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JESUS' ALLEGED CONFESSION OF SIN

The pericope of "the rich young ruler" is found in all three of the Synoptic Gospels, and it is associated in all of them with narratives of a common type. In all three it immediately follows the account of Jesus' receiving and blessing little children; and it is clear from Mark's representation (as also indeed from Matthew's¹) that the incident actually occurred in immediate sequence to that scene. In Luke, these two narratives are immediately preceded by the parable of the Pharisee and Publican praying in the Temple; in Matthew they are immediately succeeded by the parable of the workmen in the vineyard who were surprised that their rewards were not nicely adjusted to what they deemed their relative services. It cannot be by accident that these four narratives, all of which teach a similar lesson, are brought thus into contiguity. It is the burden of them all that the Kingdom of God is a gratuity, not an acquisition; and the effect of bringing them together is to throw a great emphasis upon this, their common teaching.

Perhaps this teaching finds nowhere more pungent intimation than in the declaration of our Lord which forms the core of the account of His reception of the children: "For of such is the kingdom of heaven," (or "of God": Mt. xix. 14; Mk. x. 14; Lk. xviii. 16). These "little children" were, as we learn from Luke, mere babies (Lk. xiii. 15: τὰ βρέφη), which Jesus held in His arms (Mk. x. 16: ἐναγκα-

¹ Accordingly, Th. Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthaeus ausgelegt*, 1903, p. 589 says correctly (on Mt. xix. 16): "The close chronological connection is assured by the καὶ ἰδοὺ, verse 16, after ἐπορεύθη ἐκείθεν, verse 15."

ASSYRIOLOGICAL RESEARCH DURING THE PAST DECADE¹

Assyriology is still a comparatively young science. It is but a life-time—three-score and ten years—since the first excavations were conducted in the vicinity of Mosul by French and English excavators.² And only within a decade have the last of the pioneers—Jules Oppert, Rassam and Schrader—passed away. The work of Oppert as excavator and decipherer carried us back almost to the very beginning of Assyriology. He was a member of the second French expedition, which was sent out in 1852, and in 1857 he helped to place this science on a firm basis and to win for it the confidence of scholars by his translation of the cylinder inscription of Tiglath-Pileser I.³ Rassam in 1854 discovered the famous Library of Assurbanapal at Nineveh, from which 20,000 tablets or fragments of tablets, many of them of the greatest value, have been recovered. Schrader, rightly called “the father of Assyriology in Germany”, carried us back into the sixties; and his investigations, which were especially along historical and geographical lines, won for him an international reputation.

The labors of these men, and many others whose names might be mentioned, have made possible the rapid advance which Assyriology has made during the past decades. They have supplied our museums with thousands of inscriptions

¹ This article is in substance an address delivered on September 19th, 1913, in Miller Chapel at the opening of the One Hundred and Second Session of Princeton Theological Seminary. The writer has however claimed the privilege of quite considerably revising and expanding it before its publication.

² Botta began excavations at Nineveh (*Kuyundjik*) in December, 1842, Layard at Calah (*Nimrud*) in November, 1845.

³ Rawlinson, Hincks, Fox-Talbot and Oppert were the members of a committee appointed by the Royal Asiatic Society to make test translations of this inscription. They worked independently of one another and the substantial agreement between their translations did a great deal to establish confidence in Assyriological studies and to remove suspicions regarding their value and reliability.

and antiquities of various kinds. They deciphered the complicated cuneiform script and have solved most of its difficulties; They have published many inscriptions and supplied the student of to-day with grammar and lexicon, with works on history and religion, and with textbooks and helps of all sorts. In fact so rapid has been the progress that the Assyriologist of to-day is being forced to become in ever increasing measure a specialist in some one or more of the many fields of investigation which the cuneiform inscriptions have opened up to us. And even when we restrict ourselves to the work of the decade which is past⁴—the seventh and in many ways the most productive in the history of Assyriology—it is by no means easy to trace the progress which has been made and it is necessary for us to confine ourselves more especially to the most important fields. We shall consider therefore the progress this decade has made in the work of excavation; in philological research; in chronology and history; in the study of legal and business documents, and letters and of the proper names; and in the investigation of the religion.

THE EXCAVATIONS

The work of excavation has been carried on with vigor and although no single finds have been reported which rank in importance with the discovery of the Library of Assurbanapal by Rassam in 1854, the finding of the Tell-el-Amarna letters in 1888 and the unearthing of the Stele of Hammurapi in 1901, some very important discoveries have been made and much valuable information has been obtained.

⁴ This period is counted roughly as beginning with 1903 and extending to the present time. This is a little over a decade, but still is sufficiently accurate for our purpose. For several years back Dr. H. Pick of the Royal Library at Berlin has prepared a brief yearly summary of the progress made in Assyriological research for the *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*. Cf. also H. W. Hogg, *Survey of Recent Publications on Assyriology*, vol. I, 1908; vol. II, 1910, which are favorably spoken of by Pick, and also L. W. King's survey for the years 1910-12 in the *Britannica Year-Book*, 1913, pp. 256-60.

The Germans who were the last to enter the field have done more work during this period than any other single nation. The *Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft*, which was founded in 1898 and began excavations at Babylon in the following year, has continued its work uninterruptedly and although the results of those excavations have been rather disappointing in some ways they have thrown very welcome light upon the topography of Babylon, especially upon the character of the fortifications, palaces and temples of the Babylon of the time of Nebuchadnezzar.⁵ In 1903—just ten years ago—excavations were commenced at Assur, the ancient capital of Assyria, and have been in progress ever since. These excavations have been especially valuable for the light which they have thrown upon the early history of Assyria.⁶

The *Orient-Gesellschaft* has also conducted excavations at Fāra, which is probably to be identified with the ancient Shuruppak, which according to the Babylonian legend was the home of Ut-napishtim the hero of the Flood, and at Abu Hatab, another very ancient ruin, and has recently begun excavations at Warka, the Biblical Erech. Three cities of far less antiquity, Hatra, near Assur, and Samarra and

⁵ Meissner who was for a time connected with the expedition, has recently expressed the opinion (*OLZ*, XV, 416) that the fears entertained by "most German Assyriologists" that these excavations would not be sufficiently successful to warrant the great expense involved, have been proved to have been justified by the results. "Especially as regards literary and archaeological data, the results are quite moderate. Only the architect has thus far perhaps gotten his money's worth." The costs of the 13 years excavations he estimated at \$200,000 or more. For an account of these excavations cf. the *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient Gesellschaft* also the *Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen* of the same society and especially the account of the work of the expedition recently presented by Koldewey in his *Das wiedererstandene Babylon* (1913). Koldewey who has been in charge of the work at Babylon from the very start estimates that about one-half of the necessary work has been accomplished. The magnitude of the task is shown by his statement that 200 to 250 men have been working on it steadily for thirteen or fourteen years.

⁶ Cf. pp. 243 ff. For the official accounts of these excavations cf. the publications of the *Deutsche Orient Gesellschaft* mentioned in note 5.

Ocheidir in Babylonia have also been visited and studied by German archaeologists.

The French have resumed their excavations at Tello, which were interrupted by the death of de Sarzec in 1901. Capt. Gaston Cros, his successor, reached Tello in 1903 and the work of excavation has been carried on with very considerable success. At Susa where excavation was commenced in 1897 and where the code of Hammurapi, the obelisk of Manishtusu and a number of other very valuable finds were made, the work of the *Délégation en Perse* has been continued and some work has also been done in other parts of Persia. At Oheimir, the site of the ancient city of northern Babylonia, Kish, excavations have recently been carried on by Genouillac and they are reported to be successful.⁷

Of the work of the English excavators little has been heard. King conducted excavations at Nineveh nearly ten years ago, and he, with the assistance of Thompson, made a new copy of the trilingual inscription of Darius the Great at Behistûn.⁸

Only two American expeditions have been at work in this region during the decade.⁹ The expedition of the Uni-

⁷ Cf. Gaston Cros, *Nouvelles Fouilles de Tello (de Sarzec's monumental work Découvertes en Chaldée* which was begun about 30 years ago and which gives an account of the excavations of this distinguished archaeologist at Tello, was completed last year by Heuzey and Thureau-Dangin, eleven years after the death of de Sarzec); also L. Heuzey in *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 1910. Heuzey reports that Cros has discovered a part of a wall built by Gudea. For the excavations at Susa compare the *Memoires de la Délégation en Perse* and the other publications of the *Délégation*. It is worthy of note that according to Scheil (*Comptes Rendus*, 1910) it is now possible to trace the old Elamitic language, or as he has named it *Anzanite*, as far back as Naram-Sin. For a reference to the excavations at Oheimir cf. *OLZ*, XV, 426. The French have also been working at Samara cf. Viollet, *Fouilles à Samara en Mésopotamie*.

⁸ *The Sculptures and Inscription of Darius the Great on the Rock of Behistûn in Persia*. A new collection of the Persian, Susian and Babylonian Texts, with English translation, plates, etc. 1907.

⁹ The excavations of the University of Pennsylvania at Nippur have not been continued since 1900.

versity of Chicago under the direction of Dr. Banks excavated the site of Bismaya,¹⁰ the ancient *Adab*, in 1903-4 and the Cornell expedition under Olmstead, Charles and Wrench, which has thus far only published the results of its excavation in the Hittite country of Asia Minor, will also work in Mesopotamia, if it has not already done so.¹¹

Besides these expeditions the natives have done considerable excavating on their own account, notably at Sippar (*Abu Habba*), Drehem, Warka and Dailem, and many hundreds of tablets found by them have been bought by European and American collectors.

Through the excavations just enumerated the material for our study of ancient Babylonia and Assyria has been greatly increased. The inventory-lists of objects excavated at Assur passed the 20,000 mark during the past year. At Babylon No. 30,130 was found on Feb. 20, 1905. At that point the inventory ceases, at least as far as all reference to it in the "Reports" is concerned; but the latter indicate that the number must have grown very considerably since then. The inventory numbers at Susa have passed the 15,000 mark, and judging from the registry-numbers of the British Museum that collection has been increased through excavation or purchase by at least 10,000 objects.¹² The other excavations referred to have yielded less.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to form anything approaching an accurate estimate of the extent of the material which has been recovered. A conservative estimate would probably place the total at about 300,000 objects, of which perhaps one-fourth have been recovered during the past decade.¹³ The collection of the British Museum, which

¹⁰ Cf. Edgar J. Banks, *Bismaya*, 1913.

¹¹ Cf. A. T. Olmstead, B. B. Charles, J. E. Wrench, *Travels and Studies in the Nearer East* (Cornell expedition to Asia Minor and the Assyro-Babylonian Orient).

¹² The figures for the Susa excavations and also for the British Museum are based on the inventory or registry numbers of the tablets of these collections in official publications and they may be considerably too low.

¹³ The Kuyundjik Collection of the British Museum numbers, as has

is by far the largest single collection, has passed the 100,000 mark by several thousand. The Imperial Ottoman Museum at Constantinople probably comes next,¹⁴ then the Louvre and then Berlin, for the European collections. The largest collection in this country is that of the University of Pennsylvania, which has about 17,000 tablets.

An estimate of this kind is also very unsatisfactory because of the heterogeneous character of the collections. A single number may represent a large cylinder, or tablet, or a small tablet or even a fragment of a tablet. It may stand for an uninscribed terracotta figurine—according to Koldewey some 6,000 often fragmentary have been found at Babylon—or for a basalt or diorite stele or statue. Of course the small tablets and the fragments are in the majority.

Still these figures give some idea at least of the extent of the material. And it can consequently occasion no surprise that although the work of publishing and copying the inscriptions was entered upon immediately, the pen of the copyist and the varied labors of the decipherer have never been able to catch up or to keep up with the spade of the excavator. In 1850 Botta and Flandin completed their *Monument de Ninive*. In 1851 Layard published his *Inscriptions in the Cuneiform Character*. The first volume of Rawlinson's *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia* appeared in 1861 and the fifth volume was published nineteen years later. Other texts and series appeared from time to

been said, over 20,000 tablets or fragments. Rassam estimated that 50,000 were found at Sippar. During the years 1893-5 about 30,000 were excavated according to de Sarzec at Tello. Hilprecht has estimated the Nippur yield at over 50,000. These are the most noteworthy finds of previous decades, as far as numbers are concerned.

¹⁴Under the present regulations of the Turkish government all antiquities are its property and are to be handed over to the Imperial Ottoman Museum. What percentage of these inscriptions, excavated by European and American archaeologists, will eventually reach the Museums which they represent and what percent of the recently excavated material has already been transferred to Constantinople it is difficult or impossible to say. According to report most of the antiquities found at Babylon are still there, and have not been removed to Constantinople.

time; but Rawlinson was, until about twenty years ago, the great *corpus inscriptionum* of the Assyriologist. About thirty years ago Strassmaier, who himself during the eighties and early nineties published several thousand tablets (contracts), complained of the reluctance of scholars to undertake the publication of new inscriptions. And no one who knows the difficulty involved in this work can wonder at this. The texts are often very hard to read, being usually more or less mutilated and often quite fragmentary and the writing is sometimes very difficult to decipher. But yet probably no decade has a better record in text publications than this one. Over ten thousand inscriptions of various kinds have been published. Clay, Ungnad, Thureau-Dangin, Scheil, Genouillac, King, Thompson, Harper and Virolleaud have published a great many inscriptions and a number of others have made more or less extensive contributions.¹⁵ Most of these are texts not previously published. Many of these inscriptions are small and a large proportion of them are contracts or other documents of a business character. A large part of these latter are in Sumerian, the non-Semitic language spoken by the early inhabitants of Southern Babylonia, from whom the Semitic Babylonians borrowed the cuneiform script.

This record for a single decade is quite noteworthy and shows the great interest which is being taken in this field of investigation. With so many new texts constantly appearing, so much new material to be studied, it is no easy task to keep abreast of the work which is being done in Assyriology alone, not to mention the discoveries in other fields, especially Egyptian, Hittite, Cretan and the Greek papyri, which claim attention. And yet despite this great output it is probable that only a comparatively small part, perhaps not over ten to twenty per cent of the excavated material has been published thus far. There are doubtless in many of our

¹⁵ de la Fuye, Messerschmidt, Hilprecht, Barton, Myhrmann, Radau, Langdon, Klauber, Le Gac, Pinches, Poebel, Weissbach, Peiser, Friedrich, Waterman, Lau, Macmillan, Hincke, Hussey, Delaporte and some others.

museums tablets of the greatest value, which are as unknown as if still covered by the dust of ages. The publication by King, in 1907, of a chronicle containing a valuable synchronism between Babylonian and Assyrian history, a tablet which had seemingly lain in the British Museum for some years before its value was discovered, occasioned the humorous comment by Winckler that "excavations in the British Museum seem more successful than those which are conducted on the site of many a capital city of Babylonia".

This witticism was aimed perhaps more at those responsible for the rather unproductive excavations at Babylon than at the Trustees of the British Museum who have shown very commendable zeal in the publication of texts and in the opening up of their treasures to scholars from all parts of the world. And it is to be hoped that future "excavations" will prove even more successful. This great collection has not yet been even fully catalogued. Bezold took over ten years to catalogue the Kuyundjik Collection alone, which is only about a fifth of the whole, and years must elapse before all its treasures shall have been published. And the same is true in a lesser degree of the other large collections. And in the meantime the work of excavation is being pushed.

PHILOLOGY

Considerable progress has been made along the line of linguistic and philological study. Delitzsch and Sayce have published new editions of their Assyrian grammars. Ungnad and Meissner have published short grammars. The first of these latter is especially valuable because of the prominence which it gives to 'old Babylonian'. Prince has published a new chrestomathy for beginners and Delitzsch's well known *Lesestücke* has appeared in a fifth edition. Special problems of grammar have been studied by Ungnad, Bezold, Thompson, Böhl, Ebeling, Ylvisaker, and others. Brockelmann has made use of Assyrian very extensively in his comparative semitic grammar. The first Sumerian

grammar has recently been published by Langdon—and another by Delitzsch will appear very soon. The advance which has been made in this direction is shown by the fact that at Berlin University Professor Delitzsch expects to make Sumerian a distinct discipline instead of as heretofore merely a department of Assyrian. Lexicography has also made great progress. Almost every new inscription of any length brings us some new word or new expression. Muss-Arnolt's lexicon was completed in 1905, and has about 1200 pages. It is rumored that the supplement to Delitzsch's *Handwörterbuch* (1896), which has been promised for half a decade, will be nearly as large as the original dictionary. The glossary in the new edition of the *Lesestücke* contains much new material. Quite recently Holma, a Finnish scholar, has published a monograph of nearly 200 pages on the names given to the different parts of the body in Assyrio-Babylonian (*Die Namen der Körperteile im Assyrisch-Babylonischen*). This study brings together some 350 words and although many of them are still of uncertain meaning, this work shows something of the possibilities of Assyrian lexicography. Prince completed in 1908 his *Materials for a Sumerian Lexicon* and Meissner finished in 1910 his great collection of rare Assyrian ideograms. This work contains approximately 10,000 ideograms and is intended as a supplement to Brünnow's *Classified List*, which appeared in 1889. Other less extensive contributions have been made by Fossey, Virolleaud, Langdon and Hussey.

Barton has been making an elaborate study of the cuneiform script. The material for such a study has increased greatly of recent years. The publication of texts of all periods, especially of so many of the period of Hammurapi and still earlier, has made it possible to trace the stages in the development of the script from very early times in its various modifications.¹⁶ A comparative study of this kind is very helpful and carries on the work of Amiaud, Thureau-

¹⁶ The publication of early Assyrian inscriptions has shown that about the time of Hammurapi the Assyrian script closely resembled the Babylonian although at a later date it developed marked peculiarities.

Dangin, Delitzsch and others. The most ancient script has been especially studied by Toscanne.

The controversy with regard to the character of the Sumerian language, which has been waged with greater or less activity since 1874, when Halévy first put forth the hypothesis that instead of being a non-Semitic language, it was an ideographic or cryptographic script (*allographie*) of Semitic origin, has now been practically settled in favor of the opponents of Halévy. The family to which it belongs is still in dispute. Indeed little light has been thrown upon this subject in the last quarter of a century. But the fact that it is a genuine language is now practically universally admitted. Jastrow, who until recently was a supporter of Halévy, now admits that the proof contained in the "royal inscriptions", which have recently been edited and translated by Thureau-Dangin, that the Sumerian had *phonetic* elements, has convinced him that it was once a spoken language and not merely an ideographic way of writing Semitic-Babylonian.¹⁷ This evidence has seemed to him more convincing even than the evidence produced by Ed. Meyer to show that on the monuments we find representations of two distinct races, the one Semitic, the other the Sumerian. Jastrow was one of the last if not the last prominent supporter of Halévy. So that the latter now stands practically alone and although he has quite recently written a lengthy defence of his standpoint, and predicts that "some day the historians and philologists will be grateful to him for having delivered them from the absurd nightmare, which has troubled their minds for sixty years and which is called 'the Sumarian mystery'", it is hardly likely that he will win many converts to his position.

It is interesting to note in this connection that the cuneiform inscriptions have thrown valuable light on the vocalization of ancient Egyptian. As is now generally admitted, this language was written, like Hebrew and most of the

¹⁷ Cf. Jastrow, *Religion Babyloniens und Assyriens*, vol. II, pp. ix. Many of these inscriptions had been previously edited. But this translation constitutes a great advance in this field.

other Semitic languages, without the vowels. The cuneiform although in many respects a complicated and cumbersome system has the advantage that it does render the vowels. Ranke has collected considerable material bearing upon this subject. And while it is probable that the Egyptologist will have to look in the future as in the past chiefly to Coptic for light upon this important question, the value of the cuneiform is not inconsiderable.

The excavations conducted by Winckler at Boghaz-Keui in 1907 have also made it clear that it is to the Cuneiform, which has unlocked for us the long forgotten Sumerian, that we are to look for the key to the Hittite. Winckler found there Hittite tablets written in the cuneiform script and containing a number of Assyrian words. It is also reported that bilingual syllabaries have been found. Such tablets should make possible that scientific study of the Hittite language, which is necessarily a preliminary step before any thorough study of the hieroglyphs can be made. For it has been the circumstance that the language as well as the script was unknown which has made the problem so exceedingly difficult.¹⁸

CHRONOLOGY AND HISTORY

Important light has been thrown upon chronology and history by chronicles, date lists, dated contract tablets and historical inscriptions of various kinds, published during the past decade. Two new chronicles published by King¹⁹ are especially valuable. One gives us a synchronism between early Babylonian and Assyrian history, by stating that Ilu-shûma, king of Assyria, was a contemporary of Su- (or Sumu-) abu, the first king of the First Dynasty of Babylon—a synchronism which carries us back more than 500 years

¹⁸ Thompson, in his *New Decipherment of the Hittite Hieroglyphs* (1913) has made considerable use of the cuneiform tablets published by Winckler (*MDOG*, No. 35), and his decipherment seems to rest on sound principles. Just how much of it will eventually prove to be correct, it is hard to predict at present.

¹⁹ L. W. King, *Chronicles concerning early Babylonian Kings*, 1907.

before the "Synchronistic Chronicle" starts *i.e.*, to about the beginning of the second millenium B.C.²⁰ Another chronicle states that Samsu-iluna, son of Hammurapi, waged war against Iluma-ilu. As this Iluma-ilu is admitted to be the first king of the Second Dynasty, or, as it is called, the Dynasty of the Sea-Land, this statement proves that the Second Dynasty was contemporaneous with the First for one third to one half its duration. Whether the Second Dynasty held sway at Babylon at all is not yet definitely settled. King thinks that it did not. In this opinion he is supported by Ed. Meyer. The fact that as early as the ninth year of Samsu-iluna the Kassites, as Hilprecht expresses it "knocked at the door of Babylonia", and that no inscription dated in the reigns of these kings has ever been found, goes a long way toward establishing this contention.²¹ That this is the case was argued fifteen years ago by Hommel, following a suggestion of Halévy. This evidence brings down the date of Hammurapi very considerably and largely obviates the difficulty in the way of the acceptance of the identification of this king with the Amraphel of Gen. xiv. The chronology is still too uncertain to warrant an attempt at exact determination,²² but this discovery goes a long way toward harmonizing the two chronologies

²⁰ Another important datum for the history of the early period is the fact that we are able in view of a recent discovery of Thureau-Dangin to assign the Cappodocian Tablets, which have been found near Boghaz-Keui, to about 2300 B.C., *i.e.*, to a period several centuries earlier than the first dynasty of Babylon. Cf. *The Britannica Year-Book*, 1913, p. 259.

²¹ Hilprecht in 1906 expressed the opinion that the Dynasty of the Sea-Lands is for a great part contemporaneous with the Hammurapi dynasty and that the first eighty to one hundred years of the Kassite dynasty run parallel with the closing years of the preceding dynasties (cf. *Babylonian Exped. of the Univ. of Penn.* Series A, XX, 1, p. 43).

²² Auchincloss (*Chronology of the Holy Bible*, p. 61) fixes the date of the Promise to Abraham at 1907 B.C. and states that Rogers on the basis of Babylonian data assigns this event tentatively to 1915 B.C. Beecher (*The Dated Events of the O. T.*) places this event twenty-one years earlier. Both of these scholars accept the view that the Second Dynasty never ruled at Babylon and that the Third or Kassite followed immediately on the First. F. A. Jones (*The Dates of Genesis*) regards

at this point. The fact that this tablet furnishes us with a definite instance of a dynasty being to all appearance regarded by Assyrian chroniclers as successive when it was really contemporaneous in whole or in part with other dynasties is, as King points out, of the greatest importance because it helps in the solution of another problem which has long been puzzling scholars—the date of Naram-Sin. According to Nabunaid, the last king of Babylon, Naram-Sin lived about 3800 B.C. This date has been regarded as too high by many scholars. It could not be accepted without admitting enormous gaps in the history, as known, or inventing new kings or dynasties to fill them. Lehmann-Haupt tried to obviate this difficulty by assuming that the scribe made a mistake of 1,000 years, writing 3200 for 2200 and this view has gained considerable acceptance. But, as King points out, while this correction answers fairly well in this instance, it cannot explain other cases of conflict and is not scientific. King argues with justice that it is far more probable that the scribes of Nabunaid made the same mistake in calculating the date of Naram-Sin which modern scholars have made in estimating the date of Hammurapi, that is, they have regarded as successive dynasties which appear consecutively in the lists but which should really be treated in some instances at least as contemporaneous. We have seen that the evidence that the Second Dynasty did not rule in Babylon at all or at the best only a part of the time assigned to it in the “King-Lists”, brings down the date of Hammurapi approximately 125-350 years. Had the scribes of Nabunaid made this same mistake and also counted several of the earlier dynasties, some of which we know to have been contemporaneous, as consecutive, an error of a thousand years, great as it is, would readily be

1913 B.C., Ussher's date for Gen. xiv, as approximately correct. Toffteen (*Ancient Chronology*, Part I) on the other hand allows an interval of about 150 years between the First and Third Dynasties and his date for the “Promise” is 2090 B.C., very much higher than that proposed by the others.

explicable. King's latest estimate for the date of Naram-Sin is about 2700 B.C.²³

For the history of the earlier period new data are furnished by a dynastic tablet recently published by Scheil, which records the names and reigns of the kings of three new dynasties. Two of these are Sumerian, the third Semitic, the dynasty of Guti. This last dynasty, although only mentioned in the list, clears up several difficulties of the history of the early period, proving as it does a period of Semitic domination lying between the time of Sargon and the Hammurapi dynasty, and King describes this invasion as "an event of the first importance". Hilprecht in 1906 published the latter part of a fragment of a dynastic tablet giving the dynasties of Ur and Isin (preceding the Hammurapi dynasty). He argues from the shape and size of the tablet that it must have contained the names and reigns of about 135 rulers of the period prior to Ur-Engur whose reign he places between the limits 2500-2200 B.C. Poebel has found in the Nippur collection another dynastic tablet which should prove of great interest, since it purports to carry us back to the kings who reigned after the Deluge. How much, if any, historical value it will prove to possess, it is at yet impossible to say. King asserts that "the age of Sumerian civilization can be traced in Babylonia back to about the middle of the fourth millenium B.C., but not beyond".

The tablet referred to above which has proved that the First and Second Dynasties were in part contemporary, contains an additional statement which must be mentioned, namely a reference to an invasion of Babylonia by the Hittites at the close of the First Dynasty of Babylon. This information throws light upon several problems. It accounts perhaps for the fall of the First Dynasty and for the success of the Kassites in establishing their power there. King thinks that it was at this time that the images of Marduk

²³ Hilprecht in 1906 (*op. cit.*) assigned him to a date between 2950 and 2650 B.C. Ed. Meyer in 1909 fixed his date as low as 2450 B.C.

and Sarpanitum were carried off, which more than a century later the Kassite king Argum II brought back from Khanî and restored to the temple Esagila in Babylon. This fact is of especial interest because of its confirmation of the book of Genesis, which testifies to the power of the Hittites at this early period. "Among the great political forces of the ancient Oriental world," declares Professor Sayce, "we now know that none exercised a more profound influence than the Hittites of Asia Minor."²⁴ The "nebulous" kingdom of the Hittites is assuming very definite shape!

A number of strictly historical texts have been found coming from all periods. Those from the excavations at Assur have greatly increased our collection of the inscriptions of the Assyrian kings.²⁵ The inscriptions of Adad-Nirari I,²⁶ Salmaneser I (c. 1300 B.C.) and Samsi-Adad are especially worthy of mention and there are a number belonging to subsequent monarchs. About four years ago Scheil and Gautier published a valuable inscription of Tukulti-Ninib II (889-884), a king who until then was practically known only by name. The account which he gives of his military expeditions is especially valuable because of the light it throws on the geography of that period. Recently King has published a cylinder of Sennacherib, acquired by the British Museum, which is of peculiar interest because it gives us an account of the expedition of Sennacherib against

²⁴ Garstang, *The Land of the Hittites*, p. ix.

²⁵ The most recent list of Assyrian kings published by Andrae, the German excavator at Assur, contains 72 names. The discovery of new inscriptions has changed our nomenclature to a considerable degree. Pul is now Tiglath-Pileser IV, not III; Assurnaširpal is now III. Samsi-Adad (823 B.C.) and his son Adad-nirari are now respectively V and IV. Johns indeed calls the former Samsi-Adad VII. A Sargon I has been found, who ruled at Assur about the time of Hammurapi of Babylon, so that it is he and not the founder of the neo-Assyrian empire who first assumed the name of the ancient king of Akkad.

²⁶ Prof. R. D. Wilson has called my attention to the fact that one of the newly discovered inscriptions of this king contains a reference to the Arameans (*Akhلامي*). The earliest previously known reference to them on an Assyrian inscription is from the reign of Tiglath-Pileser I, about two centuries later. Cf. Schiffer, *Die Aramäer*.

Cilicia and the Greeks. This expedition, which is, according to King, the sixth conducted by that monarch, took place in 698. It is described in the Chronicles of Eusebius (Armenian version) but is not referred to at all in the Taylor Cylinder, despite the fact that the latter is dated in 691. This confirmation of an ancient tradition is especially noteworthy because the silence of the "Taylor Cylinder" might easily be construed as discrediting the account given by Eusebius.²⁷ This new cylinder also gives a lengthy account of Sennacherib's extensive building operations at Nineveh and is of value for a study of the topography of the city, giving as it does the names of its fifteen gates and describing the new palace and park.

Another interesting inscription is the Sargon-tablet which has been recently published by Thureau-Dangin. It is a letter and one of unusual length (430 lines). It was written by the king, while residing at Calah, to the officials and citizens of Assur and gives an account of his activities. It is really a war bulletin. It begins, following the epistolary style: "To Asur, the father of the gods, the mighty lord, who dwells in *Eharsaggalkurkurra*, his great temple, may there be most abundant prosperity." Then follows a similar greeting to the other gods and to the citizens of Assur. Sargon writes a letter to his god!

During the course of the excavations at Assur a number of steles have been discovered—nearly 150 in all—which are of not a little historical interest since they usually bear inscriptions. There are two rows of these steles. One is confined to royal personages, the other to officials. About twenty-five of the former have been found, the oldest being that of Erba-Adad, who lived considerably earlier than Adad-Nirari I. One of these is especially interesting because it bears the name of Shammuramat, i.e., Semiramis. This stele shows that she was the wife of Samsi-Adad V and the

²⁷ Cf. L. W. King in *Cuneiform Texts*, XXVI, p. 11 f. Cf. also Professor R. D. Wilson's discussion of the argument from silence in the first volume of his *Studies on the Book of Daniel* which will soon be published.

mother of Adad-nirari IV (800 B.C.). Lehmann-Haupt of Berlin has made a careful investigation of the historical basis of the legend of Ninus and Semiramis, which has come down to us through Greek sources, notably Ctesias, and he believes that this legend must have had its origin not in Assyria but in a foreign country, probably Media. Shammuramat seems to have been a remarkable woman. The fact that her name appears on this stele and on several other inscriptions proves this, for of the Assyrian queens we hear but little. She was a Babylonian, probably of royal birth, and Professor Lehmann-Haupt thinks that her prominence in this legend can be accounted for, if she accompanied her husband and later her son on their warlike expeditions against Armenia and Media and through her prowess and ability won fame and renown as a warrior-queen. That a legend, which represents a queen, who lived in the ninth century B.C., i.e., at a time when the kingdom of Assyria had been in existence for centuries, as being the consort of the founder of the empire, could have grown up on native soil, he believes to be impossible.

In his brief history of the life and times of Assurbanapal²⁸ (Sardanapalus) Professor Delitzsch calls attention to what seems to have been a practice of Assyrian and Babylonian rulers of carrying off dust and rubbish from the cities which they captured and destroyed and pouring it out in a heap at the gates of their royal cities or of the temple of their gods. Sometimes they erected on it a monument recording their exploits. This custom, which seems to be very ancient, is of significance because it is perhaps referred to in the boastful message of Ben Hadad to Ahab recorded in 1 Kings, xx. 10. "The gods do so to me and more also if the dust of Samaria

²⁸ Delitzsch identifies Assurbanapal with the "great and glorious Assnapper" of Ezra iv and points out that as against the Greek and Roman legends which represent him as weak and effeminate, this characterization which we find in the Bible is the only true one. It must be borne in mind, however, that neither the identification of Assnapper with Assurbanapal on the one hand, nor that of Assurbanapal with Sardanapalus on the other can be regarded as certain.

shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that follow me." The vain and ambitious king of Damascus is thinking probably of Nineveh with its victory-columns raised on the ruins of captured cities. He too hopes to erect his monuments before the gates of Damascus. And so, enraged at Ahab's obstinacy in refusing to yield to his demands, he utters this scornful taunt. "You Ahab trust in your city of Samaria, with its walls and its warriors! The dust of your ruined city will not even suffice to fill the hands of my soldiers when I and my two and thirty kings return in triumph to erect before Damascus my victory-stele as conqueror of Samaria!" A braggart speech and one which might well come from the lips of Ben Hadad!

Boundary stones have received considerable attention during the past decade. King has recently published a fine collection of boundary and memorial stones—thirty-seven in all (a number of them are fragmentary)—, and two-thirds of these for the first time. Twenty had been found at Susa up to 1905. Hincke has made a thorough investigation of this class of inscriptions. Their dates range from the Kassite period down to the Persian—*i. e.*, a period of nearly a thousand years. While not historical texts strictly speaking they contain data which are of value to the historian.

LEGAL AND BUSINESS DOCUMENTS, LETTERS, PROPER NAMES

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the discovery of the Code of Hammurapi in 1901 has in several ways revolutionized our ideas of conditions existing at the time of Abraham. This code has been diligently studied during the past decade. Several editions of the text have been published and a number of translations of it have been made. Its contents have been studied from various aspects, prominent among them being the comparison of it with the Mosaic legislation.²⁹ The proof of the existence of a code of this

²⁹ The text of the code was first published by Scheil; subsequently by Harper and by Ungnad. The latter has also published several fragments of the code which have since come to light. It has been translated by Scheil, Müller, Johns, Harper, Winckler, Ungnad and others.

kind five hundred years before the time of Moses is a strong argument for the possibility of the promulgation of the Law at the time of the exodus. There has been a tendency on the part of some to disparage the Mosaic to the advantage of the Babylonian code, and to argue that the admittedly human origin of the latter must of necessity dispose of the argument in support of the supernatural origin of the former. This was of course to be expected. But it must be admitted that the discovery of this code has in many ways both directly and indirectly confirmed the historicity of the Pentateuch.

The discovery of the Code of Hammurapi had, as might have been expected, the effect of stimulating interest in legal and business documents of that period. Some work had already been done in that field, notably by Strassmaier, Meissner and Peiser, several hundred texts having been published and more or less carefully studied. During the past decade over 1,300 tablets have been published and the majority have been translated by Ungnad, and Kohler has made a study of the legal questions involved. Over 600 tablets dating from the Kassite period and about 1,500 from the Neo-Babylonian and Persian period have also been published. From the Assyrian period relatively few new texts have been published, although Ungnad has translated most of the texts published by Johns (1898-1901), and some others making nearly 900 in all, and Kohler has discussed the legal problems.

It is of interest to note that quite recently Koschaker, of the University of Prague, has written a valuable study of an important legal problem, the law of guarantee (*Bürgschaftsrecht*) as it was operative among the Babylonians and Assyrians. He studies it not merely in the early period but

The problems of the code and its relation to the Mosaic legislation have been studied by S. A. Cook, D. H. Müller, Grimme, Edwards, W. W. Davies, Kohler and Ungnad, and others. The name of this king was formerly read Hammurabi. It has been shown however that the sign read *bi* has also in Old-Babylonian the value *pi*. And since this king is generally identified with the Amraphel of Gen. xiv. (see p. 240) the new reading, which was first proposed by Ungnad, is to be preferred.

in the late as well, and in order to do this he, although a jurist and not an Assyriologist, devoted considerable time and effort to the study of the Assyrio-Babylonian that he might be able at least to study transcribed texts in the original language. Schorr, an Assyriologist who has devoted much time and study to this line of investigation, remarks in reviewing Koschaker's book that it is a noteworthy event in the history of Assyriology that a jurist has taken the trouble to study Assyrio-Babylonian in order to investigate its legal problems.

In addition to the tablets just mentioned, about 3,000 business documents or temple-records as they are frequently called, dating in the main from the third millenium B.C. and written in Sumerian and not in the Semitic Babylonian, have been published and quite a number have been translated.

The fact that these business documents are usually dated makes them of value, sometimes of great value, historically. They serve as an important check on the dynastic lists, date lists and chronicles and, where these are fragmentary or unreliable, they are of great assistance in determining the chronology. This is especially true of the early period, the third millenium, and also of the Kassite period, for which the "King-List" is fragmentary. The tablets of the Assyrian period, most of which were published by Johns, give us the names of most if not all of the eponyms for Assyrian chronology between 666 and 606. But for about the last forty years of this period it is impossible for us as yet to determine their order. The Eponym Canon enables us to establish the chronology between about 900 and 648 (Ungnad) with almost no breaks.³⁰

Letters form a not inconsiderable group among the tablets which have been excavated. The number is relatively small as compared with the far greater number of contract and other business documents which have come to light. But

³⁰ This custom of dating by eponyms in Assyria is very ancient. It is regularly used by Adad-Nirari I (cir. 1300 B.C.) on his larger inscriptions and we even find it on "Cappadocian Tablets," which (*cf.* note 20 preceding) may now be assigned to the period of the Second Dynasty of Ur (cir. 2300 B.C.) instead of to the fifteenth century B.C. (*cf. Sayce, Encycl. Brit.*, 11th edition, Vol. III, pp. 101 f).

over 2,000 letters have been published thus far and they are receiving a good deal of attention. The study of letters practically began with the discovery of the El-Amarna letters in 1888. A few years later Harper undertook the publication of the letters contained in the Library of Assurbanapal—there are some 1,500 letters or fragments in this collection—a task which is now nearly completed. King published a little over ten years ago some eighty letters written by kings of the First Dynasty of Babylon. Many of these letters are of very considerable historical interest. Some of them throw important light upon the customs secular and religious of the people. A great deal has been written on the subject of the El-Amarna letters especially and a new edition of them has been prepared by Knudtzon.

It is practically within the last decade that private letters, *i.e.*, letters written by and generally to private individuals as distinguished from official letters written by or to the king, have been studied. Some 400 tablets of this character, chiefly of the period of the First Dynasty³¹ and of the Neo-Babylonian period have been published. They have been studied by Thompson, Ungnad, Landersdorfer, Martin, Ebeling and others.

These letters, despite the many difficulties which they present to the translator, are a very interesting study. Covering as they do a period of some 1,500 years and coming from different localities, they present similarities and differences which are quite marked. It is instructive to study the epistolary style, the differences in the forms of the greeting, etc. The private letters are intrinsically far less important than the official or royal letters. But in one respect they are of great value, namely for the sake of their witness to the degree of education and culture possessed by their writers.

³¹ Thureau-Dangin has recently published a tablet which is of peculiar interest. It is somewhat mutilated. But he seems to have good grounds for his view that it is a letter written by Luenna, chief priest of Ninmar, to Enetarzi, chief priest of Girsu, at Lagash (Tello). In it Luenna tells of his successful warfare with invading Elamites. This letter dates from about 2850 B.C. and is written in Sumerian.

In this respect the letters of the early period are especially valuable because they indicate that a fairly high degree of culture prevailed in Babylonia at the time of Abraham. Thus the contents of some of the letters which have been found are of such a trivial nature that the fact that such messages were committed to writing seems to indicate that letter writing was neither a rare accomplishment nor a difficult task for the people of that age. When for example Akhum writes to Lipit-Ishtar and Awêl-Bau: "Now then send me the ass about which Zaziz spoke to you", or Adayatum to Nanna-intukh: "Give a shekel of silver to the agent of Sin-asharidu", or Nanna-intukh to Shumma-Shamash: "Give 60 *Qa* [c. eight gallons] of date-wine to Marduk-nâsir son of Bêl-khâzir"—brief instructions which could easily be conveyed by word of mouth, especially since the letters were probably delivered by private messengers—it seems clear that letter-writing could not have been a rare accomplishment, confined to temple scribes, or such messages would hardly have been written down. This is confirmed by the nature of the script. In these letters the characters are often carelessly written or scribbled and the inference seems justified that they are written by and to men who were so well accustomed to their complicated script that they did not feel obliged to write every character with great care and precision in order to avoid misunderstanding. When we remember that this script contains some 300 characters, some phonetic, some ideographic and many of them quite complicated, it speaks a great deal for the culture of this age. It is also a noteworthy fact that, despite minor differences, letters of the early period are all written in much the same general style, showing that letter-writing was taught in the schools of 4,000 years ago.

In the conclusion to the Code of Hammurapi we read the exhortation to the oppressed to come and read the words of the Code: "Let the oppressed man who has a cause come before my image as king of righteousness and let him read³²

³² Ungnad favors the rendering "let him have read to him". But the

my inscription which is written and let him hearken to my precious words and let my inscription show him his case, let him see what is his right and let his heart be at ease." Judging from the letters and business documents of the period it seems certain that many of Hammurapi's subjects were able to avail themselves of this exhortation and that the inscribing of the code on a great block of diorite and setting it up where all could see it served a very practical purpose.

That was however not the only purpose of the setting up of the stele. This great stele, with its bas-relief representing the king receiving the code from the Sun-god, was also intended to be a memorial stone, a tribute to and reminder of the goodness of the Sun-god, the god of justice and righteousness, the giver of the Code. And this was probably the chief reason that Moses commanded Joshua to set up great stones on Mount Ebal and to plaster them and write on them the words of the Law of Jehovah. It was to be a memorial, an Ebenezer, an Ebenezeker. Whether we can from it draw any inference as to the amount of education possessed by the Children of Israel when they entered Canaan is difficult to say. We know of course that the priests were to have copies of the Law and to teach it to the people. It is consequently assumed that the priests could read and possibly a considerable number of the people could also.

As Professor Sayce has recently reminded us, an old argument against the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was that writing was not known at the time of Moses and that, had the Law been revealed to him, he could not have written it down and codified it. This position has of course long been utterly untenable. But it has found its echo in the claim that the Israelites were merely nomads, strangers to the high culture of Babylon and Egypt. In the light of other is equally if not more probable in itself and it is certain that many could have read for themselves, although it must be regarded as no less certain that very many could not. Perhaps the expression is on this account intentionally ambiguous.

archæology, it is certainly not too much to say that Abraham probably learned to read and write when a boy in Ur of the Chaldees and that Moses, who was versed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, may during the long years spent at the court of Pharaoh have learned not merely to read and write Egyptian but even have mastered the Babylonian cuneiform as well, since the El-Amarna letters show that it was at that time the *lingua franca* of a very wide area.

The contract tablets, business documents and letters contain a great many proper names. During the past decade several scholars, notably Ranke, Tallquist, Huber, Clay, Dhorme and Poebel have collected and published the names occurring on some thousands of tablets of different periods, both Semitic and Sumerian.³³ This study has proved very valuable. The study of the theophoric names throws considerable light upon the religious life and thinking of the people, as has been shown by Tallquist's investigations. The similarity between these names and names contained in the Old Testament is sometimes very great. One fact which has been brought out very clearly is the frequency with which names were abbreviated, through the omission of one or more of the component parts. In such cases a termination often having the force of a diminutive is frequently added. This feature is probably more characteristic of names in the Bible than is as yet recognized. The study of these names is also proving valuable, as Clay's investigations have shown, from the ethnological standpoint. It is possible clearly to distinguish men of different nationalities by the names. And Clay has shown that the study of the proper names of the Kassite period throws considerable light upon the puzzling Hittite problem.

The contracts, many of the other business documents and some of the letters bear seal-impressions; and many signets of various kinds have been discovered. These signets form a very interesting and fruitful field for investigation, attrac-

³³ Dhorme, Huber and Poebel have been studying Sumerian proper names, Ranke names of the First Dynasty, Clay those of the Kassite period and Tallquist those of the Neo-Babylonian and Persian period.

tive alike to antiquarian, artist and historian. In 1910 appeared W. H. Ward's *Cylinder-Seals of Western Asia*, which is a very valuable contribution to this subject. It is a seal impression on one of the "Cappadocian Tablets" which has established their early date (see note 20). A casual reference in Gen. xxxviii proves that, as might be expected, the Patriarchs carried signets.

THE RELIGION

In the study of the religious texts, which possess for us an interest which is in some respects at least scarcely inferior to the historical texts, very marked progress has been made.³⁴ Most noteworthy is perhaps the study of the omen

³⁴The study of the historical texts, with which Assyriology began, furnished of course some information with regard to the religion of these peoples. The study of the myths and legends practically began with George Smith's discovery of portions of the Babylonian Flood-legend (1872), followed by his *Chaldean Genesis* in 1876. Since then a number of myths and legends, of which the Gilgamesh-epic (the account of the Flood is contained in the eleventh tablet of this epic), the Creation Tablets and the Descent of Ishtar are the most generally known, have been extensively studied. Within the past decade Jensen has published a new edition of the more important of these texts. The study of the magical texts began with the appearing of the second volume of Rawlinson's *Cuneiform Inscriptions* (1866). Oppert and especially Lenormant (1873) opened up the study of the incantations and exorcisms practiced in the Babylonian demonology. This line of investigation has been continued by Tallquist, King, Fossey, Thompson, and others. In 1875 appeared Lenormant's *La Divination et la Science des Présages chez les Chaldéens*, in which work although he was to a very considerable extent dependent on the classics for information, he pointed out most of the departments of this field (to astrology he devoted little attention). The hymns and prayers to the gods early received attention and many of them were published. In 1885 Zimmern's *Bab. Busspsalmen* appeared, in 1893 Kundtson's *Assyrische Gebete an den Sonnengott*. In the course of the decade a good deal of work has been done in the study of the cults of special deities—Bollenrücher, *Nergal*; Perry, *Sin*; Combe, *Sin*; Gray, *Shamash*; Hrozny, *Ninrag*; Schollmeyer, *Ishtar*, Myhrmann, *Labartu*, Pinches, *Ishtar*. Langdon has been studying the old Sumerian hymns and temple ritual and contributions to this subject have been made by Radau, Zimmern, Myhrmann, Macmillan and others. Behrens has made a valuable study of seven of the letters which have been published by Harper, which relate to religion and cult. Works on the religion have been published by Rogers, Sayce, Dhorme, Pinches and Jastrow.

texts. Within a year the second volume of Jastrow's German edition of his *Religion of the Babylonians and Assyrians* (1898) has been completed. This volume is very largely devoted to the study of these omen texts and contains a great deal of new material. In fact the writer devotes nearly 800 pages, more than the compass of his entire first edition, to this one subject. He discusses at very considerable length the most important forms of augury and divination which were practiced at Nineveh and Babylon—examination of the liver (hepatoscopy), observation of the heavenly bodies and of natural phenomena, divination by means of oil and water (lacanomancy), augury based on the encountering of different animals and the observation of their actions, augury based on the birth of monstrosities, oracles, dreams, etc.³⁵

The omen literature attracted attention quite early in the history of Assyriology, as was natural in view of the references to it in the classical writers as well as in the Old Testament. And all of the branches of it, which Professor Jastrow investigates, have received more or less attention from previous writers. He is however one of the first to emphasize the great importance of this aspect of the religion and he has also been the pioneer in the study of the texts dealing with the examination of the liver.³⁶ In the study of astrology, the Jesuit Kugler has come to be regarded as an authority and Boissier, Virolleaud, Fossey, Hunger, King, Klauber, Handcock and others have made contributions to these lines of investigation. Professor Jastrow regards hepatoscopy and astrology as the two most important forms of divination practised by these peoples. The former he characterizes as the popular, the latter as the scientific system.

³⁵ Cf. also his *Aspects of Religious Belief and Practice in Babylonia and Assyria*, 1911.

³⁶ As early as 1875 Lenormant called attention to the importance of hepatoscopy and referred to two unedited text fragments dealing with this subject. But, as has been stated, it is only quite recently that this subject has been carefully studied.

Professor Jastrow has been accused of devoting too much attention to this one subject—the omen literature—in his new work and with thus giving his readers a false, or at least a one-sided, conception of this religious system and of the importance of this feature in it. That there is some truth in this objection must be admitted. For, as he himself admits, he is forced to reserve for a new volume the treatment of a number of subjects which should be discussed in a work bearing this title—subjects which occupied over a third of the space of the first edition—because he has devoted fully one-half of the space of these three volumes to this one topic.

His reply to this objection is however significant. He points out in the Preface to the second volume that these omen texts form a large part of the religious literature as we know it. They constitute, as he reminds us, the largest single group in the texts coming from the Library of Assurbanapal. He argues with justice that we must take the material as we find it and further justifies his procedure by the fact that this group of texts has been largely neglected in the past. Having himself devoted a great deal of time and pains to the study of texts dealing with the liver, it is only natural that he should discuss this “new subject” more fully than he might otherwise have done. His second reason is especially noteworthy. He contends that the preponderance of omen texts is not accidental, but that it is really due to the especial prominence of this feature in the religious beliefs and usages of the people. He tells us that “it was in these very omen-texts that the theory of the universe, which dominated the lives of the people in Assyria and Babylonia, from the very earliest to the latest period, expressed itself, that it was one of the chief objects—if not the main purpose—of the religion in its practical form to enable men to prepare themselves for that which was impending and to enable them to do their best to ward off every evil, when it was impossible to prevail on the gods to alter their purposes.”

This characterization of the religion of Babylon and Nineveh, given to us by one who is a recognized authority in this field, is very significant. That these nations used divination and augury was known to us, as has been remarked, through the Old Testament and the Classics even before the study of Assyriology began. But it is only recently that the great prominence of this feature in these religions—the special emphasis upon the “future problem”—has been made clear by this literature itself. And this fact is of unusual importance not merely for our study of this religion, but even more for a true appreciation of the relation in which it stands to other religions and especially to the religion of Israel.

In this age of comparative study and research, to which the words development and derivation are so familiar, a comparison between these religions is unavoidable, more especially since the interest which has been taken in Assyriology has come largely from the study of the Old Testament, and Bible lovers have been inclined to welcome every new point of contact between the Old Testament and the Monuments and have looked to the latter for confirmation of the truth of the former. And to many, of course, connection necessarily suggests derivation or dependence, and an emphasis on the correspondences between the religion and culture of these nations leads naturally to the inference that there was an interdependence—a derivation.

The attempt to prove the dependence of Israel upon Babylon in religious and other matters, which can be traced back for several decades,³⁷ was brought prominently before

³⁷ It received its first real impulse through the discovery of the Babylonian myths of the Flood and of Creation. In 1877 C. P. Tiele, in his inaugural address as professor of comparative religions at Leyden on: “*Die Assyriologie und ihre Ergebnisse für die vergl. Religionswissenschaft,*” asserted that the religious literature of the Babylonians and Assyrians was destined to play in the comparative theology of the Semites the same rôle as the Vedas in that of the Indo-Germans. In 1888 Dr. Edw. G. King in his *Akkadian Genesis* tried to trace the influence of early Babylonian religion on the language and thought of Genesis and advanced some quite extreme views. The discovery of the El-Amarna

the public eye through the so-called "Babel-Bible" lectures of Professor Friedrich Delitzsch of the University of Berlin. The first of these lectures was delivered in January, 1902, the second a year later and the third in 1905. The main thesis defended by Professor Delitzsch was to the effect that many features of the religion of the Old Testament which have been and are regarded as distinctly characteristic of that religion and as having their origin in supernatural revelation are derived directly or indirectly from Babylonian sources. In the second lecture, for example, he contrasted the Mosaic law with the recently discovered Code of Hammurapi and argued for the purely human origin of the former. The law of revenge he affirmed could not come from the thrice-holy God. In the third lecture he took occasion to inveigh against the narrow "particularism" of the Hebrew prophets who so bitterly opposed all foreign innovations and were so intensely exclusive in their spirit.

These lectures, which were delivered by one who was regarded as an authority in the field of Assyriology and who had done so much for its development, and which furthermore were delivered before the *Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft*, which was conducting excavations in Babylonia, Palestine and Egypt and had the warm support of the German emperor, naturally became the storm-centre of a very active controversy. Numerous articles, pamphlets and books written by theologians and Assyriologists have been published and the controversial literature is very extensive. Professor R. D. Wilson who delivered the "Opening Address" in Miller Chapel in the fall of the same year in which

letters gave strength to this movement because it showed how far-reaching was the influence exerted by Babylonian language and literature at the time of Moses. In 1895 Gunkel in his *Schöpfung und Chaos* argued that in the account of the Serpent in Genesis and of the Dragon in Revelation we have Babylonian mythical elements. In the next year Zimmern published a little book entitled: *Vater, Sohn und Fürsprecher* in which he sought to show that the Babylonian theology presented some noteworthy correspondences with the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. In 1896 Eduard Stucken began his studies of astral myths.

the first "Babel-Bible" lecture was given by Professor Delitzsch chose for his subject: "Babylon and Israel", and showed by "a comparison of their leading ideas based on their vocabularies" that the alleged influence was opposed by weighty philological evidence.³⁸ Sayce, in *Monumental Facts and Higher Critical Fancies*, König, in *Bibel und Babel*, a little book, which has passed through a number of editions in Germany and has been translated into English, Hommel, in *Altisraelitische Denkmäler*, and a number of others have opposed the views advanced by Professor Delitzsch. A. T. Clay, in *Amurru, the Home of the North Semites* has argued that the influence was the other way around and that it was the West-Land that influenced Babylon. In justice to Professor Delitzsch it should perhaps be remarked that although his lectures have attracted more attention than the utterances of any other scholar, which might be expected in view of his high position and distinguished attainments, he has certainly not gone to greater extremes than some other almost equally prominent German Assyriologists, e.g., Zimmern, Jensen and Winckler, in the attempt to prove the dependence of Judaism upon Babylon. Winckler through his astral myth theories, Jensen in his attempt to find in Moses, Jesus and Paul, variants of the ancient Babylonian mythical hero Gilgamesh, and Zimmern in his more recent writings and already in his *Vater, Sohn und Fürsprecher* (1896) have gone further probably than Delitzsch. Jensen and Zimmern, especially the latter, have taken part in the recent controversy precipitated by Drews' *Christ-Myth*, and although Alfred Jeremias has attempted to combine a most unqualified recognition of mythical and legendary elements in the Old Testament with a firm belief in its historical trustworthiness, the Pan-Babylonists, of whom he and Winckler were the leaders, have had

³⁸ This address appeared in THE PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW (April, 1903). It was repeated in a somewhat different form, at the Boston Convention in December, 1904, under the title, *The Linguistic Evidence for the Relations between Babylon and Israel*, and was published in the *Bible Student and Teacher* (May, 1905).

recourse to far fetched and fanciful theories hardly less extreme than those of Jensen. When one reads a book like *Moses, Jesus, Paulus*, which may be regarded as an extreme type of much that has been written to prove Babylonian influence, one is tempted to ask one's self whether these scholars have not, like so many Jews of the time of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, fallen victim to the spell of Babylon. One might almost imagine that a third "Babylonian Captivity" is pending, a thought to which the distinguished Jesuit scholar Kugler has given expression in the title of his recent book, *Im Bannkreis Babels*, in which he seeks to show that, as far at least as astrology and astronomy are concerned, the influence of Babylon on Israel has been greatly exaggerated.

In view of these attempts to make the Old Testament more or less tributary to Babylon and Assyria in religion and culture, especially the former, the new light which has been thrown upon the character of the religion of the Babylonians and Assyrians is especially valuable since it brings out clearly, as against the derivation theories which have been so freely advanced, one at least of the very important points of divergence between these religious systems—namely, with respect to augury and divination.

As regards Babylon and Assyria it is clear not only that divination and augury in their varied forms were very prominent in their religious systems, but also that the two forms most frequently used were hepatoscopy and astrology. In Israel on the other hand, not only was the emphasis on the "future problem" far less marked, but the recognized means for the ascertaining of the divine will were different, namely oracle and dream or vision, two means which according to Jastrow were not at all prominent in the Assyrio-Babylonian cult. Furthermore these two choice means employed by the latter, hepatoscopy and astrology, seem to be intentionally interdicted in Israel. While on the other hand necromancy, to the practice of which the Israelites were especially inclined, does not seem to have figured at all in the systems of the Assyrians and Babylonians.

The liver, the examination of which was so important for augural purposes among the Assyrians and Babylonians, is only once referred to in this connection in the Old Testament, namely in Ezek. xxi. 21 where the king of Babylon is represented as standing at the head of the two ways and practising divination: "he looked into the liver" (רָאָה רֶאֱזָה). But nowhere do we read of this form of divination being practised by the Hebrews. Instead "the instruction, which is frequently reiterated in the Old Testament, that in sacrificing, the caul above the liver, which played such an important rôle in hepatoscopy, should be burned, seems to be a protest against this form of augury" (Hehn).

Similarly as regards astrology we find nothing in the religion of the Law and the Prophets corresponding to the Assyrian and Babylonian usages. We know it is true that cults of the heavenly bodies flourished more or less in Israel (*cf.* 2 Kings, xxiii. 4 f.; Jer. viii. 2; Ezek. viii. 16; Amos v. 26; Acts vii. 43). But they were condemned by the Law (Exod. xx. 4-5; Deut. iv. 19, xvii. 3) and according to Hehn the conditions in Israel were not only unfavorable to the development of astrology, but "the religion of Israel was obliged to reject astrology on principle because it would have led directly to the worship of the stars as divine beings".

In his book *The Biblical and the Babylonian Idea of God*,³⁹ which we have just cited, Hehn has carefully investigated this all important problem of the nature of the conception of God as it is found in these two religions. He brings out very clearly, as may be gathered from the following brief summary, the great fundamental distinctions existing between them. The gods of the Assyrians are "personifications of the cosmical manifestations of the forces which are operative in the world of human beings, animals, and plants". Jehovah is transcendent and not connected with any natural phenomena. The relation between the pagan gods and their worshippers is a natural one.

³⁹ Hehn, *Die biblische und die babylonische Gottesidee*, 1913.

They are nature gods. The relation between Jehovah and His people is a covenant relation. The nature gods are very tolerant and admit other cults alongside of their own. The difference between deities is often only one of name. The Assyrio-Babylonians took Sumerian gods into their pantheon. The Egyptians took over Semitic deities. Ishtar of Nineveh pays a visit to the king of Mitanni. "Jehovah alone tolerates no other worship beside His own. He alone is intolerant and exclusive." Images too figure prominently in these cults. Jehovah forbids plastic representation of the deity. In the theology of the nature gods, the sex idea is prominent. We find gods and goddesses and complex relationships as among human beings. This idea enters too into the cult, and sensuous rites are found in this as in other ethnic religions of the Orient. This is absolutely foreign to and most emphatically condemned in the religion of Israel. Further, "Jehovah as national God is the ethical God whose first demand is for love and righteousness". "In the case of the nature gods the ethical factor is more accessory." The fact that the religion of the Old Testament centers around certain great figures, Moses, Samuel, Elijah, etc., finds no parallel in Babylon. And finally the uniqueness of the Old Testament religion shows itself in a peculiar inner contradiction which is to be observed in no other religion of the ancient Orient, namely, "the antagonism between the demands of the religion of Jehovah and the leanings of the people toward polytheism and nature worship". Were the religion of Jehovah of the same general character as that of the other neighboring peoples such a phenomenon would be inexplicable.

Barton says of this book: "In the face of Hehn's sober comparison no one can hereafter successfully contend that Yahweh as he appears in the Old Testament is a creation of Babylonian influence or that Hebrew Monotheism is borrowed either from Babylon or Amenophis IV." A judgment of this kind expressed by one who is himself a "natural evolutionist" of a pronounced type and who might conse-

quently be expected to be somewhat biased in favor of the "derivation theory"⁴⁰ is quite significant. And while it would be rash to assert that the "Babel-Bible" controversy is ended—it is far from that—it is a fact which can hardly be gainsaid, that the investigations of the past decade have tended to no inconsiderable degree to emphasize the differences and not the resemblances between the religion of Israel and the religion of Babylon and Assyria.⁴¹ And this is but to assert that the trend has been to confirm the witness of the Hebrew Prophets who lived at the time when the influence of Assyria and Babylon was at its height.

In fact if we would guard ourselves from the danger of forming a false estimate of Babylon and Nineveh we cannot do better than turn to the "Prophets", who just because of that particularistic attitude which Professor Delitzsch decries were peculiarly qualified to form a true estimate of these great nations which left a name at which the world grew pale long after their capitals were desolate wastes. The excavations have brought vividly before us the evidences of the might of these nations, their high civilization, the breadth of their influence. But they do not make it out to have been one whit greater than these Prophets of old describe it as having been. It was no puny

⁴⁰ Cf. his *Sketch of Semitic Origins*, in which he traces the beginnings of the religion of Israel not to Babylon but to the Kenites.

⁴¹ It is also worthy of mention that Farnell in *Greece and Babylon* reaches much the same conclusion regarding the influence of Babylon on ancient Greece. He believes that "where the influence of Babylon upon Greece can be reasonably posited, it reaches the western shores of the Aegean at a post-Homeric rather than a pre-Homeric epoch" (p. 249). Thus the use of incense and the examination of the liver are comparatively late. ". . . the theory that primitive Hellas was indebted to Babylonia for its divination-system is strongly repugnant to the facts." This "all-pervading atmosphere of magic which colors their [the Babylonians'] view of life and their theory of the visible and invisible world" he stigmatizes as "most un-Hellenic". The closing paragraph summarizes his conclusions as follows: "So far, then, as our knowledge goes at present, there is no reason for believing that nascent Hellenism, wherever else arose the streams that nourished its spiritual life, was fertilized by the deep springs of Babylonian religion or theology."

state that overthrew Samaria and no weakling who carried captive Judah. It was a high culture and an alluring religion which exerted such a subtle and baleful influence upon these peoples. And the Prophets do not disguise the fact. They proclaim it rather with great plainness of speech. They tell us how the kings of Assyria subjugated and plundered the nations as an egg hunter plunders the nests. The boastful words in Isa. x find their counterpart in the "royal inscriptions". They tell us too how the daughters of Zion aped the luxurious customs of the Assyrians, and that even in the very temple of Jehovah women baked cakes for Ishtar, the Queen of Heaven, and made a wailing for Tammuz. But they tell us that it was for this very sin of aping the foreigner and worshipping his gods that Assyria was made the "rod of His anger" and Babylon became to them a second Egypt. And they deny most emphatically that this "strange worship" had any place or part in Israel. They speak with scorn and contempt of the idol gods, who see not and hear not, who are made by men's hands and carried on men's shoulders. They scoff at the signs of the wise men and diviners, which are vain, and exalt Jehovah as the One who alone can predict and perform.

This warning of the Prophets to the men of their age is one to which the men of our own will do well to hearken. Assyriology has done much and we have reason to hope that it will yet do much more to confirm the Scriptures and to open up anew for us the history of long ago. But there is a danger that in the interest and fascination of these new discoveries, which seem almost to annihilate time and carry us back to the days when Assyria and Babylon were at the height of their power we lose a sense of true proportion and turn to them and not to the "Law" for light and leading. It is for this reason that the evidence which has been produced to show how essentially different was the religion of Israel from that of Babylon and Assyria is especially welcome. And we have reason to hope that future discoveries will make this all the more apparent, and that

we, who look back upon Assyria and Babylon through the mist of centuries will be able with ever increasing confidence to cite the witness of the monuments in support of the great affirmation of the Hebrew Prophet: The Word of our God shall stand forever.

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