

BABEL AND BIBLE.*

BY FRIEDRICH DELITZSCH.

THIRD AND LAST LECTURE.

I.

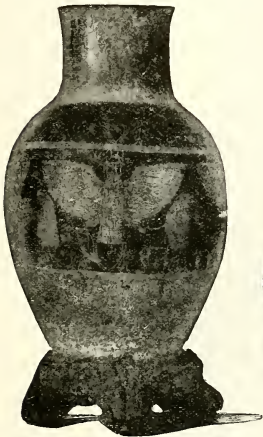
ONCE again let me point out how the restoration of Babylonian and Assyrian antiquity is broadening our spiritual insight, how, together with the achievements of Old Testament research, it is radically changing our judgment in regard to the essential value of ancient Hebrew literature, and how it seems destined to shed light upon the most vital religious questions.

The horizon of the tribal genealogy of Genesis x (the so-called *Völkertafel*) only extended as far as the Persian Gulf, and its geography and ethnology corresponded to the limited knowledge of about the seventh century before Christ, yet no one would hold it responsible for its many errors and omissions. In the second verse Japheth's oldest son is given as Gomer (mentioned also in Ezekiel xxxviii, 6), and the third as Madai. While the Indo-Germanic Medes (Madai) first came within the horizon even of the Assyrians in the time of Sargon (722-705 B. C.), this is not the case with Gimir (Gomer) until Asarhaddon's time (681-668 B. C.)¹ The Sapaerdæans were the inhabitants of the land Sapaerdæa which is named in the inscriptions of King Darius together with Cappadocia and Ionia and was probably also in Asia Minor; and these people appear on the clay tablets (Sm. 2005, K. 4668 and others) together with the Girmiræans, Medes, and Mannæans as enemies of Asarhaddon. Thus a little light falls on the land Sepharad mentioned by the prophet Obadiah (i. 20) to which the people of Jerusalem were taken as captives probably by Ionian merchants or pirates.

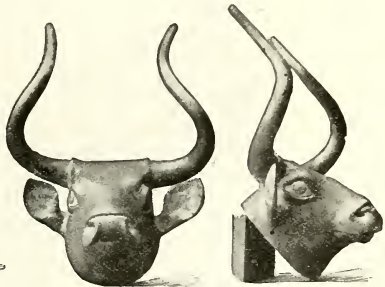
* Translated from the German by Lydia Gillingham Robinson.

¹ See my paper *Wo lag das Paradies?* p. 245 f. Leipsic, 1881.

To rightly appreciate the actual facts, we must take into account that it was a Hebrew author who gave Shem the rank of first born of the father of post-diluvian humanity. But we may not always persist in slavish dependence upon such a shortsighted representation of the history of civilization which is constantly fettered by Semitic prejudices; but rather must we be thankful for the enormous expansion of our knowledge that has been brought about by excavations in Babylonia and Assyria, in the realm of the earliest history of mankind. The Old Testament writers had no presentiment of those people, for instance, who preceded the later Indo-Germanic Medes (the descendants of Japheth) or the Semites in



SILVER VASE OF ENTEMENA.
Original in the Louvre.



BRONZE OX HEAD.
Original in the Royal Museum at Berlin.

Mesopotamia. The genealogy in Genesis takes no note of the non-Semitic Elamites whose dominion extended for a time over Babylon as far as Canaan in the third millennium before Christ, and the inexhaustible plenitude of whose power set limits even to the victorious Assyrian columns.

Even the Sumerian nation disappeared completely from the remembrance of the writers of the Old Testament as well as of Greek authors, although by a curious chance Abraham's home, Ur of the Chaldees, bears a Sumerian name, and the temple (*hêchal*) on Zion as well as David's throne (*kissê*) are called by foreign names borrowed from the Sumerian language. Ur (Hebrew, *Ur-Kash-*

*dim*²) is the Sumero-Babylonian *Uru*, originally *Urum*, i. e., "city," so called as a "place of refuge." The Hebrew words for "temple,"³ and "throne"⁴ are borrowed like the corresponding Babylonian-Assyrian words *êkallu* and *kussû*, from the Sumerian *ê-gal*, i. e., "large house," and *guzá*.

Ever clearer and more tangible appears before our eyes this small but highly talented nation whose people shared the religious



SITTING STATUE OF GUDEA.

beliefs of the Semitic Babylonians and more or less influenced the Canaanite tribes; this nation of pioneers in everything which makes for the refining, ennobling and beautifying of life. Their workings in silver of the third or even the fourth millennium before Christ, like the magnificent silver vase of the royal priest Entemena, arouse our admiration; or bronzes like those splendidly molded oxen heads with eyes of lapis lazuli. Their diorite sculptures, like that of the

architect with his construction plans upon his knees, are not so very inferior to the ideal that must have been present in the mind of the Sumerian artist.

When we observe these heads of Sumerian men and women in whose finely cut features the ennobling influence of hard work is clearly evident, and realize that the culture of these people not only founded that of the Semitic Babylonians, but is still operative in our own in matters of no inconsiderable importance, then we feel justified in the hope that the form of which instruction in the earliest history of mankind has availed itself, will in the future be made to



RESTORATION OF THE SUMERIAN ARCHITECT.⁵

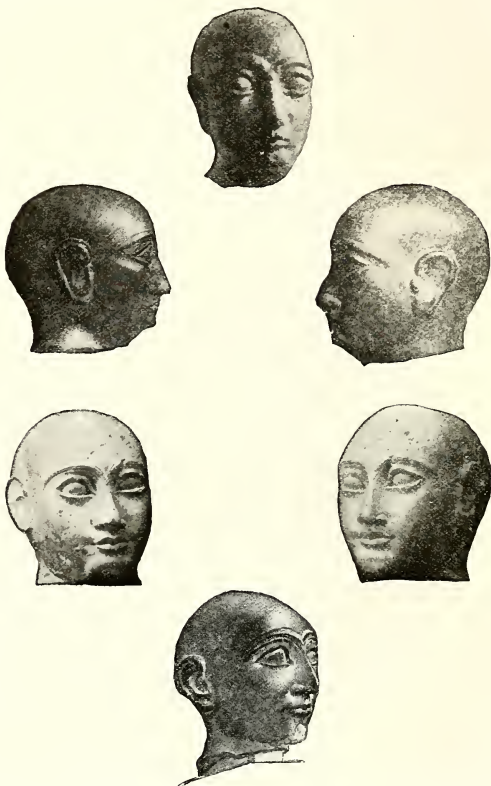
conform to the advance of science, even if the old form, Shem, Ham and Japheth must be abandoned.

Only two kings of the few rulers of the kingdom of Chaldæa which Nabopolassar had founded, held any interest for the people of Judæa: Nebuchadnezzar who led the Jewish nation into captivity, but by the vastness of his dominion compelled veneration and awe even from his enemies, and the last minor king Nabuna'id in whose reign Babylon fell into the hands of Persian Cyrus, the redeemer of Judah's captivity. And as their recollection became less vivid, Nabuna'id was replaced in the minds of the people by his son Bel-

⁵ The *restitution en nature* of the statue of "The Architect" is due to Léon Heuzey and may be found in plate XI of Heuzey's *Origines orientales de l'art; recueil de mémoires archéologiques et de monuments figurés*, 1re partie, Paris, 1891. Heuzey observes in regard to this photograph of his model. "Thus we can account for the arrangement of the *shoudda* or Indian woolen shawl which I have used in restoring the fringed shawls of the statues of Gudea."

shazzar, the leader of the Chaldæan army in the war against Persia, who in turn was wrongfully called the son of Chaldæa's greatest king, Nebuchadnezzar.

Thanks to excavations, however, we are now correctly informed



HEADS OF SUMERIAN MEN.
Originals in Paris and Berlin.

4189

about all these matters without casting any especial reflections upon the Book of Daniel, a production of the second century before Christ. Much rather are we grateful to the author that whatever liberties he has otherwise taken with the history and interpretation of the

words *menê menê tekêl û-pharsîn*, he has nevertheless given us the key to their correct explanation. For, as the French archæologist Clermont-Ganneau has recognized, the contrast so impressively depicted in the fifth chapter of the Book of Daniel between the great



HEADS OF SUMERIAN WOMEN.
Originals in Paris and Berlin.

4190

father Nebuchadnezzar and his exceedingly inferior son under whom the Persians had seized the kingdom, betrays in connection with the once possible meaning of the words, "There has been numbered a *mine*, a *sekel* and a half *mine*," that this familiar saying had its

origin in Jewish circles where the insignificant son of a great man used to be figuratively designated as "*sekel*, son of a *mine*" and *vice versa*. To this epithet then the word play between *parsin*, "half-mine," and "Persian" was easily adapted. This spirited, somewhat sarcastic *bon mot* comprehensively sums up the entire Chaldaean history in the words, a *mine*, i. e., a great king; a *sekel*, i. e., a worthless prince; and half *mine*, i. e., the division of the realm between the Medes and the Persians.⁶

We need no longer discuss the identity of the Assyrian king, Pul, who reigned in the days of Menahem of Israel (2 Kings, xv. 19) with the Assyrian king Tiglathpileser, the contemporary of Pekah (verse 29). The question at issue has long been settled, and was forever done away with by the discovery of two more cuneiform chronologies. I refer to the list of Babylonian kings in which Poros is written *Pu lu* (Hebrew *Pul'*); and the Babylonian chronicle, which, although copied from a Babylonian original for a Babylonian, inserts instead of *Pulu* the Assyrian name of this king *Tukulti-apil-êšara*. Incidentally we notice the play of chance, that just as in the Hebrew record (1 Chron. v. 6, 26; 2 Chron. xxviii. 20) the name of this Assyrian king is wrongly written Tiglathpilneser, so in the Babylonian Chronicle (I. 23) it is incorrectly written *Tukul-ti-apil-ina-êšâr-ra*. This error is accounted for by the *ina Bâbili* which immediately follows.

A bas relief in the palace of Nimrud represents him as standing vividly before us on his war-chariot, the renowned Pul or Tiglathpileser III, whose protection Menahem purchased for one thousand talents of silver, but who afterwards threw in the face of Assyria, the whole of Galilee with its neighboring territory and led away the inhabitants captive. Thus was furnished occasion for that amalgamation of Galileans and Samaritans which sprang into existence in the eighth and seventh centuries before Christ, by transplanting on that soil foreign nationalities at whose head were citizens from the Babylonian towns, Babel, Kutha and Erech. According to 2 Kings xvii. 24, the king of Assyria (Sargon is meant) placed people from Babylon, Kutha,⁸ Ava, Hamath and Sepharvaim in

⁶ Of the large number of treatises written on the words *mnê mnê tkêl û-pharsin*, the following are worthy of especial mention: Clermont-Ganneau in the *Journal asiatique*, Série VIII, 1 (1886), p. 36 ff.; Th. Nöldeke, "Mene tekel upharsin" in the *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie (ZA)* 1, 1866, p. 414-418. Georg Hoffmann, "Mene, mene tekel upharsin," *ibid.*, II, 1887, pp. 45-48; but above all others Paul Haupt in *Johns Hopkins University Circular*, No. 58, p. 104. Cf. also *ibid.* No. 98, May, 1892, John Dyneley Prince, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin."

the cities of Samaria; so also Ezra iv. 9 records where the inhabitants of Erech and Babylon are likewise named among those nationalities transplanted by Asnappar (Asurbanipal) to Samaria and other lands across the Euphrates, together with the Susianians, i. e., Elamites.

The underlying current of this mixed race was Babylonian and remained so to such a degree that the Talmud in countless passages calls the Samaritans Kuthæans directly after the Babylonian city Kutha, and that the Galilæan dialect with its peculiarly Babylonian slurring of gutturals betrayed the Galilæan even in Jesus' time (Matt. xxvi. 73). To illustrate this, compare the familiar passage of the Talmud (*Erubin* 53 b.): "When the Galilæan said,



THE ASSYRIAN KING PUL (TIGLATHPILESER III).

4191

'Who has an *amar*⁹?' they answered him, "Thou foolish Galilæan, meanest thou an ass (*hamôr*)¹⁰ to ride, wine (*hamar*)¹¹ to drink, or wool ('*amar*)¹² for clothing, or a lamb ('*immar*)¹³ to slay?" Gutturals were for the most part similarly reduced to a *spiritus lenis* in the Babylonian language. The Israelites regarded the Babylonians as so little Semitic that the author of the ethnological lists in Genesis did not include them at all in his enumeration of the "Sons of Shem." The establishment of the Babylonian character (which from this very fact, therefore, was not purely Semitic) of the mixed race of the Samaritans and Galilæans might prove worthy of consideration, it seems to me, in the New Testament investigations of the future.

⁹ For Kutha see *Babel and Bible*, Chicago, Open Court Publishing Co., 1903, pp. 72 and 73.

⁹ אמיר

¹⁰ תמיר

¹¹ תמיר (תמיר)

¹² זמיר (זמיר)

¹³ אמיר

Many of the sayings, ideas, and actions of the Galilæan Jesus unconsciously compel Babylonian comparisons; as, for instance, there might prove to be an intrinsic connection between the Babylonianism "Son of Man," by which term Ezekiel was usually addressed by Yahveh, and the use of exactly the same expressions in the mouth of Jesus. It no longer requires explanation that in Aramaic usage as well as in the Babylonian, "son of man" is a circumlocution for "man" (children of men = men) and that Dan. vii. 13 (where with reference to the coming Messiah it is said one like the "son of man" came with the clouds) is to be understood as "there came a being in human form." As regards Yahveh's constant mode of addressing the prophet Ezekiel as son of man (*ben adam*),¹⁴ which is found elsewhere only in Dan. viii. 17, it seems to me we must accept it as a Babylonianism like others in the book of Ezekiel. Smend in *Der Prophet Ezechiel*¹⁵ considers that the prophet is thus addressed as one "who in relation to the majesty of God feels himself simply as an accidentally chosen individual of his wretched race (Ps. viii. 4; Job xxv. 6) and not as a particular personality (cf. Amos vii. 8; viii. 2; Jer. i. 11)"; and on that account Luther translates it "child of man" to be more exact. But why were none of the other prophets addressed by Yahveh as "son of man" or "child of man"? If the Ezekiel mode of address is only a Babylonianism, then the epithet "son of man" might prove to be simply a substitute for the personal name. For the Babylonian *mâr avîlim*, "son of man," or "child of man" is only a circumlocution for the simple *avîlum*, "man," and is interchangeable with it, for instance, in the Code of Hammurabi; but with the Babylonian "son of man" (and consequently also with the simple "man") there is always connected the idea of a certain dignity. For in contrast to a slave whose name never received the added "son of such and such," and in contrast to a person of obscure parentage who was called "son of nobody" (*mâr lâ maman*), the idea of the free man, the nobleman, was closely connected with the term "son of man." For this very reason the Babylonian "son of man" made a very suitable substitute for a personal name, just as old Babylonian letters bear in place of the individual name of the addressee, the words "Speak to the man whom Marduk will endow with life" (*ana avîlim ša Marduk uballatšu*).¹⁶

It surely seems as if it would be an easy matter to prove a close

¹⁴ מֶן אָדָם

¹⁵ Second ed., p. 17. Leipzig: 1880.

¹⁶ See VATH 793. Bu. 88, 5-12, 207. Bu. 91, 5-9, 354.

connection between this Babylonianism as used in the accounts of the prophets and the same expression spoken by Jesus. On the other hand it may be well to add just here that a far more important Biblical usage is now at last conclusively cleared up, and indeed in a way that no Old Testament exegetist ever dreamed of. The old Babylonian law documents, like the Code of Hammurabi, bring to light certain short formulas by means of which definite expressed wishes receive irrevocable legal authority. If the father or mother says to a child "You are not my child," (*ul mârî atta*), then by that statement he is repudiated and cast out from house and home. And as a child was legally adopted in Babylonia by pronouncing the words "You are my son," so the psalmist in that familiar seventh verse of the second psalm explains the Messiah allegorically as Yahveh's adopted son and heir of the nations until the end of the world by Yahveh's own inviolable decree, "Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee."

It is interesting in this connection to compare the Code of Hammurabi, Sec. 170: "When a man's wife bears him children and his slave bears him children, and during his lifetime he says to the children which the slave bore him 'my children' (*mârûa*) they are included with the children of the wife. After the father's death the property will be divided equally among the wife's children and those of the slave, but the son of the wife will have the first choice of the portions." It is similarly stated in Sec. 171. We read further in Sec. 192: "If a child says to his foster father or mother, 'You are not my father,—You are not my mother,' his tongue shall be cut out."¹⁷

Indeed, the reawakening of the Assyrio-Babylonian antiquity proves to be especially significant for the Old Testament psalter, that hymn book of post-exilic Israel. Of course I do not refer here to the minor consideration that the many musical instruments mentioned in the Old Testament and particularly in the psalms, such as harp, zither, cymbals, and timbrels, are now found to be represented on Assyrian monuments, although, because of the near relationship of the Israelites with the Babylonians and Assyrians, the Assyrian reliefs may well bespeak our interest above all others. By others, I mean those representations which furnish valuable illustrations to the Hebrew or Syrian musical instruments as, for instance, the relief brought to light by German excavations in Sendschirli

¹⁷ For these short juridical formulas see Kohler-Peiser, *Hammurabis Gesetz* (Vol. I, Leipsic, 1904, p. 123, note 1)—where reference is made (and with reason) to Hosea i. 9, "Ye are not my people," and Psalms lxxxix. 27, "Also I will make him my first born."

under the leadership of Felix von Luschan and which is now preserved in the Museum of Constantinople. Indeed, when we observe more closely this long triumphal procession of singing and playing musicians, men, women and children, and perhaps single out the first lute players and place by their side analogous pictures



MUSICIANS.

4203

Relief from Sendschirli in Northern Syria.



ASSYRIAN PROCESSION OF MUSICIANS.

From the time of Asurbanipal.

of harp and zither players, reliefs of the ninth and seventh centuries before Christ; perhaps add, too, this quartet which represents both cymbals and timbrels, connoisseurs would then be sufficiently informed in regard to the construction and manner of playing on those old stringed instruments. It is interesting to be able to place

by the side of the ten-stringed harp so often mentioned in the Old Testament psalms an eleven-stringed harp represented in a primitive Babylonian relief.

But of far greater importance is the fact that in the Assyrio-Babylonian poetry a perfectly consistent parallel has arisen to the Hebrew psalms themselves, especially as far as concerns the external form of their lyrics.



ASSYRIAN HARP AND ZITHER

ASSYRIAN QUARTET.

PLAYERS. 4194-4195

4196



ASSYRIAN HARP AND FLUTE PLAYERS.

4193

“O Lord, Thou who judgment pronoucest on earth and in heaven,
 Against whose decrees there is none who prevai leth,
 Thou who fire and water controllest, and guidest all Odem possesses,
 Who of the gods can come near Thee in power majestic?
 In heaven—who is exalted? Thou alone art exalted!
 On earth—who is exalted? Thou alone art exalted!
 When Thy word goeth forth in the heavens, the heavenly hosts¹⁸ bow
 before thee,

¹⁸ *Igigi*, i. e., “the strong ones” of heaven.

When Thy word goeth forth upon earth, the spirits of earth¹⁹ kiss
 the ground.
 When upward mounteth Thy word like a hurricane, food and drink
 are in plenty abounding,
 Resoundeth Thy word in terrestrial places, green groweth the grass
 in the meadows.
 Thy word maketh fat the flocks and herds, and increaseth what
 Odem possesses,
 Thy word bringeth truth and justice to pass, so that truth by man-
 kind may be spoken,
 Thy word's like the heavens afar or the earth deeply hidden—none
 can it fathom,
 Thy word—who can learn it? Or who can struggle against it?"



ANCIENT BABYLONIAN HARP OF ELEVEN STRINGS.

4204

This might be a psalm of the Old Testament after the manner perhaps of the 148th, yet the words are taken from a Babylonian hymn addressed to the local deity of Ur, the moon god, and show plainly how similar was the poetical form of religious songs of the two lands; the verses are usually formed of two parallel portions and two or more of the individual verses unite to form a stanza.

The Babylonian psalms, certain ones of which the Babylonians themselves divided off metrically by strokes, unite with the creation epic to add a new and rich element to the question which has for centuries been a mooted subject; namely, whether or not, and to what degree and extent a definite rhythm depending on rise and cadence might be accepted as existing within the divisions of a

¹⁹ *Anunnaki*, i. e., "the strong ones" of the earth.

separate line.²⁰ Some of the Babylonian psalms²¹ in which smaller or larger groups of lines begin with the same syllable, furnish parallels to the so-called acrostic psalms of the Old Testament, in which every line or group of lines begins with a definite letter arranged in alphabetical order.

It will continue to redound to the glory of the later Old Testament knowledge that by an untiring application to progressive work it has struggled through to the now almost universally accepted truth that much the greater number of the Old Testament psalms belong to the latest period of Hebrew literature; that especially the seventy odd psalms labeled "of David" are later addenda most inconsistent in language and theme; that on the whole not a single psalm of the Old Testament can be proved to be of David's authorship—or can even be assigned to him with any degree of probability. And it only remains to wish that the knowledge may extend to broader circles, since that labeling of the psalms "of David" is especially adapted to thoroughly veil the development of the Jewish religion. Meanwhile, however easy it would be because of these facts, to admit an influence of the Babylonian lyrics upon the Hebrew, yet I will limit myself entirely to pointing out the *parallels*. And I do this the more willingly since the near relationship of the Hebrew and Semitic Babylonian, as well as the similarity of their language, modes of thought and points of view, are clearly enough explained when the two systems of poetry frequently prove to be alike in language and style, rhythm, thought and figures.

Whoever knows his Psalms, will recall the extravagant wretchedness of body and soul into which the poet has fallen by sin and retribution, by persecution and threats: he cries from out of the depths, he sinks in deep mire, he goes about wailing as one that mourneth for his mother, his strength is dried up like a potsherd, his bones and his soul are distressed, he is like a pelican of the wilderness, and laments like a dove, his heart beats wildly, his soul already dwells in Sheol and is encompassed by the sorrows of death. "I am weary with my groaning: all the night make I my bed to swim: I water my couch with my tears" (Ps. vi. 6). All these and

²⁰ See Ed. Sievers, *Metrische Studien*, I. *Studien zur hebräischen Metrik*, Proceedings of the philological-historical department of the Kgl. Sächs. Ges. d. Wiss., Bd. XXI, No. I and II, Leipsic, 1901. See also H. Zimmern, "Ein vorläufiges Wort über babylonische Metrik," in the *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, VIII, 1893, pp. 121-124; also *ibid.* X, pp. 1-24; and compare my article "Das babylonische Welterschöpfungsepos" in the Proceedings of the philological-historical department of the Kgl. Sächs. Ges. d. Wiss., XIII, 1896, pp. 60-68.

²¹ E. g., K. 9290 + K. 9297 + K. 3452 — K. 8463. Sp. II, 265 a.

many similar thoughts and pictures we read also almost literally in the Babylonian psalms. "Lamenting he sits amid grievous complaints, in anguish of spirit." Like a dove he mourns bitterly both day and night, to his merciful God he cries like a wild beast, his form is bent like a reed, his heart takes its flight, he is already the prey of death, the tomb stands open, vermin are lying in wait for him. Yes, certain Old Testament psalms like Psalm lxxxviii, that melancholy cry of distress from the heart of one who was abandoned as if he were dead, deserted by his fellows and confined within himself from his youth up, bear a strong resemblance to the Babylonian songs of lamentation in their entire line of thought. For instance I have in mind the Babylonian dirge,²² in which a pious man who was sorely afflicted describes his wretched condition in the following parting words:

"My dwelling has become a prison,
 In the bonds of my flesh my members are stricken,
 In fetters of my own my feet are entangled...
 My persecutor tracks me all the day,
 Nor in the night time hath my pursuer let me draw a breath.
 Torn asunder, my bones have become disjointed,
 Loosened are my limbs and stretched upon the ground...
 No god came to help, none gave me gently his hand,
 No goddess had pity upon me, nor helpfully walked by my side.
 Wide open stood my coffin; they made ready for my burial,
 While yet I was alive, funeral songs for me were sung,
 And vermin they called to destroy me.
 My adversary hath heard it, his face beams with radiance,
 Delightedly was my undoing noised abroad, and his heart rejoiced."

Instructive, too, are the manifold references on both sides to personal enemies and malicious foes. The Old Testament psalms contain many such prayers of devout and righteous Israelites against those who hate them to the death, against those enemies who laugh *aha! aha!* with grinning mouth when misfortune or destruction comes upon them. That realistic psalm from the bed of sickness (xli) closes with these words, "But thou O Lord, be merciful unto me and raise me up that I may requite them," referring to those enemies who had already desired the singer's death. These malicious enemies are to be "brought to confusion together and clothed with shame and dishonor" (xxxv. 26) and the singer longs for the time when he may "see his desire upon his enemies" (liv. 7; lix. 10).

In like manner a prayer to Nebo begins, "I declare thy renown

²² IV R 60, together with VR 47.

O Nebo, above all great gods, [in spite of the crowd] of my adversaries my life was taken," and closes, "In spite of the crowd of my adversaries thou, O Nebo, wilt not forsake me; in spite of the crowd of them that hate me thou wilt not forsake my life."²³

We read similar passages in a penitential psalm addressed to the goddess Istar which has been published by L. W. King in his work *The Seven Tablets of Creation*.²⁴

But the significance of the Babylonian psalms is still further enhanced by the fact that they offer us a particularly clear insight into the moral and religious ideas of the Assyrians and Babylonians. Of course it is clear without further question that the accounts of wars and triumphs of the Assyrian kings are of as little value as sources for critique of the Assyrio-Babylonian religion, as, say, the annals of the Thirty Years War would be to familiarize any one with the Evangelical or Catholic religion and ethics. Whoever aspires with earnest zeal to discover the ideas the Babylonians held in regard to man's moral duties, to divinity and its attributes, to man's relation to God and *vice versa*, cannot help becoming absorbed in the epigrammatic wisdom of the Babylonians and in the religious content of their literary monuments.

Since this has been undertaken hitherto by but very few people, I would like now to sketch in rough outlines a picture of the Babylonian ethics and religion. And this has the rather become a duty, since we have been completely misled with reference to Babylon by traditional historical treatment; but henceforth we will be in a position to examine critically and to pronounce judgment on the religious views of the Old Testament, and also in large part on our own from this newly acquired Babylonian standpoint.

What I emphasized some time ago²⁵ has since been splendidly confirmed beyond all expectation, by the Code of Hammurabi, viz., that the first and original commands of man's impulse to self-restraint, and of human society, namely not to shed a neighbor's blood, not to approach his neighbor's wife, not to take unto himself his neighbor's garment, were at least no more sacred and inviolable in Israel than in a typical constitutional state such as Babylon had been since the third millennium before Christ, and whose legislation arouses the admiration even of the modern world.

This is equally true of most of the specific commandments. Of

²³ K, 1285, published by James A. Craig, in the first volume of his *Assyrian and Babylonian Religious Texts*, Leipzig, 1895, p. 5 ff.

²⁴ London, 1902, Vol. II, Plate LXXV—LXXXIV, pp. 223-237.

²⁵ *Babel and Bible*, p. 46.

the one with reference to honor due to parents, Hammurabi's law takes account only in so far as punishable violations are concerned; as, for example, in Sec. 195, "If a child strikes his father, his hand shall be cut off"; as for the rest, the documents of religious purport, psalms and prayers as well as the epigrammatic poetry of the Babylonians must serve as sources for the demands which Babylonian morals and piety made upon individuals. There is a text of this kind (IV. R. 51) where while seeking the cause of divine retribution which had befallen a man, among others the questions were asked: "Has he set the son against his father? Has he set the father against his son?" (Here follows the estrangement of mother and daughter, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, brother and brother, friend and friend.) "Has he not set free the captive? . . . Perhaps it is a trespass against God, perhaps a crime against Istar; perhaps he has offended God, or scorned Istar, or held father and mother in contempt, disparaged his elder brother, or spoken untruthfully. . . . Has he broken into his neighbor's house? Has he approached his neighbor's wife? Has he shed a neighbor's blood? Has he taken his neighbor's garment?"

With reference to the commandment against adultery, compare Sec. 129a of the Hammurabi Code: "When a wife is discovered sleeping with another man, both shall be bound and thrown into the water." Transgression of the command, "Thou shalt not steal" is with a few exceptions made punishable by death.²⁶ The Code treats of murder in only two places. In the first section we read: "When a man brings another under suspicion and accuses him of murder, but does not prove it, then he who has brought suspicion upon the other shall be put to death"; and in Section 153 provocation for murder is mentioned, "When a wife causes her husband's death on account of some other man, she shall be hanged," *ina gašiši išakkanû*.

The commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" is paralleled in Hammurabi Sec. 3, "Whoever bears false witness in a case at law, and can not support his testimony, that man shall himself be put to death, if the case is a trial for life." How strictly the unlawful appropriation of other people's property was censured also in Babylon, may be seen in Sec. 7, "Whosoever buys without witnesses or contract, or consents to keep either silver or gold, a man servant, or a maid servant, or an ox or a sheep, or an ass, or any other thing from bondman or free, that man is a thief and shall be put to death." This commandment which says,

²⁶ See Sections 6, 7, 9, 10, 19, 25.

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, wife, servants, etc.," implies nothing more than "Thou shalt not attempt to acquire, for thyself, shalt not appropriate thy neighbor's house, etc."

Quite analogous to this we read in Sec. 25 of the Code of Hammurabi, "When some one who has come to extinguish a fire covets something that belongs to the master of the house, and helps himself to the property of the master of the house, he shall be thrown in the same fire." This Hebraic-Babylonian "coveting," as we can see, implies the simultaneous action—Jesus with his "But I say unto you" was the first to brand the sinful inclination or the evil desire as sin. And since to this day law and religion are inseparable in the Orient it must be recognized as a special merit of the Code of Hammurabi that it has avoided any confusion of law and religion within the Code itself. For this same reason all transgressions of the commandments are considered as sins against God which incur the wrath and vengeance of God over and above the earthly legal punishment. But we read that all the other duties over which the jurisdiction of authorities does not extend were impressed as rigidly upon the Babylonians as upon the Israelites, and their neglect threatened with divine punishment.

Truthfulness stands first in this line. Hammurabi's government knew how to protect its subjects effectively against false weight, false measure and false testimony. But the moral consciousness of the Babylonians as of the Israelites demanded truthfulness in a much broader and deeper sense, and, since this is true, it can only be a matter of regret that the Hebrew commandment instead of being limited to false witness was not worded so as to contain the more universal application "Thou shalt not lie." If we could have been so inoculated with the consciousness of the wrong involved in a lie in any form, from our earliest youth, as the Persians, according to Herodotus (I, 136), brought up their children from five to twenty years of age exclusively to the three things, riding, archery and truthfulness, it would have brought incalculable blessing to the world. But falsehood existed even among the Babylonians. Not to keep the word one had given, to refuse the promised protection, to say "yes" with the mouth and "no" with the heart—generally speaking any lie was expressly and repeatedly branded as a sin contrary both to man's law and to God's; while on the other hand sincerity was regarded as a noble virtue.

As far, however, as the virtue of love for one's neighbor, and mercy towards one's fellows is concerned, none will contest with the people of Israel the sublimity of their moral law, "Love thy

neighbor as thyself," in spite of its undeniable limitation to the people of their own nation (Lev. xix. 18). But as gladly as we render to Judaism whatever credit is due, let us give just as freely and honestly to other nations what is theirs, and unto God what is God's. We must not permit the virtue of neighborly love to be considered a monopoly of the Hebrew people or such rash words to be spread abroad in the world as these, that "The fundamental principles of all true morality 'I desired mercy and not sacrifice' (Hosea vi. 6, cf. Isaiah i. 11 ff, Mic. vi. 8 etc.) 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself' have no analogy whatever in Babylon."²⁷ If it seems at the outset quite unthinkable that the Babylonians who, like the Hebrews, acknowledge themselves to be entirely dependent on the divine grace and divine mercy, should have known in their time no love nor mercy toward their fellows, this assertion is directly contrary to the testimony of the monuments. I have previously pointed out²⁸ how the question was asked when seeking the cause of divine wrath: "Has he not set free a captive, and loosed the bound, and hath he refused light to one who was imprisoned?" That was one instance. The British Museum contains clay tablets (unfortunately still incomplete) with Babylonian proverbs which give us glimpses into the depths of the moral and religious thought of the better class of Babylonians similar to those which the Code of Hammurabi has given of the "immeasurable culture" of this nation. There we read maxims like these which in spite of the fact that they have been taught by the experience of thousands of years, continue to be disregarded by mankind to their great injury:

"Open not wide thy mouth, and guard thy lips,
Art thou aroused, speak not at once.
If thou speak rashly, later thou'lt rue it,
Rather in silence soothe thy spirit."

Just there²⁹ we read the admonition of the Babylonian sages, which is comparable to a jewel whose radiance remains undisturbed by place and time: to show love to one's neighbor, not to despise him nor oppress him harshly which would necessarily call down the wrath of God, but much rather to give food and drink to him who asks, which is well pleasing in God's sight, to be helpful and to do good at all times. While we are deep in perusal of tablets like these, we rejoice inwardly that the allmerciful God, who is

²⁷ E. Sellin, "Ein Schlusswort zu *Babel und Bibel*" in the *Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung für Oesterreich*, July 1903, No. 14, 15, p. 210.

²⁸ *B. a. B.*, p. 47.

²⁹ See the table K. 7897 which is now completed, and is translated and published by K. D. Macmillan in the *Beiträge zur Assyriologie*, V, 1905.

Love, has not given his heavenly virtues exclusively to one people, but that his mercy reaches as far as the clouds extend, and therefore his reflection is found in the heart of man everywhere.

These admonitions did not exist in word only, but we read also of instances of their practice extending even to slaves. The Book of Kings closes with the account of a Babylonian king's act of grace towards his political enemy—the liberation from prison of the King of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar's son Evilmerodach. And whoever makes a careful study of the Code of Hammurabi will be obliged to admit that in spite of the fact that the life, property and reputation of each individual was carefully protected, and the conscientious performance of duty was required of every one of whatever calling or position, and every neglect of duty was visited with the strictest punishment, with the purpose of intimidation; nevertheless gentleness, love and mercy came also to their rights: loving care for the invalid (Sec. 148), for the widows (Sec. 171-172a) and orphans (Sec. 177), clemency toward the unfortunate debtor (Sec. 48), forbearance with the unruly son (Sec. 169). In fact why waste further words when it was shown at the beginning of the lecture that the Samaritans are really Babylonians as far as character is concerned and that the Jews pass for Kuthæans, i. e., Babylonians! Jesus himself has erected a monument to universal neighborly love, an ideal of the Babylonians, great-hearted in this point, too, in his divinely spiritual parable of the Good Samaritan, which towers perceptibly over the whole terrestrial globe! Yes, indeed, not only do Babel and Bible clasp hands in brotherly fashion whenever in the wide world Samaritan service is rendered, but the Babylonian has been set up by Jesus as a pattern for all mankind: "Go and do likewise!"

Why Jesus chose the Samaritan to be the pattern of the universal love which should encompass all men and nations without distinction, can now be fully comprehended for the first time. The Code of Hammurabi has justly occasioned surprise, among other reasons because "a distinction between native and foreigner practically does not appear at all," whence we may confidently expect to find that the repeated command of Israel to treat well the stranger within the gates will be missing in the Code. "It seems," observes Kohler, (*Hammurabis Gesetz*, p. 139) "that in this respect a complete leveling has entered into Babylon, quite in accordance with historical precedent, while foreign tribes were transplanted more and more into Babylon, and a general commingling and amalgamation of the nations of the earth and their civilizations was brought

about." To this, also, corresponds the highly developed commerce, international relations and the character of the civilization inherent in Babylonian culture. We know that even Hammurabi like the later Babylonian kings regarded himself as lord of the earth and like the German emperors of the Middle Ages, aspired to include all tribes under his dominion and by so doing to wipe out all distinction between native and foreigner.

Right here lies the difference between the juridical condition of Babylon and Israel; for in Israel the stranger remained a stranger and was kept aloof from the Israelitish national life; only the *gêr*,³⁰ the foreign guest who enjoyed the protection of Israel, was included in the circle, and even he was not on an entire equality with the Israelites in legal privileges. This accounts for the standing injunction to treat him well, an injunction which would have been out of place in Babylon where no discrimination was made between stranger and native-born. But what a contrast! Here in Israel a few refugees, probably deserters, exiles, fugitives, fearing either murderous revenge or punishment; there, a multitude of strangers! This developed Babylon into the commercial metropolis of the world.

To these and other commands and prohibitions were added in Babylonia as in Israel manifold priestly regulations with reference to the offering of prayer, sacrifices and voluntary gifts, above all, however, the commandment not to "take the name of the Lord in vain," that is, not to misuse it. Especially was it so absolutely sacrosanct in the eyes of the Babylonians to swear by the name of God, that in the Code of Hammurabi as far as has yet come to our notice, as well as in trial reports, the possibility of perjury is not even considered.³¹ On the other hand the Babylonian was not supposed to eat without mentioning God's name, always mindful of the duty of gratitude toward his maker. And if we take all the many passages in which the fear of God is made the most important duty of man, and not to fear God appears as the root of all evil, we can confidently assert that to the Babylonian as to the Hebrew, the fear of God was considered the beginning of wisdom. The saying "Fear God and honor the king" we read in the same terse style on a tablet in the library of Sardanapal. *Ilu tapalah sarru tana 'ad*. This reverence for the king which saw in the head of the state the represen-

³⁰גֵר

³¹ For the refusal to taken an oath see the Code of Hammurabi, Sec. 20, 103, 131, 206, 227, 249. Also all statements made "before God" as for instance estimates of losses (Sec. 9, 23, 120, 126, 240, 266, 281) are regarded as absolutely inviolable, truthful and incontestable. We learn the same facts from the law suits; the oath of the defendant determines the verdict. See for instance Bu. 91, 5-9, 2181 (*Cuneiform Texts*, II, 46).

tation of deity upon earth, this deference to the laws of the state given by the highest lawgiver of heaven and earth, and above all the fear of God,—these were the pillars upon which rested the duration of the Babylonian government for 200 years in spite of surrounding enemies. How seriously the kings themselves regarded sin we learn from the inscription which the last Chaldæan king caused to be placed on the tower of the Temple of the Moon, the closing prayer of which was to the effect that Belshazzar, the king's eldest son, might be shielded from all sin.

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]