

NEW DISCOVERIES IN BABYLONIA  
ABOUT GENESIS



Written in Ur 800 years before the birth of Moses. The tablets containing the Ten Commandments were probably the same size as this tablet, *i.e.*, 6 in. by 4 in.

*Frontispiece*]

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ABOUT GENESIS

BY

AIR COMMODORE

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## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

IT is an encouraging sign that a second edition should be required within a few months. Advantage has been taken of this to add a few paragraphs, and where the evidence requires it, to strengthen others. I cannot lament, as some have, that critics ignore anything written on the conservative side. I have given their remarks careful consideration, but it is significant that in all criticisms I have seen, no attempt has been made to controvert the main lines of evidence put forward in support of the original sources from which Genesis was compiled. Indeed, the fundamental theme of the book—that regarding the use of the formula which constitutes the framework of Genesis—has been generally accepted.

It is perhaps necessary to add that I have not attempted to discuss the general problems presented by Genesis or archæology. I have limited the contribution of the latter to a very slight "archæological background" and have confined my comments about Genesis to the literary problem of its origin.

It is my hope that I have not misrepresented anything or omitted any relevant point of importance.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

**T**HIS book is the outcome of studies in archæology and Genesis, while working in the land of Genesis—Babylonia. The investigation of the literary problems of the book in its ancient environment, and in the light of the mass of new facts regarding ancient literary methods, throws an entirely new light on the problem of its authorship.

My aim is to state as simply as possible the evidence which the Book of Genesis has to give concerning its own origin and composition. To many it will appear surprising that Genesis has anything whatever to say for itself regarding the method by which it was originally written, for scholars have discussed this very question for the last two centuries, without even suggesting that it contains the slightest direct statement concerning its own authorship. The investigation is of the greatest possible importance, and the conclusions which result from it, no less so, for this first book of Scripture is the basis on which much of the superstructure, not only of the Old Testament, but also of the New is reared. Moreover Genesis has an interest and significance to which no other document of antiquity can pretend.

The solution of the problem of the composition of Genesis outlined in the following pages, is the result of the study of the findings which archæological research has presented to us in recent years. During this period the writer has spent several years in "the land that was Babylonia," repeatedly visiting the various excavations at the ancient sites, and in constant touch with the latest discoveries. In this environment of ancient things Genesis was carefully examined—not



for the purpose of discovering a new solution to its composition—but solely to illustrate the geography and archæology of the country in relation to it.

While engaged in these studies the key to its literary composition became increasingly clear, for Genesis was permitted the rare privilege of being allowed to speak for itself in the light of all the new knowledge we now possess of the methods of writing practised in patriarchal times. It would seem that the key to its composition has hitherto remained unrecognised, and therefore, unused. While prevailing theories have been unable to unlock the door to its literary structure, it is submitted that the following explanation does:—*The Book of Genesis was originally written on tablets in the ancient script of the time, by the Patriarchs who were intimately concerned with the events related, and whose names are clearly stated. Moreover, Moses, the compiler and editor of the Book, as we now have it, plainly directs attention to the source of his information.*

Such a statement needs adequate confirmation by the writer, and on the part of the reader a patient study of all the evidence on which it is based. When this evidence has been scrutinised, it will be found that it is attested by facts so numerous and verified by undesigned coincidences so overwhelming, that almost every critical difficulty regarding Genesis disappears.

Until the beginning of last century, the only known contemporary history which had been written earlier than 1000 B.C. was the earlier part of the Old Testament. The ancient historical records of Babylonia had not been unearthed, but lay buried and unknown beneath mounds and ruins which had hidden them for millenniums. It was because the earlier books of the Bible stood alone and unique in this claim to have been written centuries before any other piece of writing then known to the world, that a century ago critics endeavoured to prove that they must have been written at a date much

later than Moses. On the other hand the defenders of the Mosaic authorship could not then know that writing was in frequent use a thousand years before he was born. Consequently both sides in the controversy imagined that the contents of Genesis had been handed down by word of mouth, it being assumed that writing was impracticable, and almost unknown in the times of the Patriarchs.

Ewald the critic, was prepared to admit that Moses was acquainted with the art of writing, but he says that "the accounts of the Patriarchal time contain no sure traces of the use of writing in that early age." Even as late as 1893, H. Schultz wrote "of the legendary character of the pre-Mosaic narratives, the time of which they treat is a sufficient proof. It was a time prior to all knowledge of writing" (*Old Testament Theology*, Vol. I, p. 25).

Constant reference will be made to archæological research, this is necessary because of the urgent need for a re-consideration of Genesis in the ancient environment in which it came into existence, it will also emancipate us from the prevailing fallacy of investigating the Book just as though it should have been written in a manner similar to modern history. It is not possible to avoid reference to the "critical" theories concerning its origin, for while critics have sometimes stated clearly certain special literary characteristics observable in Genesis, their speculations based on these observations are frequently at variance with the explicit statements of the Book itself and also with modern archæological discoveries. Because the series of conjectures, commonly known as "Higher Criticism" are so widely accepted in certain quarters as an explanation of the method of its composition, it is necessary to test these critical suppositions. It will be seen that these conjectures would never have seen the light of day, had scholars of that time been in possession of modern archæological knowledge. It is therefore submitted that because the critical theories originated in an age of ignorance concerning

the earliest Patriarchal times, and the newer facts of excavation having rendered them so hopelessly obsolete, the time is now overdue for a new appreciation of Genesis in the light of recent archæological research.

For this reason it is necessary to call upon archæology to be our first witness, to inform us of the facts, and to enlighten us regarding the lessons to be learned from excavation, especially in their bearing on the antiquity of early writing and the literary methods employed. This witness will occupy Chapters II to IV. Genesis speaks for itself in Chapters V to VIII. In Chapter IX, the "Higher Critics" will tell us in their own words, their case concerning the Book; this evidence is considered in Chapter X. In Chapters XI and XII, Genesis defends itself against attack. Critical tendencies are examined in Chapter XIII. The question whether Genesis is a purified form of the Babylonian records, or whether the Babylonian records are a corrupted form of the Genesis tablets is discussed in Chapter XIV. The New Testament use of the ancient narratives is considered in Chapter XV. Finally the "Faithful and True Witness," the Lord Jesus Christ, gives His testimony in Chapter XVI. The evidence is summed up in Chapter XVII.

The highest meaning that can be given to the word "critic" is "to judge." A judge may not commence his examination of the evidence by taking for granted that the accused Book of Genesis is "guilty," he will listen to this witness patiently and impartially. He will be scrupulously fair to weigh the whole of the evidence, and not allow any material fact to be suppressed. Moreover, both sides must be permitted to give their evidence in their own words.

A secondary meaning of the word "critic" is "a hostile witness." The following pages are a plea that the Book of Genesis should be given a fair hearing. Because we are in search of the whole truth, the critics put forward their greatest and most eminent advocates, and give their witness in their

own words—not merely specially selected extracts—but the whole of their material evidence.

Is it not an easier task to be an advocate for the accusation than for the defence? It is certainly not so difficult to be destructive as constructive, it requires less thought to pull down than to build up. One match can be used to fire a palace which will take many men a considerable time to replace. It is not difficult to suggest doubt or suspicion against a book, but it may take much time and labour to clear it of the charges and restore it to confidence. It is intended that these pages should be constructive, they are certainly not a mere denunciation of "Higher Criticism."

## CHAPTER II

### EXCAVATIONS IN THE LAND OF GENESIS

**T**HE discoveries in Babylonia which aroused the greatest interest among the general public were those connected with the Bible. In the early days of excavation, the finding of a palace belonging to a king mentioned in Scripture, or of an inscription referring to an Old Testament incident, produced not merely excitement, but sensation. To this day the excavations at Ur of the Chaldees are followed with far greater interest by the majority, than the unearthing of the older city of Kish; simply because Abraham lived at Ur, and from it he journeyed to Palestine, while Kish, having no direct connection with the Bible is not of great interest except to archæologists.

It was not until the middle of last century that excavators began digging among the ruined mounds of Mesopotamia. Eighty years ago these long undulating hills of earth were the undisturbed grave clothes covering the remains of the oldest civilizations. The Arab pitched his black goat's hair tent on these hills, and with unseeing eyes followed his primitive plough as it was dragged around these mounds of earth. This was all that was then visible of Babylon, Ur, Erech and Calneh, in the land of Shinar, and Asshur, Nineveh and Calah in the land of Asshur. The sands of time had covered these cities so thoroughly that less than a hundred years ago they appeared to be merely ordinary hills. Except for their elevation they seemed to be composed of nothing else but the dust of the desert. However, rain storms had partially furrowed their sides, revealing pieces of broken pottery and tablets on which had been imprinted an intricate pattern made up of combinations of wedge-shaped indentations.

In Egypt, the great monuments—the pyramids, temples and palaces—had at least kept their heads above the shifting sands of the desert, thus partially remaining visible to the wondering gaze of men. But in Mesopotamia the cities were so thoroughly buried, that it had become a land of dead cities; moreover so obliterated had the places of their interment become that their sites were either unknown or uncertain. The mounds masked their secrets so well that with few exceptions, the inhabitants of the country knew no more of what lay beneath them than did the sheep who fed on their scanty spring grass. Now jackals and scorpions make their homes in their ruins, “her cities are a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness” (Jer. li. 43). Even to-day there are many mounds of which we know nothing, either of their past or present contents. Quite recently some distinguished archaeologists who had not only repeatedly visited a certain ancient site, but who had thoroughly surveyed it, passed it by unrecognized more than once, supposing it to be an unknown ruin.

It is necessary to restrict this brief review of excavation to the lands referred to in the earlier chapters of the Book of Genesis; the lands of Shinar and Asshur, until lately known as Mesopotamia (the land between the rivers), but now called Iraq. In early times the southern part of the country was known as Babylonia, and the northern as Assyria. Still earlier, the southern plain was called “Sumer,” and the more northerly “Accad.” This country is a strip of land, some 600 miles long and 250 miles broad, now extending from the Kurdish mountains in the north to the Persian Gulf in the south, with the Persian or Iranian mountains as its eastern border, and on its western, the desert of Arabia. It is a land uniform in its flatness, down which the two great rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates, flow.

Here civilization commenced, here excavators have discovered the beginnings of history, and out of its soil the most

ancient forms of writing have been dug. It is the cradle of the human race.

It is not surprising that early travellers mistook the buried cities for ordinary hills, for so obliterated were the ruins of the city of Babylon, that it is questionable whether some of those who wrote about the great city knew exactly where it was, for they describe mounds quite different in shape and size to those of the ruins of Babylon. Benjamin of Tudela, a Spanish Jew, who visited the country in the twelfth century, writing of these ruins, says, that they were "to men inaccessible on account of the various and malignant kinds of serpents and scorpions living there" (*Itinerarium*, p. 70), while Marco Polo seems to have passed them by unnoticed. On the other hand the site of Babylon appears to have been known to the Arabs, for De Beauchamp, who visited it twice between 1780 and 1790, says of the ruins that "they are exactly under the mound the Arabs call Babel."

Sir Antony Shirley, who travelled through Mesopotamia at the end of the sixteenth century, wrote of "Nineve, that which God Himself calleth That great Citie, hath not one stone standing which may give memory of the being of a towne." Tavernier visited Mosul in 1644, and referring to these ruins said, "They appear a formless mass of ruined houses extending almost a mile alongside the river. One recognises there a large number of vaults or holes which are all uninhabited."

The first attempt to solve the mystery of the contents of these mounds was made at the beginning of last century, but it was not until 1842 that the work of excavation properly commenced. Even then, little effort was made to obtain written records, because excavators could not read them, and the few scholars engaged upon the task had not themselves entirely solved the puzzle of cuneiform writing. It must be admitted that in those early days excavators were

searching mainly for sculpture which would adorn the museums of London and Paris.

Claudius James Rich may be called the first excavator. His ability to acquire oriental languages had become evident quite early, so much so, that at age sixteen he was appointed to a military cadetship in the East India Company's service. At age twenty-one he became the Company's resident at Baghdad. Thereafter all the time he could spare from his official duties, he devoted to his historical researches. He visited Babylon in the December of 1811, and wrote about the desolation and confusion which existed there, and of the brick robbers who had been carrying away Nebuchadnezzar bricks for ordinary building purposes. The East India Company requested him to send home specimens of these bricks, and also of the clay tablets inscribed with wedge writing. These were forwarded in a box three feet square. At that time a small glass case in the British Museum contained all that Britain possessed of the antiquities of Babylonia. In 1821, at age thirty-four, Rich died of cholera.

The remaining mounds, covering the numerous cities of ancient days, were left undisturbed until 1842, when France sent Paul Emil Botta to Mosul as their Consul. On the eastern bank of the Tigris, opposite Mosul, lay the ruins of Nineveh; two mounds of which were prominent. The southern, called Nebbi Yunus (i.e. Prophet Jonah) appeared to him to be that which would yield the best results, but on the summit of this mound was a small village including a mosque which the Arabs claimed to contain the tomb of the Prophet Jonah. Here Botta found that the owners of the houses and land either refused him permission to dig, or requested far greater sums for the privilege than he was prepared to pay. He was therefore restricted to the northern mound known as Kouyunjik, but success did not attend his excavations. However, early in the proceedings a peasant from the village of Khorsabad, some thirty miles north of Nineveh, happening



to pass the diggings and finding that Botta was in search of stones with pictures on them, volunteered the information that in his village there were plenty such stones. The Frenchman, having already learnt the tendency of the Arab to wish to be the bearer of good news, took little notice of the peasant's story; but having had months of unsuccessful digging at Nineveh, he sent some of his workmen to the Arab's village to see what they could find. As soon as digging began they came across sculptured bas-reliefs and inscriptions. An Assyrian palace had been found. When the news of this discovery reached Paris it created such interest that funds were immediately placed at Botta's disposal to continue the work. By 1844 numerous rooms in the palace had been unearthed, and it was identified as the palace of Sargon II, who is mentioned in Isaiah xx. 1, as sending his Commander against Ashdod. Botta also discovered a magnificent alabaster wall sculpture of Sargon accompanied by his Commander.

In 1851, Victor Place succeeded Botta, not only at the French Consulate at Mosul, but also as excavator of Khorsabad. He spent the next four years in unearthing the palace of Sargon. Apart from the reference to him in Isaiah, practically nothing was known of this monarch. Now the rooms in which he had lived, and sculptured representations of him which had been lost to sight for 2,500 years became familiar. Monsieur Place put sixty-eight cases containing some of these great sculptures and inscriptions, together with those he had collected from Babylon, on a raft and sent them down the Tigris for shipment to Paris, but before the raft reached the junction of the Euphrates and the Tigris, it foundered with all its precious cargo.

It was not long before Great Britain became represented in northern or Assyrian archæology in the person of Austen Henry Layard. From early years he had an enthusiasm for the East, yet had been articled to a solicitor in London. After six years in the office he abandoned Law and went to

Constantinople, where he hoped to obtain an appointment as attaché at the British Embassy. In 1839 he commenced touring the Near East; in those days a long and perilous undertaking. When on his way to Persia in 1840 he visited Mosul and on his return in 1842 met Botta at Nineveh. In 1845, Sir Stratford Canning, the Ambassador at Constantinople, instead of giving him the attachéship, gave him £50 for archaeological research; this, together with his own money, enabled him to realise the aspirations of the last five years. He set off at once for Mosul, and in order to attract as little attention as possible, said nothing whatever to anyone about his plans. Taking with him only six workmen, he went twenty-five miles down the eastern bank of the Tigris to a mound called Nimrud—the Calah of Genesis x. On the first day he discovered an Assyrian palace, on the third, he came across numerous fragments of cuneiform tablets, but for the latter he was not searching, for he could not decipher this cuneiform writing.

One day when he was away from the excavations Layard saw two mounted Arabs riding towards him at top speed. On reaching him one excitedly exclaimed, "Hasten, O Bey, hasten to the diggers, for they have found Nimrod himself! wallah it is wonderful, but it is true, we have seen him with our own eyes." They had discovered one of the great human headed winged lions now in the British Museum. Scarcely a day passed without unearthing something of value, but on one occasion when he had dug a fifty-foot trench into one of the mounds, he was about to abandon it because nothing worth while had been traced, when a workman unearthed a black marble monument—the now famous obelisk of Shalmaneser II—inscribed on which are the words, "I received the tribute of Jehu the Israelite silver and gold, etc." When Colonel Rawlinson, at Baghdad, deciphered this inscription referring to the king of Israel the news of the "find" created a considerable impression. Layard commanded a second expedition in 1849-1851, and the results were so

good that it required hundreds of cases to send even part of the acquired treasure to the British Museum.

Hormuzd Rassam, a resident of Mosul, who had assisted Layard, took charge of the operations two years later. At first he found little to encourage him at Nimrud, so he turned his attention to the mound Kouyunjik at Nineveh. Here he found the palace of Ashur-bani-pal, and on the sides of one room was a bas-relief depicting the king standing in his hunting chariot, with his servants around him handing him the weapons for the chase. More important still, he found the great king's immense library containing tens of thousands of tablets, but unfortunately many of them were either broken or burnt. Ashur-bani-pal was a great collector of ancient tablets, he boasted of his ambitions in this respect, and was known to have sent scribes to distant cities to reproduce their most important tablets, some of which were quite ancient even then. The tablets found by Rassam were packed in the primitive fashion of those days, and shipped to the British Museum, where, owing to the fact that they were so numerous, and the decipherers so few, they remained in the cellars for many years before it was discovered that among them were the king's copies of the Creation and Flood tablets. These were recognised nearly twenty years afterwards by George Smith, and immediately became famous.

During all this time, Babylonia had been almost ignored, excavators having concentrated their attention on the northern mounds of Assyria. In 1849, Col. Rawlinson, and in 1854, J. E. Taylor, visited Ur of the Chaldees, while in the latter year Rawlinson made researches both at Babylon and at Birs Nimrod. During these years Loftus surveyed these and other sites, but owing to the threatening attitude of the southern Arab, could not excavate them. In 1878 Rassam dug trenches into the mounds of Babylon, securing some important inscriptions, but none so spectacular were found

there as those yielded by the mounds of Assyria. Excavators, therefore, again turned their attention to Nineveh.

George Smith, who commenced his career at the British Museum as an engraver, unremittingly surmounted the difficulties in the translation of cuneiform writing, until he became one of the most skilful decipherers of his day. In the course of his work at the Museum he recognised and deciphered the Flood tablets (which had been discovered nearly twenty years before), and disclosed his find to the world in a paper read before the Society of Biblical Archæology in December, 1872. Such was the intense interest it created, that in 1873 the *Daily Telegraph* gave £1,000 to defray the cost of Smith going to Nineveh to search for the missing portions of these tablets, and for additional exploration. At Nineveh, he was cleaning the dust from some tablets, when he sighted some of the missing lines. He returned to England but set out again in the November of the same year on a second expedition, for the permission granted by the Turkish authorities to excavate, was to lapse in four months. Notwithstanding considerable difficulties he worked rapidly, unearthing numerous inscribed clay tablets, and on his return gave his attention to those which would illustrate the Old Testament, particularly the earlier chapters of Genesis. In March, 1876, we find him again leaving for Nineveh, but on his arrival in the country he found cholera so prevalent that it was impossible to commence excavations. Forgetful of the climatic dangers of this country, exposed to the terrific heat of the mid-day sun, often without food, and even in these conditions over-exerting himself, he left Nineveh for London, a disappointed man, because on this occasion he had accomplished nothing. He got no further than Aleppo, where on the 19th of August, 1876, he died. George Smith was one of the most successful Assyriologists that Britain has known.

It was not until 1888 that America began to take a direct and active part in Babylonian excavation. In that year

they commenced work on the mound which the Arabs called Nippur (the Calneh of Genesis x), and excavations there were most determinedly carried on in spite of considerable opposition until the Great War. From this mound thousands of tablets were obtained, and the texts which have been published, some in more recent years, reveal many of great importance.

However, it is only in the last few years that excavation has reached back to the times outlined in the early chapters of Genesis. The discoveries in Assyria and Babylonia during last century rarely took us back beyond the age of Moses. At the dawn of the twentieth century, the discovery of the Code of Hammurabi placed us in possession of the laws prevalent in the days of Abraham. Concerning the centuries before this, archæology was dim and uncertain. The researches of recent years have, however, brought to light a number of astounding and valuable facts relating to the times covered by Genesis. Now archæologists are mainly engaged upon the examination of sites and strata relating to the Genesis period, i.e. 3500-2000 B.C.

In 1922, Dr. (now Sir Leonard) Woolley of the British Museum, acting in co-operation with the University of Pennsylvania, commenced the systematic excavation of Ur of the Chaldees. From the very beginning of the work, this expert archæologist demonstrated beyond a shadow of doubt the high state of civilization existing in early times. Yet in 1923, when I watched his workmen in the process of removing thousands of tons of earth, in order to reveal the great ziggurat or "High Place," built 250 years before Abraham was born, I scarcely realised that the later results of this expedition would yield such rich treasures and throw so great a flood of light on the times of Genesis. This "High Place" is the best preserved specimen in the whole of the country, it is a solid mass of brickwork two hundred feet long, one hundred and fifty feet wide and originally about seventy-five feet high. During this excavation some bricks with the

inscription of Ur-Nammu, the builder of this Temple tower, were found. One of these was given to me, and on it the cuneiform characters are perfectly stamped, thus revealing that writing was common hundreds of years before the time of Abraham.

A year later I was shown a tablet which had just been found at Al Ubaid, some four miles from Ur. It belonged to the period of 5,000 years ago, and was one of the most ancient specimens of writing then known. Mr. Gadd, of the British Museum, who that season was at Ur, had found on it the names of two Sumerian rulers, one of whom was known, but the other up to the moment of the discovery had been regarded even by archæologists to be quite legendary. It certainly adds to the reality of the background of Genesis, to watch as I did, the excavation of the wall with which Ur Nammu encircled his city two centuries before Abraham lived there, this wall was seventy-seven feet thick and three miles round.

In 1929 Sir Leonard Woolley instructed his workmen to dig a deep pit in a selected part of the city. In doing this they unexpectedly found a remarkable change in the character of the soil, for clean water-laid clay suddenly commenced. The Arab workmen reported it, and were told to continue digging down. After a depth of eight feet of this clean water-laid clay, it ceased as suddenly as it had commenced, for below it broken pottery was found, and other evidences of the existence of a village before the layer of clay became deposited. The place where this discovery occurred, was down through strata which covered the sloping face of a mound, and the thickness of the water-laid clay varied across it from eight to eleven feet in depth. The water necessary to lay such a great thickness of deposit must have been so considerable that Sir Leonard Woolley came to the conclusion that the only possible explanation of his discovery was that they had found definite evidence of the effects of the Flood. In the season 1929-1930 he dug down through the Flood level into

virgin soil, and in 1934 he sank another pit some distance away, again through the water-laid clay of the Flood, discovering some statues and pottery in the pre-flood level. At the conclusion of this last season's work, he told me that his findings regarding the Flood had been abundantly confirmed. I have examined this Flood earth; the complete absence of salt prevalent in other levels, its exceptional nature, the sudden beginning and as abrupt cessation, then the recommencement of broken pottery and bones beneath it, are certainly most remarkable evidences of a Flood.

Beginning in the year 1927, at a level which he dates 3500 B.C., Sir Leonard Woolley unearthed a large cemetery, and many grim discoveries were made of deaths which had probably been violent. In it, however, were many fine examples of the type of golden headdress worn by women of those times, also numerous bead necklaces. One of the most spectacular finds, was that of the golden helmet of Mes-kalam-dug, whom he places as having lived about 3200 B.C.

Professor Langdon, of Oxford University, commenced researches at Kish and Jemdat Nasr in 1923, which have been exceedingly fruitful in their contribution to our knowledge of the earliest periods of civilization. I was at Kish two days after the discovery of a stone tablet in a semi-pictographic script, believed to be one of the oldest pieces of writing known to man. Here also, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles from Ur of the Chaldees, evidences of the Flood were found.

At Nippur (Calneh) the expedition of the University of Pennsylvania found a large number of inscriptions dating before the time of Abraham, these have been published by the University Press. In the volume issued in 1914 by Dr. Arno Poebel (*Historical Texts*) he reproduces a series of tablets relating to the Creation and the Flood, and "ten rulers who reigned before the Flood." It is quite possible that the latter correspond to the ten Patriarchs mentioned in Genesis v.

These tablets are written in one of the earliest forms of cuneiform script known.

A few years ago, Mr. H. Weld-Blundell obtained a number of inscribed clay prisms, which had been found at Larsa. These he has presented to the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, and Professor Langdon has studied and deciphered them. One known as W.B. 444 contains a complete list of men who "ruled before the Flood," the names are then given of those who ruled "after the Flood" until the year 2000 B.C. Another (W.B. 62) gives a list of ten persons who "ruled before the Flood."

Reference should also be made to Dr. Frankfort's *Third Preliminary Report on the Excavations at Tell Asmar (Eshunna)*. Under the chapter heading of, "The Religion of Eshunna in the Third Millennium B.C.," he writes, "In addition to their more tangible results, our excavations have established a novel fact, which the student of Babylonian religions will have henceforth to take into account. We have obtained, to the best of our knowledge for the first time, religious material complete in its social setting. We possess a coherent mass of evidence, derived in almost equal quantity from a temple and from the houses inhabited by those who worshipped in that temple. We are thus able to draw conclusions, which the finds studied by themselves would not have made possible. For instance, we discover that the representations on cylinder seals, which are usually connected with various gods, can all be fitted in to form a consistent picture in which a single god worshipped in this temple forms the central figure. It seems, therefore, that at this early period his various aspects were not considered separate deities in the Sumero-Akkadian pantheon." This illuminating statement throws light on the way polytheism developed from monotheism; it used to be imagined that the reverse was the case.

Warka, the Erech of Genesis x. has been partially excavated by German archaeologists who found remarkable evidence



of an advanced state of civilization in pre-Abrahamic days.

During subsequent years excavators have been busy tracing the various strata of civilizations backwards into the very twilight of history. In many instances they have reached down into virgin soil, before any habitation existed. Unfortunately, owing to differences of opinion with the Iraq authorities regarding the distribution of "finds," there was some cessation of activity. The seasons 1934-1937 saw only two expeditions of importance and then the war put an end to excavation.

Most of the sites excavated in the last twenty years go back to the days of Genesis, for it is with the earliest civilizations that archæologists are now concerned. They have brought to light the culture and writing of men who lived 5,000 years ago, their investigations have reached even to pre-Flood days. These researches have revolutionized thought, for concerning the civilizations of this early period we previously knew next to nothing. It has done more, for it has painted in the background on a canvas which previously was almost blank. We now understand much concerning the environment of the Patriarchs and methods of writing prevalent in the times of Genesis. Before the excavations of the last few years this early period was considered legendary even by archæologists, but almost beyond their highest hopes they have been able to dig and plan settlements which were previously in the realm of pre-history, but now, in the opinion of these able men, Sumerian civilization had reached its zenith centuries before Abraham.

It is important to remember that these archæologists are by no means engaged in an attempt to find evidences which agree with the Bible. I know from personal contact and repeated discussions, that this is far from being their aim; they sift their evidence in a most critical spirit and if there is any bias it is in favour of the critical standpoint rather than

that of the Bible. Yet, in the words of more than one, they express the truth of the matter when they affirm that they have been compelled by the evidences they have unearthed, to believe that Genesis in this or that respect is accurate. It has been my privilege to be present with these excavators when some of these evidences have been unearthed, and on the spot to listen to their statements regarding the things mentioned in the earliest chapters of the Bible. I have been impressed with the tremendous change which has taken place in recent years among archæologists in their outlook on these early Biblical records. Nothing is more noticeable or more remarked upon in Iraq, than the assurance with which archæologists speak of events recorded in Genesis.

## CHAPTER III

### RAPID DEVELOPMENTS IN EARLY HISTORY

**N**O more surprising fact has been discovered by recent excavation, than the suddenness with which civilization appeared in the world. This discovery is the very opposite to that anticipated. It was expected that the more ancient the period, the more primitive would excavators find it to be, until traces of civilization ceased altogether and aboriginal man appeared. Neither in Babylonia nor Egypt, the lands of the oldest known habitations of man, has this been the case. In this connection, Dr. Hall writes in his *History of the Near East*, "When civilization appears it is already full grown," and again, "Sumerian culture springs into view ready made," and Dr. L. W. King in *Sumer and Akkad*, p. 3, says, "Although the earliest Sumerian settlements in Southern Babylonia are to be set back in a comparatively remote past, the race by which they were founded appears at that time to have already attained to a high level of culture."

All the real evidence we have, that of Genesis, archæology, and the traditions of men, points to the Mesopotamian plain as the oldest home of man. Far Eastern civilization, whether Chinese or Indian, cannot compete with this land in the antiquity of its peoples, for it can easily sustain its claim to be the cradle of civilization. Yet, notwithstanding this, it is not possible to push back the habitation of man in this land vast millenniums into the past, for the very simple and conclusive reason, that the more southern Mesopotamian land must have been formed within the last 10,000 years or so. We know that owing to the peculiar nature of the rivers in bringing down silt, and depositing it at the entrance to the Persian Gulf, the land has been formed gradually during the

past millenniums, the land is still being added to by this means. Ur of the Chaldees was once on the edge of the Persian Gulf, is now over one hundred miles from it.

In some of these southern sites, in places where it is known that earliest man inhabited, archæologists have, as we have seen, dug down to the virgin soil. They are dealing with these earliest traces of civilization, of the period 3500-2500 B.C. Writing about the era of 3500 B.C., Sir Leonard Woolley says in *The Sumerians*, p. 37, "It is astonishing to find that at this early period the Sumerians were acquainted with and commonly employed not only the column, but the arch, the vault, and (as may be argued from the apsidal ends of the chambers) the dome, architectural forms which were not to find their way into the western world for thousands of years. That the general level of civilization accorded with the high development of architecture is shown by the richness of the graves. Objects of gold and silver are abundant, not only personal ornaments but vessels, weapons and even tools being made of the precious metals: copper is the metal of everyday use."

In his report on the "Technical achievements of the third millennium B.C. as evidenced at Tell Asmar," Dr. Frankfort writes, "Man's mastery over matter progressed further in early dynastic and Akkadian times than is often believed, and it will be useful to discuss here briefly a few relevant discoveries." He then cites the use of glass at 2600-2700 B.C., and also of the analysis made by Dr. Desch of the National Physical Laboratory, London, of some bronze objects found at Ur containing a quantity of tin "corresponding to a true casting bronze." At Tell Asmar the majority of metal objects were made of copper, but Dr. Frankfort continues, "with us the bronze of a knife handle remains an isolated instance. A knife blade from one of the private houses, however, contains 2.8 per cent of tin." He also writes of "a most unexpected discovery made during the last season, that iron

was used for tools before 2700 B.C.—more than fifteen hundred years before the day when the first iron dagger known was sent, presumably by a Hittite king, as a present to the youthful Tutenkhamen of Egypt." The bone of the handles found at Tell Asmar had gone, but the silver foil that had covered them remained.

Sir Leonard Woolley who had done so much to illuminate the period before Abraham, writes in his *Sumerians*, "About 2000 B.C., after the fall of the Third Dynasty at Ur, Sumerian scribes took it in hand to record the glories of the great days that had passed away. They must have had at their disposal a mass of documentary evidence, and from this they compiled, on the one hand the political history, and on the other hand the religious traditions of the land. Their histories have perished, or survive only in excerpts embodied in Babylonian chronicles of a much later date."

It was confidently expected that excavation would support the widely-held view of a gradual development of civilization. But the cumulative evidence to the contrary has grown to such substantial proportions in those two countries—Iraq and Egypt—where we come into contact with the most ancient civilizations, that soon after the Flood civilization had reached a peak from which it was to recede. Instead of the infinitely slow development anticipated, it has become obvious that art, and we may say science, suddenly burst upon the world. For instance, in his *Outline of History*, Mr. H. G. Wells acknowledges that the oldest stone building known to the world is the Sakkara Pyramid. Yet, as Dr. Breasted points out in his *Conquest of Civilization*, p. 61, "from the earliest piece of stone masonry to the construction of the great Pyramid, less than a century and a half elapsed."

Writing of this step pyramid, Sir Flinders Petrie states: "The accuracy of construction is evidence of high purpose and great capability and training. In the earliest pyramid the precision of the whole mass is such that the error would

be exceeded by that of a metal measure used on a mild or a cold day; the error of levelling is less than can be seen with the naked eye." Again "The conclusion seems inevitable that at 3000 B.C. was the heyday of Egyptian art."

This first stone building, erected at Sakkara as the funerary temple of King Zoser was recently excavated by Mr. C. M. Firth for the Egyptian Government. Of it, Dr. Hall of the British Museum, writes: "This building is of extraordinary interest, as the first fruits of the young Egyptian genius in the field of architecture. In it we see features such as the columns and the decoration, that it is difficult to believe can be so old as the IIIrd dynasty; but others that are obviously archaic." Again, "It is easy to say that this remarkable outburst of architectural capacity must argue a long previous apprenticeship and period of development; but in this case we have not got this long period. The Egyptians of the first dynasty, some three centuries before, had apparently no stone buildings, and the reign of Zoser was in later legend notable because he had built the first stone house."

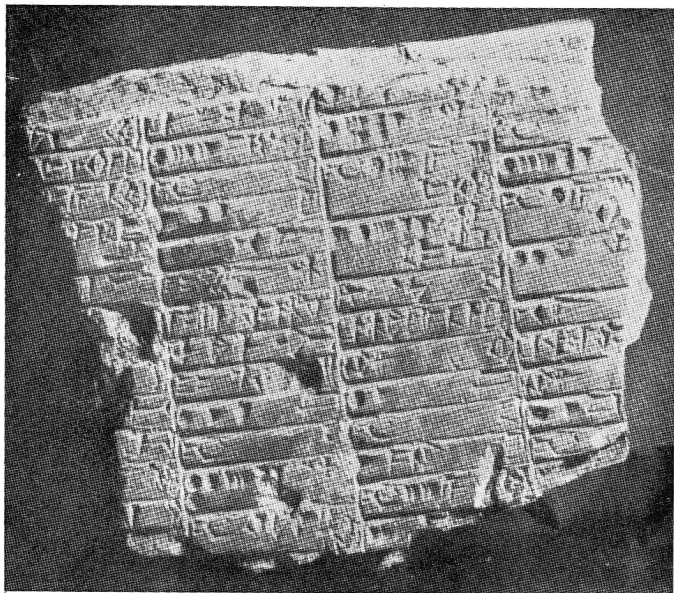
Even this rapid development was to be outdistanced, for within a period of one hundred and fifty years after the erection of this first stone building, the mightiest building in stone the world has ever known had been achieved. Khufu, or Cheops as the Greeks named him, called the great pyramid "the Glorious." It was about 480 feet high, and covers 12½ acres, notwithstanding the number of stones which have been removed, it still contains 85,000,000 cubic feet of masonry. Herodotus says that it took ten years to quarry the stone and another ten years to build it into the pyramid. According to Diodorus, 300,000 men were employed on the work. All this expenditure of time and labour, in the words of the British Museum Guide on Egypt, was in order to produce "the most magnificent tomb in the world as his last resting place." It must be remembered that this swift progress in architecture was not maintained. Sir Flinders Petrie says:

"The materials used in building tell much about the builders. In the series of pyramids the finest material and work is at the beginning, and through the IVth to the VIth dynasties the degeneration is continuous, until a pyramid was a mere shell of building filled with chips." This sudden burst of achievement, which occurred in Babylonia at the same period, made a lasting impression on the architecture of these countries.

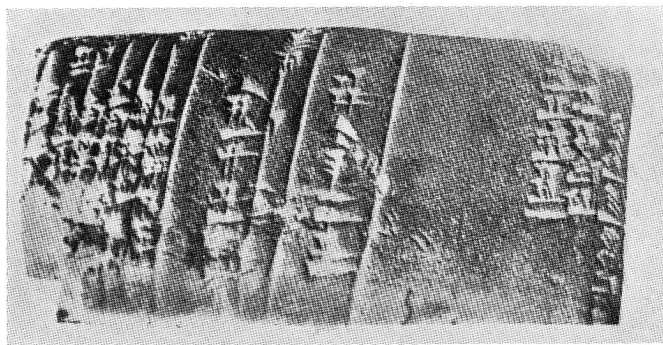
It is not merely the massiveness of the great pyramid that impresses, in its construction the building reveals a greater knowledge of astronomy than was prevalent in civilised Europe 3,500 years later. Art, and we may say science, had already triumphed. The Sphinx, a statue of the second pyramid builder, is in the form of a king's head with a lion's body, the body is one hundred and eighty-seven feet long, and the head sixty-six feet high. The man who planned the pyramid and had the stones cut with such fineness that they fit with marvellous perfection, who organised the transportation of these millions of tons of stone to the site, and their elevation to such heights, was not in a primitive state with a pigmy brain, even though only one hundred and fifty years had elapsed since the first stone building had been erected.

In the face of these facts, the slow progress of early man is a disproved assumption, and the idea that an infinitely prolonged period elapsed before civilization appeared cannot be maintained. The prevailing theory in this respect is most assertive where it has least evidence.

Four thousand years ago in Babylonia, men were highly developed in certain arts and technical trades. For instance, two bronze goats' heads made in this period, when analysed, were found to be made of 82.9 per cent of copper, 1.33 per cent of nickel, 0.88 per cent of iron, 0.23 per cent of antimony, and 14.61 per cent of oxygen. A silver vase was found in Telloh, in circumstances which, the excavators say, indicate it to be nearly 4,500 years old. On it is the

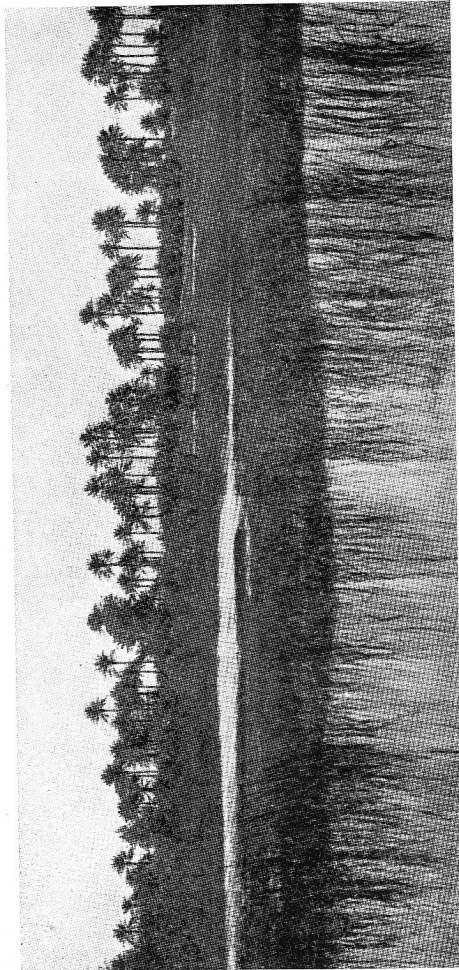


Fragment of a Register of Lands written 600 years  
before Abraham.



Tablet with Colophon, written in the time of Abraham.





*By the Waters of Babylon.*

coat-of-arms of Lagash—four eagles with outstretched wings—also representations of stags and lions; it is a remarkable and skilful piece of work. Their lapidary work was never excelled in subsequent times, and can scarcely be surpassed in some respects in the present day, even with all our modern implements and improvements. The pottery of the Sumerian age, the early civilization of Babylonia—is more expertly made than at any later period. Archæologists have taken us into the distant past, and still they find civilization at a high state of culture. In the words of the Sir Leonard Woolley (*The Sumerians*, p, 44), “so far as we know the fourth millennium before Christ saw Sumerian art at its zenith.”

These Sumerians claim to be the earliest inhabitants of the country. In his *History and Monuments of Ur*, Mr. C. J. Gadd writes, “the Sumerians possessed the land since as far back in time as anything at all is seen or even obscurely divined, and it has already been remarked that their own legends, which profess to go back to the creation of the world and of men, have their setting in no other land than their historical home.” Again, “But the shapes of the flints are not those of a pure stone age, nor has any certain evidence yet been found in Iraq of a population so primitive as to have no knowledge of metal.” This recalls the words of Berosus who, writing in the third century B.C., says of these Southern Mesopotamian people, that they introduced into the world the method of using metal and the art of writing “in a word all the things that make for the betterment of life were bequeathed to men by Oannes, and since that time no further inventions have been made.” Writing of the first historical age in Babylonia, Mr. Gadd adds: “Works of art which astonish by their beauty have been found, not least at Ur itself, to be the relics of the first, not the last ages. Nothing but the good fortune that they were recovered by regular excavation could have avoided a ludicrous misconception of their date.” “Gold is the material of their possessions and the symbol

of their superfluity. In their flourishing days and at their lavish court, the arts of manufacture rose to a perfection and beauty in their products which was never seen again. The articles made were indeed, of much the same kind as those of later ages, but they were, at this very early period, marked by a richness and splendour rather of Egyptian sumptuousness than the supposed sobriety of the River-lands. These deposits amaze by their riot of gold; silver also is there in great profusion, evidently "nothing accounted of."

Neither the Bible nor Babylonian excavation know anything of uncivilized man. Life at the beginning was necessarily simple, but it seems that it was not only enlightened, it was cultured.

## CHAPTER IV

### METHODS OF WRITING 5000 YEARS 'AGO

ONE of the most remarkable facts which has emerged from archæological research, is that the art of writing began in the earliest historical times known to man.

It is now generally admitted that history first dawned in the land known as Babylonia, and that the civilization there is older than that of Egypt, yet, however far the excavator in Babylonia digs down into the past, he finds *written* records to illuminate his discoveries. Levels as early as 3000 B.C. have been reached. Until recent times it was the general tendency to insist on the late appearance of writing, now the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction, and the present tendency is to thrust back the period for which written records are claimed to dates before 3500 B.C. Egyptologists have discovered documents written on papyrus which they claim may be dated as early as 3000 B.C.

A few years ago when visiting Professor Langdon of Oxford University, who was excavating at Kish, I witnessed the unearthing of what is believed to be the oldest piece of writing ever found. It was on a stone tablet and in the form of line pictures. This "line picture writing" is thought by many to be a development of a still older form of writing by which the ancients made ordinary pictures convey their thoughts on stone or clay. This infant system of writing while decidedly primitive is by no means crude, for the Egyptians used it at the height of their art and power. Such a method of conveying ideas through pictures has been revived recently; it is used for wayside signs, by picture newspapers and illustrated advertisements. So modern a time-table as that issued by a leading airplane passenger-carrying company,

uses pictures—a picture of a railway engine to indicate the various parts of the journey made by train, a boat to indicate where a change into a ship takes place, and of an airplane where the journey is made by air. Some of the ancient forms of picture writing are so old that they cannot now be deciphered; when however such picture writing as that of the Egyptian hieroglyphics is used, it conveys the thoughts of the writers intelligibly and accurately.

A conservative estimate is that the pictographic forms of writing which have been found, may be dated from 3300 to 2800 B.C., thereafter cuneiform writing came into view.

In very early days clay became the common material on which to write, though stone was used in some instances. The clay of the Euphrates Valley is remarkable for its fineness, it is as fine as well-ground flour. When made plastic with water, it was shaped into the size desired to be written upon and the writing done with a stylus made of metal or wood, one end of which was triangular. This stylus was held in the palm of the hand, and a corner of it was pressed into the plastic clay, leaving a mark which resembled a wedge (hence cuneiform writing, from *cuneus*, a wedge). All the signs were made up of single wedges, placed parallel, at various angles, or across each other. By this means nearly six hundred entirely independent and distinct signs were made by use of from two to thirty wedges. There were many scribes, and though the sizes of the stylus used and consequently that of the wedges varied, yet the general character of the script remained much the same in each period of history. The care and neatness bestowed upon a tablet is often indicative of its importance.

After this wedge writing had been impressed on the soft clay, the tablet was either dried in the great heat of the Babylonian sun, or baked in a special kiln. The scribes mixed a little chalk or gypsum with the clay, because they found that by doing so, when the tablet dried, it scarcely shrank

and did not crack. *These clay tablets are, next to stone, the most imperishable form of writing material known to man.* Even when dried in the sun they become so hard, that for thousands of years they have remained intact and legible. Great care is however necessary when excavating sun-dried tablets, if damp earth has come into contact with them. But after they have been dried, they again become so hard that it is difficult to tell they were not baked in a kiln.

As early as 2750 B.C. clay envelopes were used for private letters and contract tablets, and it became the practice to rewrite the contents of the tablet on the envelope, then to close it with a private seal. The owner could be assured that the contents had not been tampered with, if the seal remained intact. Should a dispute arise the tablet within was examined.

It is probable that in the earliest times, the thoughts of men were set down in writing by the use of pictures or signs. As we have seen these developed into "line pictures," because straight lines were more easily inscribed on such substances as stone and clay. When clay became the common writing material, a series of wedges were impressed on the plastic clay so as to form the pictures. At length pictures were almost entirely abandoned, and groups of wedges formed words. Of some early Sumerian tablets found at Telloh, Professor L. W. King wrote "these documents from the nature of their clay and the beauty of their writing are among the finest specimens yet discovered in Babylonia" (*Sumer and Akkad*, p. 293).

Ordinary cuneiform writing became general at an early date. Thousands of clay tablets have been found written before the Patriarchal age and altogether there are about a quarter of a million cuneiform clay tablets distributed among the various museums of the world. So common did writing become in Babylonia that a great critic—Friedrich Delitzsch—wrote, "In truth, when we find among the letters

which have survived from those ancient times in great abundance, the letter of a woman to her husband on his travels, wherein after telling him that the little ones are well, she asks advice on some trivial matter; or the missive of a son to his father, in which he informs him that so-and-so has mortally offended him, that he would thrash the knave, but would like to ask his father's advice first; or another letter in which a son urges his father to send at last the long-promised money, offering the insolent inducement that then he will pray for his father again—all this points to a well-organized system of communication by letter and of postal arrangements."

Here is a typical letter written for Hammurabi—probably the Amraphel who was chased by Abraham as recorded in Genesis xiv. It is about a tax collector named Shep-Sin who had been making excuses for not remitting to the treasury the fee which he had agreed to pay for the right of collecting the taxes in a country district of Babylonia. "Concerning chief collector Shep-Sin I have written to thee: 'Send him with the 1800 gur of sesame and 19 minae of silver owed by him as well as chief collector Sin-Mushtal with the 1800 gur of sesame and 7 minae of silver owed by him, send them to Babylon.' But thou hast replied that the chief collector had said: 'Lo it is harvest-time. after the harvest we will go.' Thus they have said and thou hast informed me. Now the harvest is over. So soon as thou seest this tablet which I address to thee, send to Babylon Shep-Sin, the chief collector with the 1800 gur of sesame and 19 minae of silver owed by him and Sin-Mushtal, the chief collector with the 1800 gur of sesame and 7 minae of silver owed by him; with them thy loyal guard. And let them come to present themselves before me with all their wealth." (*The Letters and Inscriptions of Hammurabi*, translated by L. W. King.)

Nearly a thousand years before Abraham was born and a millennium and a half before the birth of Moses, Lugal-zaggisi, King of Erech, began his inscriptions with words which

do not differ greatly from those used by the last King of Babylon, 2,200 years later. To quote Delaporte; "Schools existed where lessons were given in reading, and in tracing on clay the elements of the script's signs. That of Nippur, was, in the first millennium, the most famous for the antiquity of the texts preserved in its archives. A number of tablets from the century of Hammurabi, as well as models and copies, illustrate the methods of instruction—first reading and writing simple signs with a study of their various phonetic values; then the pupils initiation into the use consecutively of groups of signs and ideograms, and then of current formula. He was next given instructions in grammar in the guise of paradigms—declensions and conjugations. Finally he finished his education with mathematics." One other quotation (from the Preface of Luckenbill's *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*) must suffice. "This writing material was cheap, which may account in part for the fact that the Sumerians, Babylonians and Assyrians seemed unwilling to transact even the smallest items of business without recourse to a written document."

In Egypt where the papyrus plant flourished, papyrus became the usual material on which to write. The earliest papyrus manuscript still in existence is stated to have been written about 3000 B.C. The papyrus rolls, written upon with pen and ink, were usually nine to ten inches wide, and one example is one hundred and forty-four feet long. Papyrus as a writing material does not appear to have been used to any extent in Iraq; the inscribed clay tablet, baked hard, was considered a more appropriate and enduring substance for that country.

The cuneiform system of writing became general in all the civilized countries east of the Mediterranean, it was also adopted by the Hittites so often mentioned in Genesis. That it was understood in Egypt, is evident from the Tell-el-Amarna tablets, of which some 300 were found in that country in 1887. Among them we find letters dated about 1400 B.C.



from Palestine officials to the Egyptian government, all written in cuneiform.

We are by no means certain exactly when Hebrew was introduced into Palestine. Until recently the earliest examples of the Phœnician script, on which Hebrew characters are based, were the Moabite Stone (850 B.C.), and the Siloam inscription (700 B.C.). However, since 1930 discoveries have been made at Ras Shamra in Syria, of a library of tablets, written in cuneiform, in many of these a few wedge signs are used as an alphabet, thus taking this type of script back to 1300 B.C. It is to excavations in Syria and Palestine that we must look for light on the problem of the origin of Hebrew. Assyrian is as close to Hebrew as any other language and many words are common to both languages.

We must now turn to the story of the early attempts to decipher cuneiform writing; only a brief outline can be given here for it is a long and intricate one. When at first, specimens of cuneiform writing were brought to Europe, scholars even doubted whether it was real writing, or merely a form of oriental decoration! Grotefend was the first to explain the use of the mysterious wedges, by 1802 he had, with tolerable certainty, read the three proper names of the kings found on an inscription brought from Persepolis, but apart from these three words, his conclusions were generally wrong.

Major (later, General, Sir) Henry Rawlinson, the British Representative at Bagdad, at great peril, succeeded in 1835 in copying the bilingual texts of Darius at Behistun near Kermanshah. By 1839 he had read two hundred lines of this inscription. In 1847, Edward Hincks, an Irish clergyman, made a great advance towards discovery, when he found that the cuneiform was not an alphabetical system of writing, and by 1857 he had fixed the value of two hundred and fifty-two combinations of wedges. Other scholars confirmed the findings of both Rawlinson and Hincks.

However, a certain amount of scepticism existed regarding

the translations made by these scholars, for in 1857 Mr. Fox-Talbot, who was an early student of cuneiform, suggested that a test should be made by giving Rawlinson, Hincks, Oppert and himself an Assyrian cuneiform historical text which had not been published. These scholars agreed to make a translation of it entirely independently of each other, and to submit their results to the Royal Asiatic Society, who were to form a committee to compare the translations which the decipherers were to hand in. This committee found that the results were in agreement on all essential points, so that thereafter doubts were for the most part dispelled, and it was generally acknowledged that the key to the decipherment of the Babylonian cuneiform writing had been found. There were some scholars, however, who still doubted the solutions given, they were puzzled by the fact that a single sign could have more than one syllabic value. This was partly due to the circumstance that the old picture writing had been copied by wedge writing, so that a five-wedge sign placed similar to four fingers and a thumb meant a "hand," and a set of wedges crossed star formation, indicated a "star." At length all doubts vanished, and the translation of cuneiform writing has become a relatively accurate science. Since that time a succession of brilliant and able scholars such as Langdon, Gadd and Poebel, have grappled with the continual problems and difficulties presented by the more and more archaic forms of writing which have been unearthed.

Some important elements of ancient writing must yet be noticed. What literary methods were in use in early days? What style and form did they adopt for their various documents? How and where did they sign and date their letters and other tablets? Seeing that clay tablets cannot be stitched, as can pieces of parchment or the pages of a book, what means were used to connect tablets together and preserve their proper sequence when more than one tablet was necessary in order to contain a piece of writing? These problems are rarely

referred to in popular books on excavation and the student must turn to technical works, the contents of which are largely printed in cuneiform, in order to obtain an adequate answer to them.

We first notice that when scribes were employed, they not only wrote the whole of the letter, record, or legal tablet, but also took the owner's seal and impressed it on the clay; for these scribes knew best just how much pressure the seal should have on the clay to make it distinct. The seal was usually a cylinder from half an inch to an inch and a half long, but sometimes a precious stone engraved and worn on a ring was used. Each seal was specially inscribed for the owner, and often included his name in cuneiform. A reference to the use of the seal is found in Job xxxviii. 14, R.V., "It is changed as clay under a seal." Judah carried a seal about with him, and Joseph was given Pharaoh's seal ring (Genesis xli. 42). At Ur of the Chaldees Sir Leonard Woolley found seals owned by men who lived before the Flood. The use of this seal impression was the equivalent of the modern signature. When the owner's seal had been impressed upon the clay, the tablet, if written by a scribe, had sometimes written on it the name of the owner of the tablet. I have in my possession tablets sealed over 4,000 years ago.

The matter to be inscribed on clay documents varied greatly, there were historical tablets containing narratives concerning clans or nations, legal tablets relating to the sale of land, buildings, or loans; commercial tablets, detailing in a manner similar to a modern invoice, transactions in farm produce, cattle or common merchandise; letters, both official and private, and tablets containing genealogical lists.

Anyone familiar with cuneiform tablets, can tell almost at a glance the nature of their contents, just as in the present day, the size and style of paper used, whether foolscap or letter paper, parchment or post-card, generally indicates the nature of their contents, such as a legal document, a private letter, an

official communication. So the size and style of Babylonian tablets are indicative of their contents. There were prisms, cylinders, tablets made barrel-shaped and pillow-shaped, some of the latter as big as quarto paper and others as small as a postage stamp.

Ordinarily, clay tablets were made of sufficient size to contain all the writing matter to be inscribed, but in some instances this was only achieved by using a small stylus, thus enabling a larger number of words to be written on the limited space available. It was not considered satisfactory to make a clay tablet too large for two good reasons, firstly its liability to breakage, and next, from considerations of weight and handiness; so that instances of tablets fifteen inches square are rare. As a general rule single tablets sufficed for ordinary documents, such as letters, contracts, invoices, genealogical lists.

When, however, the lengthy nature of the writing required more than one tablet, it was just as necessary then as it is to-day, with the pages of letters or books, to adopt means to preserve their proper sequence, especially when a considerable number of tablets were required to complete the series. This was achieved by the use of "titles" "catch lines" and "numbering." The title was taken from the first words of the first tablet, these were repeated at the end of each subsequent tablet, followed by the serial number of that tablet; just as a title is repeated at the head of each page of a book and each page is numbered. By this method, not only the series to which each tablet belonged, but also the order in which they were to be read, was indicated.

As an additional safeguard it was also the practice to use "catch lines." This system has not entirely lapsed, but is still frequently adopted in writing or typing modern documents of importance. The present usage is to repeat the first two or three words of a subsequent page, at the end of the preceding page. In Babylonian tablets, the same method was employed,

for the first few words of the subsequent tablet are repeated as "catch lines" at the end of the previous tablet. It will not surprise the student acquainted with ancient or eastern customs, that many of the literary habits were precisely the reverse of our own. The Hebrews commenced their writing, on what to us, is the last page of the book, and wrote from right to left, so we find that in ancient Iraq, it was the ending and not the beginning of a tablet which contained the vital information as to the name of the writer, date on which written and description of the composition.

There can now be little doubt that the Book of Genesis was written on tablets. We know that they were in use in the days of Moses. The Ten Commandments were written on tablets (not tables) of stone, and in a manner similar to Babylonian tablets in "that the tablets were written on both their sides" (Exodus xxxii. 15). The Hebrew verb "to write" means to "cut in" or "dig", a reference to the early method of writing.

In the following chapter we discover on examining the Book of Genesis that some of these ancient literary usages are still embedded in the present English text, and that just as the scribes of Nineveh 2,500 years ago, when copying tablets which had been written a thousand years earlier, ended the tablet with a short statement indicating from which library the original text had come, so the compiler of Genesis has done the same.

## CHAPTER V

### THE KEY THAT UNLOCKS THE BOOK

**T**HE master-key to the discovery of the composition of the Book of Genesis is to be found in the proper use of the phrase, "These are the generations of . . ." If this key is handled properly, it will be seen that it solves every literary difficulty, critical or otherwise.

All scholars appear to agree that this is the most significant and distinguishing phrase in the Book. For example, Dr. Driver says (*Genesis*, p. ii), "The narrative of Genesis is cast into a framework, or scheme, marked by the recurring formula '*these are the generations* (lit., begettings) of . . .' The entire narrative as we now possess it is accommodated to it." Professor Ryle informs us that the use of the phrase "represents, as it were, successive stages in the progress of the narrative." Commentators of all schools of thought, such as Spurrell, Lenormant, Skinner, Carpenter, Harford-Battersby, Bullinger, Lange, Keil and Wright divide the Book into sections which begin with the phrase. The formula is used eleven times in Genesis. As to its importance there can be no doubt, for so significant did the Septuagint translators regard it, that they gave the whole Book the title "Genesis," the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word translated "generations."

The formula is used in the following places:—

Chap.	Ver.	
ii.	4.	"These are the generations of the heaven and the earth."
v.	1.	"This is the Book of the generations of Adam."
vi.	9.	"These are the generations of Noah."
x.	1.	" " " the sons of Noah."
xi.	10.	" " " Shem."

Chap.	Ver.				
	xi.	27.	"These are the generation of Terah."		
	xxv.	12.	"	"	Ishmael."
	xxv.	19.	"	"	Isaac."
	xxxvi.	1.	"	"	Esau."
	xxxvi.	9.	"	"	Esau."
	xxxvii.	2.	"	"	Jacob."

But while scholars of all schools of thought are agreed as to its importance, they seem to have misunderstood both its use and meaning. The reason for this is quite simple. Many of these sections commence, as is frequent in ancient documents, with a genealogy, or a register asserting pure birth. This has led them to associate the phrase "These are the generations of . . ." with the genealogical list where this follows, hence they have assumed that the phrase is used as a preface or introduction. For instance, Dr. Driver writes (*Genesis*, p. ii), "This phrase is one which belongs properly to a genealogical system; it implies that the person to whose name it is prefixed is of sufficient importance to mark a break in the genealogical series, and that he and his descendants will form the subject of the section which follows, until another name is reached prominent enough to form the commencement of a new section." This assertion is plainly contrary to the facts, for if we examine the evidence regarding the latter part of the statement we find that the most prominent person in *Genesis* is Abraham, he, more than all those mentioned, would be entitled to be named if this interpretation could claim to be true. Yet it is remarkable that while lesser persons are mentioned, there is no such phrase as "These are the generations of *Abraham*." The first part of the statement is also erroneous, for the phrase does not always belong to a genealogical list, for in some instances no genealogical list follows: in fact, the main history of the person named has been written *before* the phrase and most certainly is not written after it. When we read, "This is the Book of the generations of Adam," we learn nothing more about Adam excepting his

age at death. The record following, "These are the generations of Isaac," is not so much a history of Isaac as that of Jacob and Esau. Similarly, after "These are the generations of Jacob" we read mainly about Joseph; in fact this peculiarity has puzzled most commentators. It is therefore clear that this phrase is not an introduction or preface to the history of a person as is so often imagined.

Consequently it is of considerable importance to ascertain the precise meaning of this phrase "These are the generations of . . ." The Hebrew word for "generations" in this expression is "Toledoth," and not the ordinary Hebrew word "Dor" which is translated "generations" one hundred and twenty-three times. Fortunately there can be no reasonable doubt about the signification of this word "Toledoth." Gesenius, the pioneer Hebrew critical scholar, in his lexicon, explains its meaning as "History, especially family history, since the earliest history among oriental nations is mostly drawn from genealogical registers of families. Then also for the origin of anything, i.e., the story of their origin; Genesis ii. 4, 'this is the origin of the heavens and the earth,' i.e., the story of their origin." In a similar manner all the great Hebrew scholars translate the word; for instance, Buhl (17th German Ed.) "genealogical history"; Böettcher "history." Havernick says: "Toledoth signifies the history of the origin." Fuerst defines it as "generation, creation, commonly an account, a history of a rise, development of a thing." Roberts, "This is the history"; Kalisch, "Beginnings"; Ewald, "origins"; Rashi, "productions"; Dillman, "forth-bringsings"; Ryle "the chronicles." To this day, the Rabbis in Mesopotamia, who are immersed in Biblical Hebrew, use the word "Toledoth" as the equivalent of the ordinary English word "history." The Hebrew collection of Jewish traditions about the life of Jesus is called *Toledoth Jeshu* and this the Jews always translate *History of Jesus*. Even Dr. Driver sees that the word "Toledoth" is so used, for in commenting on



chapter xxv. 19, he writes, "The generations of Isaac (according to the principle followed by the compiler), the *history* of Isaac and his descendants." On chapter xxxvii. 1, he refers to the phrase as "P's introduction to the *history* of Jacob, etc."

It will be seen, therefore, that the word is used to describe *history*, usually family history *in its origin*. The equivalent phrase in English is, "These are the historical origins of . . ." or "These are the beginnings of . . ." It is therefore evident that the use of the phrase in Genesis is to *point back to the origins of the family history* and not forward to a later development through a line of descendants. This is made abundantly clear from the only occasion of its use in the New Testament, where in Matthew i. 1, we read, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ," following which is a list of ancestors. Here it certainly means the exact opposite of descendants, for it is used to indicate the tracing back of the genealogy to its origin; and this is precisely the meaning of the Greek word "geneseos" translated "generation." So that when we read "this is the book of the History of Adam" it is the concluding sentence of the record already written and not an introduction to the subsequent record.

The first use of the phrase is in chapter ii. 4, "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth." In this one instance we find that scholars have generally placed the formula in its right position, for they have seen that it obviously points back to the narrative of the creation contained in the previous chapter, and that it cannot refer to the narrative which follows, for this section contains no reference to the creation of the heavens. The phrase is only appropriate as a concluding sentence, so that most commentators, notwithstanding their usual opposite interpretation of the words, make the story of the creation *end* with them. Had they seen that *all* sections of Genesis are concluded by the use of this formula they would have possessed the key to the composition of the Book.

It is because commentators have seen so clearly that "These are the generations (or origins) of the heavens and the earth," in its first use, *ends* that narrative, that they have found themselves in such serious difficulties in their assumption that its use in all the remaining passages is as a commencing phrase. In order to make their interpretation consistent they have endeavoured to change the position of the phrase. Thus Spurrell in his commentary on the Hebrew text of Genesis (p. 19) writes, "in this chapter no history of the heavens and the earth follows, so Schrader and others suppose that this half-verse properly ought to precede chapter i. 1, its present position being perhaps due to the compiler of the book who inserted it here in order to form a transition to chapter ii. 4b, ff."; and Carpenter and Harford-Battersby (*The Hexateuch*, Vol. II, p. 1) write of the formula that it "is not appropriate to the narrative that follows it in chapter ii. 4b," and say it should be transferred to the beginning of the section. Continuing this remarkable method of reasoning, Dr. Moffat in his new translation of the Bible has deliberately altered the text by taking this sentence out of chapter ii. 4, and placing it at the beginning verse of the first chapter of the Bible. These scholars have no manuscript authority whatever for this transposition of the text; but having inherited or assumed an incorrect interpretation of the use of the formula, they think it necessary to do violence to the text by moving it from the end to the beginning of the section, for it is obvious to them (but why in this instance only?) that the words can only refer to what has gone before, i.e., to the narrative of the creation.

Another illustration may be taken from *Ellicott's Commentary*, a book opposed to the critical school. On Numbers, chapter iii. 1 ("Now these are the generations of Aaron and Moses"), it says; "the word generations here, as in the Book of Genesis and elsewhere, is used to denote the history," then having lapsed into the usual assumption that it can only

refer to the *history* of descendants, it proceeds on this supposition to give a long and involved explanation in an endeavour to account for the fact that "we find in this place no mention of the sons of Moses." Had the phrase been interpreted correctly it would have been clear that the reference was backward to the record already written about or by Aaron and Moses and not forward to the history of their sons.

In two instances only in Genesis does a genealogical list follow the sentence without intervening words, and both these lists are quite complete without its use. The formula is not necessarily connected with a genealogical list at all, although in almost every instance a list of immediate descendants is given *before* the phrase as well as after it. "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth" has obviously nothing to do with a list of descendants, neither have the two sentences in chapter xxxvii. 2 ("These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph being seventeen years old was feeding the flock with his brethren") any immediate connection with each other. "These are the generations of Jacob" ends one section of history; "Joseph being seventeen years old," etc., commences another section.

In the early days in Babylonia, the most treasured tablets were those containing the record of ancestors and the appropriate place for such a genealogical list is at the *beginning* of a tablet. That it was quite customary to give a genealogical list at the commencement can be seen from the beginning of such books as Exodus and Chronicles. When this is understood it clears away the great difficulty out of which commentators have laboured to extricate themselves, in endeavouring to account for the absence of a genealogical list after the formula. An instance of this may be cited from William Paul's *Analysis and Critical Interpretation of the Hebrew Text*. On Genesis vi. 9, he says, "This is the record of the history of Noah, for so 'Toledoth' is rendered by Rosenmuller, Gesenius

and Lee here and in Genesis ii. 4." He then lapses into the conventional assumption that a genealogical table must necessarily follow, but states: "There is here no genealogical account of Noah's pedigree, with the exception of the mention of his three sons of whom previous notice was taken." It is therefore evident that the formula is not a preamble to a genealogical list but an ending to such a list or narrative. This may be seen from numerous early tablets.

The genuineness of these Genesis records and their uncorrupted state, is surely attested by this adherence to the prevailing literary method of ancient writing, where we find little or nothing by way of preface, but frequently a very formal conclusion. In contradistinction to its simple opening, the conclusion of Leviticus is, "These are the commandments which the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel in Mount Sinai," and the last sentence of Numbers reads: "These are the commandments and judgments which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses unto the children of Israel in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho." One instance outside Scripture may be cited, that of the code of Hammurabi, the king who was contemporary with Terah and Abraham. Here again the conclusion is more lengthy and formal than the preface. It is at the end of his great inscription that he speaks of having written it. He says, "The righteous laws which Hammurabi the wise king established . . . my weighty words I have written upon my monument." Now this Genesis method is the literary method of early times, but commentators having assumed that the formula begins a section, and not realising that it ends it, have used this key to its compilation upside down, and consequently the problem of the composition of the Book of Genesis has remained unsolved by them. For instance Professor Skinner wrote (Genesis p. lxvi) just before he died in 1929 "The problem of the *Toledoth* headings has been keenly discussed in recent writings, and is still unsettled."

Another important fact needs to be emphasised in connection with its use; on its second mention (ch. v. 1) we read: "This is the *book* of the origins of Adam." Here the word "sepher" translated "book" means "written narrative," or as Delitzsch translates it, "finished writing." Moreover, the Septuagint Version renders chapter ii. 4: "This is the *book* of the origins of the heavens and the earth." The "books" of that time were tablets, the word simply means "record." The earliest records of Genesis, therefore, claim to have been written down, and not as is often imagined passed on to Moses by word of mouth. We are of course not sure who wrote the original tablet containing Gen i., but there cannot be the slightest doubt whatever, that anything written up to the time that Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees was written on tablets. As we have seen in a previous chapter, the Ten Commandments were written on tablets.

Finally, a careful examination of the use of the name of the person stated at the end of "These are the origins of . . ." makes it clear that it refers to the owner or writer of the tablet, rather than to the history of the person named, i.e., "These are the origins of Noah," does not necessarily mean "This is the history *about* Noah," but the history written or possessed by Noah. When in chapter xi. 27, we read: "These are the generations of Terah," we do not read much about Terah, for it simply records that he was the son of Nahor. The phrase is intended to indicate that Terah either wrote or had written for him the list of his ancestors found in verses 10 to 27. Nowhere is there a "these are the generations of Abraham," yet his story has been fully written, for we are told that Isaac and Ishmael wrote or owned the tablets containing it. In the early days of writing it was often the practice to impress the name of the scribe at the end of the tablet. The formula "these are the generations of . . ." was probably inserted by Moses the compiler. It is therefore possible that the Patriarchs mentioned in Genesis did not

with their own hands impress the cuneiform, or other ancient script, on the stone or plastic clay, in some instances a scribe may have been employed.

We have noted three things about this phrase:—

(1) It is the concluding sentence of each section, and therefore points backward to a narrative already recorded.

(2) That the earliest records claim to have been *written*.

(3) It normally refers to the writer of the history, or the owner of the tablet containing it.

The Book of Genesis, therefore, contains the following series of tablets possessed by the persons whose names are stated, all of these tablets would come into the possession of Moses who compiled the Book as we now have it.

Tablet series	Contents	Chap.	Chap.
1.	i. 1 to	ii.	4: "This is the Book of the origins of the heavens and the earth."
2.	ii. 5 to	v.	2. "This is the Book of the origins of Adam."
3.	v. 3 to	vi.	9a. "These are the origins (or histories) of Noah."
4.	vi. 9b to	x.	1. ....the sons of Noah.
5.	x. 2 to	xi. 10a.	.....Shem.
6.	xi. 10b to	xi. 27a.	.....Terah.
7. & 8.	xi. 27b to	xxv. 19a.	.....Ishmael and Isaac.
9.-11.	xxv. 19b to xxxvii.	2a.	.....Esau and Jacob.

In this way Moses clearly indicates the source of the information available to him and names the persons who originally possessed the tablets from which he gained his knowledge. These are not arbitrarily invented divisions, they are admittedly the framework of the book.

Two remarkable confirmations of these divisions are:—

(1) In no instance is an event recorded, which the person or persons named could not have written from his own intimate knowledge, or have obtained absolutely reliable information.

(2) *It is most significant that the history recorded in the sections outlined above, ceases in all instances before the death of the person named, yet in most cases it is continued almost up to the date of death, or the date on which it is stated that the tablets were written.*

In confirmation of the first point, it will be seen in a later chapter that these narratives bear all the marks of having been written by those who were personally acquainted with the events recorded. These valuable personal histories were not entrusted, as is generally supposed, merely to the memory of man to be handed down century after century by word of mouth. Writing was prevalent at a very early date, and of all the things to be put down in writing, few were of more importance than the events recorded in the early chapters of Genesis. Moreover, we know that in the most ancient times men concerned themselves with writing about the very things which have been preserved to us in the earlier part of this book; the stories of Creation and the Flood were among the oldest and most frequently written of the historical tablets. We have tablets written 4,000 years ago relating to the Creation and the Flood, these were dug up at the Calneh of Genesis x. It is true that the accounts are grotesque when compared with Genesis, but they were written 600 years before Moses was born, and even at this date were only copies of tablets which had been written centuries before.

The second corroboration is that in almost every instance where it is applicable, the history contained in the section indicated, ends just before the death of the person whose name is given at the conclusion of the tablet. Nine persons are mentioned, the first tablet bears no name, it simply reads: "these are the origins of the heavens and the earth."

An examination of the remaining sections reveals that in:—

Tablet II (ch. ii. 5 to v. 2). The history ceases abruptly with Tubal Cain, the "instructor of every artificer in brass and iron," Jabal, "the father of such as dwell in tents and have

cattle, "Jubal, "the father of all such as handle the harp and organ," and Tubal-cain "the forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron." These men were the eighth generation from Adam, and a comparison with the chronology given in Genesis v. shows that this generation lived immediately before Adam's death.

Tablet III (v. 3 to vi. 9a), Noah's genealogical list, ends with the birth of his three sons. This list is followed by a statement concerning the corruption of mankind, revealing that this was the cause of the Flood, which took place when Noah was an old man. In this instance he could have written the story of the Flood. But this is contained in the tablets of the "history of the sons of Noah."

Tablet series IV (vi. 9b to x. 1) contains the account of the Flood and the death of Noah. How long Ham and Japheth lived after Noah's death we are unaware, but we know that Shem survived him by one hundred and fifty years, hence there is nothing in this section which the sons of Noah could not have written.

Tablet series V (x. 2 to xi. 10). Shem writes of the birth and the formation into clans of the fifth generation after him. We know that he outlived the last generation recorded in this tablet, i.e. the sons of Joktan.

Tablet VI (xi. 10 to 27). Terah's genealogical list registers the death of his father Nahor, while he himself lived on till his son Abraham was seventy-five years old. Had Terah lived another eleven years he would have been able to record the birth of Ishmael, and if for another twenty-five years it would have been possible for him to add, "and Abraham begat Isaac." But the history contained in this tablet ends immediately before his own death. If the words found at the end of the tablet, "and Terah lived seventy years," refer to the date he wrote it, then according to the Samaritan Version it was written just one year after the last chronological event mentioned in it, i.e. the death of Nahor.



The series of Tablets VII and VIII (xi. 27 to xxv. 19) were written by the two brothers Ishmael and Isaac. The latest chronological statement (ch. xxv. 1 to 4) refers to the birth of Abraham's great-grandsons, and of their growth into clans. Ishmael died forty-eight years and Isaac one hundred and five years after Abraham. As Abraham would seem to have married Keturah soon after Sarah's death—which occurred thirty-eight years before Abraham died—this period of thirty-eight years added to the remaining one hundred and five years of Isaac's life, is a most reasonable period to assign for the birth of Abraham's great-grandsons by Keturah. This indicates that the history recorded in these tablets ceases just before the death of Isaac, whose name is given as the last writer, for Isaac survived Ishmael by fifty-seven years and records his death.

The remaining Tablets, series IX, X, and XI (xxv. 20 to xxxvii. 2), contain the tablets belonging to Esau and Jacob. Jacob is the central figure in the record, and the latest chronological statement in them is that of the death of Isaac. Immediately before the ending formula, "These are the origins of Jacob," we read, "and Jacob dwelt in the land of his father's sojourning, in the land of Canaan." This sentence has seemed so isolated, that it has been regarded by many to have little relation to the context, yet, as we shall see in a later chapter, it is evidence of the date, when and where the tablets were written. Within a few years Jacob had moved down to Egypt, but this sentence indicates where he was living when he closed his record, for although he tells us of the death of Isaac, he says nothing whatever of the sale of Joseph into slavery, which occurred eleven years before Isaac's death, neither does he tell of Joseph's interpretation of the butler's dream, or of any other event in Egypt. Until Jacob went down to Egypt (ten years after he had buried his father), thus leaving "the land of his fathers sojourning," he could not know anything whatever about these things. Thus the record of Jacob closes

precisely at the period indicated in the sentence in chapter xxxvii. 1. He had gone back to the South Country, Hebron (where his father lived), only ten years before Isaac had died, and he records his death, and within ten years of this latter event, Jacob was himself living in Egypt. So this hitherto obscure verse of chapter xxxvii clearly indicates not only that Jacob wrote the tablets, but when and where they were written.

It cannot be a mere coincidence that each of these sections, or series of tablets, should contain only that which the person named at the end of them could have written from personal knowledge. Anyone writing even a century after these Patriarchs, could and would never have written thus. It is therefore abundantly clear that this important formula, "These are the origins of . . ." which is acknowledged by almost every scholar to be the framework on which the records of Genesis are constructed, is consistently used. It is often a rule in scripture that the first use of a word or phrase fixes its future meaning, and we have seen that the obvious and admitted meaning it bears in its first use in chapter ii. 4, is appropriate in the remaining instances of its use in Genesis. Thus we are delivered from the labyrinth of conflicting guesses and given clearly indicated sources; the names of the persons who wrote or owned the tablets from which Moses compiled the book.

## CHAPTER VI

### EVIDENCES OF THE ANTIQUITY OF GENESIS

**E**VERY part of the book of Genesis furnishes evidence that it was compiled in the present form by Moses and that the documents from which he compiled it were written much earlier. The various lines of evidence may be summarised as follows:—

(1) The presence of Babylonian words in the first eleven chapters.

(2) The presence of Egyptian words in the last fourteen chapters.

(3) Reference to towns which had either ceased to exist, or whose original names were already so ancient in the time of Moses, that as compiler of the book, he had to insert the new names, so that they could be identified by the Hebrews living in his day.

(4) The narratives reveal such familiarity with the circumstances and details of the events recorded, as to indicate that they were written by persons concerned with those events.

(5) Evidences that the narratives were originally written on tablets and in an ancient script.

The early chapters of Genesis contain Babylonian words; in fact it is said by critics, that the whole environment of these chapters is Babylonian. As these chapters claim to have been written down by persons then living in that country, this is just what we should expect, and it is a strong testimony that they were written at a very early date. How do the critics account for the fact that the only definitely Babylonian words are to be found in the earlier chapters of Genesis, and not in the latter part of the book or in the Pentateuch? It is impossible

to suggest that they got into these particular chapters after the Hebrews second contact with Babylon in the days of Daniel or Ezra, for even the critics admit that these accounts had been written before then.

When the narrative reaches the point where Joseph arrives in Egypt, the whole environment changes and we find definitely Egyptian names such as "Potiphar, the captain of the guard" (xxxvii. 36). "Zaphenath-paneah and Asenath" (xli. 45). Dr. Yahuda's testimony regarding this is weighty. We find ourselves removed from the simple country life of the patriarchs in Palestine, and introduced to the customs of a Pharaoh and the constitution of a kingdom. We are told of the particular method by which the land was granted to the Egyptian priests (xlvi. 22); that Joseph has a gold chain about his neck, that runners who went before his chariot demand homage to him as to the highest official of the court (xli. 42). When Joseph's brethren come down to Egypt he does not eat with them, "because the Egyptians might not eat bread with Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians"—a statement which I submit would never have been written at a time later than Moses. Finally we are told how the bodies of Jacob and Joseph were embalmed in accordance with the normal Egyptian custom, and of the forty days that this process occupied. The person who wrote these chapters was intimately acquainted with Egyptian life and thought.

There is one sentence—probably the most important piece of evidence of all—which must be added to the five lines of evidence already indicated. In Genesis x. 19 we read, "and the border of the Canaanite was from Zidon as thou goest towards Gerar unto Gaza as thou goest towards *Sodom and Gomorrah*." This sentence arrests attention, for it must have been written before the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, which took place in Abraham's day. So completely were these cities blotted out that all trace of them became lost and men believed they were buried beneath the Dead Sea.

In our study of the sources we have seen that this sentence occurs in Shem's tablet, and in his day Sodom and Gomorrah were still standing.

The third line of evidence is that many of the original place names given in Genesis were so old, even in the age of Moses, that it became necessary for him to add an explanatory note, in order to identify these ancient names for the sake of the children of Israel entering the land after their exodus from Egypt. Several instances of this may be seen in Genesis xiv. When in the time of Abraham this tablet was written, it recorded the movements of certain kings, and the names of the places as they were then known were put down. But in the four hundred years which elapsed between Abraham and Moses, some of these names had become changed, or the localities unknown to the Israelites. So Moses with this ancient tablet (i.e. Genesis xiv) before him and compiling the Book of Genesis added a note to enable his readers to identify them. Thus we have:—

Bela (which is Zoar) verses 2 and 8.

Vale of Siddim (which is the Salt Sea) verse 3.

En-mishpat (which is Kadesh) verse 7.

Hobah (which is on the left hand of Damascus) verse 15.

Valley of Shaveh (which is the King's Dale) verse 17.

This is the only occasion where these ancient names are used in the Bible.

Further instances of the use of notes to explain ancient names or localities are to be found in chapter xvi. 14. Beer-lahai-roi (behold it is between Kadesh and Bered); in chapter xxxv. 19 we read of Ephrath (which is Bethlehem). In chapter xxiii. 2 we are told that "Sarah died in Kirjath-arba (the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan); this note is of special interest as it was necessary to give not only its modern name, but even to say that Hebron was in the land of Canaan. This surely

indicates that the note was written at a very early date, and before the Children of Israel had entered the land. No one in later times would need to be told where Hebron was, for the Children of Israel must have known it quite well after its capture in Joshua's day, when the city was given to Caleb for an inheritance. It then became one of the "cities of refuge" and as such must have been familiar throughout the land. Besides all this David was king in Hebron seven years. On the other hand it would be necessary for a people not yet entered into the land to be told, not only the name of the place where the founders of the race had lived, but where this place was situated.

We get a similar note in the nineteenth verse of the same chapter, "the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre (the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan). Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had been buried in this cave of Machpelah; consequently it would have been well known to their contemporaries. But it must be remembered that the whole of the nation excepting Joshua and Caleb had died in the time which had elapsed between leaving Sinai and entering into the land of Canaan. I submit that once the Children of Israel had settled in the land, there would be no need of a note to explain where the founders of their race, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had been buried. Obviously these explanations were written for those who were about to enter into the land of Canaan. This is a testimony that these notes were written by Moses who died, on the margin of the land immediately before the Israelites had entered into it.

Primitive geographical expressions such as the "south country" (xx. 1 and xxiv. 62), "the east country" (xxxv. 6) are used in the time of Abraham. These ancient designations never reappear as a description of the countries adjoining the south and east of Palestine. After the time of Genesis they have well-known and well-defined names; I submit that they were written down in early days, and that no writer

after Moses could have used such archaic expressions as these.

Another most significant mark of antiquity in Genesis, is to be found in the existence of small "city states" and of a large number of clans. By the time of Solomon these had ceased to be, and even at the time when Abraham lived, Babylon and Egypt were dominated by powerful monarchs ruling from their capitals over vast districts.

In a later chapter we examine further facts indicating that these records were written soon after the incidents related had happened, and also that they were written with so great a familiarity with the details of these happenings, that the conclusion is inevitable that the men who were most concerned in these events, had written them down soon after their occurrence. An instance of this may be cited in the action of Sarah with her maid Hagar, in relation to the birth of Ishmael. The procedure followed both by Abraham and Sarah was precisely that laid down in the law then in existence as evidenced by laws Nos. 144-146 of the Code of Hammurabi. In Mosaic times quite another law was ordained in Deuteronomy. The "critical" idea that these incidents are a selection made for religious purposes, does not agree with the facts, for, as in other parts of Scripture, the narrative recounts the weakness as well as the strength of the Patriarchs; their sins, as well as their virtues. The records have not been idealized, but left in their ancient and truthful reality.

The fifth and final series of evidences for the antiquity of Genesis, is found in the various indications that these records were originally written on tablets, and in accordance with ancient methods. In Babylonia the size of the tablet used, depended upon the quantity of writing to be inscribed thereon. If this was sufficiently small, it was written on one tablet of a size that would satisfactorily contain it, much as to-day, small or large-sized paper is used according to the amount or style

of matter to be written. When, however, the quantity to be inscribed was of such a length that it became necessary to use more than one tablet it was customary to:—

- (1) Assign to each series of tablets a "title."
- (2) Use "catch lines," so as to ensure that the tablets were read in their proper order (see Chap. IV).

In addition, many tablets ended with a colophon. This was the equivalent of the modern title-page. However, on ancient tablets it was placed at the end of the written matter, instead of at the beginning, as is now done. This colophon frequently included among other things:—

- (3) The name of the scribe who wrote the tablet.
- (4) The date when it was written.

There are clear indications in Genesis of the use of some of these methods. As these literary aids relate to the tablets as they came into the possession of Moses, it is of course unlikely that we should find them all in the document as completed by him. That the Book was compiled at an early date, certainly not later than the age of Moses, is witnessed by the presence of these literary aids. It is a remarkable testimony to the purity with which the text has been transmitted to us, that we find them still embedded in this ancient document.

Evidence of these literary aids may be observed in the following significant repetition of words and phrases connected with the beginning or ending of each of the series of tablets, now incorporated in the Book of Genesis.

Chap.	Ver.	
i.	1.	"God created the heavens and the earth."
ii.	4.	"Lord God made the heavens and the earth."
ii.	4.	"When they were created."
v.	2.	"When they were created."



Chap.	Ver.	
vi.	10.	"Shem, Ham and Japheth."
x.	1.	"Shem, Ham and Japheth."
x.	1.	"After the Flood."
xi.	10.	"After the Flood."
xi.	26.	"Abram, Nahor and Haran."
xi.	27.	"Abram, Nahor and Haran."
xxv.	12.	"Abraham's son."
xxv.	19.	"Abraham's son."
xxxvi.	1.	"Who is Edom."
xxxvi.	8.	"Who is Edom."
xxxvi.	9.	"father of the Edomites" (lit: Father Edom).
xxxvi.	43.	"father of the Edomites" (lit: Father Edom).

The very significant repetitions of these phrases exactly where the tablets begin and end, will best be appreciated by those scholars acquainted with ancient methods of writing in Babylonia, for similar arrangements were then in use to link tablets together. I submit that the repetition of these words and phrases precisely in those verses attached to the colophon, "These are the origins of . . ." cannot possibly be a mere coincidence, for in most instances they are not used elsewhere, in others rarely used. They have remained buried in the text of Scripture, their significance apparently unnoticed.

On cuneiform tablets the "title" was taken from the commencing words of the record. In a similar manner the Hebrews called the first five books of the Bible by titles taken from their opening words. Thus they called Genesis, "Bere-shith," the Hebrew for "in beginning"; Exodus was called "Welleh shemoth" ("Now these are the words") the words with which the book commences; so Leviticus is called "Wayyiqra" ("and he called"); Numbers, "Bemidbar" ("in the wilderness"); Deuteronomy, "Haddebarim" ("the words"). To this day these are the titles given to the first five books of Moses in the Hebrew Bible.

This practice was carried out in the ancient East in the following manner. When two or more tablets form a series, they were identified together, because the first few words of

the first tablet were repeated in the colophon of the subsequent tablets, somewhat similar to the way in which the name of a chapter is often repeated at the head of each page of a modern book. If pages were not bound together as they are now, the advantage of this would be obvious. By the repetition of the words we have listed, the whole of Genesis was connected together.

In addition, some of these tablets show evidence of "dating." After a tablet had been written and the name impressed on it, it was customary to insert the date on which it was written. In the earliest times this was done in a very primitive fashion, for it was not until later that tablets were dated with the year of the reigning king. It was the custom to do it in the following way:—"The year in which the throne Nabu was made," "Year Sumulel the king built the wall of Sippar," "Year of the canal Tutu-hengal" (presumably the year the canal was cut), "Year Samsu-iluna made a throne of gold," "Year in which canal Hammurabi was dug." The method of dating the Genesis tablets is seen in the following instances.

The end of the first tablet (ch. ii. 4) reads, ". . . in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens."

The sense in which the phrase "in the day" is used may be seen from such a passage as verse 17 of the same chapter, where we read, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"; and also verse 2, "God rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made."

At the end of the second tablet (ch. v. 1) we read:—

"This is the book of the origins of Adam *in the day that God created man.*"

Later tablets are dated by indicating the dwelling-place of the writer at the time that the colophon was written and these dates are immediately connected with the ending phrase, "these are the generations of . . ." Instances of this are:—

Chap. Ver.

- xxv. 11. "And Isaac dwelt by Beer-lahai-roi."  
 xxxvi. 8. "And Esau dwelt in Mount Seir."  
 xxxvii. 1. "And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father  
 sojourned, in the land of Canaan" (R.V.).

This primitive method of dating is in agreement with the current literary usage of that early age and also with the rest of the text, as we have noted in a previous chapter. For instance, it was precisely at the time he was living in "the land of his fathers sojourning" that Jacob's tablets were written.

I suggest that when this ancient method of "dating" tablets is fully realised, and the use of "catch lines" (referred to in Chapter IV) is appreciated, it will be seen that we have the means of solving such problems as that presented by the wording of Genesis xi. 26 and 27, "and Terah lived seventy years and begat Abram, Nahor and Haran, now these are the origins of Terah. Terah begat Abram, Nahor and Haran." The first statement in these verses has been a great stumbling-block to chronologists and commentators, for as it reads, it implies that when Terah was seventy years old, there was born to him all the three sons named. But Scripture makes it plain that this was not so, as anyone may see by referring to Acts vii. 4, and Genesis xii. 4, where it is clear that Abram was not born until sixty years later, i.e. when Terah was one hundred and thirty years old. It is mere speculation then to attempt to give the birth dates of the other two sons. To what then does the statement, "and Terah lived seventy years" refer? I venture to suggest that in conformity with the prevailing practice of the times, Terah was "dating" his tablet, i.e. indicating that it was written when he was seventy years old. This of course implies acceptance of the Samaritan date of the death of Nahor, the father of Terah, which occurred one year before Terah was seventy. The repetition of the names of "Abram, Nahor, and Haran," before and after the formula,

or "Toledoth," indicates that they are "catch lines," and conform to the usual practice of repeating the first words of the subsequent tablet after the last line of its preceding tablet.

Moreover it would not be an uncommon practice when tablets relating to ancestors came into possession of a descendant that he should add his own tablet giving his own ancestry, so connecting him with the persons and events previously recorded. This is just what Terah has done. He has simply added a list of his ancestors (Genesis xi. 10 to 27) connecting him with Shem. Such genealogical tablets were general and important in his day. Thus the literary methods employed in connecting together these tablets comprising Genesis, are precisely those in use in the most ancient times. Most certainly they are not the methods prevailing in Palestine during the times the critics state Genesis was composed. The writing contained on the tablets in the possession of Abraham (Genesis i. 1 to xi. 27) is about one-fifth the number of words which were inscribed on the Stele of Hammurabi, in Abraham's time. The brevity of the earliest records is worthy of note, that of the Creation is the most brief, notwithstanding its importance. Then they gradually expand, but all the records before the Flood are concise and brief. We know that writing before the Flood would probably be less extended than it became in the time of Abraham. In his day writing was already common, so we find that the story of his life and that of his sons, is written with much more detail.

The remaining literary aid was the use of the colophon, this was a final paragraph, sometimes long, in other instances only a few words. Among other things, this appendix usually stated the name of the writer or owner of the tablet. The remnants of this ancient usage may still be seen in periodicals and newspapers where the name of the printer and publisher appear as the last lines of the paper. The colophon in Genesis is, "These are the origins of . . ."

That these ancient literary aids and cuneiform usages are still discernible, clearly reveal the purity of the text and the care with which it has been handed down to us. It also signifies that in the earliest times these records were written on clay tablets, and that *these tablets forming the series, i.e. Genesis i. 1 to xxxvii. 1, were joined together in the same manner as we have them to-day. This definitely demolishes the critical theory that Genesis was composed of documents originally having nothing to do with each other.*

## CHAPTER VII

### WHO WROTE THE ORIGINAL TABLETS?

**B**EFORE examining in greater detail the substance of these tablets, it is necessary to recall again the facts brought to light in recent years regarding the literature of the period under review. It is now admitted that writing became prevalent before the days of Abraham. To those acquainted with the results of recent excavation, not only is there no difficulty in believing that the patriarchs caused records to be written, but seeing the exceptional nature of the revelation of God to them, it would be remarkable if they did not cause the narrative to be set down in writing.

In January 1902, M. de Morgan found at Persepolis, three broken pieces of black diorite stone which, when fitted together, measured nearly eight feet in height and twenty inches across. On it had been written some 8,000 words in cuneiform, arranged in 4,000 narrow lines, and in forty-nine columns. The number of words contained on this stone is about a quarter the number in the Book of Genesis. The writing is cut into the stone with considerable care, and the laws reveal a most advanced state of civilization. This code of laws had been inscribed for Hammurabi who was a contemporary of Abraham (in all probability the Amraphel mentioned in Genesis xiv) whom he met in battle. If therefore the original tablets which Abraham caused to be written, such as Genesis xiv were now available, scholars would be able to read his cuneiform writing; for the originals of other tablets written long before Abraham's day have been translated by Assyriologists. The fact that tablets were written 5,000 years ago presents no difficulty to archæologists, for I have witnessed the unearthing of several tablets written soon after the Flood.

Of one tablet Professor Langdon of Oxford University claimed that it was certainly written before the Flood. No longer is there any good reason to doubt that the very earliest records in Genesis—those of the Creation and the Fall—were written down in a very early form of writing, within the period which Genesis assigns to Adam's sons.

No one could have written the first series of tablets (i. 1 to ii. 4) from personal knowledge of the manner in which the world was created. And significantly enough it is the only tablet which does not state the name of the author or writer, it simply says "these are the generations of the heaven and of the earth." The facts contained in the narrative preserved on this tablet were certainly beyond the speculations of the time. Whence came it? Who wrote it? The second question is not so important as the first. Obviously if it is not a concise account given by God of the order of Creation, it is merely a piece of literary guesswork. The latter cannot be true for it contains facts which centuries of modern scientific research aided by the use of recently perfected instruments of marvellous precision and power have only latterly discovered. Yet so profoundly accurate is this narrative that one critic (Professor Wade in his *Old Testament History*, p. 41) writes "of the inherent improbability of an ancient writing anticipating accurately the conclusions of modern science." He therefore endeavours to argue that it was written a few centuries later than Moses; but surely the state of science even a thousand years after Moses was just as incapable of producing an account of Creation "anticipating accurately the conclusions of modern science."

Naturally the wording is simple, but the truth conveyed is profound. Human as the language is, it is still the best medium God could use. It is God teaching Adam in a simple, yet of course faultless way, how the earth and the things he could see on and around it, had been created. The Lord God talked with Adam in the Garden and this tablet is a simple record of what

God said and did. Adam is told just as much as his mind could understand, the details and processes are not fully revealed; had they been, how could he have understood them? This first piece of Genesis then, this most ancient piece of writing, is a record of what God told Adam. It is not an impersonal general account, it is God teaching the first man the elemental things about the universe, at the very dawn of language. Here we get back to the very inauguration of written history, for it was written down before even the sun and moon had been given names. We note the simplicity with which the facts are presented, a type of repetition and simplicity rarely recurring in Scripture; "Let there be *lights* in the firmament . . . and God made two *great lights*, the *greater light* to rule the day and the *lesser light* to rule the night." We know that long before the time of the Flood men worshipped the sun and the moon, and had given them names. Had this first chapter of Genesis been written even as late as Abraham's day, instead of the simple expression "greater light" we should have had the Babylonian word for the sun, "shamesh." It is used in the legal tablet (containing the names of thirteen witnesses) illustrated in this book. Moreover "shamesh" was the name of the sun-god worshipped by the Babylonians. In his Code, Hammurabi depicts himself in the attitude of receiving his laws from this "Shamesh." When Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees, the moon-god was the chief object of worship in that city; and the great tower built in the centre of the city 250 years before the time of Abraham, was surmounted by a temple dedicated to this moon-god. Names for the sun and moon are among the oldest words known in any language, yet this document was written before names had been given to the "greater and lesser lights."

This earliest of all documents is written in a most exceptional way, just as if recording the words God used in telling Adam the story of Creation. Observe the method employed in writing this narrative. "And God *said* . . . and God *called* . . .";



and what God called the components of the universe he places on record. "And God called the light *day* and the darkness called He *night*," "and God called the firmament *heaven*: and God called the dry land *earth* and the gathering together of waters called He *seas*." It is written in the style of one recording precisely what Adam heard when the narrative was told to him.

Further it is written on a very personal note, and far removed from the style of a vision. There is no "I saw," "I beheld," "I heard." It is direct speech, "and God said, Behold I have given you every herb yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed to you, and it shall be for meat." These words were spoken to the first man, it is not a vague and general account. All the student needs to do is to compare it with the Babylonian versions to realize its unique features.

The Greek version of the Old Testament renders the final sentence of this account, "This is the *Book* of the origin of the heavens and the earth." How it came to be written we are not told, but we are informed that language originated in Eden. Adam, who gave names to the living creatures, could conceivably write this short account in his simple form of writing. The literary methods already referred to indicate that the tablet was in existence by the time of Noah. The use by the Septuagint of the word "book" indicates that the original account was written down early though it may have been repeated verbally at first. I was present some time ago at the unearthing of the most ancient form of picture writing known to man; it was conjectured that it was at least 5,500 years old. This first chapter is so ancient that it does not contain mythical or legendary matter; these elements are entirely absent. It was written before myth and legend had time to grow, and not as is often stated, at a later date when it had to be stripped of the mythical and legendary elements

inherent in every other account of Creation extant. This account is so original that it does not bear a trace of any system of philosophy; yet it is so profound that it is capable of correcting philosophical systems. It is so ancient that it contains nothing that is merely nationalistic, neither Babylonian, Egyptian nor Jewish modes of thought find a place in it, for it was written before clans, or nations or philosophies originated. Thus it is the original, of which the other extant accounts are merely corrupted copies. Others incorporate their national philosophies in crude polytheistic and mythological form, while this is pure. Genesis chapter one is as primitive as man himself, the threshold of written history.

The second tablet or series of tablets extends from the fifth verse of the second chapter to chapter v. 2, and contains an account of the beginning of man upon the earth, the Garden of Eden, the Fall, and the murder of Abel. This tablet also bears sure marks of extreme antiquity and simplicity, which could never have come from a late hand. For instance, the test of obedience is the eating or refraining from eating of the fruit of a tree, the tempter is referred to after the Fall as a serpent in the dust, a form never afterwards used in the Old Testament, and again, one that no late writer was ever likely to employ. Then there are expressions such as "sin crouching at the door" in connection with the story of the offering made by Cain, and the remark of Lamech, "I have slain a young man to my wounding and a young man to my hurt," pointing to contemporary archaic events of which no explanation is given. Here again the record shows evidence of being a personal one, "I heard Thy voice in the Garden and I was afraid . . . I hid myself." I suggest that no late writer would have used such intimate language as "the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." The Jew had been taught a most reverential conception of God, as One infinitely Eternal and Supreme, the Maker of the heavens and the earth. Even unto Moses God did not appear except in majesty

and awe. The expression, "cool of the day" is most natural in this country, for the greater part of the year it experiences intense heat throughout mid-day, while in the evening a cool wind blows. Often in this land I have heard the expression used to indicate the time immediately after the sun has gone down and the evening wind begins to blow. The one person who knew all the facts, about the Fall, is stated to be the source from which the account came. This second tablet takes the story up to the birth of the sons of Lamech. Soon after this Adam died; the concluding words of the tablet are, "This is the book of the origins of Adam."

Noah's tablet comprises chapter v. 3 to chapter vi. 9, and commences with a genealogical register of the Patriarchs connecting him with Adam; such genealogical lists appear in the oldest tablets unearthed, and many may be seen in the various museums of the world. This list is followed by a statement concerning the corruption extant in his day together with an explanation of the cause of it. "These are the origins of Noah." It is a small tablet of narrative writing, added to a genealogical list.

The next series of tablets now forms vi. 9 to x. 1. We are still in an ancient realm of thought, it commences in a Babylonian scene, but ends outside that country. Although for the first time we have moved beyond the confines of the ancient Mesopotamian plain, the writer does not take us to Palestine, but to Ararat. We also have the use of that exceptional word "gopher" wood in connection with the construction of the ark; this is most archaic, and the word is never used again. The tablets end with the statement: "These are the origins (or family histories) of the sons of Noah," they are almost wholly taken up with the account of the Flood. This story has received considerable attention from higher critics, who assert that it was borrowed from Babylonia; they have made much of the "two accounts" and "three accounts" interwoven into the narrative. Anstruc, when he came to

this story, insisted that it contained three accounts and instanced such passages as:—

Chapter vii. 18, "And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth."

Ver. 19. "And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth."

„ 20. "Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail."

Also

Ver. 21. "And all flesh died that moved upon the face of the earth."

„ 22. "All in whose nostrils was the breath of life and all that was in the dry land died."

„ 23. "And every living substance was destroyed," etc.

It is here sufficient to note two most significant facts, first, that the conclusion of the tablet informs us that more than one person is connected with the writing of the narrative, for it is the history of the three *sons* of Noah, and next, that an examination of it reveals every indication that it was written by eye-witnesses of the tragedy.

The fifth series of tablets is contained in chapter x. 2 to chapter xi. 9, and therefore includes the famous tenth chapter—the outline of the clans which became nations. Embedded in this chapter is a brief statement regarding Nimrod the Rebel. In the earlier verses of the eleventh chapter we have an account of the building of the Tower of Babel and the scattering of the peoples. Of these records it is written, "These are the histories of Shem." We have already seen the significance of the seemingly abrupt ending of his genealogical list with the "sons of Joktan," and the repetition and completion of it in Terah's tablet. This tablet of Shem's is an outline of developments during the 500 years after the Flood. The tablet containing the register of lands illustrated on Plate I, was written in Shem's time.

In chapter xi. 10 to 27 we have the genealogical register belonging to Terah. It gives a list of his ancestors connecting

him with Shem, the son of Noah. Several such genealogical lists are in existence, written long before Terah's.

The next and longest division (chap. xi. 27 to xxv. 12) is followed by a postscript of seven verses (vers. 13 to 19). In accordance with his usual custom Moses has placed the name of Abraham's eldest son Ishmael (ver. 12) before that of Isaac the heir (ver. 19). A similar arrangement in the next section places Esau before Jacob; in both instances they were brothers. It will be noticed in Numbers iii. 1 that in a similar way he places Aaron his elder brother, before himself. The whole section contains records belonging both to Isaac and Ishmael. It commences with "Terah begat Abraham," and ends with "and his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah." The intervening chapters are a narrative of all we know of the life of Abraham, the central figure of the Book of Genesis. Abraham alone could have recounted most of the incidents, but it would appear that his sons wrote them down, or at least, the copies which Moses had before him belonged to them. The whole story is written with great familiarity with detail. For instance, the visit of the three men recorded in the eighteenth chapter, "as he sat in the tent door *in the heat of the day*, and he lift up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood over against him; and when he saw them he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself to the earth and said . . . and he hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal. . . . And Abraham ran to the herd and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto his servant and he hasted to dress it . . . and set it before them; *and he stood by them under the tree*, and they did eat." The remainder of the chapter is an intimate personal account of Abraham's prayer for Sodom. After its overthrow we read, "*And Abraham got up early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord*, and he looked towards Sodom and Gomorrah and toward the land of the plain, and beheld and lo, the smoke of the

country went up as the smoke of a furnace" (chap. xix. 27 and 28). The style is just what we would expect of Abraham relating the incidents to Isaac who is stated to have owned the tablets recording them.

The following section (chap. xxv. 19 to xxxvi. 1) is followed by two postscripts contained in chapter xxxvi, concerning Esau in Canaan and Seir. This section, including the postscripts, are records left by Jacob and Esau. The greater part of the story concerns Jacob, and more than half of it refers to his journey to and from Padan-aram and his life there. He alone could have recorded the events occurring during this period of his life.

It is necessary to bear in mind the place occupied by the Patriarchs in the affairs of the time; for instance, Abraham comes into contact with Pharaoh and the princes when he goes into Egypt. In his day, Egypt was a mighty power, and he must have had a status which made him a person of prominence in that country, for it was not merely an oriental mode of speech that made the sons of Heth say, "Hear us, my lord: thou art a mighty prince amongst us." We are told that he had "menservants and maidservants," and that "Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold," that "their substance was great." So great a person was he, that when he returned to Canaan, he could say to Lot, notwithstanding the presence of the Canaanite in the land, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between my herdmen and thy herdmen, for we are brethren. *Is not the whole land before thee?* Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if thou take the right hand then I will go to the left . . . and Lot chose him the plain of Jordan, and Abraham dwelt in Canaan" (chap. xiii. 8-12). In such a manner the choice was made where he would live, and thus the scene is set for the next chapter where he meets the four kings, among them one so mighty as Amraphel, King of Shinar. When these four kings from the East easily overcame

the five petty city-state kings of Transjordan, we read that "when Abraham heard that his brother Lot had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them as far as Dan . . . and smote them and brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people . . . and Abraham said unto the King of Sodom, I have lift up my hand unto the Lord God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take a thread nor a shoelatchet nor aught that is thine, lest thou should say I have made Abraham rich." In a like manner Isaac and Jacob are depicted as possessing considerable status in their day, and quite capable of writing or employing scribes to write the tablets containing narratives from which Moses compiled the account.

But who wrote the last fourteen chapters of Genesis? It is mainly a history of Joseph in Egypt, at least the family history centres round him. This record begins with the words, "and Joseph being seventeen years old," and ends with "and he (Joseph) was put in a coffin in Egypt." This section, as we have seen, contains many purely Egyptian words and phrases, as well as intimate references to Egyptian modes of life. In this section we have passed from Babylonia to Egypt where in all probability it would be written on papyrus. Unlike the other sections it has no ending formula to indicate who the author is, and this question forms part of the problem dealt with in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER VIII

### HOW MOSES COMPILED GENESIS

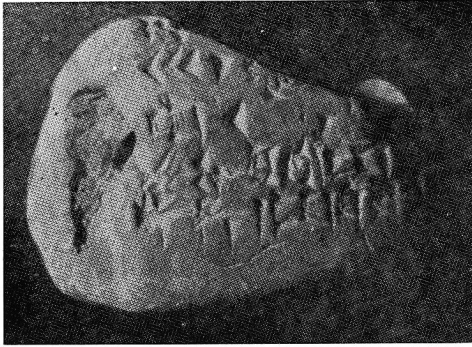
**T**HE solution of the origin of the narratives and genealogies of which Genesis 1-36 is composed having been established on the basis stated in Genesis itself, it now remains to consider the work of Moses in connection with the book. On examining it we discover that the name of Moses is not mentioned, and nowhere in Scripture is there a statement that Moses wrote the narratives or genealogies of Genesis. Nowhere in Genesis have we statements referring to Moses, the same as, or similar to, those so often repeated in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, "The Lord said unto Moses . . ." or "God spake unto Moses saying." Surely this is a most remarkable and significant fact, for the critics have told us over and over again, that we can ignore these phrases as claims to authorship. They say they were used inaptly, and lavishly inserted by later writers or editors, who wished the people to believe that what they themselves had written had been spoken to Moses directly by God. This was done, so we are told, in order to claim for their contents the great authority of Moses. But, if this is so, how do these critics account for the complete absence from Genesis of any reference to Moses? Especially as they assert that these alleged writers and editors most certainly included Genesis in the writings they wished to attribute to Moses, and for which they desired to claim the cover of his great name. Surely the fact that the phrase: "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying . . ." does not appear in Genesis, is a testimony that the so-called editors and redactors did not exist, for they have not touched the original text of Genesis. Furthermore, the non-existence of this phrase here is surely a clear



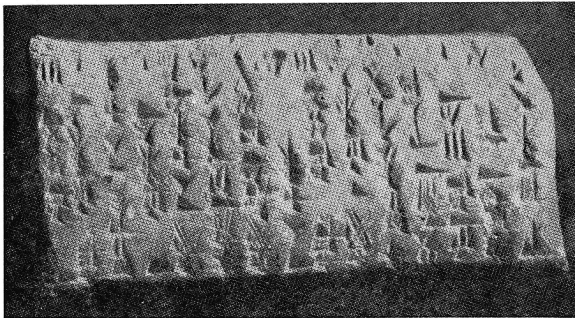
indication that when it is used in the remaining Books of Moses it is used authentically and accurately, and that there also, the text has been preserved in a pure state.

The New Testament method of referring to the Books of Moses is worthy of note, as it is a significant example of the accuracy with which references to authorship are made. Although Christ and the Apostles repeatedly quote from Genesis, they never say that Moses wrote or spake the statement quoted. When, however, we read references or quotations taken from the beginning of Exodus and onwards to Deuteronomy, it is then we begin to read in the New Testament, "Moses said . . ."

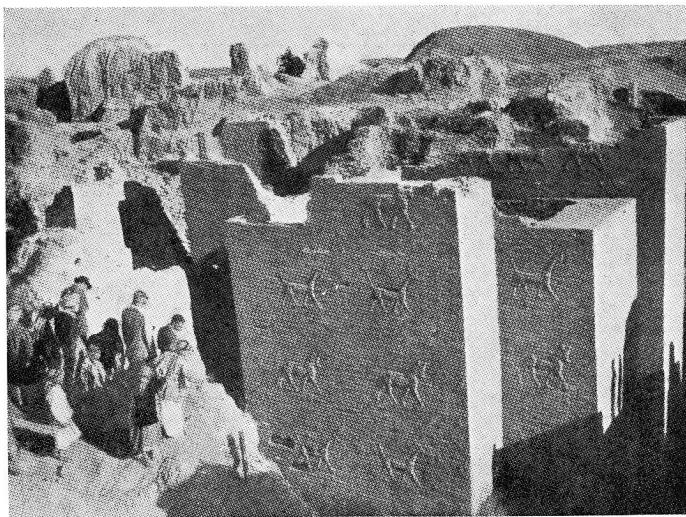
What internal evidence then have we of the connection of Moses with the Book? In the first place, there is the obvious unity of plan which it presents. Secondly, there is the authorship of the story of Joseph in Egypt. Moses was learned in all the arts of the Egyptians, his acquaintance with literature and the ability to write it was perhaps the greatest. He was born sixty-four years after Joseph had died. Joseph may have written a great part of his story, but we are not told that he did so, for there is no such phrase as, "These are the origins of Joseph," at the end of Genesis. Besides, in this instance Joseph's death and embalming are recorded, and he would not have written that. The whole of the story contains numerous Egyptian expressions, and shows an exact acquaintance with Egyptian customs. Every indication points to Moses as the writer of the narrative. Thirdly, there are the "notes" and "explanations" made by a compiler. These (as we have seen in Chapter VI) fit in exactly with the circumstances of a people on the edge of the Promised Land, for whom Moses was writing. The fourth piece of evidence is that the Book of Exodus commences just where Genesis leaves off, and is unintelligible without the explanation, given in Genesis, of the circumstances leading up to the state of affairs with which it opens.



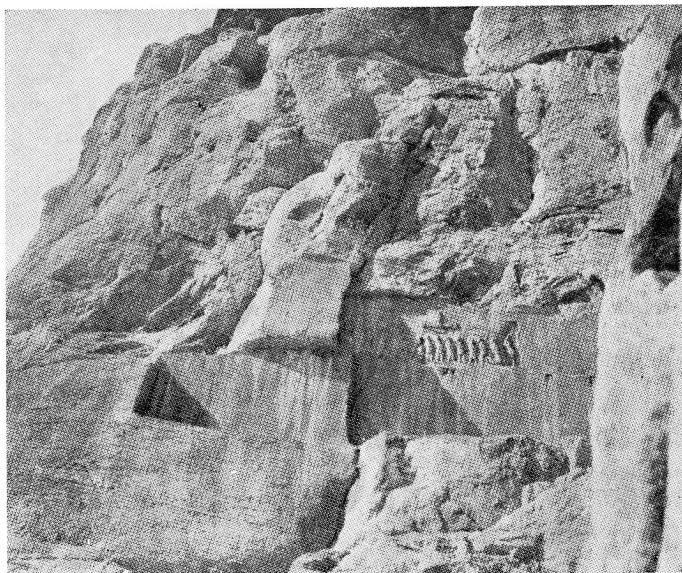
A clay document dated the 5th year of Bur-Sin, King of Ur, 2200 B.C. It was attached to a sack containing a consignment of two commodities. The hole through which the string passed can be seen.



A legal tablet containing a will and Law of Adoption. The names of thirteen witnesses are given on the back. Written 1950 B.C.



The ruins of Babylon.



The sculptured rock at Behistun.

It is strange that though many learned works have been written to defend the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, these say next to nothing about the direct connection of Moses with the greater part of Genesis. For instance, so able and acute a writer as the late Dr. W. H. Green of Princeton, in his valuable volumes on this subject, gives many excellent reasons why Moses wrote the laws contained in Exodus to Deuteronomy, but he leaves Genesis isolated. Dr. Adam Young writes of Moses that, "his authorship of Exodus, Leviticus Numbers, and Deuteronomy, is attested by every possible mark of an internal and of an external kind," but no mention is made of Genesis. Others speak of "four-fifths of the Pentateuch claiming to have come from Moses." The first fifth, Genesis, has been neglected.

It would seem that conservative scholars, though accepting the Mosaic composition of Genesis, have not found it practicable to indicate exactly the manner in which he received his information. Doubtless the reason why most have hesitated to say that he received the whole as we have it, as a direct revelation from God on Mount Sinai, is the very sufficient one, that he himself does not say that he did so, and surely had he so received it, Moses would have stated the fact, just as he so constantly does in Exodus to Deuteronomy. There is a distinction between a direct revelation of the original narratives and genealogies from God, and the full inspiration afforded Moses by God in its compilation, but the end achieved by God is the same. Luke wrote his gospel record by "having trace the course of all things accurately from the first," but the Divine inspiration of Luke's gospel is none the less because of this. There have been many eminent scholars who have suggested, and some who have asserted, that Moses used previously written documents from which he compiled Genesis, but none, so far as I am aware, have even suggested the precise nature and contents of the documents which came into his possession, notwithstanding the fact this

information is given in Genesis. There are three reasons for this: firstly, it is due, as we have seen in Chapter V, to a misunderstanding of the use of the phrase, "These are the generations (or origins) of . . ." and secondly, to a lack of acquaintance with, or oversight of, the literary methods in use in the times of Genesis or a failure to apply these to the Book. These methods, such as dating, catch lines, titles, and colophons, are rarely referred to except in technical archæological works. Thirdly, it is due to acquiescence in the now obsolete, but commonly accepted, opinion of the conservative school, that the contents of Genesis were handed down to Moses by word of mouth, and the long ages to which the pre-Flood Patriarchs lived is emphasized to show that oral transmission as far as Abraham would have entailed the narratives and genealogies passing through but few memories. There is nothing whatever in Genesis, or elsewhere, which asserts an oral transmission. It would seem that it was not possible until the results of the past few years' excavations had become known, to read such a verse as chapter v. 1, "This is the book (tablets) of . . ." as though it could mean precisely what it says. This oral transmission theory originated at a time when men were unacquainted with the facts concerning the early development of writing.

It would be possible to describe, and even to cite the museum numbers of hundreds of tablets, now in the various museums of the world, which were written at periods ranging up to a thousand years and more before Abraham. I am myself in possession of cuneiform, written a thousand years before Moses. Included in the museum tablets are accounts of the Creation and the Flood, so that now we can at least give Genesis credit for speaking the truth, and for stating precisely what it intends to convey when it refers to these records as having been written. Moses did not use a collection of stories which had descended to him by word of mouth, for he himself informs us at the end of the various narratives and genealogies,

who had written or owned them. These, commencing at the dawn of history, accumulated as Noah, Noah's sons, Terah, Isaac and Jacob, added their tablets.

How did these tablets get into the hands of Moses? They contain records from the creation of man to his own time. We have seen that the tablets of Creation were extant in the time of Noah, and we find that the record of the Garden and the Fall (to which Moses added a geographical description) had been written by his time. These would descend to Noah, for we notice that in his own tablet (ch. v. 29) he makes a reference, (chapter iii. 17), to the first tablet. Noah added the genealogical list contained in chapter v. Already several cuneiform tablets bearing some resemblance to this chapter have been found; they refer to ten men who "ruled before the Flood." Noah's tablet is simple and straightforward compared with these, and the ages given not a tenth of those stated in the Babylonian tablets. Noah also adds a short statement regarding the corruption existing in the world in his day. His sons, we are informed in Genesis, wrote the account of the Flood, while Shem wrote the genealogical list which now occupies chapter x, and also the brief description of the building of the Tower of Babel. Thus we see how Noah, possessing the tablets relating to The Creation and The Fall, would pass these on to Shem, together with his own tablet, and as Shem already had the tablets relating to the Flood, these, including his own (Genesis x, and the Tower of Babel), would naturally pass down to Abraham, with the genealogical tablet written by his father Terah, thus to him were committed these ancient "oracles of God"—now Genesis i to xi. 27.

This does not by any means imply that copies were not made by other members of these families. There is every reason to believe that they were made, but a scrutiny of the later copies of these copies, which excavators have dug up, reveal that they became hopelessly corrupted very early, by the introduction of dozens of vicious gods into the Creation

tablets, and a similar pollution befell the Flood tablets. On the other hand, even hostile critics admit that the records preserved to us in Genesis are pure and free from all those corruptions which penetrated into the Babylonian copies.

The archæological evidence that the second series of tablets relating the story of the Fall was joined to the first recording the story of Creation was presented in chapter vi. We have also seen the way the sons of Noah joined their accounts of the Flood, to their copy of Noah's tablet by a repetition of certain words, and the manner in which Shem connected his tablet with the previous tablets of which he appears to have had copies.

There cannot be the slightest doubt whatever, that a tablet such as Terah's was written in the ordinary cuneiform script used at Ur of the Chaldees, but the earlier tablets were written in a more ancient script, and these would possibly be transcribed into the more modern language of the day. Abraham, coming into possession of these precious documents telling of the God of his fathers, the One God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth; was called by God to leave Ur for Canaan, and the most sacred charge he would carry with him were these tablets. Some uncertainty still exists as to the language spoken in Palestine at the time of Abraham's arrival there, but we know that six hundred years later correspondence with both Babylonia and Egypt was still conducted in cuneiform script. This was the script of the educated of the day, and there can be little doubt that Isaac and Jacob probably used this script when writing their tablets. When Jacob moved with all he had down to Egypt, he would carry with him the narratives and genealogies of the Book of Genesis up to chapter xxxvii. 1, for Jacob tells us that he had written his own account while "he lived in the land of his fathers sojourning, in the land of Canaan." As we have noticed in chapter vi, we possess ancient evidence that Isaac's tablet was joined with Terah's by the use of a "catch line," and

that the remainder of the tablets, Esau's and Ishmael's, are also connected with Jacob's in the manner prevalent in that day, so that in Jacob's time these tablets comprising Genesis i-xxxvi, were connected together as one record.

In Egypt they became the heritage of Joseph and the family then developing into a nation. They would naturally pass into the hands of Moses, not necessarily the actual originals (though stone and baked clay are the most imperishable forms of writing materials known) but true copies of these originals. An educated Egyptian of his day would be able to read cuneiform writing with as much facility as a classical scholar to-day is able to read Greek or Latin. At the time of Moses this cuneiform writing was the current diplomatic script, and the despatches received at the Egyptian Foreign Office, from Eastern lands, were in this script, the hundreds of Tell-el-Amarna tablets are examples of such correspondence. Moses, learned in the arts of the Egyptians, would readily be able to read and, if necessary, to translate them.

Until Moses was eighty years old these tablets of Genesis were his only Bible. This would appear to be the only way God instructed him, for there is no mention of God speaking directly with him until the end of the forty years in Midian, when He called him to return to Egypt to bring His people into the Promised Land. Then God announced Himself by saying: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and Moses hid his face." God was now speaking to him, just as the Patriarchs had recorded that He had spoken to them, and his mind would be saturated by the Genesis records with the knowledge of all that this involved.

Although his Bible consisted only of the tablets now contained in the first thirty-six chapters of Genesis, his mind would not be a blank regarding sacred institutions, nor was he dependent on oral traditions as to what God had ordained for the Patriarchs. In the second tablet he would read of Abel



"bringing the firstlings of his flock, and Cain the fruit of the ground, for an offering unto the Lord," and in Isaac's tablet, of that incident in his life when the ram was substituted for him on Mount Moriah. The fourth series of tablets would tell him of the "altar which Noah builded," and later tablets how Abraham set up altars at the places where he dwelt; of his giving one tenth to Melchizedek, and of Jacob vowing a tenth to God. The centuries before Moses were not dark ages unilluminated by God. God had not left mankind without a written revelation; at sundry times and in divers manners He had spoken to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their records had been written on tablets, in the manner customary at that time. The revelation of God in Genesis, as it was handed down to Moses, had not been dependent on the memory of man during the centuries which had elapsed.

Moses became the leader of the nation, and we are informed that as soon as he left Egypt he began his career as a scribe for God. It is possible that he used tablets, for the Ten Commandments were written on two tablets (not tables) of stone, and written in the usual manner, on both sides. As we have noted the Hebrew verb "to write," means "to cut in," a reference to the original method of writing on tablets. When the Israelites had crossed over into Sinai, and immediately after their battle with Amalek, we read: "and the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book" (Exod. xvii. 14). After God had given the covenant to him on Mount Sinai, we read: "And the Lord said unto Moses: Write thou these words," "and he wrote *upon the tablets* the words of the Covenant" (Exod. xxxiv. 27 and 28). As soon as God gave Moses the first part of the law, we read that: "Moses wrote all the words of the Lord" (Exod. xxiv. 4). Of the stages of their journeyings we are told: "And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the command of the Lord" (Num. xxxiii. 2). The endings of the Books of Leviticus and Numbers, where we are told that they were

written by the hand of Moses, are further illustrations of this. Also in Deuteronomy xxvii. 2 and 3, we read: "And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaister them with plaister, and thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law," and, in verse 8, they are told to write this "very plainly," then in xxxi. 9, "And Moses wrote this law and delivered it unto the priests." In the same chapter there is a very interesting account of how Moses "the same day" wrote the words of a song: "Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel," "So Moses wrote the song the same day." The reason for having this written at once, is stated in verse 21, "for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed, for I know their imagination . . . even now." In this same chapter we read: "And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book until they were finished." This writing on that day ended the forty years of Moses' literary career.

It would seem certain from the "notes" and "explanations" which Moses has given us in Genesis that they were written by him when he was at the edge of the Promised Land. With these inspired tablets before him, tablets written from the earliest days, he is compiling his book, possibly necessitating the transcription of these ancient records into the current language of the people. Most reverently does he handle them, for they are the record of God's dealing with their fathers of old. The first thing that impresses us as we read them now, is that he regards the old wording as so sacred that usually he avoids making unnecessary alterations to the text even to modernise words. He leaves the original ancient expressions and place-names just as he finds them, though they are no longer in current use. In order that they may be understood by this people—a new generation just entering the land—he explains the ancient records by adding the

contemporary place-names alongside the ancient names, and sometimes he states that the name is retained "to this day." These "notes and explanations," some of which have been noticed in chapter VI, are sufficient to interpret ancient usages, to explain or indicate the location of Eden, and to identify Patriarchal place-names. An examination of such a verse as chapter xxiii. 17, "And the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees in the field, that were in all the borders round about, were made sure," etc., leaving the impression on the mind of a verbatim extract of the precise wording on a legal tablet such as was used in the days of Abraham. Furthermore, in the Flood tablets, more criticised than any other part of Genesis on account of the "phraseology and style", there are clear indications that the wording has been repeated verbatim from the tablets of the "sons of Noah."

It is evident that Moses held these tablets in such high esteem that he made no attempt whatever to avoid the repetitions, or combine genealogies. Thus, for instance, the genealogies of Shem are found in both x. 22-29, and xi. 10-18, also the reference to the corrupt state of the earth, and the declaration regarding its destruction, as found in chapter vi. 5-8 and 9-13, are left duplicated. We have already seen that these repeated facts belong to tablets written by different Patriarchs. Indeed, these repetitions are characteristic of the whole Book, and are commented upon by almost every reader. It is most significant that with the exception of the section relating the story of the life of Joseph in Egypt, every tablet or series of tablets begins with a repetition of facts contained in the previous tablet. This is precisely what anyone acquainted with the ancient methods of writing would expect and is a testimony to the faithfulness with which the records have been transmitted to us.

It would be to venture off the safe ground of fact, on to

the shifting sands of speculation, to go beyond that which is written and attempt to indicate what we are not told. The precise method Moses employed, to adapt, connect and transcribe these tablets, may be a fascinating pursuit, but speculation has, in the past, led men far from the truth. The facts regarding the origin of the narratives are plainly stated in Genesis, and these need no support from imagination. It is sufficient that all the evidence we have before us, indicates that these records have been kept in their original purity and compiled by Moses. The more rigid the tests applied to Genesis, the more minute the examination of its contents in general and the words in particular, the more it is read in the light of the newer facts of archæology, the more irresistibly does it lead us to the conclusion that Moses—the one outstanding man, who is named by the consensus of ancient thought, and confirmed by all the implication of scripture—compiled the book, using the pre-existing records he named at the end of each section.

## CHAPTER IX

### A CRITIC'S HISTORY OF THE HIGHER CRITICISM

"**H**IGHER Critics" admit that their opinions about the composition of the early books of the Bible are completely at variance with the statements of Scripture itself. It is obviously impossible in this chapter to give anything but an outline of the development of the theories of these critical advocates. In order that there shall be no misrepresentation, Wellhausen, probably the most distinguished critic this school of thought has produced, will be cited to explain its history, and leading modern critics its conclusions. These citations have not been taken out of their context unfairly. They are made in order that the critical point of view may be fairly stated.

The term "Higher Criticism" is used here in its now commonly accepted significance. In its ordinary application it involves "forming and expressing judgments on such matters as the manner of composition, authorship and date of a book." This in itself is a right and proper work, but the term has now acquired in the general mind, a fixed reference to a school of writers whose views of the composition of the books of the Bible contradict those of the Bible itself. The term "Higher Criticism" was used to describe this investigation so as to distinguish it from the textual or lower criticism which deals with questions of text and translation.

Eichhorn was the first to adopt the expression "Higher Criticism" to explain the literary method used in investigating the age, composition and authority of the books of the Bible. In the preface to his *Introduction to the Old Testament*, published in 1787, he says: "I am obliged to give the most pains to a hitherto entirely unworked field, the investigation of the

internal condition of the particular writings of the Old Testament by the help of the higher criticism (a name new to no humanist)." Until 1670 when the *Tractatus Theologic-politicus* was issued by Spinoza, Genesis had been held, first by Jew, and then by Christian, to have been written by Moses. Now let Wellhausen tell in his own words the history of the development of this criticism:—

"Spinoza's bold conjecture that in the present form not only the Pentateuch but also the other historical books of the Old Testament were composed by Ezra, ran far ahead of the laborious investigation of details necessary to solve the previous question of the composition of the Pentateuch. Jean Astruc has the merit of opening the true path of this investigation. He recognised in Genesis two main sources, between which he divided the whole materials of the book, with some few exceptions, and these sources he distinguished by the mark that the one used for God the name Elohim (Gen. i, comp. Exod. vi. 3), and the other the name Jehovah (Gen. ii-iv). Astruc's hypothesis, fortified by the observation of other linguistic differences which regularly corresponded with the variations in the names of God, was introduced into Germany by Eichhorn's *Einleitung in d.A.T.*, and proved there the fruitful and just point of departure for all further enquiry. At first, indeed, it was with but uncertain steps that critics advanced from the analysis of Genesis to that of the other books, where the simple criterion of the alternation of divine names was no longer available. In the hands of the Scotsman Geddes, and the German Vater, the Pentateuch resolved itself into an agglomeration of longer and shorter fragments, between which no threads of continuous connection could be traced (*Fragmentary Hypothesis*). This fragmentary hypothesis was mainly supported by arguments drawn from the middle books of the Pentateuch, and as limited to these it long found wide support. Even De Wette started from it in his investigations; but this was really an inconsistency, for

his fundamental idea was to show throughout all parts of the Pentateuch traces of certain common tendencies, and of one deliberate plan; nor was he far from recognising the close relation between the Elohist of Genesis and the legislation of the middle books.

“But meantime a reaction was rising which sought to direct criticism towards positive rather than negative results. The chief representative of this positive criticism, which now took up a distinct attitude of opposition to the negative criticism of De Wette were, Bleek, Ewald, and Movers. By giving up certain parts of the Pentateuch, especially Deuteronomy, they thought themselves able to vindicate certain other parts as beyond doubt genuinely Mosaic, just in the same way as they threw over the Davidic authorship of certain Psalms, in order to strengthen the claim of others to bear his name. The procedure by which particular ancient hymns or laws were sifted out from the Psalter, or the Pentateuch, had some resemblance to the *decretum absolutum* of theology; but up to a certain point the reaction was in the right. The youthful De Wette and his followers had really gone too far in applying the same measure to all parts of the Pentateuch, and had been satisfied with a very inadequate insight into its composition and relation of its parts. Historical criticism had now to overtake it. De Wette himself felt the necessity for this, and from the year 1817 onwards—the year of the first edition of his *Einleitung*—he took an active and useful part in the solution of the problems of Pentateuchal analysis. The fragmentary hypothesis was now superseded; the connection of the Elohist of Genesis with the legislation of the middle books was clearly recognised; and the Book of Joshua was included as the conclusion of the Pentateuch. The closely knit connection and regular structure of the narrative of the Elohist impressed the critics; it seemed to supply the skeleton which had been clothed with flesh and blood by the Jehovist, in whose contributions there was no such obvious conformity

to a plan. From all this it was naturally concluded that the Elohist had written the Grundschrift, or primary narrative, which lay before the Jehovist, and was supplemented by him (*Supplementary Hypothesis*).

"This view remained dominant till Hupfeld, in 1853, published his investigations on *The Sources of Genesis and the Method of their Composition*. Hupfeld denied that the Jehovist followed the context of the Elohist narrative, merely supplementing it by additions of his own. He pointed out that such Elohist passages in Genesis as clearly have undergone Jehovistic redaction (e.g., chs. xx, xxi, xxii) belong to a different Elohist from the author of Genesis i. Thus he distinguished three independent sources in Genesis, and he assumed further, somewhat inconsequently, that no one of them had anything to do with the others till a fourth and later writer wove them all together into a single whole. This assumption was corrected by Noldeke, who showed that the second Elohist is preserved only in extracts embodied in the Jehovistic book, the Jehovist and the second Elohist form one whole, and the Grundschrift another, and that thus in spite of Hupfeld's discovery, the Pentateuch (Deuteronomy being excluded) was still to be regarded as made up of two great layers" (Julius Wellhausen, *Encl. Britannica*, 9th Ed., Vol. 18).

The statement of this theory, in its final conclusions, as far as it applies to Genesis, is left to Dr. Driver, who, on page 20 of his *Literature of the Old Testament*, writes:—

"The process by which, probably, the Book of Genesis assumed its present form may be represented approximately as follows. First, the two independent, but parallel, narratives of the patriarchal age, 'J' and 'E', were combined into a whole by a compiler whose method of work, sometimes incorporating long sections of each intact (or nearly so), sometimes fusing the parallel accounts into a single narrative, has been sufficiently illustrated. The whole thus formed ('JE') was



afterwards combined with the narrative 'P' by a second compiler, who, adopting 'P' as his framework, accommodated 'JE' to it, omitting in either what was necessary in order to avoid needless repetition, and making such slight redactional adjustments as the unity of his work required. Thus he naturally assigned i. 1 to ii. 3 the first place,—perhaps at the same time removing ii. 4a from its original position as superscription to i. 1, and placing it where it now stands. In appending next from 'J', the narrative of Paradise, he omitted probably the opening words (for the narrative begins abruptly), and to Jahweh added the defining adjunct Elohim, 'God,' for the purpose of identifying expressly the Author of life in ii. 4b ff. with God the Creator in i. 1 ff. Still following 'J,' he took from it the history of Cain and his descendants (iv. 1 to 24), but rejected the list of Seth's descendants (which the fragments that remain show that 'J' must have once contained) except the first two names (iv. 25 f.), and the etymology of Noah (v. 29), in favour of the genealogy and chronological details of 'P' (v. 1-28, 30-32). In vi. 1-9, 17, he combines into one the double narrative of the Flood, preserving, however, more from both narratives than was usually his practice, and in parts slightly modifying the phraseology. In ix. 18-27, he introduces from 'J' the prophetic glance at the character and capabilities of the three great ethnic groups descended from Noah, following it by the account, from 'P,' of the close of Noah's life (ix. 28 f.). Chapter x (the Table of Nations) includes elements derived from both sources; it is succeeded by the account from 'J' of the dispersion of mankind (xi. 1-9). Chapter xi. 10-25 carries on the line of Israel's ancestors from Shem to Terah, from 'P'; xi. 26-32 states particulars respecting Abram's immediate remains taken partly from 'P,' partly from 'J', and necessary as an introduction to the history of Abram in chapter xii. ff. *Mutatis mutandis*, a similar method is followed in the rest of the book."

Nothing original and vital has developed in the criticism of Genesis since the time of Wellhausen. Conjectures have been made as to who these unknown writers were, and where and when they wrote. But to continue the principle adopted in this chapter, the words of one of their leading authorities on Genesis will be quoted instead of our own explanation of them. Dr. Ryle writes (in *Hastings Bible Dictionary*, Vol. ii, p. 145): "The majority of critics incline to the view that 'J' was composed by a dweller in the Southern Kingdom; it is pointed out in support of this view, that the dwelling place of Abraham, and possibly also of Jacob, is, according to 'J,' Hebron, and that the leader of Joseph's brethren is Judah, and not Reuben. Such arguments are obviously precarious; but the alternative opinion, that the writer belonged to the Northern Kingdom, as Kuenen maintains, does not rest on any more convincing proofs."

Concerning "E," Dr. Ryle says: "That 'E' represents an Ephraimitic tradition is the generally accepted opinion. This is based upon the prominence given in its narrative to places and persons with which tradition in the Northern Kingdom would presumably be closer in sympathy than tradition in the Southern."

With regard to the alleged combination of these so-called 'J' and 'E' narratives, he writes: "Whether the work of combining the narratives 'J' and 'E' was effected by one writer, or was the result of a gradual process directed and influenced by a group or succession of 'prophetic' men, must be left to conjecture."

About these narratives, he writes (p. 146): "As to the relative priority of these two documents, scholars are hardly yet in absolute agreement," then a little pathetically he adds:—

"The difficulty which besets the modern student is how to distinguish the substratum of actual history from the accretion of later legend and from the symbolism of Eastern

description. The task is one which will probably defy all the attempts of existing scholarship. Future discoveries may bring fresh light to bear on the Patriarchal narratives."

Notwithstanding all this, it is common to read of "the assured results of modern criticism." The passion for dislocation and dismemberment of the books has admittedly got out of hand, and nothing is more noticeable than their despair in stating their conclusions. For instance, in Lenormant's *Genesis*, p. vii, we read:—

"That while every verse of the Pentateuch has been discussed minutely and word for word, with a view to determining its origin; the details of this necessary labour have become so complicated, that only a professional critic can obtain a general view of its results."

Thus we have the critics' own interpretation of their critical processes and results, so far as it is possible to bring them within the limits of this chapter.

## CHAPTER X

### THE CRITICAL THEORIES NOW OBSOLETE

IT is safe to say that the higher critical theories would never have seen the light of day, had it not been that they were conceived in an age unenlightened by archaeological discovery. The fundamental mistakes they made were primarily due to the lack of knowledge concerning ancient times which existed a century ago when they were originated. They may be summarised as follows:—

- (1) The theories were born in an age of ignorance regarding early civilizations.
- (2) The critics attempted a literary analysis when they knew nothing of early methods of writing.
- (3) The majority assumed that writing was not in use in the days of the Patriarchs.
- (4) Their speculations became saturated with the "myth and legend theory" now generally abandoned.

The first and fundamental reason why the critical theories are now obsolete is that they originated in an age when critics were completely ignorant regarding the civilizations of the times of Genesis. Excavation in the Euphrates valley did not begin until the middle of last century, yet notwithstanding the lack of knowledge which prevailed during the period, critical theories were being invented, and critics thought themselves capable of determining what they imagined to be the literary conditions, or lack of them, appropriate to those times.

The Old Testament was then the only historical light which shone in the darkness, for apart from it, at that time, men

were not in possession of history written earlier than 1,000 B.C. Light concerning early civilizations began to dawn when Layard and Botta commenced uncovering the sites near Nineveh, but the discoveries there did not then take us back beyond the days of the Old Testament prophets. However, by the end of the nineteenth century excavations had gone back to the times of Abraham, now they have reached the times of the Flood and beyond. Yet notwithstanding all this modern research many critics have not abandoned theories, now wholly untenable, which had been constructed upon the obsolete assumptions prevalent in those unenlightened times.

Their fundamental mistake was that they attempted a literary analysis of the Book of Genesis, based on differences of style and the use of special words and phrases, at a time when ancient literary methods were unknown. Any competent estimate of either age, composition, or authorship of a book implies a wide and adequate knowledge of the literary method in use during the period covered by the book. But the higher critical theories were decided before they were in possession of a single document of the Patriarchal age and were thus wholly ignorant of the manner in which records of that age were written. When this is understood, it is not surprising to read in Wellhausen's account of the inception and growth of this literary analysis, about "conjectures," or of the way successive critics scrapped not only the conclusions but the principles on which their predecessors had based their theories. Thus the "two document theory" gave way to the "fragmentary hypothesis" which was contradicted by the "supplementary hypothesis" and this in its turn was displaced by the "crystallization hypothesis." Like men groping in the dark, they wove together their intermixture of short-lived theories. So in the citation made from Wellhausen, in the last chapter he writes of "inconsistency," "reaction," "had really gone too far," "the fragmentary hypothesis was now superseded," this fragmentary theory "remained dominant till Hupfeld denied"

and "his (Hupfeld's) assumption was corrected by Noldeke." This in a history of criticism written by the greatest critic.

With such scanty critical apparatus, and without a single piece of writing of the age of Genesis to assist them, they commenced their analysis, finally dissecting Genesis into a series of unknown writers and editors all of whom they allege could be detected by their "style" or "editorial comments." Although nothing was known at this time, apart from Genesis, of early civilizations, the critics assumed that the times must be excessively crude, yet they committed the fallacy of subjecting Genesis to a type of literary analysis, which was supposed to be modern, just as if it was a piece of modern writing.

This lack of knowledge regarding early history prevailing at the time the critical campaign began, made it possible for the critics to assume that civilization was primitive, and writing almost unknown to the Patriarchs. So unenlightened were men at this time that it was imagined that the wedge-shaped writing which had been found, was only a form of pottery decoration. Until the mounds of Babylonia gave up their tens of thousands of tablets, and these, together with the inscriptions from the land of Egypt, had been deciphered, it was customary for commentators on Genesis, to write a special introduction which defensively suggested that writing was sufficiently prevalent to enable Moses to write! Thus the conservative *Speakers' Commentary* issued in 1871 says on page two, "The first question then which naturally occurs is, was the art of writing known so early as Moses? and especially was it known to the Egyptians and the Jews." Yet recently I have seen tablets dug up, and myself possess some, which were written 1,000 years before Moses, and the great museums now possess thousands of tablets inscribed with cuneiform writing, which were ancient when Moses lived. It is now known that writing was so common a thousand years before the great Lawgiver was born, as to be used for ordinary commercial transactions, for civilization had already reached an advanced stage.

Similarly, the "mythical theory" was adopted fifty years before the commencement of modern archæological research. For it was at the end of the eighteenth century, very soon after the higher critics had begun to formulate their theories, that there swept over Europe a literary fashion which attempted to label as myth all early history which had come down to us. In 1795 Wolf published his famous *Prolegomena*, in which he endeavoured to show that the persons and places referred to by Homer were wholly mythological; he even denied that Homer had any existence. This craze spread like an epidemic and the learned everywhere occupied themselves with finding mythological explanations to account for historical facts. This method of interpretation was instantly taken up by the critical school, who endeavoured to explain the historical facts of Genesis as "nature myth stories." However, in 1874, Schliemann began his excavations, and on the 16th of November, 1876, he found the Tomb of Agamemnon. His find was at first derided, for had not scholars decided that Agamemnon, King of Mycenæ, was merely a mythical creation of an unknown Greek writer? But gradually, yet completely, the obvious facts of archæology undermined this fourth pillar of criticism until it collapsed utterly. The very mummies of so-called mythical and legendary figures, and the palaces in which they lived have been unearthed.

It is therefore as unscientific as it is inaccurate to speak of "the assured results of modern criticism," for these results are neither assured nor modern. Instead of being assured they have been completely undermined; and far from being modern, they are the product of an age of ignorance regarding the times of Genesis, and are now entirely obsolete. Archæology has given us the literary background of the Patriarchal age, and a clear insight into the diffusion of civilization and writing in those early times. Excavation has proved the critical theories to be not only groundless, but false, whereas the Bible statements have been abundantly confirmed.

## CHAPTER XI

### GENESIS DEFENDS ITSELF AGAINST ATTACK

**I**T is necessary that we should examine in greater detail the charges made by the critics against the Book of Genesis. These are:—

- (1) Differences in phraseology and style.
- (2) Repetitions of the same event.
- (3) Evidences of date.
- (4) Differing names for God.

The critics affirm that they can detect differences of phraseology and style in the Book, and say they are able to disjoin and isolate not only verses, but phrases, and to distribute them among writers called "Priestly," "Jehovist," "Elohist," etc. They assert their ability to discover where and when an editor or redactor had amended or added a single word. It is significant that although they claim to know the literary style of these writers, yet they do not know their names or when or where they lived. In fact, the theory that at present holds the field concerning them, is that instead of merely one "Priestly" and one "Jehovist" writer, the book was composed by a school of writers, and that their composition was spread over a considerable period. They add that the writings of this group were subjected to the scrutiny of editors who endeavoured to harmonize the narratives, and that the efforts of these editors received the final attention of an additional editor who scrutinized their work and gave the books the form they now possess. Critics were forced to introduce this final editor but the admission is fatal to their theory, for he would most certainly have been capable of eliminating any discrepancies



or repetitions had he seen them to exist. The least we can assume is that a Hebrew literary editor would have been as capable of detecting a discrepancy as the average critic.

It would be as profitless as it is wearisome to follow the critics through the confused maze of their examples of "differences of style and wording." If we take one simple narrative—the thirty-seventh chapter of Genesis—as an instance of this pretentious literary dissection, we find that they have distributed it in the following manner:—

Verses	1	to	2a	assigned to	"P"
"	2b	to	4	"	"J"
"	5	to	11	"	"E"
"	12	to	18	"	"J"
"	19	to	20	"	"E"
"	21	to		"	"J"
"	22	to	25a	"	"E"
"	25b	to	27	"	"J"
"	28a			"	"E"
"	28b			"	"J"
"	28c	to	30	"	"E"
"	31	to	35	"	"J"
"	36			"	"E"

According to this analysis the chapter becomes a tangle in which the products of "schools of writers" have been worked in alternately, yet the result is a continuous narrative. It has been shown (in Chapters V to VIII) that Moses plainly indicates the sources from which Genesis was compiled, and this is a sufficient answer to this critical medley of unknown schools of writers. It disposes of the intricate theories and assumptions which would assign it in fragments, to unknown persons, who lived in unknown times, and at unknown places, yet about whom the critics claim to know with infallible certainty their "style," "vocabulary" and religious opinions.

The second series of charges made against Genesis is that there are many instances of "duplicate accounts." Dr. Driver writes, "the narrative of the Deluge, vi. 9-13 (the wickedness of the earth) is a duplicate of vi. 5-8." That such a repetition

should exist is certainly significant, particularly that one should follow the other and the true significance of it has been referred to in chapter VII where it was observed that the first account (ch. vi. 5-8) is the end of Noah's tablet, and the second (vers. 9-13) commenced the history of the Flood written by the "sons of Noah." Moreover such a repetition was a common literary method in early writing, and as the records contained in the early chapters of Genesis would require several tablets, it served to connect the record left by the sons of Noah with that written by Noah himself. The next alleged duplicate is said to be contained in the two promises made to Sarah of a son in xvii. 16-19 and xviii. 9-15. This too, is quite naturally explained when we realize that we have in this section the tablets of both Isaac and Ishmael. Many theologians do not seem to realize that this charge of "repetition" could be brought against nearly every piece of ancient writing. It is characteristic of the style of the time and is a testimony to their ancient character. In this connection Professor Arno Poebel in his work on cuneiform *Historical Texts*, issued by the University of Pennsylvania in 1914, in commenting on some ancient Sumerian tablets found at Nippur (Calneh) writes: "readers of the Bible, moreover, will recognize the quaint principle of partial repetition or paraphrase."

The third instance quoted by Dr. Driver is that "The section xxvii. 46 to xxviii. 9 differs appreciable in style from xxvii. 1-45." Again significantly enough these two passages are found in the section where we have the records of two persons, Isaac and Ishmael. It is not suggested by Dr. Driver that there is any discrepancy between them, that one should emphasize the side of Isaac and the other that of Ishmael is just what we should expect.

The fourth and fifth instances of Dr. Driver's criticism is that in xxviii. 19 and xxxv. 15 "we find two explanations of the name Bethel, and two explanations of the name 'Israel'

in xxxii. 28 and xxxv. 10. Esau is described as already resident in Edom, whereas in xxxvi. 6, his migration thither is attributed to causes which could not have come into operation until after Jacob's return to Canaan" (*Genesis*, p. 4). This criticism is presumably based on the assumption that Esau had no cattle until after Jacob's return from Padan-Aram. But Jacob did not go away to Padan-Aram until he was seventy-seven, there is not a word in this passage which could be said to be in the slightest degree improbable. Surely Dr. Driver was aware that Mount Seir is only at the southern end of the Dead Sea, and that Jacob was living at Beersheba, merely fifty miles away. The critics constantly speak of these Patriarchs as nomad sheiks, and a return to Canaan and a subsequent parting would not be abnormal. I submit that no difficulty exists.

Having dealt with all the alleged duplicate passages and differences of explanation which this leading moderate critic makes on *Genesis*, I leave the reader to judge between *Genesis* and critic.

The next line of attack relates to evidences of date, for certain passages are alleged to indicate a date later than Moses. In the words of Dr. Driver (*Genesis*, p. xv): "There are indeed passages in *Genesis* which cannot reasonably be supposed to have been written until after Israel had been settled in Canaan, as xii. 6, xiii. 7, xiv. 14 (Dan), xxi. 32, 34 and xxvi. 1 (the Philistines, if what is stated on x. 14 is correct, were not in Palestine till the age of Rameses III, considerably after the Exodus), xxxvi. 31 (a verse which obviously presupposes the existence of the monarchy in Israel), xl. 15 (Canaan called the 'land of the Hebrews')."

As the first two passages refer to the same situation, they may be taken together. In xii. 6, we read, "and the Canaanite was then in the land"; in xiii. 7, "and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt then in the land." All the difficulty vanishes when these sentences are understood as explanations made by

Moses when compiling Genesis from tablets. When the context is read carefully, it will be seen that he is referring to the two localities, Shechem and Bethel, where Abraham had lived temporarily when he first entered the land. When Abraham arrived in Palestine from Mesopotamia he pitched his tent at Shechem—then the Canaanite dwelt in this district—and when he continued his journey southwards to Bethel, he found “the Canaanite and the Perizzite” were inhabiting the district. Now it is evident by the use of the two names “Canaanite” and “Perizzite,” that the “Canaanite” is to be understood here as it often is elsewhere, as merely one of the many tribes then inhabiting Palestine. But these notes by Moses were not written until the people were on the margin of the land and about to enter it after the forty years in the wilderness, that is, a period of over four hundred years after Abraham’s brief stay at Shechem and Bethel. What then was the difference in the habitation of these tribes between the times of Abraham and Moses? This is what Moses is indicating, and this we find from Numbers xiii. 29, where we read that in the days of Moses, “the Amorite dwell in the mountains and the Canaanite dwell by the sea and along by the side of Jordan.” Thus in the four hundred years which had elapsed, the Canaanite had lost his foothold, or had moved, from the mountainous country round Shechem and Bethel, to the low lands along the sea coast and the Jordan valley. The Canaanitish clans which the people would meet on entering these parts of the land had therefore changed, and Moses here has made a note to indicate that the inhabitants of Abraham’s day are no longer living in the same places. The addition of these notes, therefore, is a clear attestation that the original was written in Abraham’s or Isaac’s time, and that the note explaining the new situation was made by Moses.

The next objection concerns the word “Dan” in ch. xiv. 14. The critics assume that it is the town of Dan taken in the days of the Judges which is referred to. This assumption

cannot be proved or pressed, the scholars of ancient days would know as well as the critics the date when Laish was named "Dan." Such repetition of simple names are constantly occurring in ancient tablets, and no Assyrian scholar would jump to the conclusion that there was necessarily a contradiction. In all probability the reference was to an ancient town of this name in existence long before the person or town of Laish was taken by the tribe of Dan.

The next difficulty raised by Dr. Driver is one which he himself admits to have made by his conjecture that the Philistines are referred to in x. 14. It is not a Bible difficulty, but one which his own supposition has created.

The final, and to the critics the most decisive passage in Genesis which they think to be indicative of the late date on which it was written, is in chapter xxxvi. 31, where we read, "These are the kings of Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel." Dr. Driver says of this verse that, "it obviously presupposes a monarchy in Israel," and, therefore, hints that it was written after Saul began to reign. The passage does not necessarily presuppose this, for it simply says, "reigned *over* the children of Israel," and not reigned *in* Israel. Pharaoh reigned over the children of Israel, while in Egypt the whole nation had become subjects of the king of Egypt. The opening verses of Exodus inform us that this sovereignty had become arbitrary and despotic, that they were then the slaves of Pharaoh who fears that they may "fight, so as to get them up out of the land" (Exod. i. 10). In order to prevent their escape the king commanded that all male children born should be put to death. They said of themselves that they were Pharaoh's bondmen. This phrase "before there reigned any king over Israel" is a note of explanation, as all are agreed, but who is more likely than Moses to have written it? He knew of Pharaoh's reigning over Israel. But there is a further reference. In Deuteronomy vii. 8 we are told that "the Lord brought you out with a

mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh." In the song of Moses the Dukes of Edom and kingship are again mentioned together. After the overthrow of Pharaoh in the sea we read, "the Dukes of Edom shall be amazed," "the Lord shall reign for ever and ever," and in the final poem written just before he died (Deut. xxxiii), Moses speaks of the God of Jeshurun being king in Jeshurun (i.e. Israel). We have already seen that it was just at this period of his life that Moses wrote some of these "notes of explanation."

Further evidence that this list of Edomite kings ended at the time Moses wrote, is to be found in the fact that when 1 Chronicles i. repeats this list from Genesis xxxvi, it adds one phrase about the last king, Hadar, that "he died." In Genesis this fact is recorded of all the kings named before Hadar, so it would appear that he was still living in Moses' day. But Dr. Driver makes much of this "difficulty," and referring to the list of kings who reigned over Edom writes, "the last-mentioned king will actually have lived just before the time of Saul." But nearly eight hundred years elapsed between the date of Esau's marriage and "the time of Saul," and this would involve eight kings reigning for eight hundred years. To such lengths will such a scholar as Dr. Driver go to support what he and the critics maintain to be the most decisive argument indicating a late date. In those days eighty years may well have been ample for eight kings to reign, as none of their sons succeeded to the kingship. Ninety years elapsed between Esau's marriage and Jacob going down to Egypt, and two hundred and fifty years more before Moses arrived at the edge of the land of Canaan, in all a period of three hundred and forty years; more than sufficient time for eight kings to hold power over a clan. Yet there is scarcely a critical attack on Genesis which does not assert this so-called "difficulty" to be overwhelming. On such trivial grounds has the authenticity of Genesis been questioned.

We have examined this principal and most expert witness, and have fairly and honestly endeavoured to permit him to state his accusations in his own words, nothing relevant being omitted. His charges have been considered and it is submitted, disposed of completely. The one-sided nature of the evidence given by this witness is apparent when it is seen that he has merely brought forward statements which he thinks tell against the book being true and ancient history. On the other hand he has omitted in his summary every passage which speaks in its defence. In this paragraph of Dr. Driver's regarding "evidences of date," he says nothing whatever about such a verse as Genesis x. 19, which refers to Sodom and Gomorrah as towns then in existence, and refers to them as landmark, notwithstanding that these cities were destroyed beyond recognition as early as Abraham's day. He does not similarly deduce from this verse that it must have been written before the days of Abraham, when they were destroyed.

When the poverty of the critical case against Genesis is compared with the overwhelming evidence the Book provides in its own defence, the verdict must surely be certain.

The one remaining critical objection, that of the use of the Divine Names, is dealt with in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE USE OF THE NAME AND TITLE FOR GOD IN GENESIS

**T**HE chief imputation made against Genesis by critics is that different names for the Almighty are used in various parts of the Book. Each different writer, they allege, had only one name for God. On this assumption they endeavour to account for the use of different names, by asserting that each section or verse where a particular Divine name is mentioned, indicates that it was written by the writer who uses that name exclusively or predominantly. It was on the basis of this use of the Divine name in Genesis that critics first elaborated their theories, until at length they represented the Book as a piece of literary patchwork, and extended its application to the remaining Books of the Old Testament. As the critical 'documentary theory' of the composition of Genesis originated in the supposed exclusive use by one writer of the name of Jehovah, this document theory and the use of the name Jehovah will be considered together in this chapter.

It was Jean Astruc, a French physician, who invented the theory of separate documents based on these names. He found that in the first thirty-five verses of Genesis, i.e. chapters i. 1 to ii. 4a, the word 'Elohim' (God) was used, and no other Divine name, while in chapters ii. 4b to iii. 24 the only designation given is 'Jehovah Elohim' (Lord God), except where Satan uses the word God. The passages must have been written by different writers, he said, for if Moses wrote the whole of it himself first-hand, then we would have to attribute to him this singular variation, in patches, of the Divine name. He then divided the Book up into little sections according to the Divine name used. Thus he alleged



that a writer who used 'Elohim' was the author of the Elohist document, and the writer who used 'Jehovah', was called the 'Jehovist.' As this two-fold theory was found to fail as an explanation, seeing that some verses which were obviously written by the same person contained both names for God, another contrivance was devised in order to separate the verse into two parts. This was done by introducing an editor, who combined these two documents into one. Even this complication did not satisfy, for critics had to admit that the word Elohim (God) appeared in passages which they attributed to the writer who was supposed to use the name 'Jehovah' exclusively. A loophole out of this difficulty was soon devised by alleging another redactor, who, it is asserted has altered the Divine names.

After a century of such conjectures the following elaborate tangle has been produced by the critics to explain the use of 'Jehovah' and 'Elohim' in Genesis. Two different writers, or rather schools of writers, some time after the reign of Saul, produced two documents known as 'J' and 'E.' A redactor called 'RJE' combined these two documents into one. In the course of his editing he is supposed to have taken pieces from 'J' then 'E.' sometimes altering, at other times adding a passage of his own. They assert that this editor has done his work so well that it is difficult to separate the original writings. Another redactor revised and again altered this composition. Then they claim that a further document was written nearly a thousand years after Moses, called 'P,' and a redactor called 'EP' added this document to 'JE,' inserting details of his own authorship. In this way Genesis has been reduced to a series of confused fragments and authors, in order to account for the way the name of God is used in the Book. Sometimes the critics say that the Bible was written just like all other books, but no other book was ever written in this fashion. Some years ago a critical edition of Genesis was issued in which the parts written by these alleged authors

and editors are represented in inks of various colours, it became known as the 'Rainbow Bible.' Dr. Skinner's volume on 'The Divine Names in Genesis' is an illustration of the tangle into which this subject has been tied. The critics have to admit that their literary expedients break not only the logical, but also the grammatical sequence of passages; it is confusion confounded. Wellhausen, one of the greatest of critics, acknowledged that the result was an 'agglomeration of fragments.'

But Astruc had found one important verse of Scripture to which he appealed in support of his theory, and all the succeeding critics have made this the foundation text of their arguments. In Exodus vi. 3 we read, "I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty (El-Shaddai), but by My name Jehovah I was not known unto them." This, the critics maintain, is a clear and explicit statement, and a leading critic writes, "unless the writer of Exodus vi 3 contradicts himself not one of these passages (in Genesis) can have issued from his hands" (Carpenter, *Oxford Hexateuch*, Vol. I, p. 34).

On the other hand the defenders of Genesis, most unreasonably dislike the critics making their stand on this text of Scripture ("by my name Jehovah I was not known to them," Exod. vi. 3). They maintain that the verse cannot mean precisely what it appears to mean, because the name of Jehovah is in fact used nearly two hundred times in Genesis. The usual explanation given of this by anti-critics is, "though the name was ancient, and known to the Patriarchs, its *full meaning* was not known to them, and so God was not manifested to them by it," or "the name Jehovah was known, but not known to be understood." These interpretations overlook, first the fact that God distinctly states the alternative way by which He appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and secondly there is no special explanation of the full meaning of the name, other than the simple yet profound declaration 'I AM THAT I AM.'

Further, in the endeavour to show that Exodus vi. 3 cannot mean what it says, appeal is made to such passages as Genesis iv. 26, "then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah." But it is found that the name occurs even before this, so for an instance, the editor of the *Companion Bible* who was an anti-critic, says of this verse: "If this refers to Divine worship it is not true, for Abel and Cain both began, and their descendants doubtless followed their example. What was really begun, was the *profanation of the name of Jehovah.*" This is just as much conjecture as that of the critics, for the verse does not contain a hint of such a thing, and had this been the case it would have said so. Such evasions are pathetically ridiculous attempts to get out of a difficulty. Many similar unreasonable and unwarrantable wriggles could be cited where commentators, in attempting to rid themselves of the perplexing passage, have abandoned the plain meaning of words.

A more elaborate, but even less convincing type of explanation is offered by that able Jewish scholar, H. M. Weiner, who writes:—

" . . . suffice it to say that in the opinion of the writer the reading 'I made known' is clearly right. The meaning, which at first sight appears to be the same, is seen, in the light of comparative evidence as to primitive ideas, to be absolutely different. It appears that men in a certain state of civilization hold that names have an objective existence, and regard the utterance of a man's name by himself as giving his interlocutor a certain power over him. There is plenty of Old Testament evidence to show that the early Hebrews believed in the objective existence of names. It seems that here the utterance of the Name of God, not in any incidental or evasive fashion (as, for instance, in quotation, 'Thus saith the Lord,' etc., in Exod. iii. 15), but as a part of the direct formula 'I am the LORD,' would have an

esoteric meaning for the ancient Hebrew. The true effect of the phrase was not to reveal a new name or give a fresh meaning to an old one, but to create a bond between Deity and people, and to give Moses and the Israelites a direct pledge that the whole power of Deity would be exerted on their behalf" (*Origin of the Pentateuch*, p. 38).

Numerous contradictory explanations have been given both by critics and defenders to account for the fact that in Exodus vi. 3, we are told that God was not known to the Patriarchs by the name of Jehovah, while on the other hand, Genesis frequently represents Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as using the name. *I submit that all these contradictory explanations and evasions have been due to the fundamental mistake made by both sides in assuming that no part of Genesis had been written until the time of Moses.* This fatal assumption has resulted in the desperate literary tangle of the critics, and the difficulties of the defenders. The critics find themselves in the hopeless position of employing numerous editors, who had before them the explicit statement of Exodus vi. 3, when they are said to have edited Genesis. Are we supposed to assume that the final editor was unaware that he was contradicting himself? The critical 'explanations' only increase their difficulties. All these evasions are made because neither side in this great and prolonged debate has realised that the Book of Genesis is a record written by the persons whose names are stated in it, that the earlier writers used a primitive script, and the later tablets were written in the cuneiform script and language of the day. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the tablets which Abraham would take with him from Ur of the Chaldees, would be written in the cuneiform script prevalent in that city. When Moses came into possession of these tablets he would find on some of them the cuneiform equivalent for 'God.' An instance of this may be seen in the tablet of Creation, where 'God' is used thirty-four times, and no other Divine title or name

appears. In others he would find in addition the cuneiform equivalent of 'El Shaddai' (God Almighty or All Sufficient), the name by which Exodus vi. 3 plainly states He appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

There are some noteworthy facts regarding this word 'Shaddai' to which sufficient attention has not been given. In the first place, the full composite title 'El Shaddai' as stated in Exodus vi. 3, is not used elsewhere than in Genesis, and these uses are on important occasions (see xvii. 1, xxviii. 3, xxxv. 11, xlvi. 3). The next impressive fact is that the word 'Shaddai' alone is used forty-two times, and in almost every instance by persons writing or living outside Palestine, and in contact with Babylonian cuneiform modes of expression. Job uses it thirty-one times, Balaam who came from Mesopotamia uses it. Naomi, the Moabitess, and Ezekiel the prophet in Babylonia. This accounts for thirty-eight of the forty-two uses of the word, and is surely significant.

We have an account in Exodus iii. of God's revelation of Himself to Moses at Horeb, and of his commission to go down into Egypt to bring up the people out of slavery, "and Moses said unto God, Behold when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you, and they shall say to me, *what is His name?* What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and He said, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Jehovah the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you, this is My name for ever."

It is necessary at this juncture to note the difference between a *name* and a *title*. The word 'God' is not a *name*, it is a *title*. Jehovah was the *name* of God. This distinction may be seen in the second commandment: "Thou shalt not take the *name* of *Jehovah* thy God in vain." The Jew did not

mind writing and speaking of God (Elohim), but he so regarded this commandment that he did not utter the name Jehovah when reading the Scriptures, but substituted the word 'Adonai' for it. Moreover, the Hebrews spoke of *the* Elohim, the true God, as contrasted with false gods, but never did they speak or write of *the* Jehovah, for there was only one Jehovah in heaven and earth. In Genesis we read of 'my God,' but never of 'my Jehovah'; they spoke of 'the God of Israel,' but never of the 'Jehovah of Israel,' for there was only one Jehovah. I do not stay to enter into the question of the exact pronunciation of the name. God says: "I am Jehovah, that is my name, and my glory I will not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."

When men began to make 'gods many and lords many,' they called them 'gods'; but to distinguish them from each other, they gave each a *name*. So that the word 'god' ceased to be used, even in Scripture, exclusively of the Creator of the heavens and the earth. It is used of idols, for we find Laban calling his teraphim which Rachael had stolen, 'gods' (elohim), and Jacob does the same. In Exodus xii. 12, we read of the 'gods (elohim) of Egypt.' Chemosh and Dagon are the names of, and are called, 'elohim.' In early times Babylonia had dozens of 'gods' but each of them had a distinguishing name, as well as the title 'god.' The names of more than eighty Babylonian 'gods' who were worshipped in the time of Abraham, and whose names have been found in tablets with the determinative 'ilu' (god) may be seen in Dr. Herman Rankes' *Early Babylonian Personal Names of the Hammurabi Dynasty* (p. 197 ff.), published in series D of *Researches and Treatises of the University of Pennsylvania*. When we reach the time of Moses, matters in this respect were even worse, for there were over forty petty states in Egypt, each with its own chief god, worshipped in the temple at the principal city of its nome or state. All these gods had other gods associated with them, a wife goddess, or sons,

called 'gods,' and each in his own territory was regarded as a 'god almighty,' as the creator and preserver of all the world and mankind. The Egyptian seemed to see nothing illogical in these scores of gods, each being creator and ruler of the world. All of them were given names to distinguish them from each other. Besides this, each town and village possessed its own god. The Thebian Recension of the 'Book of the Dead' gives the names of over 450 gods and the Pyramid texts contain references to over 200. Although the names of many of the Egyptian gods have been lost to us, those of over 2200 are known. Amidst all this polytheism, it became necessary when God was to reveal Himself, as He did in Exodus vi. in an especial manner both to the Hebrews and to the Egyptians, that He should use a *name* to distinguish Himself the only true God, from all the false gods around. That name was a most significant one, 'I AM.'

When Moses, at a later date than the revelation of Exodus vi, was compiling the Book of Genesis, with his Patriarchal tablets before him, he would find the cuneiform equivalent of El Shaddai on many of them. Now that God has given Himself a new name, Jehovah (a personal pronoun, not a title), which word for God should he use in transcribing these ancient tablets? Every translator of the Bible has been confronted with the same problem. The title 'God' may be repeated, but how is the description or name—the cuneiform equivalent of El Shaddai,—to be transcribed where necessary, unless the new revealed name of God, i.e. Jehovah is used? To use any other name would be to create a misunderstanding in the minds of those for whom Genesis was being prepared. The translators of the Bible into Chinese had the same problem. Which of the Chinese names should be used? *Tien-chu*, meaning 'the Lord of heaven,' or *Shang-ti*, the Confucian name for the 'Supreme Ruler,' or *Shin* which may mean 'spirit.' If there had been a pure name or description for 'God' in China, a name not debased by association with the religions of the country, there would have been no difficulty. In

Arabic-speaking countries, the word 'Allah' is used for the one God in heaven, the singular of Elohim is 'Elah,' in the Arabic it is 'ilah,' and with the article 'al 'ilah,'—the modern equivalent of 'Allah.' This is a good Arabic title for God, but if I speak of Allah to a Christian, or Jew, living in an Arabic-speaking country, I at once associate myself with Mohammedanism.

What name then was Moses to write? God had revealed Himself to him by the name of Jehovah, and that name had been announced to the children of Israel in Egypt and was revered by them. Now that the ancient records of their race, preserved in purity and handed down by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were being edited and possibly translated by Moses; what name should he use, seeing that the ancient title 'El Shaddai,' God Almighty or All Sufficient, had been corrupted by its use in connection with scores of other 'gods' each of whom were called 'god almighty' by their devotees? The most natural course was to use the name Jehovah. Thus then, is the presence of the word Jehovah in Genesis quite naturally explained. Not by assuming a complicated jumble of tangled documents written by unknown writers as the critics do, or by an evasion of the literal meaning of Exodus vi. 3, but by the inspiration by which God led Moses in most instances to translate 'El Shaddai' by the word Jehovah,—His distinguishing name, which separated Him from the heathen gods around.

When it is understood that Genesis is composed of a series of tablets as indicated by the formula: "These are the origins of . . ."; it will be seen that it aids in a most significant way, in explaining the remarkable use of the name and title given to Jehovah God. In our survey of the first tablet we saw that the only Divine name on it was 'God,' also that the contents of this tablet were a personal revelation to Adam. At the dawn of history it was sufficient to use the name 'God,' for at that time there were no other 'gods,' so that a name in addition to a title was obviously unnecessary in the first tablet.



The second tablet (ii. 4b—iv. 26) written, as we noticed, before the beginning of the Flood, contains both the title 'God' and the name 'Jehovah.' In this tablet the name and title are always used together except by the tempter and Eve, and this exclusive combined use is peculiar to this tablet. Is not this due to the revelation, given during this period, of the cuneiform equivalent of the title El Shaddai, now translated Jehovah? It was of the days of Adam's grandson, Enosh, that we read, "then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah." Hence, in this tablet, we have both a name and a title for God, for the most probable reason, that at this time men began to worship other gods, so that then a distinguishing name became a necessity.

"Higher Criticism" originated on the basis of the changes in the use of the Divine name and title, but now the critical case falls to the ground on the new evidence produced. This evidence not only fully accounts for this variation, but explains its necessity, as it applies to Genesis. The late Dr. W. H. Green said in his *The Higher Criticism and the Pentateuch* (p. 89), "It may be observed, however, that so far as there is anything remarkable in the alternation of these names in the Pentateuch it is confined almost entirely to the Book of Genesis and chiefly to the earlier portion of that Book."

It will be noticed that the tablets of which Genesis is composed, sometimes correspond with the divisions which critics have formed on other grounds. The critics have endeavoured to divide the Book up into documents, and to assert that they were written at a late date which would agree with their theory. On the other hand the writer of this essay came to Genesis simply to find its natural divisions, and discovered that by adhering to the proper use of the formula: "These are the origins of . . ."; that the book revealed its own original records, and thereafter the critical and other difficulties, especially those connected with the use of the name and title for God, vanished.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE TREND OF HIGHER CRITICISM

**I**T is sometimes asserted that the effect of "Higher Criticism" has been to strengthen faith in God's revelation of Himself in Scripture. Is this in fact the harvest produced by the critical seed?

It is significant that the first critics were Hobbes, the English Deist, and Spinoza, the Dutch Jewish philosopher. These men were definitely antagonistic not only to the claims made by Scripture as being a revelation of God, but also to Christianity, for they had little or no belief in the possibility of such a revelation. Eichhorn said he borrowed the name "higher criticism" from these critics and humanists.

Of Eichhorn, the father of criticism, Cheyne, writing in the *Founders of Old Testament Criticism*, p. 16, said: "It was his hope to contribute to the winning back of the educated classes to religion." Germany was then beginning an anti-supernatural crusade, and the rationalists said that miracles could not happen, so Eichhorn thought that he could make belief in God and Scripture easier by getting rid of the miraculous from the Bible. He refused, however, to go as far as Spinoza, for he said: "to attribute a part of the writings of Moses to Ezra is to mock human intelligence." But having rejected Scripture as the inspired revelation of God, he had blinded his own eyes, for even Ewald, who did so much to extend this criticism, said of him: "we cannot fail to recognise that from the religious point of view the Bible was a closed book to him."

The next great critic, De Wette, swept aside Eichhorn's belief in the Mosaic authorship of Genesis, even though it had been split up into "Jehovistic" and "Elohistic"

fragments. Eichhorn's bait had failed to win the "educated," so De Wette went further and abandoned the historical basis of the Book, alleging that it was written centuries after Moses, therefore, he said, the contents were not fact, but legends handed down verbally and written long after the events which gave them colour.

At this point the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and His clear statements about Genesis, became an obstacle in the way of this destructive criticism. So Semler, another critic, propagated what is called the "accommodation theory," by which he robbed the Lord Jesus Christ of His right to be a witness, or worse still excluded Him as an unreliable witness, by representing that, though He spoke of Moses having written certain things, He was only accommodating Himself to the errors current around Him. This theory is obviously false, for it is demonstrably untrue to say that He acquiesced in the misunderstandings of His time. On the contrary, in all His works and words He strove to correct those misunderstandings.

Sir William Robertson Nicoll records a conversation he had with Wellhausen in Germany: "We spoke of Robertson Smith. I said that Smith held the Bible to be inspired and historically true, along with Wellhausen's views, and that he also held to the truth of miracles. Wellhausen shook his head, and said that, while he did not deny that miracles were possible, there was no historical proof of them, and that Smith's position was *sehr sonderbad*, but he had no reason to suspect his good faith. I asked him what he thought of the testimony of Christ. He replied that no doubt Christ was mistaken about the Old Testament, but that as He did not understand about the earth and the sun, so He did not about the Bible, and it mattered little. I said that the natural effect of such views was to shake the place of the Bible in people's minds, to which he replied that he was pressed by this difficulty—that he did not see any way out of it—that he was

angry with Stade, of Giessen, for preaching his (Wellhausen's) *theories* as gospel". But in England these *theories* were swallowed whole, especially by Robertson Smith. C. W. Emmet, the advanced critic writes thus of the sequel, "the famous trial and expulsion of W. Robertson Smith from the Free Church College of Aberdeen in 1881 on the ground of his Biblical articles in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*; his writings are now the text-books of a quite moderate and orthodox criticism." This same writer says: "They were right when they spoke about the thin end of the wedge. Once the Church surrendered the traditional view of inspiration, once it allowed a single historical statement or miracle of the Bible to be questioned, or admitted the possibility of mistakes and contradictions, it became impossible to say *a priori* where the process would stop. It abandoned a hard-and-fast theory in favour of facts, and it must now follow where the facts lead it. Where can the line logically be drawn? Nearly all responsible teachers of the Church would now deny the historicity of the Creation or Deluge narratives." It is surely significant that just after this was written about these critics throwing out the Deluge narratives, the great archaeological scholars began to write whole chapters about the historicity of the Flood, the evidences of which have so lately been discovered by Sir Leonard Woolley and Professor Stephen Langdon.

Wellhausen, the last of the great theory-producing critics became a mere rationalist. Just in the proportion that his destructive criticism caused his Bible to diminish, so his faith grew less and less until it ebbed away. He pathetically admitted that he had made havoc of his own faith. Next came Kuenen, who, writing of religions generally, said: "For us the religion of Israel is one of these religions, nothing less and nothing more" (*Religion of Israel*, p. 37). So these men went from faith to doubt, and from doubt to radical unbelief. It did not and could not remain there, the state of

mind produced by this process was carried to its logical conclusion by the issue of Friedrich Delitzsch's *The Great Deception*. And quite recently a critic in this country, W. F. Lofthouse, as Principal of Handsworth College, Birmingham, gave it as his opinion that "save for some few beliefs of uncertain origin, the older Hebrews were little better than what would now be called animists." It is, however, true to say, that many of the present generation of critics have recoiled from the "advanced position," and have hesitated to press the critical theories to their logical conclusions.

It is the obvious bias of certain critics which deprives them of the right to be judges. They have ransacked the Bible to find matter for criticism. Even "moderate" critics like Dr. Driver, cite, as we have noted, passages which they think will tell against Genesis having been written as the book indicates, but omit references to evidence which speaks in its favour. Professor Sayce, in his *Higher Criticism and the Monuments* (p. 21), wrote: "The Bible has been tortured in an attempt to make it give evidence against itself, no point has been overlooked which could tell against it, no interpretation neglected which could assist in the work of destruction." This is criticism with such a bias that it constitutes the critic a hostile fault-finder, and unfits him to be judge.

"The critical conclusions received little favour in Great Britain and America, until within recent years (especially through the influence of A. B. Davidson, W. Robertson Smith, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs)" (Hastings, *Bible Dictionary*, Vol. III, p. 604). Thus a strange thing happened, criticism which admittedly began as an attack on Scripture by rationalists outside the church, is now taught in theological colleges, so that now it is from the pulpit that the belief of the average person in the Bible is attacked. Although the majority of ministerial candidates are instructed in the dogmas of this criticism, yet their church creeds are based on the absolute truth of the Scriptures. Moreover, soon after their education

in these critical principles, they are asked to pledge themselves to defend the Scriptures they have learned to impugn. For instance, a candidate for ordination in the Church of England is asked, "Do you *unfeignedly* believe in all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament?" Is the answer given to this question the whole truth, the sole truth and nothing but the truth?

The tide has turned. There is evidence that the work of destruction has spent its force, it has wrought its wreckage in the faith of men and its havoc in the Church of God. But, the work of reconstruction has begun. Real historical research—archæology—is giving us back the ancient narratives as records of truth.

## CHAPTER XIV

### BIBLE AND BABYLONIAN CREATION TABLETS

**E**XCAVATORS in Iraq have found many tablets containing accounts of the Creation and Flood. The versions given in these tablets differ considerably from the Bible account; in fact, there is as much dissimilarity between them as between a mud hut and a king's palace. Both the hut and the palace are places in which to live, both have windows and doors. In just such a way there are resemblances between the Bible and the Babylonian tablets, and because of these resemblances, two opposite views have been taken:—

(1) That the Babylonian accounts are corruptions of the Bible.

(2) That the Bible accounts are the crude Babylonian accounts purified and stripped of their corrupt elements.

Those who hold the true historical character of Genesis, accept the former, the higher critical school the latter alternative.

Concerning the most important fact of all, both are agreed, for none can doubt that the Biblical records are immeasurably superior to the Babylonian. The Bible account is simple in its ideas, and irreproachable in its teaching about God, while the Babylonian tablets are complex and polytheistic. The difference may be compared to that between the pure waters of the springs at the source of the Thames, and the contaminated waters of the docks of London. There are resemblances between a river at its source and at its termination, both are in one sense the same river; so in Genesis we find the story at its pure source, while in the Babylonian it is seen at its contaminated development.

Why then do the critics adopt the attitude that the Genesis account of Creation and the Flood are purified copies of the Babylonian tablets? The answer is simple. Having taken up the critical attitude which alleges that Genesis must have been written at a late date, they are forced by this supposition to say that the narratives were borrowed from Babylonia, notwithstanding the fact that the Bible account is unquestionably simpler, purer and superior.

Resemblances in these accounts do exist, but the Babylonian similarities are embedded in the mass of corrupt and graceless mythologies, with troops of gods wrangling in jealous rivalry, and grotesque conceptions of the universe. Let one quotation suffice—taken from the fourth tablet of the Babylonian story of Creation—the lines which contain the nearest resemblance to Creation are:—

Marduk rested viewing her corpse  
 In parting the carcase, conceiving a cunning plan  
 He split her like a mashed fish into two parts  
 With her half he established and guarded the heavens  
 He drew the bolt, he placed a guard  
 He directed them not to let her waters escape  
 He passed over the heavens, he circled the regions  
 He set before Apsu the dwelling of Nudimmud.

It is in the story of the Flood that the Babylonian tablets more closely resemble the Bible record. These similarities are:—

- (1) The Flood a punishment for sin.
- (2) Command to build a ship and preserve life.
- (3) Use of bitumen to make the ship water-tight.
- (4) Grounding of the ship upon a mountain.
- (5) Offering sacrifice.

So that the main framework of the story agrees with that in Genesis, but there the agreement ends, as apart from



this the Babylonian account is mainly crude polytheistic quarrelling, with references to a host of scheming gods who are stated to "cower like dogs" and "crowd like flies." The pure original version as we have it in Genesis has become so corrupted, confused and distorted, as to be, other than in its framework, deformed almost beyond recognition.

It is sometimes said by critics that the Patriarchs borrowed their religion from the nations around them. The opposite is surely the truth; instead of accepting the religions of the nations around them, they deliberately rejected those cults. Abraham lived the first seventy-five years of his life in the Euphrates valley, Jacob spent the latter, Joseph the greater, and Moses the earlier part of his life in Egypt. Yet what is the effect of this contact with Babylonian and Egyptian religious systems? When Abraham lived in Ur of the Chaldees it is possible that he may have been influenced by the idolatry around, but at the call of God he cut clean adrift from its crude polytheism. As regards Egypt, one of the most significant facts is that the whole emphasis of religion concerned itself with the fate at death and destiny in the next world, as explained in the "Book of the Dead." But this Egyptian emphasis never found a place in the religious life of the Patriarchs. It is surely remarkable that nowhere in Genesis is there the slightest trace of this "death religion" having any effect on these men, so much so that references to the state of the soul at death are not made in Genesis.

Such lapses as the making of the "golden calf" are immediately checked. The Israelites are warned against copying the corrupt cults of the peoples around: "After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, ye shall not do, and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do" (Lev. xviii. 3).

## CHAPTER XV

### THE NEW TESTAMENT USE OF GENESIS

**T**HERE can be no doubt whatever that the writers of the New Testament so believed the statements recorded in the book of Genesis, that they made its narratives the basis on which some of the most important doctrinal statements of Christianity are founded. Outstanding instances of this use of Genesis are those made by the Apostle Paul in Romans v, and 1 Corinthians xv. In Romans, he writes, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin . . . nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression. . . ." He continues the contrast between Adam and Christ, in the effect of Adam's sinful act in the Garden and Christ's righteous act on the Cross. If a person assumes Adam and the Fall to be merely myths, then the great result attributed in this passage to the Lord Jesus Christ in dealing with the effects of that sin, is wholly negated.

In the second passage (1 Cor. xv) Adam is referred to as the head of the human race, "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive . . . so also it is written the first man Adam became a living soul, the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit . . . the first man is of the earth, earthy, the second man is of heaven." Reference is made to the Creation in 1 Timothy ii. 12, and Hebrews iv. 4. There can be no doubt that these passages are based upon the narratives of Genesis.

Paul, in 2 Corinthians xi. 3, writes, "the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty." Hebrews xi. 4 tells us how "by

faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," and 1 John iii. 12, says, "not as Cain who was of the wicked one and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous." Jude writes that "Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied," and Hebrews xi. 7, that "By faith Noah being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark," and Peter in his first Epistle (iii. 20) refers to the time "when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls, were saved through water," and in his second Epistle (ii. 5) he adds that God "spared not the ancient world, but preserved Noah with seven others, a preacher of righteousness, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly."

The outstanding passage in the New Testament illustrative of absolute faith in God, attributes that faith to Abraham. The sixth verse of the fifteenth chapter of Genesis reads, "And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." Not only Paul, but James used it; they make it the basis of their discussion. Again, in Romans iv. 3, Paul appeals to this incident in the life of Abraham by asking, "For what saith the Scripture?" then he quotes this verse from Genesis. Moreover, he also makes it the foundation of his argument in his Galatian Epistle. In addition, Stephen says (Acts vii. 2): "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, and said to him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldees." Unless we can rely upon the fact that Abraham actually lived and also that he acted with outstanding faith in God, these apostolic references are worse than useless for the purpose for which they are cited.

Other incidents in the life of Abraham are quoted as reliable

history. In 2 Peter ii. 6, we read that God "turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, having made them an example unto those that should live ungodly." In a similar manner Jude also writes of these cities. Further, Hebrews (xi. 17) tells us that "By faith Abraham, being tried, offered up Isaac, yea, he that had gladly received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; even he to whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God is able to raise up, even from the dead," and James writes, "And was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac on the altar?"

Other persons and incidents related in Genesis are quoted in the same definitely historical manner. Paul refers (Galatians iv. 23-31) to Abraham's two sons Ishmael and Isaac, and to the "son of the bondwoman and the son of the free woman." We read in Hebrews xi. 20, that Isaac "blessed Jacob and Esau," and that "By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, leaning upon the top of his staff." And in the following chapter, of Esau selling his birthright and repenting of it. Stephen, in Acts vii, speaks of the way Jacob's sons "moved with jealousy against Joseph, sold him into Egypt; and God was with him and delivered him out of all his afflictions and gave him wisdom and favour before Pharaoh, King of Egypt; and He made him Governor over Egypt and all his house." This chapter also refers to the famine in Canaan and Jacob's moving down into Egypt. Peter (2 ii. 7) refers to God having "delivered righteous Lot sore distressed by the lascivious life of the wicked." Heb. xi. 22, says "that Joseph when his end was nigh made mention of the departure of the children of Israel and gave commandment concerning his bones."

Thus every prominent incident and person recorded in Genesis is referred to in the New Testament, not merely in a vague and general way. They are introduced into the most

decisive statements written. A scrutiny of these passages leaves upon the mind of the reader a most definite assurance that the Apostles regarded these narratives of Genesis as real and inspired history. In fact the New Testament has its historical roots in Genesis.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE ATTITUDE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST TO GENESIS

“**H**IGHER Critics” are unanimous that there is one Person whose witness about Genesis always tells against them. They realize that their theories collapse hopelessly unless the value of His testimony regarding Genesis is discredited. There is no attempt to question the kind of evidence our Lord Jesus Christ gives; they admit that His statements are opposed to their own, so two theories have been invented which result in refusing to admit Him as a reliable witness. These are the “Accommodation” and the “Kenosis” theories, which would never have seen the light of day had not the critics seen that their theories were opposed to His plain statements. The effect of the first theory is to deny His truthfulness, and of the second, His knowledge. The first implies that even if He believed the Book of Genesis to be a literary patchwork by unknown authors who lived long after the time of Moses, He would speak to the people in such a manner as to lead them to believe that Moses wrote it. In other words they allege that He accommodated Himself to the errors He found around Him. It is sufficient to say that He spent His public ministry cutting clean across the prevailing ideas and errors of His time; there is not the slightest evidence whatever for the theory. It implies that Christ knew that Moses had little or nothing to do with the early books of the Old Testament, that, for instance, such a Flood as described therein had never occurred, but they say He accommodated His speech to the ideas of the people who believed in the narratives of Genesis. Yet the astounding thing is that these very critics often say that when preaching or writing about Genesis they themselves cannot be absolutely honest unless

they indicate that they have no belief in the literal fact or accuracy of these records. This surely implies that they feel they themselves must maintain a higher degree of honesty than they attribute to the Lord. Many of these men would shudder to so represent themselves, because they do not wish to take their own critical principles to their logical conclusion.

The second or "Kenosis theory," in effect asserts that our Lord did not know as much as the modern critic does about the Book of Genesis. A critical Bible dictionary of the moderate school may be cited here: "Both Christ and His Apostles or writers of the New Testament held the current Jewish notions respecting the Divine authority and revelation of the Old Testament" (Hastings, Vol. III., p. 601). This dictionary maintains that these "current Jewish notions" were wholly unreliable. The consequence of this is, that the reliability of Christ is more insidiously undermined. They say that He may be relied upon for religious facts, but that His references to authorship or to certain narratives of the Old Testament cannot be relied on. On the other hand He said, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?"

We find that our Lord Jesus Christ put His Seal on the Book of Genesis; the earlier chapters of it are most particularly, though incidentally, referred to by Him. He quotes from the second chapter, and also refers to the Creation account, to the Fall, to Satan, Abel, Noah, the Flood, to Lot and the destruction of Sodom. We find that general or specific attestations are made to Genesis, chapters i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi to ix, and xi, as well as to incidents in the lives of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as recorded in the other chapters.

Let us examine this testimony in more detail. In Matt. xix. 4 and 5 R.V. (also Mark x. 6-8) He refers to the creation of mankind: "He answered and said, Have ye not read, that He which made them from the beginning, made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father

and mother and shall cleave to his wife and they twain shall become one flesh." A citation from Genesis ii. 24.

He referred to Satan in John viii. 44. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof." The reference here is evidently to Satan in the Garden of Eden.

An explicit reference to the beginning was made in Luke xi. 50 and 51, when He said, "that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation from the blood of Abel."

He emphasised the lesson of Noah, the Ark and the Flood, in Luke xvii. 26 and 27: "And as it came to pass in the days of Noah, even so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the Ark, and the Flood came and destroyed them all." He then went on to speak of Lot and the destruction of Sodom (ver. 28): "Likewise even as it came to pass in the days of Lot; they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but in the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all."

Abraham is repeatedly referred to. Our Lord said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; he saw it and was glad. The Jews therefore said unto Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, before Abraham was, I am. They took up stones therefore to cast at Him" (John viii. 56-59). In referring to the Patriarchs, He made it plain that though dead, they still had an existence, for said He, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." After the resurrection "beginning from Moses and from the prophets, He interpreted



to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke xxiv. 27). A few days later He said unto them, "These are My words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, how that all things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures" (Luke xxiv. 44, 45).

A personal incident regarding the application of the "Accommodation" and "Kenosis" theories may be permitted here. Some years ago a young chaplain called on me; we were complete strangers, but seeing on a shelf in my room a book entitled *Daniel the Prophet*, he remarked, "You don't believe that kind of thing do you, that Daniel was a prophet? I had all that knocked out of me during the years I was at my theological college." "But," I said, "our Lord spoke of Daniel as a *prophet*." My visitor replied, "He did not know any more about that than He could learn from the people around Him. Professor — says that Daniel never wrote it, that it is not prophecy, but history, it was written after the events, and made to look like prophecy." I asked him whether he preferred to believe the Lord Jesus Christ or Professor — (I omit his name for he is still living, and I think would be pained that anyone should take him so literally and logically); he replied, "I would rather believe Professor—, for living in a more modern and critical age, obviously he is more accurately informed about these things." In this way criticism has to rid itself of the testimony of the "Faithful and True Witness" in order to support its theories. It cannot be difficult to the Christian and logical mind to decide between the critics and Christ.

## CHAPTER XVII

### CONCLUSION

**I**N the first chapter it was emphasised that adequate confirmation was necessary in order to establish the statement that the Book of Genesis:—

- (1) Was originally written on tablets, in an ancient script.
- (2) By the patriarchs intimately acquainted with the events related.
- (3) That Moses was the compiler of the Book as we now have it.
- (4) That he plainly directs attention to the sources of his information.

It is submitted that the confirmation given has been entirely adequate, and the promise that it would be "attested by facts so numerous, and undesigned coincidences so overwhelming" has been amply fulfilled. Moreover, the corroboration presented, is not of the subordinate kind which forms merely a number of separate links in a chain of evidence, the weakness in one link creating a weakness in the whole. It is rather a series of separate strands each strong in itself, but when woven together produces a confirmation of such strength and substance that the weight of evidence requires a decision in favour of the contemporary writing of Genesis.

The various lines of evidence brought forward in these pages may be summarised as follows:—

(1) Archæological research (which commenced after "Higher Criticism" had produced its theories) has, in recent years, given us the ancient and contemporary background of Genesis, which wholly agrees with its contents (Chapter II).

(2) The Genesis narratives imply that rapid developments took place in early history. Archæologists have dug down

into virgin soil, and find that a high state of culture existed in times previously called "prehistoric." They even assert that long before the time of Abraham, Sumerian civilization had reached its zenith (Chapter III).

(3) As far back as archæology has been able to go, and in the earliest times, examples of writing have been found. During the period covered by the greater part of Genesis, writing has been discovered to be in common use even for ordinary commercial transactions (Chapter IV).

(4) The contents of the earlier chapters of Genesis claim to have been written (Chapter V).

(5) Both Scripture and archæology give evidence that the narratives and genealogies of Genesis were originally written on stone or clay *tablets*, and in the ancient script of the time (Chapters IV and V).

(6) We now know something of the literary methods used by the ancients. Prominent among these was the colophon of the tablet. In our examination of Genesis we find a similar literary method, for the formula "These are the origins of . . ." the ancient conclusion which Moses inserted indicating the source from which he obtained the narratives and genealogies (Chapters V and VI).

(7) Other literary methods were the use of "titles" and "catch lines" in order to bring the tablets together in proper sequence. Although Genesis as we now have it is a book compiled by Moses, there are still traces of the use of these literary means of preserving sequence (Chapter VI).

(8) In some instances indications are provided giving the date when the tablet was written. This is given in a most archaic way and very similar to the method prevailing in very ancient times (Chapter VI).

(9) In confirmation of (4) to (8) above, we have shown that in no instance is an event recorded which the person (or persons) named in Chapter V could not have written from intimate personal knowledge, or have obtained absolutely

unmistakable contemporary information. In Chapter VII the positive evidence is reviewed showing that they were so written. The familiarity with which all the circumstances and details are described, is noted.

(10) Additional corroboration is found in the significant fact that the history recorded in the sections written *over* the names of the Patriarchs ceases in all instances, on the date on which the tablet is stated to have been written, or, where no date is given, before the death of that person. In most cases it is continued almost up to the date of the Patriarch's death.

(11) The presence of "Babylonian" words in the first eleven chapters is a further testimony that the contents of the earliest narratives and genealogies were written during the lifetime of the early Patriarchs of Genesis, for they used that language (Chapter VI).

(12) The presence of Egyptian words and Egyptian environment in the last fourteen chapters of Genesis, adds its irresistible testimony that those chapters were written in Egypt (Chapter VI).

(13) The first tablet—that of the Creation, seems to have been written at the very dawn of history. This is evidenced by its archaic expressions, for it was put into writing before names had been given to the sun and moon and before polytheism had arisen, or clans developed (Chapter VII).

(14) There is no statement in Scripture to support the supposition that all the narratives and genealogies were handed down verbally—on the contrary they claim to have been written down (Chapters V, VII, VIII).

(15) Many references are made to towns which had either ceased to exist, or whose original names are so ancient that the compiler had to insert the names by which they were known in his day. These new names and explanations fit in exactly with the circumstances of a people then on the edge of the land

of Canaan, and about to enter it; thus indicating that Moses used earlier records and that he was the compiler of the Book (Chapters VI and VIII).

(16) That Genesis should still contain archaic expressions and show traces of the literary aids associated with the use of clay tablets, is a testimony to the fidelity with which the text has been handed down to us (Chapter VI).

(17) It is clear that the ordinary Babylonian tablets of the Creation and the Flood are a corrupted form of the Genesis record. The narratives of Genesis are not merely a purified form of the Babylonian accounts (Chapter II).

(18) Archæology has completely undermined the "myth and legend" theory. Evidences of persons once thought by critics to be mythical, have been discovered by archæologists (Chapter X).

(19) The difficulties alleged against Genesis by "Higher Critics" vanish quite naturally when it is understood that the narratives and genealogies were first written on tablets in an ancient script, by the persons whose names they bear, and that the Book was compiled by Moses. Any differences of phraseology and style are just what we should expect in these circumstances (Chapter XII).

(20) The "repetition of the same event" of which critics speak, is shown to harmonise exactly with the arrangement of the tablets from which the Book was composed and to conform to ancient Sumerian usage (Chapter XII).

(21) The outstanding examples brought forward by critics to suggest a late date for Genesis are shown to prove the reverse (Chapter XII).

(22) The documentary theory was originated in order to account for the use of the name of Jehovah in Genesis, and the exclusive use in certain sections (now shown to be tablets) of one particular name or title for God. On the basis of this theory the unwieldy structure of "Higher Criticism" has been reared, and it collapses entirely when

it is seen that these are contemporary and translated records (Chapter XII).

(23) The writers of the New Testament base important arguments and illustrations on the narratives of Genesis. These arguments and illustrations would be worse than useless, they would be misleading, unless these narratives rest on historical facts (Chapter XIV).

(24) The testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to the narratives contained in Genesis is of greater value than all the preceding evidence, and constitutes the pinnacle of these evidential verifications of its history. To the Christian mind the testimony of Christ must be supreme (Chapter XVI).

These twenty-four strands woven together make a cumulative muster of evidences, so exceptional both in character and importance, that they establish the antiquity of Genesis as a contemporary record of events, upon a sure foundation. This foundation is the internal testimony of the Book itself, supported by the external corroboration of archæology.

It formed no part of our purpose to discuss questions relating to the teaching and doctrines of Genesis, this has been done in many excellent volumes. These pages have been restricted to the fundamental question of the genuineness of the sources of the narratives. It is the answer to this question for which so many of the earnest and interested young men and women at our universities are enquiring. They declare that the battle between belief and unbelief cannot be fought elsewhere than over the trustworthiness of the early chapters of Genesis. They insist that the remaining books of the Bible, and Christianity, are without secure foundation unless it can be shown that here, concerning the beginning, God revealed Himself in truth. This attitude is also that of such writers as Mr. H. G. Wells, who says: "If, after all, the animals and men had been evolved in this ascendant manner, then there had been no first parents, no Eden, and no Fall. And if there

had been no Fall, the entire historical fabric of Christianity, the story of the first sin, and the reason for the Atonement, upon which current teaching bases Christian emotion and morality, collapses like a house of cards." The modern mind of to-day naturally finds it impossible to jettison Genesis, and at the same time retain fully unimpaired the New Testament Christianity of which Christ spoke and the Apostles wrote. For the writer, the foundation of Christianity is Christ, and not Genesis, but New Testament Christianity is unquestionably based upon the Genesis revelation of Creation, the Fall, etc. It is submitted that the new light on the sources from which Genesis was compiled, revealing them as contemporary records, furnishes us with the certainty that we are dealing with recorded revelation as old as man. One of the most brilliant modern archæologists, representing one of the greatest universities in the world, said in Iraq: "I was brought up a 'Higher Critic,' and consequently disbelieved in the actual truth of the early narratives of the Bible. Since then I have deciphered thousands of tablets, and the more I learn, the more I believe the Bible to be true." God has, through excavation, resurrected from the graves in which they have lain buried so long, the external evidences which give witness to the truth of this first Book of Scripture.

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