

## The Archaeology of the Book of Genesis.

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III. 1. The Serpent was the symbol of Ea, 'the god of wisdom,' to whom the oracle tree was dedicated. He therefore was the true owner of the tree of knowledge, and consequently was naturally found beside it. He, too, would have had the right to allow his worshippers to eat of it and so obtain wisdom. But those who did so would be his servants and followers, and not the servants of another god. Hence in tempting the woman to eat he was tempting her, and, through her, her husband with whom she was 'one flesh,' to transfer their service and allegiance from Yahweh.

The Hebrew writer has taken the polytheistic sting out of the story, and given it a monotheistic and moral character. The serpent, so far from being a god or the symbol of a god, is declared to have been one of the beasts of the field 'which Yahweh-Elohim had made.' The 'good and evil' of the tree becomes moral good and evil, and the fall is the result of disobedience to the commands of the Deity to whom Adam owed his service. But the old framework of the story remained, and with it much of the old language. The original would have run something like this: *u tsiru ersu eli kal pul tseri u ana assati iqbi umma*. It is noticeable that *Elohim* is used, and not *Yahweh-Elohim*, by both the serpent and the woman. Does this mean that the writer had in some sense identified Yahweh with Ea, so that when the serpent appeared upon the scene, which was itself a form of Ea, the proper name had to be dropped? In early Babylonian names and documents *ilu*, 'the god,' very frequently takes the place of a specific deity. Thus in the Sumerian poem attached to the Epic of the Creation, we read, 'Towards thy god shalt thou be pure, for that is the glory of the godhead . . . the fear of the god begetteth mercy.' Similarly, Babylon is Bab-ili, 'the gate of the god.' Throughout the story of the Fall, the Hebrew writer is careful to indicate that the *Elohim* of 3<sup>1, 3</sup> is really Yahweh.

The prohibition to eat the fruit had been given to the man alone, but he and the woman were now 'one flesh,' so that it applied to them both. So in the Babylonian story of the Deluge Utu-napistim

'and his wife' are together made 'like the gods' and translated to paradise. That the serpent should have addressed himself to the woman rather than to the man is explained by the fact that the leading interpreters of the will of heaven were women. Thus we possess a collection of the oracles delivered to Esar-haddon by the prophetesses of Istar at Arbela.

3. 'In the midst of the garden.'—The Assyrian would have been *u inib etsi sa ina kirib gani—ilu iqbi-ma lâ takulû-su*. *Ina kirib* is literally 'in the midst of,' but in actual use signifies merely 'within.' The Hebrew translator, however, has understood it literally as in 2<sup>9</sup>, on which see note. The prohibition to 'touch' the tree and its fruit is new, and reminds us of Ex 19<sup>12</sup>, so that it may be an insertion in the original text.

Similarly Adamu was forbidden by Ea to eat 'the food of death.'

4. The serpent was right, since the eating of the fruit was not followed by death; see note on 2<sup>17</sup>. So, too, as noted above, the eating of the food offered by Anu to Adamu would have been followed by immortality and not by death.

5. When Zû stole the tablets of destiny he is said to have 'seized the sovereignty (of the world), the laying down of the laws (of fate).' As the god had knowledge of good and evil fortune, so man by gaining the same knowledge would become 'as the god.' The Babylonian original would have been *lû temû kî ilani mudê dumqa* (or *dhâba*) *u limutta*.

7. Aprons.—The fig-tree, called *nurma* in Sumerian, is not unfrequently mentioned in the Babylonian texts. The 'girdles' (E.V. 'aprons') would correspond with the girdle which Gilgames is represented as wearing. The verb תָּפַר, *tâphar*, 'to sew together,' seems to be connected with the Ass. *tîpparu*, a garment which is also called *muqqu* ('the plaited one?').

8. The Babylonian gods are similarly described as *aliki* or 'walking,' like 'the great gods' of Assyria who are said to 'march before the army' (*alikut pan ummanâtê*), or Nin-ip, Nebo, and Merodach, who in the story of the Deluge are described as 'marching in front' (*illaku ina makhri*). In *W.A.I.* iv. 24. 1, Rev. 42-43, we read of *Nergal*

*belu muttallik musi*, 'Nergal, the lord who walks at night.' With רוח־היום *rûah hay-yôm*, 'the cool of the day,' we must compare the Babylonian expression, *ilâni itsinu sâri-sa dhâba*, 'the gods inhaled its good breath,' a variant of 'the gods inhaled the good odour' (*irisa*), which occurs in the Deluge tablet.

**10, 11.** On Babylonian monuments of the early Sumerian period the worshipper is represented as approaching the image of his god completely naked, a custom which much offended the Semitic Babylonians of a later day.

**12.** The masculine pronoun הוּא for feminine הִיא is like the frequent substitution in Assyrian of the masculine for the feminine form of the suffixed pronoun. Perhaps the Babylonian original was *assatu sa tiddinanni emidu-sa* (or *-su*) *ina idiya*.

**14.** The verse implies that the serpent had previously walked upon legs like a man, thus indirectly pointing to the god Ea, who was depicted as a man, though his symbol was a snake. See note on v.1, 'Thou shalt eat dust,' *ipra tâkul*, is Assyrian; in the introduction to the legend of the Descent of Istar into Hades it is said that the ghosts of the dead who flit about there 'like birds clad in a garment of wings,' have only 'dust for their nourishment and clay for their food' (*ipru bubu-ššunu akal-sunu dhidhdhu*). Like the shades in Hades, the serpent also was 'a child of the earth' (Hdt. i. 78).

**15.** 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman.' This is translated from the Ass. *ayabata asakkin ina biri-ka u assati u ina birît zêri-ka u zêri-sa*. The verb שָׁפַח, *shûph* (like the Ass. verbal forms *useppu* and *usippa*, 'I crush') points to an Ass. phrase containing *sêpu*, 'foot'; cp. the incantation against demons, *sepi-sunu ana sepi-su â iskunu*, 'their foot against the man's foot may they not set.' The original will have been *sû yuseppa resi-ka u atta tuseppa iqbi-su*.

**16.** In Ass., *ana assati iqbi umma*. The woman was no longer to be 'as the gods,' among whom the goddess Istar was mistress in her own right with no husband to rule over her.

**17. Adam.**—'The man' has become Adam, Adamu, through the gift of knowledge and the fact that his wife is to bear him children who will be distinguished from him by special names.

Since 'the ground' had not committed any fault there was no reason for cursing it. בְּעִבְרֵךְ,

*ba'ablu'reka*, 'for thy sake,' is the Babylonian *ina eburi-ka*, 'in thy working (of it),' *eburi* being the technical term for working the land and gathering in its produce. The sense given to בְּעִבּוֹר by the Hebrew writer may have been due to the resemblance between אָדָם and אֲדָמָה. The statement that Adam should 'eat it' (not 'of it') is due to the fact that *eburi* also meant 'the harvest.'

**18.** The word קֹץ, *koz*, may be a play upon the Ass. *qitsu*, 'summer fruits'; 'gots, instead of *qits*, shall it bring forth to thee.'

The 'herb of the field' was not 'thorns and thistles,' but the food which man was intended by nature to eat; see 1<sup>20</sup>. At first sight, therefore, it is not clear why eating this food should imply a curse, or why the growth of thorns and thistles should be followed by eating vegetables and cereals. In the original, however, the phrase was *tâkula esbi sa siddi* (or *tsêri*); where *siddi* (or *tsêri*) signified the alluvial plain of Babylonia, called *siddu* ('the bank' of the rivers) and *tsêru*, which were outside the precincts of the sacred garden. Moreover, as this garden was a plantation, the food eaten by man within it consisted of fruits—the ambrosia of the gods—not of the vegetables and cereals which were grown in the plain by human labour. Hence the next verse goes on to say: 'In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread.' Babylonia was the native land of wheat, from which the cultivation of the cereal was carried to other parts of the world. It has been found still growing in a wild state in the neighbourhood of Hit.

**19.** So in the Babylonian legend of Atarpi (?) the goddess Mami is described as moulding seven men and seven women out of 'clay.'

It will be noticed that the reason given to Adam for driving him out of Paradise is not that given by Yahweh-Elohim to his brother gods in vv. 22, 23. Since vv. 22, 23 are polytheistic in phraseology and tone, they must be nearer to the original document than vv. 17-19. Hence we seem to have evidence here of two cuneiform texts—(1) the original document, and (2) another document founded upon this by a Hebrew writer, but written in cuneiform and the Babylonian language.

**20.** This verse does not seem to have had anything corresponding with it in the Babylonian original.

**21.** Similarly, in the Babylonian story of Adamu, Adamu receives his clothing from the god Anu. A good many garments enumerated in the

Babylonian lists of clothing are described as made of leather, which, as in modern Egypt, would have been found useful in protecting the body against water when the *shaduf* was worked. The leopard-skin worn by the Egyptian priests is usually regarded as a survival from a primitive period of clothing. The 'tunic,' however, points to a time when linen had already been invented, leather tunics being more naturally copied from linen ones than the converse. The tunic was an old form of dress in Babylonia, as it appears also to have been in Syria, though some of the Beduin who entered Egypt in the age of the twelfth dynasty are represented as wearing kilts. Its shape was that of the Ionic χιτών—the name of which, as well as the dress, was borrowed from the Semites—and reached to the ankles; in early times the right arm was generally left bare.

22. For the Babylonian original of this, see note on v.<sup>5</sup> above. Here Yahweh-Elohim is identified with the Elohim of v.<sup>5</sup>. הַחַיִּים is the *u inanna* of the Tel el-Amarna tablets.

'As one of us' is a relic of the original which has been allowed to remain in spite of its polytheistic character, since to make Yahweh say that the man had become like Himself would have been even more offensive to the monotheistic Hebrew than the retention of the original expression. The Babylonian was *lû adamu emû kî ilâni nasi-ma* (which are the actual words used of Utu-napistim in the Babylonian story of the Deluge) *u inanna sînma idâ-su yublamma ilaqqi inib etsi* (or *akal*) *baladhi u ikal u ibludh ana daris*. . . . The apodosis of the speech is not given, the translation breaking off in the middle of the sentence. But it is clear that what is intended is that if man becomes not only as well acquainted with the divine secrets—the '*pirîsti*' and '*amat nitsirti* of the great gods,' as they are called in the Babylonian legends—but also immortal, the gods will no longer be able to control his destiny, and consequently the object for which he was created (to be a servant of the gods) would be defeated. Hence Yahweh-Elohim judged the sinner (*bel khidhi innâ ana karasi*) 'and banished him from the garden.'

24. 'So he drove out the man' is an alternative rendering of the original text, of which 'he sent him forth (from the garden of Eden) to till the ground from whence he was taken' is a paraphrastic version.

Since the land of Eden lay to the west of the

garden (2<sup>8</sup>), the guard preventing man's entrance into the garden ought to have been on the west and not on the 'east' side of it. Hence קָדֵם, *kedem*, 'east,' must be a transliteration of the Babylonian *qudmu*, 'in front of,' which has been erroneously supposed to signify 'east,' like the Heb. קָדֵם, perhaps because the sun rose in the east, and on Babylonian seal-cylinders the sun-god is represented as stepping forth behind the twin mountains of the east with flames of fire issuing from his shoulders. The only alternative would be to regard נָ as an interpolation, the original reading being 'eastward of Eden.' But against this is the fact that the cherubs always stood at the entrance to the place they were set to guard.

'Cherub' is a word borrowed from the Ass. *kirubu*, which is connected with *karubu*, 'powerful.' Dr. Pinches, however, adopts Rawlinson's derivation of the word from *qarâbu*, 'to be near,' supporting it by the use of *kirubu* in the sense of 'intimate friend' (*O.T. in the Light of Assyria and Babylonia*, p. 81). The *kirubi* were guardian spirits who were stationed at the entrance to a building or estate to prevent an enemy, whether earthly or spiritual, from entering it, and figures of them are frequently drawn on either side of the tree of life in Assyrian bas-reliefs and on Babylonian seals. In the description of the tree of knowledge which grew at Eridu, the two cherubs are the gods called Kakkhegal, 'the mouth of fertility,' and Si-tur-gal, 'the eye of the Prince.' They corresponded to the gods Tammuz and Nin-gis-zidda—'the lord of the upright tree,' the Yakin of 1 K 7<sup>21</sup>—who stood on either side of the entrance to the heaven of Anu, like the symbolic cones of stone or trunks of trees that stood on either side of the entrance to a Phœnician temple. It will be noticed that the Hebrew writer speaks of '*the Cherubim*'; the two, therefore, who guarded the approach to the terrestrial paradise of Babylonia must have been well known from pictorial and written representations.

The approach was also guarded by a 'sword.' Each of the 'great gods' of Babylonia was symbolized by a particular weapon which bore a particular name. The weapon is represented on boundary stones as stuck into the ground, and thus explains the sculpture of the sacred dirk at the entrance to the Hittite 'Holy of Holies' near Boghaz Keui, which is similarly depicted as stuck

in the ground, and must have been derived from Babylonia like the anthropomorphic representation of the Hittite deities in the same place. The name of the weapon which protected the entrance to the garden of Eden is given as לַחַט, *lahat*, 'flaming sword,' without the article (like הַחַט in 1<sup>2</sup>), and the explanation is attached to it that it is 'the sword which turned to this side and to that.' לַחַט is the Ass. *la'adhu*, 'to burn up,' and a title of the Assyrian kings is *laidh lâ-magiri* 'the consumer of the disobedient,' a title originally applied to the gods from whom the kings derived their authority. This indicates that we ought in the present passage to punctuate לַחַט, the name of the weapon which guarded Paradise being *Lâidh (Lidhu)*, 'the consumer.' The description of the sword reminds us of that of the lightning-sword of Nin-ip—called 'the weapon of fifty heads,' etc.—in the hymns to that deity translated by Hrozny (*Mythen von dem Gotte Ninrag*). The חֶרֶב, *herēbh*, was of the scimitar shape; such was the form of the *harpē* or חֶרֶב assigned by Greek mythology to Perseus, and the two earliest Semitic swords yet discovered—that of Ramman-nirari I. of Assyria, and another of exactly the same shape found by Mr. Macalister at Gezer—are both of them bronze scimitars.

The last words of the verse look back to 2<sup>15</sup>; man had been placed in the garden of Eden to 'watch' it; he had proved unfaithful to his master and been dismissed, thus becoming one of the enemies from outside against whom the *kirubi* were now set to keep 'watch.' In the Epic of the Creation we are told that Bel created man to take the place of the conquered gods who had joined the rebellion of Tiamât and fallen from their high estate,<sup>1</sup> and he too, as we learn from Genesis, proved rebellious in his turn. Was his offence in the original story that he had deserted the service of Bel of Nippur for that of Ea, the god of culture?

The archæological analysis of chapters 2 and 3 has thus shown—

- (1) that a Babylonian document lies behind them which has been very closely followed;
- (2) that the Hebrew text has been translated from a cuneiform original, the words of which have not always been rightly under-

<sup>1</sup> Sixth Tablet of the Epic of Creation, ll. 9, 10 (King, *Seven Tablets of Creation*, i. p. 88).

stood, and of which in one instance at least an alternative rendering has been preserved;

- (3) that the geography of it goes back to a period before the rise of the kingdom of Assyria;
- (4) that the point of view of the writer is purely Babylonian;
- (5) that the polytheism of the original document has been replaced by monotheism;
- (6) that a moral signification has been given to the Babylonian conception of the knowledge of good and evil conferred by Ea;
- (7) that the account of 'the generations of the heavens and the earth,' which ought to have followed the first words of the introduction, has been omitted; and
- (8) that between the original Babylonian document and the Hebrew translation or translations there probably lies an intermediate text written by a Hebrew author, but in cuneiform characters and the Babylonian language.

It results, therefore, that between 1<sup>1-23</sup> and 2<sup>4-324</sup> there is a wide difference, the first showing little trace of translation from a Babylonian text, and implicitly contradicting the polytheistic and materialistic elements in the Babylonian cosmology, while the other is little more than the translation of a Babylonian original with its more glaringly polytheistic characteristics suppressed. The point of view, moreover, in the second narrative remains Babylonian, while it begins with the introductory formula of a Babylonian cosmological work which presupposes that nothing had preceded it. Hence 1<sup>1-23</sup> must have been a later addition prefixed to 'the generations of the heavens and the earth,' and intended not only to justify the institution of the Sabbath, but also to do for the current Babylonian cosmology what St. John in the introduction to his Gospel has done for the current Philonian philosophy; that is to say, transform the current system of philosophy into the expression of a purely monotheistic faith. In place of 'the generations of the heavens and the earth'—in which man, as made from the dust of the earth, was included—we have the creation of all things by the One God in a series of days. Whether the omission of what must have originally followed the words, 'these are the generations of

the heavens and the earth,' was due to the writer of the first chapter or to the translator of the Babylonian text, there are no materials for deciding. But the geographical extract was composed at a time when the kingdom of Assyria had not as yet come into existence, and the geographical point of

view throughout is that of a West Semite living in a Babylonian city, like Ur or Babylon, which stood on the Euphrates. After the disuse of the cuneiform system of writing in Palestine, the fact that Eden was 'the plain' of Babylonia would have ceased to be known.

## In the Study.

### Ears of Corn.

THE places where ears of corn are mentioned are Gn 41<sup>5-7, 22-24</sup> (Pharaoh's second dream); Lv 2<sup>14</sup> 23<sup>14</sup> (the meal offering); Dt 23<sup>25</sup> (plucking the ears of standing corn); Ru 2<sup>2</sup> (gleaning); 2 K 4<sup>42-44</sup> (a gift for the man of God); Job 24<sup>24</sup> and Is 17<sup>5</sup> (illustrations from harvesting); and in the N.T., Mk 2<sup>23</sup>, with parallels, Mt 12<sup>1</sup>, Lk 6<sup>1</sup> (the disciples plucking the ears of corn), and Mk 4<sup>28</sup>.

I. 'And there came a man from Baal-Shalishah, and brought the man of God bread of the first-fruits, twenty loaves of barley, and fresh ears of corn in his sack (mg. the husk thereof). And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat. And his servant said, What, should I set this before an hundred men? But he said, Give the people, that they may eat; for thus saith the Lord, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the Lord' (2 K 4<sup>42-44</sup> R.V.).

It was a time of famine in Israel when this incident took place. The famine was so sore that even the sons of the prophets were suffering seriously from it. The people must themselves have been at the last extremity before letting their ministers of religion suffer to this extent. If the event occurs at the same time as the one that precedes it in the same chapter, the prophets were driven to the use of herbs of which they were ignorant and were just saved from being poisoned. Elisha and some hundred men in the College of the Prophets at Gilgal were face to face with the possibility of starving of hunger when a man came from Baal-Shalishah, bringing with him twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of corn.

The gift was timely. Elisha, who could not meet the famine single-handed, was able, when

strengthened in faith and hope by this man's visit, so to use the contents of the sack that it served to satisfy all the men that were with him. But the gift was not only timely and abundant, it was an Israelite's sacrificial gift to God. Notice that it contained *fresh ears of corn*.

2. The ears of corn are the spikes which contain the flower or the seed. They are called sometimes heads of corn, and sometimes simply the corn, the stalk on which they grow being the straw. In old Scotch the form of the word was *icker* (not always spelt in one way). Murdoch Nisbet in his *New Testament in Scots* of 1520 translates Mt 12<sup>1</sup>, 'his discipilis hungrit, and began to pluk ekiris of corn, and to ete.' And Burns addresses the mouse whose nest he had turned up with the plough:

I doubt na, whiles, but thou may thieve;  
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!  
A daimen icker in a thrave  
's a sma' request:  
I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,  
And never miss't.<sup>1</sup>

3. The earliest occurrence of the word is in Pharaoh's dreams. His first dream was about cattle; the second about ears of corn. He thought he saw a stalk of corn upon which there appeared seven ears, one after another, that were rank and good. Then on the same straw there came up other seven ears, one after another, that were thin and blasted. And the thin ears made the rank ears disappear before them, so that it looked as if they had swallowed them up. Now one of the few things that are certain about dreams is that we dream by night of what we are thinking about by day. Pharaoh dreamed of cattle and of corn. He

<sup>1</sup> The thrave is two shocks or stooks, so that 'a daimen icker in a thrave' is an occasional ear of corn in every four-and-twenty sheaves.