

## ADDITIONAL NOTES TO GENESIS

### A

#### THE CREATION CHAPTER

Genesis 1-11, 3, is a worthy opening of Israel's Sacred Scriptures, and ranks among the most important chapters of the Bible. Even in form it is pre-eminent in the literature of religion. No other ancient account of creation (cosmogony) will bear a second reading. Most of them not only describe the origin of the world, but begin by describing how the gods emerged out of pre-existent chaos (theogony). In contrast with the simplicity and sublimity of Genesis 1, we find all ancient cosmogonies, whether it be the Babylonian or the Phœnician, the Greek or the Roman, alike unrelievedly wild, cruel, even foul.

Thus, the Assyro-Babylonian mythology tells how, before what we call earth or heaven had come into being, there existed a primeval watery chaos—Tiamat—out of which the gods were evolved:—

'When, in the height, heaven was not yet named,  
And the earth beneath did not bear a name,  
And the primeval Apsu (the Abyss), their begetter,  
And Chaos (Tiamat), the mother of them both,  
Their waters were mingled together,  
Then were created the gods in the midst of heaven.'

Apsu, the Abyss, disturbed at finding his domain invaded by the new gods, induced Tiamat and Chaos to join him in contesting their supremacy; he was, however, subdued by the cunning of Ea; and Tiamat, left to carry on the struggle alone, provides herself with a brood of hideous allies. The alarmed gods thereupon appoint Marduk as their champion. With winds and lightnings, Marduk advances; he seizes Tiamat in a huge net, and 'with his merciless club he crushed her skull'. The carcase of the monster he split into two halves, one of which he fixed on high, to form a firmament supporting the waters above it. In the same grotesque way the story continues to describe the formation of sun, moon, plants, animals and man. Many moderns feign to believe that this is the source from which Genesis 1 is taken. But a thorough-going Bible critic like the late Dr. Driver admits, 'It is incredible that the monotheistic author of Genesis 1 could have borrowed any detail, however slight, from the polytheistic epic of the conflict of Marduk and Tiamat.'

The infinite importance, however, of the first page of the Bible consists in the fact that it enshrines some of the fundamental beliefs of Judaism. Among these are:—

I. GOD IS THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE. Each religion has certain specific teachings, convictions, dogmas. Such a dogma of Judaism is its belief

that the world was called into existence at the will of the One, Almighty and All-good God. And nowhere does this fundamental conviction of Israel's Faith find clearer expression than in Genesis 1. When neighbouring peoples deified the sun, moon and stars, or worshipped stocks and stones and beasts, the sacred river Nile, the crocodile that swam in its waters, and the very beetles that crawled along its banks, the opening page of Scripture proclaimed in language of majestic simplicity that the universe, and all that therein is, are the product of one supreme directing Intelligence; of an eternal, spiritual Being, prior to them and independent of them.

Now, while the *fact* of creation has to this day remained the first of the articles of the Jewish Creed, there is no uniform and binding belief as to the *manner* of creation, i.e. as to the process whereby the universe came into existence. The manner of the Divine creative activity is presented in varying forms and under differing metaphors by Prophet, Psalmist and Sage; by the Rabbis in Talmudic times, as well as by our mediæval Jewish thinkers. In the Bible itself we have at least three modes of representing the overwhelming fact of Divine Creation. Genesis 1 gives us the story of Creation in the form of a Divine drama set out in six acts of a day each, with a similar refrain (*And there was evening, and there was morning, etc.*) closing the creative work of each day. The Psalmist, to whom Nature was a continual witness of its Divine Author (Ps. xix), gives in Psalm civ a purely poetic representation of the Creation story:—

'O LORD my God, Thou art very great;  
Thou art clothed with glory and majesty.  
Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment,  
Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain . . .  
Who makest the clouds Thy chariot,  
Who walkest upon the wings of the wind:  
Who makest winds Thy messengers . . .'

Again, Proverbs viii, 22-31, shows forth Divine Wisdom presiding at the birth of Nature.

The mode of creation continued to engage Jewish minds after the close of the Bible and throughout the Rabbinic period, even though the Mishnah warns against all speculation concerning the beginning of things. To some, the relation of God to the universe was that of a mason to his work, and they accordingly spoke of God's 'architect's plans'; others lost themselves in heretic fancies as to what constituted the raw material, so to speak, of Creation; while to Philo of Alexandria, Creation was altogether outside time. Several of the ancient Rabbis, followed by the later Mystics, believed in successive creations. Prior to the existence of the present universe, they held, certain formless

worlds issued from the Fountain of Existence and then vanished, like sparks which fly from a red-hot iron beaten by a hammer, that are extinguished as they separate themselves from the burning mass. In contrast to these abortive creations, the medieval Jewish Mystics maintain, ours is the best of all possible worlds. It is the outcome of a series of emanations and irradiations from God, the Infinite, *En Sof*. Furthermore, Rashi, the greatest Jewish commentator of all times, taught that the purpose of Scripture was not to give a strict chronology of Creation; while no less an authority than Maimonides declared: 'The account given in Scripture of the Creation is not, as is generally believed, intended to be in all its parts literal.' Later Jewish philosophers (Levi ben Gerson, Crescas, Albalag) made dangerous concessions to the Aristotelian doctrine of the eternity of matter; which doctrine Yehudah Hallevi, among others, strongly opposed as both contrary to Reason and as limiting God's Omnipotence.

#### JEWISH ATTITUDE TOWARDS EVOLUTION

In face of this great diversity of views as to the *manner* of creation, there is, therefore, nothing inherently un-Jewish in the evolutionary conception of the origin and growth of forms of existence from the simple to the complex, and from the lowest to the highest. The Biblical account itself gives expression to the same general truth of gradual ascent from amorphous chaos to order, from inorganic to organic, from lifeless matter to vegetable, animal and man; *insisting, however, that each stage is no product of chance, but is an act of Divine will, realizing the Divine purpose, and receiving the seal of the Divine approval.* Such, likewise, is in effect the evolutionary position. Behind the orderly development of the universe there must be a Cause, at once controlling and permeating the process. Allowing for all the evidence in favour of interpreting existence in terms of the evolutionary doctrine, there still remain facts—tremendous facts—to be explained; *viz.* the origin of life, mind, conscience, human personality. For each of these, we must look back to the Creative Omnipotence of the Eternal Spirit. Nor is that all. Instead of evolution ousting design and purpose from nature, 'almost every detail is now found to have a purpose and a use' (A. R. Wallace). In brief, evolution is conceivable only as the activity of a creative Mind purposing, by means of physical and biological laws, that wonderful organic development which has reached its climax in a being endowed with rational and moral faculties and capable of high ethical and spiritual achievement; in other words, as the activity of a supreme, directing Intelligence that has planned out, far back in the recesses of time, the ultimate goal of creation—'last in production, first in thought' סוף מעשה במחשבה תחלה. Thus evolution, far from

destroying the *religious teaching of Gen. 1, is its profound confirmation.*

As a noted scientist well remarks:—

'Slowly and by degrees, Science is being brought to recognize in the universe the existence of One Power, which is of no beginning and no end; which existed before all things were formed, and will remain in its integrity when all is gone—the Source and Origin of all, in Itself beyond any conception or image that man can form and set up before his eye or mind. This sum total of the scientific discoveries of all lands and times is the approach of the world's thought to our *Adon Olam*, the sublime chant by means of which the Jew has wrought and will further work the most momentous changes in the world' (Haffkine).

II. The second teaching of this chapter is, MAN IS THE GOAL AND CROWN OF CREATION—he is fundamentally distinguished from the lower creation, and is akin to the Divine. Man, modern scientists declare, is cousin to the anthropoid ape. But it is not so much the descent, as the *ascent* of man, which is decisive. Furthermore, it is not the resemblance, but the *differences* between man and the ape, that are of infinite importance. It is the differences between them that constitute the humanity of man, the God-likeness of man. The qualities that distinguish the lowest man from the highest brute make the differences between them differences in kind rather than in degree; so much so that, whatever man might have inherited from his animal ancestors, his advent can truly be spoken of as a specific Divine act, whereby a new being had arisen with God-like possibilities within him, and *conscious* of these God-like possibilities within him. Man is of God, declared Rabbi Akiba; and what is far more, he *knows* he is of God.

Nor is the Biblical account of the creation of man irreconcilable with the view that certain forms of organized being have been endowed with the capacity of developing, in God's good time and under the action of suitable environment, the attributes distinctive of man. 'God formed man of the dust of the ground' (Gen. 11, 7). Whence that dust was taken is not, and cannot be, of fundamental importance. Science holds that man was formed from the lower animals; are they not too 'dust of the ground'? 'And God said, *Let the earth bring forth the living creature*'—this command, says the Midrash, includes Adam as well, תוצא הארץ נפש חיה, זו רוחו של אדם הראשון. The thing that eternally matters is the breath of Divine and everlasting life that He breathed into the being coming from the dust. By virtue of that Divine impact, a new and distinctive creature made its appearance—man, dowered with an immortal soul. The sublime revelation of the unique worth and dignity of man, contained in Gen. 1, 27 ('And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him'),

may well be called the Magna Charta of humanity. Its purpose is not to explain the biological origins of the human race, but *its spiritual kinship with God*. There is much force in the view expressed by a modern thinker: '(The Bible) neither provides, nor, in the nature of things, could provide, faultless anticipations of sciences still unborn. If by a miracle it had provided them, without a miracle they could not have been understood' (Balfour). And fully to grasp the eternal power and infinite beauty of these words—'And God created man in His own image'—we need but compare them with the genealogy of man, condensed from the pages of one of the leading biologists of the age (Haeckel):—

'Monera begat Amoeba, Amoeba begat Synamoebae, Synamoebae begat Ciliated Larva, Ciliated Larva begat Primeval Stomach Animals, Primeval Stomach Animals begat Gliding Worms, Gliding Worms begat Skull-less Animals, Skull-less Animals begat Single-nostrilled Animals, Single-nostrilled Animals begat Primeval Fish, Primeval Fish begat Mud-fish, Mud-fish begat Gilled Amphibians, Gilled Amphibians begat Tailed Amphibians, Tailed Amphibians begat Primary Mammals, Primary Mammals begat Pouched Animals, Pouched Animals begat Semi-Apes, Semi-Apes begat Tailed Apes, Tailed Apes begat Man-like Apes, Man-like Apes begat Ape-like Men, Ape-like Men begat Men.'

Let anyone who is disturbed by the fact that Scripture does not include the latest scientific doctrine, try to imagine such information provided in a Biblical chapter.

III. JUDAISM IS OPTIMISM, is the third teaching of this chapter. No less than five times is the refrain, 'And God saw that it was good' repeated in the Creation Chapter. The world is not something hostile to God or independent of Him. All comes from God and all is His handiwork; all is in its essence good, nor is there anything absolutely evil. Israel acclaims God as the sole 'King of the universe, who formest light and createst darkness, who maketh peace and createst all things' (Authorised Prayer Book, p. 37). Though Nature seems to be indifferent to man's sense of compassion, the world is good, since goodness is its final aim: without struggle, there would be no natural selection or adaptation to changing surroundings, and therefore no progress from lower to higher. 'And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold it was *very good*'—even suffering, evil, nay death itself, have a rightful and beneficent place in the Divine scheme, is the Rabbinic comment on this verse.

IV. THE SABBATH CONSECRATES WORK AND HALLOWS MAN'S LIFE, is the culminating teaching of the Chapter. The institution of the Sabbath is part of the cosmic plan, and therefore intended for all humanity. The Sabbath is a specifically Jewish contribution to human civilization. 'The actual Jewish Sabbath as we know it is without

any point of contact in Babylonian institutions' (Skinner). The ancient Babylonians had 'a day of cessation', which they called by a name somewhat similar to 'Sabbath', and it was observed on the 7th, 14th, 19th, 21st, and 28th days of the months Ellul and Marcheshvan. These were considered unlucky days, and on them the king was not to offer sacrifice, nor consult an oracle, nor invoke curses on his enemies. Quite other is the Jewish Sabbath. It is not merely a day of cessation from toil. On the one hand, it has its positive aspect as a day of spiritual recreation; and, on the other hand, it is a day of joy, and is greeted in the Synagogue in the words לכה דודי לקראת כלל (Come, my Beloved, to meet the Bride, Queen Sabbath'). It banishes toil and sorrow—a symbol of immortality, of that Life which is wholly a Sabbath; see on Exod. xx, 9-11.

*God the Creator and Lord of the Universe, which is the work of His goodness and wisdom; and Man, made in His image, who is to hallow his week-day labours by the blessedness of Sabbath-rest*—such are the teachings of the Creation chapter. Its purpose is to reveal these teachings to the children of men—and not to serve as a textbook of astronomy, geology or anthropology. Its object is not to teach scientific facts; but to proclaim highest religious truths respecting God, Man, and the Universe. The 'conflict' between the fundamental realities of Religion and the established facts of Science is seen to be unreal as soon as Religion and Science each recognizes the true borders of its dominion.

B

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Chapter III is one of the most beautiful in the Bible. It has been called the 'pearl of Genesis', and men read with wonder its profound psychology of temptation and conscience. With unsurpassable art, it shows the beginning, the progress and the culmination of temptation and the consequences of sin. It depicts the earliest tragedy in the life of each human soul—the loss of man's happy, natural relation with God through deliberate disobedience of the voice of conscience, the voice of God. 'Every man who knows his own heart, knows that the story is true; it is the story of his own fall. Adam אדם is man, and his story is ours' (McFadyen).

Is the narrative literal or figurative, and is the Serpent an animal, a demon or merely the symbolic representation of Sin? Various have been the answers to these questions; and none of them are of cardinal importance to the Faith of the Jew. There is nothing in Judaism against the belief that the Bible attempts to convey deep truths of life and conduct by means of allegory. The Rabbis often taught by parable; and such method of instruction is, as is well known, the

immemorial way among Oriental peoples. Eminent Jewish thinkers, like Maimonides and Nachmanides, have accordingly understood this chapter as a parable; and Saadyah regarded the Serpent as the personification of the sinful tendencies in man, the *Yetzer hara*, the Evil Imagination.

Two fundamental religious truths are reflected in this Chapter. One of them is, *the seriousness of sin*. There is an everlasting distinction between right and wrong, between good and evil. There have always been voices—Serpent voices—deriding all moral do's and don't's, proclaiming instinct and inclination to be the truest guides to human happiness, and bluntly denying that any evil consequences follow defiance of God's commands. This Chapter for all time warns mankind against these insidious and fateful voices. In the words of Isaiah it seems to say, 'Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes.'

The other vital teaching of this chapter is, *Free will has been given to man*, and it is in his power to work either with or against God. It is not the knowledge of evil, but the succumbing to it, which is deadly; man may see the forbidden fruit, he need not eat of it. Man himself can make or mar his destiny. In all ages and in all conditions, man has shown the power to resist the suggestions of sin and proved himself superior to the power of evil. And if a man stumble and fall on the pathway of life, Judaism bids him rise again and seek the face of his Heavenly Father in humility, contrition and repentance. 'If a man sin, what is his punishment?' ask the Rabbis. The answer of the Prophet is, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die'—the wages of sin is death. The answer of the Sage is, 'Evil pursueth the evil-doer'—the wages of sin is sin. The answer of the Almighty is, 'Let a man repent, and his sin will be forgiven him'—*the wages of sin is repentance*.

#### JEWISH VIEW OF THE 'FALL OF MAN'

Strange and sombre doctrines have been built on this chapter of the Garden of Eden, such as the Christian doctrine of Original Sin (e.g. 'In Adam's fall, we sinned all'—New England Primer. 'The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God'—Art x, Free Will, of the Thirty-nine Articles). This Christian dogma of Original Sin is throughout the Middle Ages accompanied by an unbelievable vilification of Woman, as the authoress of death and all our earthly woe. Judaism rejects these doctrines. Man was mortal from the first, and death did not enter the world through the transgression of Eve. Stray Rabbinic utterances to the contrary are merely homiletic, and possess no binding authority in Judaism. There is no loss of the God-likeness of man, nor of man's ability to

do right in the eyes of God; and no such loss has been transmitted to his latest descendants. Although a few of the Rabbis occasionally lament Eve's share in the poisoning of the human race by the Serpent, even they declare that the antidote to such poison has been found at Sinai; rightly holding that the Law of God is the bulwark against the devastations of animalism and godlessness. The Psalmist oftens speak of sin and guilt; but never is there a reference to this chapter or to what Christian Theology calls 'The Fall'. One searches in vain the Prayer Book, of even the Days of Penitence, for the slightest echo of the doctrine of the Fall of man. 'My God, the soul which Thou hast given me is pure,' is the Jew's daily morning prayer. 'Even as the soul is pure when entering upon its earthly career, so can man return it pure to his Maker' (Midrash).

Instead of the Fall of man (in the sense of humanity as a whole), Judaism preaches the Rise of man; and instead of Original Sin, it stresses Original Virtue (אבות וזכות), the beneficent hereditary influence of righteous ancestors upon their descendants. 'There is no generation without its Abraham, Moses or Samuel,' says the Midrash; i.e. each age is capable of realizing the highest potentialities of the moral and spiritual life. Judaism clings to the idea of Progress. The Golden Age of Humanity is not in the past, but in the future (Isaiah ii and xi); and all the children of men are destined to help in the establishment of that Kingdom of God on earth.

#### C

#### THE FLOOD

The primeval traditions recorded in the early chapters of Genesis stretch away into prehistoric times, and enshrine, in outline, great universal truths that touch the origin and meaning of Life and Man. The Rabbis tell us that the Patriarch Jacob spent fourteen years in the centres of ancient Semitic learning, the 'academies of Shem and Eber' (בבית מדרשו של שם ועבר), acquiring the ancient traditions which he handed on to his descendants. Among these was the memory of a fearful upheaval with an all-destroying Flood that caused a complete breach in the continuity of civilization in the primitive dwelling-place of mankind. Striking evidence is now at hand that the Bible story of the Flood is an event in historic times, approximately about the year 3800 before the Common Era. 'New discoveries have brought history so close to the Flood period and have produced so many phenomena requiring for their explanation just such an event as the Flood is supposed to have been, that the *a priori* denial of the Flood becomes thoroughly unscientific. We are justified in asking for more evidence, but there

can be little doubt which way that evidence will trend' (L. Woolley). As it was recounted in the families of the Patriarchs, the story of that Flood is of great ethical and religious value. The Deluge was a Divine judgment upon an age in which might was right, and depravity degraded and enslaved the children of men. There were giants on earth in those days; they were the 'men of renown'; and life to these super-men meant unscrupulous selfishness and the deification of power and pleasure.

Among these men of violence, one man alone was upright and blameless, Noah, who believed in justice and practised mercy. He preached to the men of his generation—the Rabbis tell us—and warned them that a Deluge was coming, peradventure they might desist from iniquity and turn to righteousness. In vain. He saw that entire generation swept away; but he also lived to see the Rainbow of Promise, and the beginnings of a better world that was eventually to gain in strength, and to find lasting expression in Abraham and his descendants.

D

THE TOWER OF BABEL AND THE DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES

One explanation of Genesis, chapter xi, is that it continues the theme of the preceding section and indicates that the Divine ideal was One Humanity united by one universal language. In view of the division of mankind by diversity of tongue, which has ever been a source of misunderstanding, hostility and war, this chapter answers the question how the original Divinely-ordained unity of language, that indispensable link for the unity of mankind, was lost. Only a great transgression—an enterprise colossal in its insolent impiety and evidencing an open revolt against God—could account for such a moral catastrophe to humanity (Steinthal). Standing symbols of such heathen impiety to the Hebrew mind were the *ziggurats*, the Mesopotamian temple-towers, rising to an immense height as if intended to scale Heaven.

The building of the greatest of these towers was associated with Babylon, the centre of ancient luxury and power. The Rabbis assert that the builders of this Tower of Babel wished to storm the heavens in order to wage war against the Deity; and 'as the highest stage in an Assyrian or Babylon ziggurat was surmounted by a shrine of the Deity, there is perhaps less fancifulness in these words than is often suspected' (Ryle). Jewish legend tells of the godlessness and inhumanity of these tower-builders. If, in the course of the construction of the Tower, a man fell down and met his death, none paid heed to it; but if a brick fell down and broke

into fragments, they were grieved and even shed tears—a graphic summing up of heathen civilization, ancient or modern. Such an enterprise provoked Divine punishment; and that insolence and power were broken by lasting division occasioned by diversity of language.

Quite a different interpretation of this chapter is given by Ibn Ezra: 'The purpose of the builders was simply to prevent their becoming separated, and to secure their dwelling together. But as this purpose was contrary to the design of Providence (ix, 1; i, 28) that the whole earth should be inhabited, it was frustrated. The expression 'with its top in heaven' must accordingly be interpreted that that tower was to be of very great height, so that it would be visible at a considerable distance and become a rallying point to all people.

E

THE DELUGE AND ITS BABYLONIAN PARALLEL

Flood stories are very numerous, and are found in every part of the world. But these are of little or no interest to the Bible student or to the modern reader. The Babylonian parallel to the Biblical account of the Deluge, however, stands in a class by itself. Both the resemblances and the differences of the two accounts are of great importance for the understanding and proper appreciation of the Bible narrative.

The Babylonian story is as follows: The gods in council decide to send a Flood upon the earth. One of the gods, Ea, who was present at the council, resolves to save his favourite Utnapishtim—this is the name of the Babylonian Noah. He warns him of the impending danger and at the same time commands him to build a ship. He also furnishes the 'superlatively clever one', Utnapishtim, with a misleading pretext to offer his contemporaries when questioned as to the reason for his building the ship. (In the Rabbinical legend, Noah, during the years of the ship's construction, is a preacher of repentance. 'Turn from your evil ways and live,' is his admonition to his fellow-men). When the ship is built, Utnapishtim fills it with his possessions, his family, dependants, including artisans, together with domestic and wild animals. He then enters it himself and closes the door behind him. The storm rages for six days and nights, till all mankind are destroyed, and the very gods 'cowered in terror like dogs'. On the seventh day, he sends out a dove, which comes back to him. And then he lets go a raven, which does not return. On this, Utnapishtim released all the animals; and leaving the ship, offered a sacrifice. 'The gods gathered like flies over the sacrifice.' The deities then began to quarrel; but eventually Utnapishtim is

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blesed, and is received into the society of the gods.

The resemblances between this Babylonian story and the Biblical account lie on the surface. To mention only a few features common to both: the whole human race is doomed to destruction; one man with his dependants and animals is saved in a ship; the episode of the dove and raven; and after leaving the ship, the man offers sacrifices and receives Divine blessings.

Of far greater significance, however, are the differences between the two accounts. The Babylonian story is unethical and polytheistic, devoid of any uniform or exalted purpose, and lacking in reverence and restraint. Not so the terse, direct, and simple Hebrew narrative. Instead of the quarrelsome, deceitful, vindictive pack of Babylonian deities, false to one another and false to men, we have in the Hebrew account the One and Supreme God—holy and righteous in His dealings with man. Unlike its Babylonian counterpart, the Hebrew Deluge is a proclamation of the eternal truth that the basis of human society is justice, and that any society which is devoid of justice deserves to perish, and will inevitably perish. Noah is saved, not through celestial caprice or favouritism, not because he was 'superlatively clever', but because he was righteous and blameless in a perverse generation; a man who was worthy of God's approval, as well as of inaugurating a new era for humanity. An impassable gulf separates the Biblical and the Babylonian Deluge stories. This infinite ethical difference between them is recognized even by those who are otherwise hostile to the Bible. 'The Biblical story of the Deluge possesses an intrinsic power to stir the conscience of the world, and it was written with this educational and moral end in view. Of this end there is no trace in the Deluge records outside the Bible' (A. Jeremias).

In its Babylonian form, Assyriologists tell us, the story seems to have been reduced to writing as early as the days of Abraham. It must have been known in substance to the children of Israel in Canaan and later in Egypt. But in the form in which, under God's Providence, the Patriarchs transmitted it to their descendants, it was free from all degrading elements, and became an assertion of the everlasting righteousness of the One God. 'The Babylonian parallel only serves to bring out the unique grandeur of Israel's God-idea, which could thus purify and transform the most uncongenial and repugnant features of the ancient Deluge tradition' (Gunkel).

### F

#### ARE THERE TWO CONFLICTING ACCOUNTS OF CREATION AND THE DELUGE IN THE BIBLE?

All those scholars who are followers of what is called 'Higher Criticism' maintain that the

account of the Flood in the Bible was written much later than Moses. In the face of all archaeological evidence to the contrary, they maintain that the art of writing was not known in Israel before the days of David. Like all primitive nations, Israel had bards and singers who recited and composed legends and tales concerning the exploits of the ancestral heroes; and in the course of centuries, these early legends and tales of Israel assumed a fixed literary form in two distinct collections. They call one of these supposed 'collections' E, because the Divine Name used in it is *Elohim* (rendered in English by GOD), and allege that it arose in the Prophetic circles of Northern Israel in the ninth pre-Christian century. The other collection they call J, because, they say, it regularly employs the Divine Name which is read as *Adonay* (translated into English by the word LORD), and they declare it arose in the Prophetic circles of Judea in the eighth pre-Christian century. A third document (Deuteronomy), they tell us, arose in the reign of King Josiah; and on the return from Exile, a fourth portion of the Torah came into existence, the Priestly Document, which they call P. As these distinct documents, however, E, J, D, and P, do not exist separately or even side by side, we are asked to believe that at various stages in Israel's history, those different parts have been combined and edited by a succession of 'redactors'. We shall elsewhere in the course of this commentary show the utter baselessness of this revolutionary view of Israel's history and religion. At this point, we shall examine the principal reasons which the critics assign for the division of the text of the Torah into what they call its 'original elements'. These reasons are: (a) the alleged diversity in the use of Divine Names; and (b) supposed discrepancies in statement between the various 'sources'. And nowhere in the Pentateuch, they hold, are these differences in Divine Names and in details of statement more evident than in the chapters dealing with the Creation and the Deluge. These sections, therefore, should afford the best test to prove the tenability, or otherwise, of the claims of the Bible critics.

A. Genesis, chapters I and II are supposed to contain two distinct accounts of Creation. Genesis, chapter I-II, 3, is called P—the Priestly account, and is supposed to be post-exilic; whereas Genesis, chapter II, 4-25 is the Prophetic account, J, and is stated to be some two centuries earlier.

But, are there two accounts of Creation? Can Genesis II, 4-25, honestly be considered as such? Unlike chapter I, it does not describe the coming into existence of the sun, moon and stars, of the seas and their inhabitants. Even Heaven and earth are mentioned only indirectly, in an introductory phrase. Genesis II, 4-25, pre-supposes Gen. I, supplements it, and is unintelligible without it. The proposed distinguishing of the two sources by the use of the different Divine

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Names fails at the very start. *Elohim* they declare to be exclusively used by the Priestly writer of Gen. i; and *Adonay* to be the Divine Name used only by the supposed Prophetic writer to whom they assign Gen. ii, 4-15; and yet *Elohim* occurs 20 times together with *Adonay* in Gen. ii, 4-25 and in Chap. iii, which is also held by them to be Prophetic. The critics attempt to get over this difficulty by stating that *Elohim* has been here interpolated by the 'redactor' 20 times in one chapter. But then, in the conversation between Eve and the serpent, *Elohim* without *Adonay* is used! Is this, too, an interpolation?

As explained in the comment on ii, 4, the alternate, or combined, use of *Elohim* and *Adonay* for the Name of God presents no difficulty whatsoever. Their employment varies according to the nature of the context. Thus, in connection with the creation of the Universe at large (Genesis i), the Divine Name employed is *Elohim*. In God's merciful relations with human beings, however (Gen. ii, 4-25), He is spoken of as *Adonay*, Lord. There is nothing strange or out of the way in such usage. In English, we choose words like Deity, Supreme Being, Almighty, God, Lord, according as the subject and occasion demand. *One and the same writer* may at various times use any one of these English terms for the Divine Being. The nature of the context decides what Divine Name is employed. In the same way, different Divine Names in the Hebrew text do not argue a diversity of writers, but simply that the Divine Name has each time been selected in accordance with the idea to be expressed. David Hoffmann, W. H. Green, and B. Jacob have examined each and every instance of the use of these Names throughout Genesis, and have shown the exact appropriateness of each Name to the subject matter in which it occurs.

B. No more are there two distinct accounts of the Deluge than there are two accounts of Creation. Here, too, the Divine Name 'test' fails completely. One example will suffice. 'And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God (*Elohim*) commanded him; and the LORD (*Adonay*) shut him in' (vii, 16). As the Bible critics declare this verse to be written by P, it ought to contain only *Elohim*; and yet we have *Elohim* followed by *Adonay*! The critics are compelled by their theory to assign the 'offending' words to J, although the whole context belongs to P. Those who are not critics find, of course, no difficulty here: *Adonay* is used, because 'the LORD (*Adonay*) shut him in' describes a merciful action. In face of such a combined use of both *Elohim* and *Adonay* as we have here, and in Genesis ii, the test of the Divine Name surely breaks down.

Equally baseless is the argument triumphantly brought forward that there is a striking discrepancy of statement in the directions given to Noah, which discrepancy compels the assumption

of two distinct accounts. Noah is first told (vi, 19) to take into the ark two each of all animals; whereas, in the next chapter, he is told to take two of all animals, but *seven* of all clean beasts! The answer is plain: vi, 19 does not say that *only* two shall be taken from each kind. The first is a general command; whereas the second command at the moment of entering the ark is more specific, and directs that of the clean domestic animals of Noah that were to serve him for food and later for sacrifices, he was to take seven of each. Such general statements (כָּלֵל) followed by a statement giving specific details (פָּרֵט) are the rule in Scripture. Thus, the opening verse of Gen. i, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,' is a general statement. This is followed by a whole series of supplementary specific statements, giving the details of creation. Yet there certainly is no contradiction between the general statement that behind the whole Universe is a Creator, and the remainder of the chapter describing the various creative acts. The same rule of general and specific statement obtains in connection with the command to Noah.

But the utter falsity of the critical theory is proved by the Babylonian version itself. The Babylonian version is in agreement with the Bible account as an *undivided whole*. There are special points of agreement between it and the portions assigned to P; such as, the precise instructions for building the ark, and the statement that the ark rested on a mountain, etc. There are also special points of agreement between it and the portions assigned to J, such as, the sending forth of birds, and the later building of an altar and the offering of sacrifices. This is unanswerable testimony to the unity of the Scriptural Deluge account.

The procedure of the critics in connection with the Creation and Deluge chapters is typical of their method throughout. It justifies the protest of the late Lord Chancellor of England, the Earl of Halsbury—an excellent judge of evidence—who in 1915 found himself impelled to declare:—'For my own part I consider the assignment of different fragments of Genesis to a number of wholly imaginary authors great rubbish. I do not understand the attitude of those men who base a whole theory of this kind on hypotheses for which there is no evidence whatsoever.' A generation before the Earl of Halsbury, the historian Lecky gave expression to a similar judgment, in the following words: 'I may be pardoned for expressing my belief that this kind of investigation is often pursued with an exaggerated confidence. Plausible conjecture is too easily mistaken for positive proof. Undue significance is attached to what may be mere casual coincidence, and a minuteness of accuracy is professed in discriminating between different elements in a narrative which cannot be attained by mere internal evidence.'

Whenever *external* evidence comes to light, as in the case of the Babylonian version of the

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Deluge, or, as we shall see later, in the case of the discovery of the Babylonian Code of Laws—the arbitrary and purely fictitious nature of the critical theories becomes patent to all.

### G

#### ABRAHAM

##### I

Mankind descending from Adam became hopelessly corrupt and was swept away by the Deluge. Noah alone was spared. But before many generations pass away, mankind once again becomes arrogant and impious, and moral darkness overspreads the earth. And God said *Let Abraham be*—and there was light, is the profound saying of the Midrash. In many a beautiful legend, the Rabbis recount how Abraham refused to walk in the way of the Tower-builders, and broke away from the debasing heathenism of his contemporaries. In his early childhood one night, he looked at the stars under the clear Mesopotamian sky, and felt, 'These are the gods!' But the dawn came, and soon the stars could be seen no longer when the sun rose. 'This is my god, him will I adore!' he exclaimed. But then the sun set, and he hailed the moon as his deity. When in turn the moon was obscured, he cried out: 'This, too, is no god! There must be One who is the Maker of Sun, Moon and Stars.' Having gradually reached the momentous conviction that the Universe is the work of One Supreme Being who is the God of righteousness, he endeavoured to open the eyes of others to the folly of idol-worship, and becomes the Preacher of the True Faith. In his father's house, the legend continues, there stood one great idol and a large number of smaller ones. Abraham broke all the smaller ones and then placed the hammer in the hand of the big idol. 'They quarrelled among themselves,' he later explained to his dumb-founded father, 'and the big one thereupon took a hammer and shattered them all. Behold, it is still in his hands!' 'But there is no life and power in them to do such things,' his father answered in rage. 'Why then dost thou serve them? Can they hear thy prayers when thou callest upon them?' was the reply. Abraham was thereupon haled before the ruler of Babylon, Nimrod, who cast him into a fiery furnace (whence the name of the city 'Ur', which means *fire*). An angel of God rescues him unhurt from its devouring flames (Midrash). Abraham the idol-wrecker is the father of that People which was to shatter all idolatries; which was to suffer all things, endure all things, and survive all things in its defiance of despotisms of the body and soul; which was to succeed in turning the course of history by the perpetuation of true religion for the children of men. The call of Abraham is the beginning of the higher spiritual life of humanity.

##### II

With Abraham, the nature of the Book of Genesis changes. Hitherto, in its first eleven chapters, it has given an account of the dawn of the world and of human society. The remainder of the Book is the story of the founders of the People whose destiny, in the light of God's purpose, forms the main theme of Scripture. These founders of the Jewish People are not divine or semi-divine beings, as is the case with the mythical heroes of Greece, Rome or the Teutonic nations. They are purely human personalities, just normal men, of like passions with ourselves, having their faults and excellencies. 'Abraham is the "Friend of God"'. He is nothing more; but he is nothing less. In him was exemplified the fundamental truth of all religion, that God has not deserted the world; that His work is carried on by His own chosen instruments; that good men are not only His creatures and His servants, but His friends' (Stanley).

With the Patriarchs, we leave the dim, Primeval world and enter the full daylight of historical times. Even a generation ago, Bible critics looked upon the Patriarchal stories in Genesis as a tissue of fabrications, at best as legends, but in no case as authentic history. No theory was too fantastic, or too blasphemous, to be put forward as a serious explanation of the narrative. One critic declared Abraham to be a 'free creation of unconscious art'; another turned him into a 'fetish stone'; a third identified him with the 'starry heavens'; and a fourth made of him 'a sacred locality'. One of the greatest of these Bible critics (Dillmann), who at one time shared those preposterous views, eventually felt himself impelled to state 'we have no right to explain these Genesis narratives as pure fiction. They rest in essentials on sound historical recollection'. This view is now that of all responsible students of the Bible. 'The patriarchal period has been so illumined by recent discoveries,' says the author of the commentary on 'Genesis' in the *International Critical Series*, 'that it is no longer possible to doubt its substantial historicity. Contemporary documents reveal a set of conditions into which the patriarchal narratives fit perfectly, and which are so different from those prevailing under the monarchy that the situation could not possibly have been imagined by an Israelite of that age' (John Skinner). The words of the Psalmist, 'Truth shall spring out of the earth,' have become literally fulfilled, and the very stones of the Nile and the Euphrates valleys, of Palestine, and Asia Minor, have given their decisive testimony in vindication of the Torah. 'We have travelled far from the time when scholars attempted to turn the Patriarchs into mythical beings. To-day that attempt itself almost appears mythical' (Professor D. H. Müller).

H

THE BINDING OF ISAAC (AKEDAH)

This Chapter is of great importance both in the life of Abraham and in the life of Israel. The aged Patriarch, who had longed for a rightful heir ('O Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go hence childless?'), and who had had his longing fulfilled in the birth of Isaac, is now bidden offer up this child as a burnt offering unto the Lord. The purpose of the command was to apply a supreme test to Abraham's faith, thus strengthening his faith by the heroic exercise of it. The proofs of a man's love of God are his willingness to serve Him with all his heart, all his soul and all his might; as well as his readiness to sacrifice unto Him what is even dearer than life. It was a test safe only in a Divine hand, capable of intervening as He did intervene, and as it was His purpose from the first to intervene, as soon as the spiritual end of the trial was accomplished.

So much for what may be called the *positive* lesson of the Akedah. We shall now examine another side, the great *negative* teaching of this trial of Abraham. The story of the Binding of Isaac opens the age-long warfare of Israel against the abominations of child sacrifice, which was rife among the Semitic peoples, as well as their Egyptian and Aryan neighbours. In that age, it was astounding that Abraham's God should have interposed to *prevent* the sacrifice, not that He should have asked for it. A primary purpose of this command, therefore, was to demonstrate to Abraham and his descendants after him that God abhorred human sacrifice with an infinite abhorrence. Unlike the cruel heathen deities, *it was the spiritual surrender alone that God required*. Moses warns his people not to serve God in the manner of the surrounding nations. 'For every abomination to the LORD, which He hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters do they burn in the fire to their gods' (Deuteronomy XII, 31). All the Prophets alike shudder at this hideous aberration of man's sense of worship, and they do not rest till all Israel shares their horror of this savage custom. It is due to the influence of their teaching that the name *Ge-Hinnom*, the valley where the wicked kings practised this horrible rite, became a synonym for 'Hell'.

A new meaning and influence begin for the Akedah, and its demand for man's unconditional surrender to God's will and the behests of God's law, with the Maccabean revolt, when Jews were first called upon to die for their Faith. Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his most sacred affections on the altar of his God evoked and developed a new ideal in Israel, *the ideal of martyrdom*. The story of Hannah and her seven sons, immortalized in the Second Book of Maccabees, has come down to us in many forms. In one of these, the martyr mother says to her youngest child, 'Go to Abraham our Father, and tell him that I have bettered his instruction. He offered one child to

God; I offered seven. He merely bound the sacrifice; I performed it' (Midrash). As persecution deepened during later centuries, the Binding of Isaac was ever in the mind of men and women who might at any moment be given the dread alternative of apostasy or death. Allusions to the Akedah early found their way into the Liturgy; and in time a whole cycle of synagogue hymns (*piyyutim*) grew round it. In the Middle Ages, it gave fathers and mothers the superhuman courage to immolate themselves and their children, rather than see them fall away to idolatry or baptism. English Jews need but think of the soul-stirring tragedy enacted at York Castle in the year 1190 to understand the lines of the modern Jewish poet:—

'We have sacrificed all. We have given our wealth,

Our homes, our honours, our land, our health,  
Our lives—like Hannah her children seven—  
For the sake of the Torah that came from  
Heaven' (J. L. Gordon).

Many to-day have no understanding of martyrdom. They fail to see that it represents the highest moral triumph of humanity—unwavering steadfastness to principle, even at the cost of life. They equally fail to see the lasting influence of such martyrdoms upon the life and character of the nation whose history they adorn. Those who are thus blind to unconquerable courage and endurance naturally display hostility to the whole idea of the Akedah and its place and associations in Jewish thought. 'Only a Moloch requires human sacrifices' (Geiger), they exclaim. But in all human history, there is not a single noble cause, movement or achievement that did not call for sacrifice, nay sacrifice of life itself. Science, Liberty, Humanity, all took their toll of martyrs; and so did and does Judaism. Israel is the classical people of martyrdom. No other people has made similar sacrifices for Truth, Conscience, Human Honour and Human Freedom (Martin Schreiner). Even in our own day, Jewish parents in Eastern and Central European lands have refused, and refuse, fortune and honours for the sake of conscience. What is far harder, they sacrifice the careers of their children, whenever these involve disloyalty to the God of their Fathers. Few chapters of the Bible have had a more potent and more lasting influence on the lives and souls of men than the Akedah.

I

ALLEGED CHRISTOLOGICAL REFERENCES IN SCRIPTURE

The first of these references is alleged to be in the words often translated by 'Until Shiloh come', in Gen. XLIX, 10. Most of the ancient and modern explanations of this verse turn upon the Heb. word rendered by *Shiloh*.

I. It is a strange circumstance that the older Jewish Versions and commentators (Septuagint, Targums, Saadyah and Rashi) read this word without a *yod*, as if written שִׁלֹה, the archaic form for 'his'; or, as if it were a poetic form for 'peace'.

(a) The translation, 'until that which is his shall come,' is derived from the Septuagint. Its meaning is, The sceptre shall not depart from Judah till all that is reserved for him shall have been fulfilled.

(b) 'Till he come whose it (the kingdom) is' (Onkelos and Jerusalem Targum, Saadyah, Rashi and other Jewish commentators).

(c) 'Till peace cometh' (M. Friedlander).

II. Most commentators, however, take the word שִׁלֹה as the name of a place or person.

(a) 'As long as men come to Shiloh' (to worship). Shiloh was the location of the sanctuary in the days of the Prophet Samuel, before Jerusalem became the centre of Jewish worship. As the outstanding superiority of the tribe of Judah only began after the Temple was built at Jerusalem, this interpretation is unsatisfactory.

(b) 'Till he of Shiloh cometh, and the obedience of the peoples be turned to him.' Mendelssohn and Zunz see in the verse a prediction of the event described in 1 Kings xi, 29 f. Ahijah, the Prophet of Shiloh, foretold to Jeroboam that a part of the Kingdom would be taken from Solomon and transferred to him; that ten tribes of Israel (here called 'peoples', see Gen. xl.viii, 4) would break away from the House of David, and submit to his rule. This ingenious explanation fails to satisfy for various reasons. 'He of Shiloh' would be in Heb. not שִׁלֹה but הַשִּׁלֹהִי; the tribes were not turned to the Prophet of Shiloh but to Jeroboam; and the utterance would have been quite unintelligible to Judah.

(c) 'Till Shiloh come.' This is the rendering of the Authorised Version, and assumes that *Shiloh* is a personal name or a Messianic title. Although this assumption finds support in Rabbinic literature, it is there only a homiletic comment without official and binding authority. Despite the fact that nowhere in Scripture is that term applied to the Messiah, Christian theo-

logians assume that Shiloh is a name of the Founder of Christianity. In this sense, 'Till Shiloh come' is a favourite text of Christian missionaries in attempting to convert illiterate Jews or those ignorant of Scripture. It is noteworthy that this translation only dates from the year 1534, and is found for the first time in the German Bible of Sebastian Munster. Although it is retained in the text of the Revised Version, it is now rejected by all those who have a scholarly acquaintance with the subject. Even a loyal Bishop of the Church of England, the late Dean of Westminster, wrote, 'The improbability of this later interpretation is so great that it may be dismissed from consideration' (Ryle).

Such likewise is the judgment which must be passed on the translations of all the other alleged Christological passages which missionaries to the Jews are fond of quoting. Christian scholars of repute are gradually giving up such partisan interpretations. Thus Psalm ii, 12 is translated in the Authorised Version as 'Kiss the Son,' with the obvious Christian reference. In the Revised Version text, however, this is softened to 'Kiss the son'; while the Margin gives, 'Worship in purity.' This latter is in agreement with Jewish authorities.

Similarly, in connection with Isaiah vii, 14, 'A virgin shall conceive,' Christian scholars to-day admit that 'virgin' is a mistranslation for the Heb. word *almah*, in that verse. A 'maid' or unmarried woman is expressed in Hebrew by *bethulah*. The word *almah* in Isaiah vii, 14 means no more than a young woman of age to be a mother, whether she be married or not.

The most famous passage of this class is the Fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. For eighteen hundred years Christian theologians have passionately maintained that it is a Prophetic anticipation of the life of the Founder of their Faith. An impartial examination of the chapter, however, shows that the Prophet is speaking of a *past historical fact*, and is describing one who had already been smitten to death. Consequently, a reference to an event which is said to have happened many centuries later is excluded.

These three instances may be taken as typical. Modern scholarship has shattered the arguments from the Scriptures which missionaries have tried, and are still trying, to impose upon ignorant Jews.

## ADDITIONAL NOTES TO EXODUS

### A

#### ISRAEL IN EGYPT: THE HISTORICAL PROBLEMS

##### I

#### WHAT LIGHT DOES EGYPTIAN HISTORY THROW ON ISRAEL IN EGYPT?

The history of ancient Egypt is usually divided into three periods. The earliest period is that of the Old Kingdom, which comprises the first ten dynasties of pyramid builders, ending 2500 B.C.E. The second period, the Middle Kingdom, from the eleventh to the seventeenth dynasty of rulers (2500-1587 B.C.E.), is one of great obscurity, and covers the age during which the Hyksos, Bedouin invaders from the Arabian desert, ruled Egypt. They were expelled by the founder of the eighteenth dynasty in 1587. He opens the third period, the New Kingdom, which continues to the end of the twentieth dynasty in 1100 B.C.E. After that date, the country successively came under Lybian, Persian, Macedonian, and Roman rule.

Biblical interest in Egypt begins during the Middle Kingdom. Joseph served one of the Hyksos kings. These invaders, 'princes of the desert,' as they called themselves, soon accommodated themselves to the system of Government they had found in Egypt; and their contribution to Egyptian culture was not inferior to that of the native kings. Their dominion was later described as one of desolation and ruin—which is quite untrue. The Hyksos kings restored and enlarged the temples, encouraged learning, and could not have destroyed any of the previous Egyptian monuments, seeing that these have come down to our own day. On the contrary, it is the native rulers who followed them that eradicated every trace of the Hyksos kings. This is responsible for the obscurity that overhangs the story of the whole Hyksos period, and the consequent uncertainty of so much of Egyptian chronology. Not long after the death of Joseph, the Hyksos were driven back into Asia; and a native ruler, the founder of the Eighteenth Dynasty, regained the throne.

The advent of this nationalist dynasty marked the turn of the tide in the fortunes of the descendants of Jacob. As friends of the overthrown Hyksos kings, they lost their favoured position, and their past services to the State were 'ignored'. From prosperous and honoured settlers in the Eastern Delta of the Nile, with freedom of movement and right of domicile throughout Egypt and her dominions, they were under the successive rulers of the Eighteenth Dynasty (1587-1350 B.C.E.) gradually reduced to a condition of serfdom. These rulers, as well as the kings of the Nineteenth Dynasty (1350-1200),

were great architects and are famous for the number and magnificence of their monuments. That veritable frenzy for building which characterized all these rulers naturally called for vast levies of forced labour. The feared and hated Israelites seemed to these Pharaohs to be at hand for just such a purpose. The Israelites were now condemned to cruel slave labour as bricklayers and navvies, both the kind and conditions of their labour being utterly alien to the nature and the traditions of free and independent shepherd folk.

It is difficult to determine the name of the 'new king' who initiated the Oppression. Scripture does not give us the name of the ruler in question, *Pharaoh* being merely the royal title of the reigning monarch. The one aim of the Scripture story is to describe God's Providential guidance of His people. The narrative is 'theocentric'; and events are viewed under the aspect of eternity. Details, such as the exact names of the impious heathen oppressors, are passed over, and all the emphasis is placed on the religious truths with which the narrative throbs (Boehl). And as to the hieroglyphic monuments, their information on this whole subject is most meagre. Possibly this is due to the fact that as yet little excavation has taken place in Goshen, *i.e.* the Eastern Delta, which was the main domicile of the Israelites. But even when ancient Goshen is revealed to us, it will still be well to remember that the true-born Egyptian chronicler took little notice of the fortunes of an alien serf-class like the Israelites, whose original occupation—keeping sheep—was, in his eyes, that of outcasts (Gen. xlvi, 34).

There are, therefore, but few casual references on the monuments to the *Aperu* or *Apurii*, which is the Egyptian form of the name 'Hebrews'. Thus, in a report addressed to an official of the reign of Rameses II, there occur the words: 'I have obeyed the message of my lord, in which he said, "Give corn to the native soldiers, and also to the Apurii, who are bringing up stones for the great tower of Pa-Ramesu"'. . . I have given them their corn every month, according to the instructions of my lord.' In another report of the same age we read: 'I have hearkened to my lord's message, "Give provisions to the soldiers and to the *Aperu*, who bring up stones for Ra (the sun-god), viz. for Ra of Rameses, the beloved of Amon, in the southern quarter of Memphis.'" So much for the nature of the few Egyptian references to the Hebrew serfs doing forced labour for the Pharaohs.

As to the exodus from Egypt, the Egyptian records pass it over in total silence—as was their invariable custom in connection with any defeat suffered by the ruler or nation. For instance, although the Hyksos conquest of Egypt is the most important political event in Egyptian history,

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yet almost no mention is made in the monuments of this catastrophe, which shook the whole social structure to its foundations. The Egyptian records confine themselves to the boastful recounting of victories. The Biblical writers alone, among all Oriental chroniclers, describe defeats of their king and armies; nay more, they arraign ruler and people alike whensoever these are unfaithful to the aims and ideals of the nation. This is one of the reasons why, of all Oriental chronicles, it is only the Biblical annals that deserve the name of history.

### II

#### WHO WAS THE PHARAOH OF THE OPPRESSION?

In view of the above, there are several candidates for the infamy of having been the 'Pharaoh of the Oppression', under whom the bondage of the Israelites ended in a systematic attempt at their extermination. The majority of scholars identify him with the splendour-loving and tyrannical Rameses II, whose dates are variously given as 1300–1234 B.C.E. (Petrie) and 1347–1280 (Mahler). 'He was a vain and boastful character, who wished to dazzle posterity by covering the land with constructions whereon his name was engraved thousands of times, and who prided himself in his inscriptions upon great conquests which he never made' (Naville). The Exodus itself is held to have taken place under his son, Merneptah, with whom the decline of Egypt began. Merneptah (or Menephtah) was an obstinate and vain despot. He too had the habit of claiming as his own the achievements of others. 'He was one of the most unconscionable usurpers (and defacers) of the monuments of his predecessors, including those of his own father, who had set him the example . . . all due to a somewhat insane desire to perpetuate his own memory' (Prof. Griffith, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1929).

Some scholars, however, date the Oppression and the Exodus in the century preceding Rameses II, and connect it with the religious revolution of Amenophis IV, or Ikhnaton (1383–1365). This extraordinary personality abolished the multitudinous deities of the Egyptian Pantheon, and devoted himself exclusively to the worship of the Sun. These scholars hold that there was some relation between the faith of the Israelites and the solar monotheism of Ikhnaton, and that Israelite influence was partly responsible for this assault on the gross idolatry of Egypt. Ikhnaton was hated by the people as the 'heretic king', and his innovations were abandoned by his son-in-law Tut-an-khamen, who succeeded him, eventually to be altogether uprooted by Haremhab, the last Pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty. When the native religion was restored—these scholars maintain—the Israelites suffered persecution and degradation; and the Oppression formed part of the extirpation of Ikhnaton's heresy.

Other Egyptologists go back still another century to Thotmes III (1503–1449), and declare him to have been the Pharaoh of the Oppression. They connect the Oppression and the departure of the Israelites from Egypt with the movements of the Habiri people in the Amarna age (see page 51, n. 13), and believe that the recently discovered inscriptions in the Sinai Peninsula likewise favour this theory.

One of the main reasons which induce both these groups of scholars to dissent from the general view that Rameses II was the Pharaoh of the Oppression, is the fact that the name 'Israel' is alleged to occur on an inscription of Merneptah. That inscription (discovered in 1896) is a song of triumph of Merneptah describing in grandiloquent language his victories in Canaan; and, among other conquests, he boasts that 'Canaan is seized with every evil; Ashkelon is carried away; Gezer is taken; Yenoam is annihilated; *Ysiraal is desolated, its seed is not.*' From the phrase, 'Ysiraal is desolated,' these scholars deduce that the Israelites must in those days have been in possession of Canaan; and that, therefore, the Exodus must have taken place long before the time of Merneptah. However, it is not at all certain that the words, 'Ysiraal is desolated,' refer to Israel at all. Thus, Prof. Kennett takes the phrase as analogous to that concerning Ashkelon and Gezer; and therefore as merely stating that Merneptah had devastated the district of 'Jezreel.' And if 'Ysiraal' *does* mean Israel, then it refers to the settlements in Palestine by Israelites from Egypt before the Exodus (Jampel). From various notices in 1 Chronicles we see that, during the generations preceding the Oppression, the Israelites did not remain confined to Goshen or even to Egypt proper, but spread into the southern Palestinian territory, then under Egyptian control, and even engaged in skirmishes with the Philistines. When the bulk of the nation had left Egypt and was wandering in the Wilderness, these Israelite settlers had thrown off their Egyptian allegiance. And it is these settlements which Merneptah boasts of having devastated during his Canaanite campaign. There is, therefore, no cogent reason for dissenting from the current view that the Pharaoh of the Oppression was Rameses II, with his son Merneptah as the Pharaoh of the Exodus.

### III

#### THE 'INCONVENIENCE' OF BIBLICAL TRADITIONS

Little need be said in regard to the extreme and baseless scepticism, recently revived in Soviet anti-religious circles, that the Israelites never were in Egypt; and that, in consequence, there could not have been either an Oppression or an Exodus.

There is one conclusive answer to the doubts as to the historicity of the Exodus and other crucial events in Scriptural history; and that is, what has aptly been called the 'inconvenience'

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of *Biblical traditions*. One or two examples will both explain this argument and make clear its unanswerable force. The first example is taken from the story of Abraham. For centuries, the Hebrew tribes waged a life-and-death struggle with the native population for the possession of ancient Palestine. But instead of the Hebrews claiming that they too were natives of Canaan, or that they were the true aborigines of its soil, Bible Tradition concerning the beginnings of the Hebrew people is emphatic that its ancestors were *not* born in Canaan, but were nomads, immigrant shepherds, and had their origin in Ur of the Chaldees. Now, even the sceptical historian is forced to admit that such a tradition must be based on strict history, as no people would invent such an *inconvenient* tradition in regard to a matter of vital importance like its right and title to its national homeland. To take another example. The record of Genesis that Isaac and Jacob married Aramaean wives must be based on *fact*, and could not have arisen, as some Bible critics maintain, in the days of the Monarchy. For throughout the days of the Monarchy, Aram was the hereditary enemy of Israel, and was guilty of the most hideous barbarities in its continued attempts to annihilate Israel. It is clear that here too the tradition that the 'Mothers' of the Israelite people were Aramaean women was an *inconvenient* one—and cannot therefore be an invention of later legend (Cornill, Jirku).

All this applies with immeasurably greater force in regard to the historicity of the Oppression in Egypt. Compared with the Egyptian bondage and the deliverance therefrom, everything else in Bible history is of secondary importance. The memory of that bondage and deliverance is woven into the message of legislator, historian, psalmist, prophet and priest; and a large portion of Jewish life both in the Biblical and the post-Biblical ages is but a *זכר לתיאור מצרים*, an echo and reminder of that Divine event which meant the birth of Israel as a nation. Now, it is unthinkable that any nation, unless forced to do so by the overwhelming compulsion of unforgettable fact, would of its own account have wantonly affixed to its forefathers the stain and dishonour of slavery in a foreign country. No people has ever yet invented a *disgraceful* past for itself. The invention by a later age of a story so humiliating to national self-respect would be still more astounding in the case of Israel, when we consider that after the days of Menremptah the decline of Egypt began, and the invented national bondage would have been to a weak and waning Power. If, therefore, Israel's sojourn and bondage in Egypt were *merely* a fiction, such fiction would be quite inexplicable—in fact, a psychological miracle. Even a radical student of this question like Prof. Peet sums up his conclusions as follows: 'That Israel was in Egypt under one form or another no historian could possibly doubt; a legend of such tenacity, representing the early fortunes of

a people under so unfavourable an aspect, could not have arisen save as a reflection of real occurrences.'

### B

#### ISRAEL AND EGYPT: THE SPIRITUAL CONTRAST

Israel and Egypt represent two world-conceptions, two ways of looking on God and Man that are not merely in conflict, but mutually exclusive.

For ages Egypt was the Land of Wonder, and men spoke in awe of the wisdom of the Egyptians. We know now that they were indeed a wonderful people; but it is only in the arts and crafts, and especially in their colossal and titanic architecture, that they attained truly astonishing results.

The real tests of a nation's civilization, however, are far other than these. The supreme test is its vision of God. Now what were the objects of Egyptian worship? Stocks and stones, and, above all else, the beast. While there are traces, albeit faint traces, that the men of the Nile Valley were capable of learning both in religion and in conduct, they seem to have been quite incapable of *forgetting*. Egypt never discarded the low animism and savage fetishism of its prehistoric days, and remained always 'zoomorphic' in its conception of God: bulls, crocodiles, beetles, apes, cats, and goats—these were its gods. There were, it is true, stammerings of something nobler; glimpses of higher religious truth; but these remained only glimpses—like flashes of light for one brief moment in the night-time, leaving greater darkness, Egyptian darkness, behind. Once only was an attempt made by that remarkable man, Amenophis IV, to reform the barbarism of Egyptian worship and to put a kind of monotheism in its place. The sun was to be worshipped as the single deity under the name of Aton; and he changed his own name to Ikhnaton, 'Glory to the Sun.' But the reformation was a failure. He died amid the curses of his subjects, and the old confused polytheism returned stronger than ever. 'We have no grounds for holding the opinion,' says Prof. R. H. Hall, 'that the educated Egyptian priest, far less the man in the street, normally accepted any pious theories of a latent monotheism, underlying his blatant polytheism. Ikhnaton was branded as a criminal; and after his failure, we go back to the old spells and mumbo-jumbo again . . . till the death of the Egyptian religion in the days of Justinian. In religious matters, the Egyptians at all periods (except the educated at the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty) were in the mental condition of the blacks of the Gold Coast and Niger delta. They had "mysteries", of course,

like the Ashantis or Ibos. It is a mistake, however, to think that these mysteries enshrined truth, and that there was an occult "faith" behind them. There is no more proof of it than in the case of the Ashantis or Ibos' (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1929).

Now where there is no vision of God there can be no vision of man. Hence the insignificance of man in the Egyptian world-conception. They bent the knee to the beast, but man throughout Egyptian history was in bondage. Human life had absolutely no value. The lives of vast multitudes of men were sacrificed in connection with the frenzied building schemes. Herodotus tells us that in the time of Pharaoh Necho II (609–588 B.C.E.), 120,000 labourers were worked to death in the construction of a canal connecting the Nile and the Red Sea. The pyramids, erected by the tyrant's unlimited command of human forces, remain everlasting monuments of human slavery—and of the national deification of reckless and irresponsible power.

In eternal contrast to Egypt, the whole story of Israel is one long protest against idolatry and inhumanity. A single incident in the life of a Jewish ruler will illustrate the world-wide difference between Israel and Egypt. King Jehoiakim, a contemporary of Pharaoh Necho II, tried to emulate his example, and built himself palaces by means of forced labour. In Egypt, such a thing was taken as a matter of course, as the unquestioned prerogative of the king. In Israel, that enterprise was deemed an outrage against reason and human decency. Jeremiah the Prophet arose and came to the door of Jehoiakim's palace, crying: 'Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by injustice; that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not his hire. . . . Thine eyes and thy heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for shedding innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it. Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah: They shall not lament for him. . . . He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem' (Jer. xxii, 13, 17–19). These words of Jeremiah are but a prophetic echo of the Israelite's cry for freedom that pierced the heavens in the days of Moses: they are but the translation of the trumpet sounds of the Exodus and the Sinaitic Covenant, with their Divine and everlasting proclamation of the rights of man.

Another characteristic element in the religious life of Egypt was worship of the dead. I give a brief summary of that worship, taken from W. Max Müller's article in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*. The huge pyramids alone, says Prof. Müller, would be sufficient to testify that the Egyptians devoted greater zeal than any nation on earth to the abodes of their dead, and to the sustenance of their souls by sacrifices. The Bible of the Egyptians is the so-called 'Book of the

Dead'. It contains magic formulæ for the guidance of man after death, warning him of the dangers he might expect to meet, and providing him with powerful spells—previously placed on the coffins for this purpose—to guarantee his safety. When the dead man reached the great Judgment Hall of the god Osiris, his moral life was tested. In the course of that judgment, the deceased denied that he had ever committed any of the 42 cardinal sins. (R. H. Hall rightly says: The Egyptian was never a humble person, either genuinely or hypocritically. When he confessed he did not say, 'I am guilty'; he said, 'I am not guilty'; his confession was negative, and the *onus probandi* lay on his judges). Simultaneously with the doctrine just stated, there existed the conflicting belief that the departed souls lived in darkness and misery in the nether world, persecuted by evil spirits, so that it was best for the dead person to become, by witchcraft, one of these evil monsters himself.

No wonder that the influence of the Egyptian religion on the lives of men was not very profound. In every respect the morality of the Egyptians seems to have been lax. One example will suffice. The tombs were almost invariably broken into soon after burial, and no military protection could prevent even the royal tombs from being plundered.

When we compare the Egyptian attitude towards death with that of the Pentateuch, we see in the latter what appears to be a deliberate aim to wean the Israelites from Egyptian superstition. In this way alone can we explain the silence of Israel's Torah in regard to the Life after Death. On the one hand, there is not a word concerning immortality, or concerning reward and punishment in the Hereafter; and on the other hand, there is rigorous proscription of all magic and sorcery, of sacrificing to the dead, as well as every form of alleged intercourse with the world of spirits. Israel's Faith is a religion of life, not of death; a religion that declares man's humanity to man as the most acceptable form of adoration of the One God, the Creator of heaven and earth, Who is from everlasting to everlasting.

Israel while in Egypt was yet but a child, and was not strong enough to withstand Egypt in Egypt. Only out of Egypt could it grow, uncontaminated by noxious influences of a decadent civilization. Only when liberated from the contagion of a nation of mere childish stammerers in the things of the Spirit, could it flourish, and fill the earth with the glad tidings of a God of holiness and pity, and the message of Righteousness to men and nations.

## C

## DOES EXODUS VI, 3, SUPPORT THE HIGHER CRITICAL THEORY?

This query, as well as the answer to it, may have little meaning and no interest to the general reader. In that case, he will be well advised to

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skip the appropriate sections. There is, however, a good number of laymen who are aware of the crucial significance that is attached to Exodus vi, 3 in modern Biblical study. For them it is of utmost importance that the question which forms the title of this Note be dealt with in a thorough-going way. Even the man who is not possessed of technical knowledge will then see how feeble, how insubstantial, is the pillar on which so much of Bible Critical Theory rests.

### I

Contrary to what we have seen to be the plain meaning of Exodus vi, 3, Bible Critics declare that, according to the author of this chapter, the Name  $\Upsilon \text{HWH}$  (Adonay) is here revealed for the first time to Moses. Therefore—they hold—all those chapters in Genesis and Exodus in which Adonay (or the LORD, in English) occurs, must have been written by another hand than Exodus vi, 3. They point to this verse as unanswerable proof of the alleged plurality of 'sources' in the Pentateuch (see p. 398); and Exodus vi, 3, is accordingly proclaimed in every learned and popular treatise on the Critical treatment of the Bible as the 'clue' to the various sources of the Pentateuch.

The current Critical explanation of this verse, however, rests on a total misunderstanding of Hebrew idiom. When Scripture states that Israel, or the nations, or Pharaoh, 'shall know that God is Adonay'—this does *not* mean that they shall be informed that His Name is  $\Upsilon \text{HWH}$  (Adonay), as the Critics would have it; but that they shall come to witness His power and comprehend those attributes of the Divine nature which that Name denotes. Thus, Jer. xvi, 21, 'I will cause them to know My hand and My might, and they shall know that My name is Adonay.' In Ezekiel the phrase, 'They shall know I am Adonay,' occurs more than sixty times. Nowhere does it mean, They will know Him by the four letters of His Name. Every time it means, They will know Him by His acts and the fulfilment of His promises (see e.g., the Haftorah of Va-ayra).

If a new Name were indeed here announced for the first time, Hebrew idiom would require the use of the verb הגיד (cf. Gen. xxxii, 30; Judges xiii, 6); and the actual phrase would be ושמתי להם ד' לא הגדתי להם. B. Jacob has shown that the revealing of a new name of God would have been announced somewhat in the following manner:

הנה לא ידעת עד כה את שמי וגם אל אברהם  
אל יצחק ואל יעקב לא נודעתי כי אם בשם אל  
שדי ושמי ד' לא הגדתי להם : ועתה הנני מודיעך  
כי לא אל שדי יקרא עוד שמי כי אם ד' יהיה  
שמי :

'Behold, thou hast not hitherto known my Name; and even unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob I was known only by my Name El Shaddai, but my Name Adonay I did not tell them. Now I make known unto thee that my Name shall no

longer be called Shaddai, but Adonay shall my Name be.'

As it is, the writer of vi, 3 could not possibly have meant what the Critics attempt to read into his words. Furthermore, the Critics themselves furnish a most awkward obstacle to their own theory. This is the 'Redactor'. Think of it. After supposedly combining the story of the Patriarchs from documents constantly using the name Adonay, he now introduces a statement that the Patriarchs had never heard of this Name! By such a statement, that Redactor would have stultified himself completely—if he ever had any existence outside the imagination of modern Bible critics (W. H. Green).

One of these critics (Dr. J. Skinner) pleads that the Critical analysis of Scripture is a chain which is a good deal stronger than its weakest link. Whatever this may mean, no one will pretend that a chain can be stronger than its *strongest* link. And its strongest link—the alleged proof offered by Exodus vi, 3—consists not alone in disregarding the plain meaning of the text and attributing an absurdity to the Sacred Writer, but actually in sadly belittling the intelligence of the Critic's own creation, the 'Redactor'.

### II

The so-called Analysis of Sources, with its series of non-existent authors and irresponsible 'Redactors', is unsupported by any external evidence whatsoever. None of these imaginary sources has come down to us in its original form, or in any form for that matter. 'The plurality of sources,' complains Naville, 'is assumed by the Critics as an indisputable fact. Unity of authorship is ruled out by them from the very first. They must at all costs discover diverse authors, in explanation of a perfectly simple narrative which unfolds itself in the most natural manner. It matters little that the text itself is altogether out of harmony with the conception of the Critics. The text must adjust itself to these conceptions. If it does not, what does it matter: it is at fault. They correct the text; with the result that it agrees with their theory.' Moreover, all this wanton tampering with the text leads nowhere. The varying use of the Divine Names does not indicate a difference of authorship, but is due to the different meanings of the Names, the choice of which is carefully considered in each case (see pp. 6, 199). Differences of style and treatment are called forth by differences in the nature of the subjects treated: e.g. in Exodus, the story of the Deliverance from Egypt demands a strong, energetic narrative, while the account of the building of the Tabernacle calls for technical details. All suggestions of repudiations and contradictions are merely due to an insufficient insight into the spirit and intention of Scripture on the part of the Higher Critics.

Instead of the misleading term 'Higher Criticism', its followers now prefer to speak

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of their school as that of Historical Criticism. This, however, is even more misleading: for *nothing is more characteristic of the Higher Critic than the way he refuses to revise his views, in the face of historical discovery which disproves those views.* One example will suffice. The Critical theory starts from the assumption that before the days of Solomon the Hebrews lived in a state of savagery. Thus, it was one of the 'finalities of scholarship' that the art of writing was unknown in ancient Israel. As recently as 1892, an eminent exponent of that theory asserted deliberately, 'The time, of which the pre-Mosaic narratives treat, is a sufficient proof of their legendary character. It was a time prior to all knowledge of writing.' Others said the same thing of the Mosaic age. Whereas to-day, Professor Sellin—a leading exegete, excavator, and historian—says: 'That the question should ever have been raised whether Moses could have known how to write, appears to us now absurd. Every petty Canaanitish "king" of a city-state had his scribe, who conducted his correspondence and kept the necessary lists.' But though the main assumption on which the Critical speculations are based has been proved false, the Higher Critics remain as imperturbable as ever. An unimpeachable witness like Prof. Kittel, the eminent historian, recently wrote: 'The facts themselves had rendered a large portion of Wellhausen's hypothesis untenable. One would have thought that Wellhausen would have taken note of this new knowledge. But he never retracted or modified any of his theories; and his followers continued writing, and building on his hypothesis, as if nothing had happened.' Wellhausen's devotees to-day still continue writing as if nothing had happened; and his speculations are still proclaimed as truths which it is heresy to question, by the popularizers, hacks, and journeymen of theological literature, especially in English-speaking countries.

The leaders, however, are not as confident as they used to be in regard to the criterion of the Divine Names for the supposed separateness of the 'sources'. Jewish and Christian scholars like Hoffmann and Wiener, Dahse and Eerdmans, W. H. Green and Naville have not laboured in vain; and the Critical structure begun in 1753, and completed with so much jubilation by Wellhausen, his forerunners and his disciples, is crumbling before our very eyes. Dr. B. Jacob recalls the fact that even as late as 1910, a Liberal-Jewish Critic had such an absolute faith in the Critical division of the Pentateuch according to the well-known symbols J, E, P, D, R, etc., that he permitted himself to declare: 'If one is to doubt the truth of the Critical analysis, one might just as well doubt the truth of Newton's law of gravitation!' In a statement of this nature, one sees mirrored the dogmatism of the entire school of Bible Criticism. Little did they dream of the Einsteins that were to arise, who, in the field of Physics, would restate the law of gravitation

according to new categories of thought; and in the field of Bible study, shatter the foundations of the Wellhausen hypothesis, and definitely declare its assumptions to be both unscientific and obsolete.

## D

### THE TEN PLAGUES

'Bible story is nowhere more vivid than in its picture of the Plagues of Egypt. Pharaoh is the incarnation of sullen force, yielding by inches, or for a single moment, only to harden his heart when the crisis is past. But it is human strength matching itself against the inexhaustible resources of nature, which Moses is permitted to wield. The river which is Egypt's pride runs with blood; from out its reed-grass, frogs invade the secret recesses of luxury; the dust of the ground takes life, to become loathsome vermin; indoors and outside, there is no escape from swarming flies and corruption. While all over the land of Egypt beasts are dying of murrain, in Israel's land of Goshen the cattle are intact. The royal magicians, seeking to compete with the wonders of Moses, become themselves victims to the plague of boils. Now the heavens begin to play their part, and rain down wasting hail; while, to enhance the wonder, fire winds about the hailstones and melts them not. The land of Egypt is one mass of desolation; but from outside, the east wind blows steadily until the swarming locusts hide the ground; at a sign from the champion of Israel, the western hurricane succeeds, and the locust hosts are swept into the Red Sea. Then the whole scene dissolves into darkness that might be felt; every man a solitary prisoner where he stands. At last, midnight reveals the slain firstborn and Pharaoh and his people thrust Israel forth' (R. G. Moulton).

*Who is the LORD, that I should hearken unto His voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, and moreover I will not let Israel go,* was the reply of Pharaoh to the message of the God of Righteousness, who demanded justice for Israel, His firstborn son. Pharaoh, too, is a child of God, but 'a rebellious son' (Deut. xxi, 18), who must be chastised before he will let his bondmen go free. The Plagues are disciplinary chastisements of God. Instead of annihilating the tyrant by one mighty stroke, God, in His Divine forbearance, inflicted ten successive plagues to break his pride. 'See how different are the ways of God from the ways of men,' say the Rabbis; 'when a mortal warrior would destroy his enemy, he attacks him by surprise; he spaces not out his blows; and when he has him beneath his feet, he makes an end of him. But God warned Pharaoh ten times, and ten times gave him respite to repent; and before punishing him, He ten times showed him His

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mercy.' For there is grace and merciful forgiveness for those who repent; but there is unsparing punishment for those who, hardening their hearts to the voice of God, continue to oppress their fellowmen.

The Ten Plagues form a symmetrical and regularly unfolding scheme. The first nine plagues consist of three series of three each: (a) blood, frogs, gnats; (b) fleas, murrain, boils; (c) hail, locusts, darkness. In each series the first plague is announced to Pharaoh beforehand at the brink of the Nile, the second is proclaimed by Moses at the Palace, and the third is sent without warning. Each series of plagues rises to a climax, the final series is the climax of all that preceded; and these are but the prelude to the tenth plague—the death of the firstborn, which seals the completeness of the whole. The first nine plagues, though often spoken of as wonders, are not fantastic miracles without any *basis* in natural phenomena. As everywhere else in Scripture, the supernatural is here interwoven with the natural; and the Plagues are but miraculously intensified forms of the diseases and other natural occurrences to which Egypt is more or less liable. Between June and August, the Nile usually turns to a dull red, owing to the presence of vegetable matter. Generally after this time, the slime of the river breeds a vast number of frogs; and the air is filled with swarms of tormenting insects. We can, therefore, understand that an *exceptional* defilement of the Nile would vastly increase the frogs which swarm in its waters; that the huge heaps of decaying frogs would inevitably breed great swarms of flies, which, in turn, would spread the disease-germs that attacked the animals and flocks in the pest-ridden region of the Nile. But, whether we place the greater emphasis on the natural or on the supernatural in the account of the Plagues, we must never forget the purpose for which they were recorded. As is true of every Scripture narrative, the purpose is not so much to give an exhaustive archaeological or even historical chronicle, as it is moral and religious instruction. 'The story of the plagues is drawn with unfading colours, and its typical and didactic significance cannot be overrated. It depicts the impotence of man's strongest determination when it essays to contend with God, and the fruitlessness of all human efforts to frustrate His purposes' (Driver).

Moreover, the contest was far more than a dramatic humiliation of the unrepentant and infatuated tyrant. It was nothing less than a judgment on the gods of Egypt. The plagues fell on the principal divinities that were worshipped since times immemorial in the Nile Valley. The River was a god; it became loathsome to its worshippers. The frog was venerated as the sign of fruitfulness, and it was turned into a horror. The cattle—the sacred ram, the sacred goat, the sacred bull—were all smitten. The sacred beetle became a torment to those who put their trust in its divinity. When we add to these the plague

of darkness, which showed the eclipse of Ra, the Sun-god, we see that we have here a contrast between the God of Israel, the Lord of the Universe, and the senseless idols of a senile civilization; as it is written (xii, 12), 'against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD.'

### E

## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, OR THE DECALOGUE

No religious document has exercised a greater influence on the moral and social life of man than the Divine Proclamation of Human Duty, known as the Decalogue. These few brief commands—only 120 Hebrew words in all—cover the whole sphere of conduct, not only of outer actions, but also of the secret thoughts of the heart. In simple, unforgettable form, this unique code of codes lays down the fundamental rules of Worship and of Right for all time and for all men.

### I

## THE DECALOGUE IN JUDAISM

From early times the basic importance of the Ten Commandments was duly recognized in Israel. The Teachers of the Talmud emphasized their eternal and universal significance by means of parable, metaphor, and all the rare poetic imagery of Rabbinic legend. The Tables on which the Ten Commandments were written, they said, were prepared at the eve of Creation—thus ante-dating humanity, and therefore independent of time or place or racial culture; and they were hewn from the sapphire Throne of Glory—and therefore of infinite worth and preciousness. The Revelation at Sinai, they taught, was given in desert territory, which belongs to no one nation exclusively; and it was heard not by Israel alone, but by the inhabitants of all the earth. The Divine Voice divided itself into the 70 tongues spoken on earth, so that all the children of men might understand its world-embracing and man-redeeming message. Each command, as it rang out from Sinai's top, filled the world with aroma. The dead in Sheol were revived, and betook themselves to Sinai; yea, even the souls of all the unborn generations in Israel were assembled there. As the Divine Commandments rang out from Sinai's height, no bird sang, no ox lowed, the ocean did not roar, and no creature stirred; all Nature was rapt in breathless silence at the sound of the Divine Voice asserting the supremacy of Conscience and Right in the Universe. The Rabbis held the sixth of Sivan, the day of the Revelation at Mount Sinai, to be as momentous as the day of Creation itself; for without the coming into existence of Moral Law, the creation of the material universe

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would have been incomplete, nay, meaningless. At the same time, the Teachers of the Talmud were most careful to emphasize that the Ten Commandments did not contain the Whole Duty of Man, as some Jewish sectaries in the days of the Second Temple contended. The Decalogue laid down the *foundations* of Religion and Morality, but was not in itself the entire structure of Human Duty.

The Rabbinic view of the Decalogue was shared by the religious teachers and philosophers in the Middle Ages, and is to-day held by the followers of all schools of Judaism. Saadyah and Yehudah Hallevi, Rashi and Abarbanel, the Karaites and the Cabalists, all agree in regarding the Ten Commandments as the Fundamentals of the Faith, as the Pillars of the Torah and its Roots. In modern times, various exponents of Judaism have shown that all the ritual observances prescribed in the Torah are visible embodiments of the general truths enshrined in the Decalogue; and that, in fact, the whole content of Judaism as Creed and Life can be arranged under the ten general headings of the Commandments.

### II

#### THE DECALOGUE OUTSIDE ISRAEL

It is interesting to note the place that the Decalogue held in the religious life of Humanity outside the Synagogue. One of the most renowned of the Church Fathers spoke of the Decalogue as 'the heart of the Law'; and this remained the opinion of Western Christendom for over 1,500 years. Luther's words—"Never will there be found a precept comparable or preferable to these commands, for they are so sublime that no man could attain to them by his own power"—are typical of thought in the Reformed Churches. The Humanists, the Deists and even the Freethinkers spoke in reverence of the Law of Sinai. Two generations ago, Renan wrote: 'The incomparable fortune which awaited this page of Exodus, namely, to become the code of universal ethics, was not unmerited. The Ten Words are for all peoples; and they will be, during all centuries, the commandments of God.' And historians of civilization are generally agreed that, low as the ethical standards of the world at present undoubtedly are, it is certain that they would be even lower, but for the supreme influence of the Ten Commandments.

Quite a different attitude towards the Decalogue began with the rise of Bible Criticism. Too often it has been one of undisguised hostility. This hostility is based on alleged historical and moral reasons. One example of each of these alleged reasons will suffice to show their groundlessness. Thus, during the greater part of the nineteenth century, Critics denied that the Decalogue was Mosaic, because of the prohibition of image-worship in the Second Commandment. The prevalence of image-worship during the period of the Judges and Monarchy, they

maintained, proved that no prohibition of image-worship could have been promulgated in the days of Moses. Now it is quite true that the law against image-worship was for many centuries *disregarded* in large sections of ancient Israel; in the same way as throughout fourteen centuries after the rise of Christianity, the prohibition of image-worship was 'deliberately ignored by the entire Christian Church down to the Reformation, and is still treated as null and void by the major portion of Christendom' (Canon Charles). But it is never safe to argue that, because any law is openly broken or tacitly disregarded, such a law does not therefore exist. All experience, whether in ancient or modern societies, is against such an assumption. Eminent Bible Scholars fully recognize this; and men like Professors Burney and Sellin admit 'that no reasonable ground can be discovered against the Mosaic origin of the Decalogue'.

Not more convincing are the moral objections which Critics level against the Decalogue, *e.g.*, that it deals only with *outward* actions. They disregard the Tenth, the most inward of all the Commandments; or they deliberately deny that 'Thou shalt not covet' seeks to restrain the unlawful, inward desire for something that is another's. According to them, 'it emphasizes not so much the feelings, as the practical steps which might be taken to give effect to them' (Bennett). The reason for such an astounding explanation is given in the new Anglican Commentary as follows: 'A commandment which suggests so high a standard of morals as "Thou shalt not covet" is out of place in the Decalogue.' 'It is questionable,' adds the editor of that Commentary, 'whether the Decalogue should be so constantly and nakedly propounded as the summary of the Moral Law.' The motive behind this hostility of modernist ecclesiastics to the Decalogue, and to the whole of the Hebrew Scriptures, is a two-fold one. In the first place, if the Tenth Commandment is given its right and honest interpretation, *wherein is the superiority of the Gospels over the Torah?* And this alleged superiority of Christianity to Judaism they are determined to maintain at all costs. And in the second place, they believe they will save the New Testament by discrediting the 'Old'. A vain hope. Rejection of the Decalogue leads to rejection of all morality and religion.

### III

#### THE MORAL CHAOS OF OUR TIMES

Attacks on the Decalogue are singularly inopportune at the present day. For our age and generation stand in especial need of a Divine Confirmation of the Moral Law. The nineteenth-century loved to speak of itself as the Age of Science. Now 'Science equips man, but does not guide him. It illuminates the world for him to the region of the most distant stars; but it leaves night

in his heart. It is invincible; but indifferent, neutral, un-moral' (Darmesteter). That century widely heralded the discovery that man came from the beast; and very soon after that discovery, many of the literary and artistic leaders took it upon themselves to convince their contemporaries that it was only natural for man to return to the beast. A powerful Paganism began its assault against the ancient organized Morality. It dethroned God in the sphere of human conduct, derided all moral inhibitions, and declared instinct and inclination to be the true guides to human happiness. The twentieth century is bettering the instruction begun in the nineteenth. The so-called new Psychology preaches repression of instincts to be a danger to personality; and it regards as natural the unbridled gratification of impulses which civilized mankind has always been taught should be controlled or disciplined. A new ethic has arisen, as subversive as it is godless, which bids each man, woman or child do that which seems right in his or her own eyes. It teaches that *all* moral laws are man-made; and that *all* can, therefore, be unmade by man. There is, in consequence, on every side a questioning of the sacredness of human life, a scoffing at the holiness of purity, and an angry repudiation of the idea of property. In some lands, this has led to social and political upheavals, resulting in immemorial human institutions being torn up by the roots. Even in English-speaking countries there is to-day an impatience with moral authority; and men deny, or at any rate doubt, the reality of ethical distinctions. Things are tolerated, extenuated, nay encouraged—in fiction, on the stage, in everyday life—that only a generation ago would have been the subject of unqualified condemnation. The pilot's stars of moral guidance seem no longer to be fixed stars; and for the many voyagers over the ocean of life, the clouded heavens offer no guidance at all.

Amid this spiritual confusion and moral chaos, Judaism remains clear-eyed and unmoved. It clings unwaveringly to the Divine origin of the Decalogue; and continues to proclaim that there is an everlasting distinction between right and wrong, an absolute 'Thou shalt' and 'Thou shalt not' in human life, a categorical imperative in religion—high above the promptings of passion, the peradventure of inclination, or the fashion of the hour. Weak and erring man needs an *authoritative* code in matters of right and wrong, laying down with unmistakable clearness the chief heads of duty, and denouncing the chief classes of sins. Such a Divine affirmation of the Moral Law was at all times a vital necessity for mankind, in order to set aside doubt, and to silence that perverse casuistry which is always ready to call good evil, and evil good. God is not only our Father. He is also our Law-giver; and in the Decalogue, He has made known to the children of men the foundations on which human welfare and happiness can be built.

## IV

## REVELATION AND THE DECALOGUE

Judaism stands or falls with its belief in the historic actuality of the Revelation at Sinai.

Revelation, in the first instance, means the unveiling of the character and will of God to the children of men. This is implied in the Theistic position. If we think of the Universe as merely an aggregate of blind forces, then there is, of course, no room for *communication* of any kind between God and man. But the moment we assert the existence of a Supreme Mind as the Fountain and Soul of all the infinite forms of matter and life, revelation, or communication between God and man, becomes a logical and ethical necessity. The exact *manner* of this supernatural communication between God and man will be conceived differently by different groups of believers. Some will follow the Biblical accounts of Revelation in their literal sense; others will accept the interpretation of these Biblical accounts by Rabbis of Talmudic days, Jewish philosophers of the Middle Ages, or Jewish religious thinkers of modern times. No interpretation, however, is valid or in consonance with the Jewish Theistic position, which makes human reason or the human personality the *source* of such revelation. A noted philosopher of religion has recently given expression to this truth in the words: 'All Revelation is supernatural. There can be no such thing as a purely natural revelation. We cannot really know God except as He desires to be known and makes Himself apprehensible. No view of God that grew up "of itself" in the human mind, owing nothing to God's self-disclosing action, could have any value' (Wobbermin).

Revelation is thus but the obvious inference and corollary of the character of the Deity held by all who believe in a Personal God and Father in Heaven, in prayer to Whom, in worship of Whom, and in communion with Whom, the highest moments of our lives are passed and lived. This close spiritual relationship between God and man, this interplay of spiritual forces and energies, whereby the human soul responds to the Self-manifesting Life of all Worlds, attains in Israel's Prophets that overmastering *certainty* which enables them to declare, 'Thus saith the LORD.' Theirs is an absolute conviction that the thoughts which arose in their minds about Him and His will, and the commands and exhortations which they issued in His name, really came to them at His prompting and were invested with His authority. Maimonides compared revelation to illumination by lightning on a dark night. Some prophets were granted only one such lightning-flash from the Divine; in the case of others these lightning-flashes were oft repeated; whereas to Moses was accorded continuous, unintermittent Light. Not in dreams or visions or occasional flashes of Divine intuition was the

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manner of revelation in his case, but 'face to face'; i.e. in the form of self-luminous thought and complete self-consciousness. In his mind, the Rabbis say, the Divine Message was reflected as in a clear mirror (אספקלריה מאירה). The supreme revelation in the life of the Lawgiver, however, that of the Covenant at Mount Sinai, he shared with the whole of Israel. To all of them was then vouchsafed the psychic experience of a direct communion with God. Even as at the shores of the Red Sea, when, in the words of the Sages, an ordinary maidservant was able to perceive what an Ezekiel in his moments of ecstasy could not attain to—so at Sinai, a mystic Vision gripped the spirit of the awe-struck People, filling their souls with reverence and certitude and Light.

### V

#### ISRAEL, THE PEOPLE OF REVELATION

A study of Israel's amazing story will strengthen any unbiased seeker of the Truth in the conviction that Israel's Vision of the Divine is different not only in degree *but in kind* from that of any other nation; and that, therefore, there has indeed been a unique impact of the Spirit of God upon the soul of Israel. In fact, from the very first there must have been a predisposition in the nature of the Jewish people to receive the Message of Sinai. The Rabbis point out that all the precepts of the Decalogue had been practised by the Patriarchs and had become the family tradition of their children. Before giving the Torah to Israel, Rabbinic legend furthermore tells us, God offered it to the other nations of the world; everyone of them, however, refused it for one reason or another. Thus, the children of Edom asked, 'What is written in this Torah?' When God named its principal commandment, *Thou shalt not kill*—their decisive answer was, 'We cannot accept it.' Other peoples objected to the seventh and eighth commandments—immorality and the appropriation of other men's possessions being the expression of their national bent. None of them, it seems, was against Religion as such, so long as Religion confined itself to general principles. What they all objected to was he definite, concrete 'do not's' of the Decalogue. 'We have no desire for the knowledge of Thy ways,' they exclaimed; 'give your Torah to Israel.' Then God came to Israel; and Israel's reply was, *All that the LORD hath spoken we will do and we will obey.*

So all-compelling has been the recognition of Israel's national genius for the Life of the Spirit that it has crystallized itself into the doctrine of the Election and Mission of Israel (I. Epstein). 'Israel is the People of Revelation,' says a modernist Jewish thinker. 'It must have had a native endowment to produce and rear the succession of Prophets. Hence we do not speak of the God of Moses, nor of the God of the Prophets, but of the God of Israel' (Geiger). 'Had there been no Israelites there would be no Torah,'

said Yehudah Hallevi seven centuries before him. 'Israel's pre-eminence is not derived from Moses, it is Moses whose pre-eminence is due to Israel. The Divine love went out towards the descendants of the Patriarchs. Moses was merely the Divinely chosen instrument through whom God's Blessing was to be assured unto them.'

Medieval poet and modernist thinker alike agree that Israel was from its birth predestined to become a Kingdom of Priests. Its career as a Holy Nation dates from the historically actual, mystical experience at the foot of Sinai. *Without* the Covenant at Sinai, the Exodus would have had little meaning; the story of Israel, like that of other kindred Semitic tribes, would have lost itself in the sands of the desert. *With* the Covenant at Sinai, everlasting life was planted in Israel's soul; and the story of Israel issues in eternity.

### F

#### IS THE CODE OF HAMMURABI THE SOURCE OF THE MOSAIC CIVIL LAW?

For nearly a century there has been continuous archaeological rediscovery of ancient civilizations that had for ages vanished from earth. To take one example: we possess to-day the actual originals of the code of laws, administrative orders and official letters of King Hammurabi, who was a contemporary of Abraham, and is mentioned in the early chapters of the Book of Genesis. This code of laws is one of the landmarks in world history, and has important bearings on the civil legislation of the Torah.

*Mesopotamia.* The original inhabitants of the Euphrates Valley—the domain of King Hammurabi—are generally spoken of as Sumerians. Thousands of years before any other people, they built brick houses, devised a strong family organization, and grouped themselves into city-states. The first schools in the world were established by them; and the Sumerians were the pioneers in alphabetic writing, architecture, weights and measures, and scientific irrigation. Their division of the circle into 360 degrees, and of the hour into sixty minutes of sixty seconds, has remained to this day.

The extraordinary fertility of their land made it the goal of invaders from the desert countries to the east and west. The vastest of these invading hordes in historic times arrived about 2500 B.C.E. from the Arabian Peninsula. The invaders overwhelmed the country, and founded the city of Babylon in the year 2300—the city that was destined in time to become the emporium of the East and mistress of the world. The new population thoroughly assimilated, and immeasurably advanced, the religion and culture of the original Sumerians. The zenith of this

Babylonian civilization was reached under the sixth king of the Semitic dynasty, King Amraphel, better known as Hammurabi (1945-1902 B.C.E.), whose great achievement was the codification of Babylonian law. A generation ago this Code of Hammurabi was rediscovered for the modern world.

*Babylonian Society.* Nothing can give us such an insight into the cultural and social life of the Babylonians 3,900 years ago as this collection of laws. Society in ancient Babylonia consisted of certain definite castes; king, court and priests, men of gentle birth (aristocrats and officers), commoners and slaves. The differences between the social grades can be seen by various regulations; e.g. where capital punishment for theft was commuted for by payment, the thief had to pay thirtyfold if the theft was from the royal estate; tenfold, if from a gentleman; fivefold, if from a commoner. The commoner was a free man, but subject to *corvée*, or forced unpaid labour, and liable to be sold into slavery for debt or for crime.

The slave was merely a chattel, with his owner's name branded or tattooed on his arm, and could not go beyond the city gates without a written pass from his master. A strict fugitive slave law was in operation, which in some respects was as harsh as the American fugitive slave law of 'Uncle Tom' days. There were statutory rewards for the captor of the runaway slave; while anyone enticing a slave to escape was punished by death. Contrast with this the commandment in Deuteronomy xxiii, 16, 'Thou shalt not deliver unto his master a bondman that is escaped from his master unto thee.'

If a slave married a free woman, the children were free. If a free man married a slave woman, even as a second wife, the children were free, and the slave woman also became free on her master's death. The first wife had the right to punish insolence, but only by degradation. Ishmael, the son of a free man and a bond-servant, Hagar, is free. When Hagar is insolent to Sarah, the latter may punish her as harshly as Abraham would permit, but she could no longer sell her.

The position of woman in Babylonian life was favourable. In marriage between different social grades, the wife maintained, and her children inherited, the higher status. On her marriage she brought a dowry to her husband, which remained tied to her for life. As wife, she could be witness, conduct business in her own name, and possess property which her husband's creditors could not take to pay any of his ante-nuptial debts.

*Land laws and commerce.* Land was private property, subject to an impost levied on the crop. Vast herds and flocks were owned. The shepherd gave a receipt for the animals entrusted to him, and was bound to return them with reasonable increase. He was allowed to use a certain number for food, and was not responsible for those killed by lion or lightning. Any loss due to his carelessness he had to repay tenfold. This illustrates

Jacob's protest to Laban: 'These twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bore the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night' (Gen. xxxi, 38, 39).

In commerce, there was the all-pervading obligation of putting every business transaction in writing, signed, sealed, witnessed and in duplicate. There were detailed regulations for rent, lease and lease guaranties, administrators of property, safe-deposit, warehousing, partnership, commercial travellers and agents, transport and shipping. There were fixed tariffs for various classes of labourers, ox-drivers, harvesters, veterinary surgeons, ship-builders, boatmen and branders. The physician's fee was fixed according to the social grade of the patient, the builder's according to the size of the house.

The value placed on human life in this Code is slight. Horrible mutilations abound—of eyes, ears, tongue, and hand; and there are thirty-four crimes for which the death penalty is inflicted; among these every kind of theft, including receiving and buying from servants. It is well, however, to compare with this list, and the horrible forms of death prescribed, the exceedingly cruel modes of execution in European countries down to quite modern times. Even in England, pocket-picking was punishable by death till the year 1808, and sheep-stealing until 1832!

*Moses and Hammurabi.* Much more interesting than the examination of the detailed regulations of the Code is the question, What is the influence of this oldest code of laws in the world on the Mosaic civil law?

It is now admitted that some of the stories of the Patriarchs can only be fully understood in the light of Hammurabi family and shepherd law. This is so, as we have seen in the Sarah-Hagar incident; likewise, the complaint of Jacob against Laban is in strict conformity with sections 261 to 267 of the Code of Hammurabi. As for the legal portions of Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, no feature can be definitely singled out as derived from the Hammurabi Code. There are, however, some twenty-four instances of *analogies* and *resemblances* between the two Codes—in regard to the laws of kidnapping, burglary, deposit, assault, and various others; and especially in the *lex talionis*, life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. Now, it is argued, in view of the fact that the Mosaic law is at least 400 years the younger of the two, these resemblances constitute strong evidence that the Hammurabi Code is the immediate or the remote source of the Mosaic civil and criminal legislation.

Many scholars, however, challenge this inference. They say that common laws are often due to common human experience, which is much the same everywhere. The history of the Patriarchs, they agree, has a Babylonian

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background; but this is so because they were of Babylonian descent. Abraham came from Ur of the Chaldees, a favourite city of his contemporary Hammurabi. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all lived in Canaan, which was then under Babylonian sway. The Mosaic Law, however, is in no way indebted to the Babylonian. For it would be absolutely inexplicable why there are no Babylonian loan-words in its terminology, if the Babylonian law were the source of the Pentateuchal legislation. A higher culture always forces its use of language upon a primitive people which adopts that culture. Again, laws, as the peculiar expression of a people's life, can only be imported where the habits of life of the two peoples are related, and where similar social and economic conditions exist. Now Israel is the least Babylonian of peoples, being nomadic, rural, primitive; whereas Babylon has an intricate, highly industrialized, commercial city-civilization. In Israel, the people is in possession of sovereign rights; the king is under the law. In Babylon, a limited monarchy would have been deemed a contradiction in terms. In Israel, the death penalty for property crimes is abolished; and whether the theft be from king, noble, commoner or slave, the fine is the same. The slave is considered a human being. He is to go free for the loss of an eye, or even a tooth, at the hands of his master. The Babylonian Code closes with the case of the slave whose ear is to be cut off for desiring freedom; whereas the Mosaic Civil law (Exodus xxi, 2-6) opens with the case of the slave whose ear is to be bored as a mark of disgrace for refusing to go free when his six years of servitude are at an end! There is not a trace of the Biblical ideal of personal holiness in the Babylonian Code, or of the beneficence and consideration for the poor and needy, which is so characteristic of the Mosaic legislation. Deeper still is the abyss between this Code and the Mosaic Law in their respective attitudes to human freedom. The words of Henry George, spoken fifty years ago, concerning the Mosaic Law, still hold good:

The Hebrew commonwealth was based upon the individual—a commonwealth whose ideal it was that every man should sit under his own vine and fig-tree, with none to vex him or make him afraid; a commonwealth in which none should be condemned to ceaseless toil; in which for even the bond-slave there should be hope; in which for even the beast of burden there should be rest. It is not the protection of property, but the protection of humanity, that is the aim of the Mosaic Code. Its Sabbath day and Sabbath year secure, even to the lowliest, rest and leisure. With the blasts of the jubilee trumpets the slave goes free, and a re-division of the land secures again to the poorest his fair share in the bounty of the common Creator. The reaper must leave something for the gleaner; even the ox cannot be muzzled as he treadeth out the corn. Every-

where, in everything, the dominant idea is that of our homely phrase, "Live and let live."

*'Eye for eye' in Mosaic Law.* Further, nothing can illustrate the fundamental difference of the legal systems of these two peoples better than their different application of the law of taliation, or the rule of 'measure for measure'. The enunciation of the principle of 'life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth', is to-day recognized as one of the most far-reaching steps in human progress. It means the substitution of legal punishment, and as far as possible the exact equivalent of the injury, in place of wild revenge. It is the spirit of equity. The Church Father, Augustine, was one of the first to declare that taliation was a law of justice, not of hatred; one eye, not two, for an eye; one tooth, not ten, for a tooth; one life, not a whole family, for a life. The founders of International Law—Hugo Grotius, Jean Bodin, and John Selden—all maintain that the rule 'eye for an eye' enjoins, on the one hand, that a fair and equitable relation must exist between the crime and the punishment; and, on the other hand, that all citizens are equal before the law, and that the injuries of *all* be valued according to the same standard. 'It is a law appropriate only for free peoples'—said one of the pioneers of modern Bible exegesis, John D. Michaelis—"in which the poorest inhabitant has the same rights as his most aristocratic assailant. . . . It deems the tooth of the poorest peasant as valuable as that of the nobleman; strangely so, because the peasant must bite crust, while the nobleman eats cake." Of course, in primitive society there was great danger of this principle becoming petrified into a hard and fast rule of terrible cruelty. In the Mosaic Law, however, monetary commutation had already begun. This is seen from the prohibition of accepting money-compensation for malicious murder: 'Ye shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer, that is guilty of death' (Numbers xxxv, 31). The literal application of 'eye for eye, tooth for tooth' was excluded in Rabbinic Law; and there is no instance in Jewish history of its literal application ever having been carried out.

*'Son for son, and daughter for daughter' in the Hammurabi Code.* Very different is the way in which this principle was applied in the Code of Hammurabi. The whole Code seems to be built on it; and instead of being merely a general maxim, as in Hebrew jurisprudence, it is taken literally and translated into cold prose; e.g. 'If a man has caused the tooth of a man who is his equal to fall out, one shall make his tooth to fall out'; and similarly in fourteen other cases. It is true that here likewise the beginning of money-compensation appears; but not for the aristocrat or free-born, only for slaves. Furthermore, the taliation principle is extended and carried to grotesque extremes. For example, if the jerry-builder, by his faulty constructing of a house, causes the death of the owner, the jerry-builder

