

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php

Man was to him an eternal ministry; it had never been closed by death, for death itself had been superseded by resurrection. To the mind of the Apostle, the history of the past had no need yet to be written; for the past was to him still the present. The things of yesterday had, for him, no distinctive or peculiar interest; for the Being whom he recognized as the Founder of Christianity was one whom he could have described, in the language of one of his own school, as "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

G. MATHESON.

ASSYRIAN AND BABYLONIAN INSCRIPTIONS IN
THEIR BEARING ON THE OLD TESTAMENT
SCRIPTURES.

V. NIMROD AND THE GENEALOGY OF GENESIS X.

It is at first a somewhat surprising result of the studies of Assyriologists, that as yet no certain trace has been discovered of one whose name has been, from a very early period, prominent in many of the legends and traditions that gather round the history of Assyria. No interpreter has yet identified any combination of cuneiform characters with the name of Nimrod.¹ Whatever explanation may be given of the fact, it at all events bears testimony to the caution and accuracy of the interpreters as a body. Few temptations would have been greater to an imaginative scholar than that of discovering, if it were possible, even at some sacrifice of the precision which is an element of a

¹ Mr. George Smith, however (*R. P.*, iii. 6), finds the name NIN-ERDU on a brick in the British Museum, as that of the guardian deity of Eridu, one of the earliest Babylonian cities. The fact that the name appears in the Egyptian inscriptions of Pianichi-Meramon, translated by Canon Cook (*R. P.*, ii. 85), is worth noting, though as yet, no inferences have been, or perhaps, can be, drawn from it.

scholar's truthfulness, something that could be construed into a distinct reference to the "mighty hunter." It will be seen as we proceed, that one distinguished expert has so far yielded to the temptation as to believe, though with the fullest admission that his work was but tentative, that he had lighted on such an identification.

The width and permanence of the Nimrod traditions may conveniently be dealt with before entering on this alleged discovery. (1) In Gen. x. 8-10, we have them in their simplest form. Nimrod is the son of Cush, *i.e.*, belongs to the Cushite or Ethiopian race. He "began to be a mighty one (LXX. γίγας=giant) upon the earth." It passed far and wide into a proverb, "Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech and Accad in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went Asshur (or, with most modern scholars, "out of that land he, *i.e.*, Nimrod, went into Asshur"=Assyria,) and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; the same is a great city." Here then Nimrod appears as the founder of both the great ancient cities on the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris, and of other cities, at one time hardly inferior in importance, in the same region. He begins his career in Babylon and extends it to Assyria. His repute as a hunter acquires a world-wide fame. A shorter form of this record appears in 1 Chron. i. 10; and in Micah v. 6, the "land of Nimrod" appears as connected with, and yet distinguished from, the "land of Assyria." (2) In Josephus (*Ant.*, i. 4), representing, of course, a very late form of the Jewish tradition, the history is surrounded with mythical accretions. Nimrod was the chief mover in the building of the Babel tower, and he aimed at making it so high that the waters of another flood should not reach it. He "changed the government into a tyranny, that so he might turn men away from

the fear of God." (3) A later Jewish legend, in the *Targum* of Jonathan in Gen. xv. 7, and reproduced (though without mention of the name of Nimrod) in the Koran (*Sur.* ii., xxi., ed. Rodwell), brings the tyrant hunter into contact with Abraham. The young prophet-patriarch refuses to join in the king's idolatry, breaks the idols, and is thrown, like the "three children" of Dan. iii., into a fiery furnace, from which he is miraculously delivered. (4) More striking still, as a testimony to the wide prevalence of these and other like legends, is the constant occurrence of the name in the more notable localities of modern Mesopotamia, such, *e.g.*, as the *Birs Nimroud*, identified, as we have seen, with the site of the Tower of Babel, the *Tel Nimrud* near Baghdad, the dam of the *Suhr el Nimrud* across the Tigris below Mosul, and the mound of *Nimrud* in the same neighbourhood (*Art. Nimrod*, in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*). Sir A. H. Layard's narratives of his explorations in Nineveh shews that the local feeling of the Arabs still looks to Nimrod as the great hero of the region, and when his workmen brought to light the figure of a human-headed bull, they exclaimed with one voice that they had discovered the "giant hunter." (Layard, quoted by Vaux, *Nineveh and Persepolis*, i. p. 219). The absence of any trace of the name in the Greek writers who drew, at greater or less distance, from Assyrian sources, is, in view of the wide-spread fame thus evidenced, sufficiently striking. Berosus, as far as the extant fragments of his history go, makes no mention of him. Herodotus and Justin are equally silent. A possible explanation is, that the name Nimrod, which has been interpreted as meaning "the rebel," or "the scorner," or "the hero," (Gesenius, *Thes.*, *s. v.*) may have been an epithet which took the place of a name, and leaves it open to us to identify the man so described with some one of those who are prominent in Assyrian records. On this assumption, there have been sufficiently numerous conjectures, and

Nimrod has been found, as by Eusebius and Africanus, in the Euechous, (possibly, as Lenormant suggests, = Avil Cush = man of Cush) whom Berosus names as the first king of Babylon; in Ninus, the *eponymus* founder of Nineveh; in Bel, the second name in the first triad of Chaldæan deities; by Sir H. Rawlinson in Nergal (= great hero) the hunter god of Assyria; by Mr. A. H. Sayce in Merodach, the god of Babylon; by Mr. George Smith, in the earlier stage of his discoveries, in Hammurabi, the first of a series of Arab kings of Babylon named by Berosus; or treated, as by Oppert, as simply a "geographical expression" (Smith's *Chaldæan History of Genesis*, pp. 179-181). By others, again, he has been identified with the Orion of Greek mythology and astronomy, who appears in Homer (*Od.* xi. 572-5) as a giant hunter. It is at least a curious coincidence that Persian astronomy gives the name of "the giant" to the constellation which we know as Orion. Mr. Sayce, lastly, in the edition of Smith's *Chaldæan History of Genesis* just published, thinks it probable that the name Nimrod may = Anamarda = God of the city Mared (p. 191).

In the volume just referred to, Mr. Smith puts forward another theory, and identifies Nimrod with the hero Izdubar, whose name has already met us in the Chaldæan legends of the Deluge. He rests this identification mainly on the character of Izdubar as a hunter, a "mighty giant," who "like a bull towers over the chiefs;" as the conqueror of Erech, then under an Elamite king, named Hambaba; on his appearing on seals and bas-reliefs in conflict with lions and bulls (p. 239), or as in the Khorsabad sculptures, strangling a bull in his arms (p. 174). He adds, that he has evidence, accumulating in force, that the characters which had before been provisionally read as Izdubar (a reading which he was led to reject), really admit of being transliterated as Nimrod. If this latter fact were adequately proved, it would, of course, be practically decisive; but

Mr. Smith's death prevented him from submitting the evidence to the judgment of competent experts, and the question must be considered as still a *lis sub judice*. In any case the description of Nimrod as the "mighty hunter before Jehovah," paints, with a striking vividness, the type of the life of the early Assyrian kings. The sculptures from *Khorsabad* and *Koujunyik*, discovered by Sir A. H. Layard and M. Botta, are full of hunting scenes, in which lions and panthers are the object of the chase. One memorable inscription, ascribed conjecturally (the part containing the king's name being effaced) to Assur-natsir-pal, or Tiglath Pileser I. (*R. P.*, xi. 7) is occupied entirely with the records of such an expedition. A few lines will be sufficient as a sample.

"Ninip and Nergal who love bravery, over the wild beasts of the field

have conferred on him power : in ships of Arvad
 he sailed, a grampus in the Great Sea he slew ;
 fierce and large wild bulls in the city of Araziki :

* * * * *

the young wild bulls which he captured alive
 he brought to the city of Assur ; 120 lions, with his heart
 valiant in brave attacks on his open chariot,
 on foot with a club he slew ;

* * * * *

Wild goats, deers, spotted stags,
 ibexes in herds he took ;

* * * * *

leopards, tigers, jackals, two powerful bears
 he slew . . . wild asses and
 gazelles, hyenas, and *sim-kurri*
 he killed."

And so on, ending with a "great black crocodile, scaly beast of the river," and animals from the Great Sea, which the king of Egypt caused to be brought. So in the inscription of Tiglath Pileser (*R. P.*, v. 21) we find the king

recording, with triumph, how he had "extirpated all wild animals," slain four wild bulls, and ten wild buffaloes and brought their skins and horns, and four of the buffaloes alive to his city of Ashur, and had laid low not less than eight hundred lions. "All the beasts of the field and the wild birds of heaven I made the victims of my shafts."

On the rest of the genealogy of Gen. x., however, now regarded by all scholars, not as a pedigree of generations of men, but as an early attempt at an ethnological or geographical classification of the known nations of the world, based probably both on Assyrian and Egyptian traditions, the Assyrian inscriptions throw abundant light. By some writers (Lenormant, *Anc. Hist.*, i. 348) the title of "King of the Four Races," assumed by Rimmon-Nirari, (*R. P.*, i. 3) has been connected with the four cities named in Gen. x. 10.¹ Erech (the name survives in the modern *Warka*), is, as we have seen, prominent in the Izdubar legends, and is named among the conquests of Sennacherib (*R. P.*, i. 26). Accad and Shinar (the latter name appearing as *Sumeri*) make up together the compound title of the kingdom of Assyria, as in the inscriptions of Rimmon-Nirari (*R. P.*, i. 4), of Khammurabi (*R. P.*, i. 6), Accad by itself in those of Samas-Rimmon (*R. P.*, i. 21) and Assurbanipal (*R. P.*, i. 74, 106). To the former name Mr. Sayce assigns the meaning of "highlander," and finds in the people whom it represents, a people of the Finnic-Tatar or Turanian race, who came from the mountainous country to the south-west of the Caspian, and were at once the earliest population of Babylonia whom we know, and the inventors of the cuneiform characters. The word Accadian is accordingly used by him both for the language and the institutions of that people (*R. P.*, iii. 21). Calah (identified with the

¹ Mr. Sayce, however, the translator of the inscription, finds the "four races" in the Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash, the sons of Aram (= Syria) in Gen. x. 23 (*R. P.*, i. 3). This title continued to be used as late as the reign of Sennacherib (*R. P.*, xi. 49).

Nimroud ruins) (Gen. x. 11) appears in the inscriptions of Samas-Rimmon as "the crown of perfect places, the seat of the Southern Sun" (*R. P.*, i. 12). Calneh, (probably=fort of *Anu*, a Babylonian deity, and identified with the ruins at *Niffer*) though not as yet found in the inscriptions appears in Isa. x. 9; Amos vi. 2, as standing on the same level of greatness with Carchemish and Hamath. Rehoboth (=the streets or open places of the city) may, perhaps, be traced in the name *Rahabeh*, given to the remains of two cities, one on each side of the Euphrates, a little below its confluence with the *Khabour*. The ancient versions of this passage, however, shew that this claim is not without competitors. (1) The Samaritan Pentateuch gives *Sutcan* instead of Rehoboth, and this name has been found in connection with Calah in an inscription on the breast of a statue of the Assyrian god Nebo, found by Sir H. Rawlinson at *Nimroud* (*Athenæum*, April 15th, 1854). (2) Jerome, translating both parts of the name as above, "*plateæ civitatis*" (Vulg.=open places of the city), and in so doing following the Targums, identifies it with Nineveh. The name of the Bœotian city Plateæ or Plataea, memorable in the history of the Peloponnesian war, presents, on this supposition, an interesting parallel. Of Resen, the "great city" of Gen. x. 12, no trace has as yet been found in the inscriptions, but, as lying between Nineveh and Calah, its site has been placed by Professor Rawlinson between the modern *Mosul* and *Nimroud*, which are identified respectively with those two cities.

VI. UR OF THE CHALDEES.

The city thus named has for us the special interest of being the starting point of the history of Abraham. It does not appear again in the later books of the Old Testament, save in the reference to the history of Abraham in Nehemiah ix. 7, and this is at least presumptive evidence that its im-

portance belonged chiefly to the earlier stages of Chaldæan or Babylonian history. In this instance the inscriptions have thrown a decisive light into what was before a region of widely divergent conjectures. (1) The prevalent tradition of both Jews and Mahometans has identified Ur with the modern *Orfah*, the Edessa of Greek geographers. The chief mosque of *Orfah* bears the name of Abraham, the pond attached to it is the "Lake of Abraham the beloved." In a Syrian tradition, preserved by Ephraem-Syrus, whose long residence at Edessa gives a special interest to his report, in the fourth century, Nimrod appears as a king of Edessa. (2) Ur has been found in the modern *Warka*, but this has been shewn (as above) to correspond with the ancient Erech of Gen. x. 10. (3) Eusebius (*Præp. Evang.*, ix. 7), quoted by Professor Rawlinson (*Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Ur of the Chaldees*) cites a Greek historian, Eupolemus, who lived B.C. 150, as stating that Abraham was born in Camarina, a city of the Babylonians, which some call Uria, and which being interpreted, means city of the Chaldæans. (4) Ammianus Marcellinus (xxv. 8), in his account of the campaign of Jovian, after the death of the Emperor Julian, describes Ur as a fortress lying between Nisibis and the Tigris, and this identification was accepted by Bochart (*Phaleg.*, i. 10; ii. 6) and Gesenius (*Thesaurus*, s. v. *Ur*). Prior to the discovery of inscriptions it was open to infer, on philological grounds, that as *Kamar* in Arabic and *Chaldi* in Armenian, each=moon (Rawlinson, as above), the city Ur, or Uria, which bore these names, was connected with the worship of a Moon-deity.

This inference has been decisively confirmed by the evidence of inscriptions found at *Mugheir* or *Umgher*, situated on the Euphrates a little below the point at which it receives the *Shat-el-Hie* as an affluent from the Tigris. The name *Mugheir*, which signifies "the mother of bitumen," corresponds with the character of the ruins,

which represent the oldest style of Babylonian architecture, consisting of bricks, partly baked and partly sunburnt, laid in a cement of bitumen. At the northern end of the mound there are the remains of a stately temple, built in stages, and from the frequency of tombs, with inscriptions ranging over a period of some centuries, it would appear to have been used as a cemetery city almost from the rise of Chaldæan power to its fall under the Persian monarchy (*Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Ur of the Chaldees*).

From these ruins the following inscriptions have been obtained, and it will be seen that they confirm the inferences drawn on philological grounds from the passage quoted above from Eusebius, and supply abundant evidence of the identification of *Mugheir* with the long sought *Ur-Chasdim*, or Ur of the Chaldees.

- (1) Uruk, king of Ur,
Who the house of Ur built.
- (2) To UR his king, Uruk, king of Ur,
His house built, and the wall of Ur built.
- (3) To UR, the lesser light of heaven,
Eldest son of Bel the king.

It appears from these inscriptions (*R. P.*, iii. 9), found on bricks from the foundations of the buildings at *Mugheir*: (1) that Ur was the old name of the city; (2) that it was also the name of a deity; (3) that this deity was identified with the moon as "the lesser light of heaven." Inscriptions from other parts of the same region shew that the power of Uruk extended over many cities: Erech, Larsa, and Nipûr. The remains of his buildings exceed those of every other Chaldæan monarch except Nebuchadnezzar, and he appears to have been specially conspicuous as a builder of temples (*R. P.*, iii. 11). In other inscriptions he describes himself, as do most of the early Chaldæan monarchs, as king of Sumir and Accad. His son Dungi adopted the same titles and

finished his father's works. An inscription on a cylinder in the reign of Nabonidus (B. C. 555-538), many centuries later, shews that the fame of the founder still remained (*R. P.*, iii. 12).

“Bitsaresir, the tower of Bitnergal which is in Ur,
Which Uruk, the very ancient king had built,
And had not finished it. Dungi his son its top finished.”

Other records give the names of later kings of Ur (*R. P.*, iii. 12-15) who ruled also over Eridu, and Nipur, and were lords of the region of Sumir and Accad. A far-off echo of the fame of Uruk¹ may possibly be traced, as suggested by Professor Rawlinson, in the lines of Ovid. (*Metam.*, iv. 212).

“Rexit Achæmenias urbes pater Orchamus, isque
Septimus a prisca numeratur origine Beli.”

“The Achæmenian cities owned of old
The sway of Orchamus, whose lineage counts
As seventh in order from the ancient Belus.”

The “Achæmenian cities” are those of the Persian kings who claimed descent from the Achæmenidæ, the noblest family of the Persian tribe of the Pasargadæ (*Herod.*, i. 125), and the reference to Belus shews that Ovid here also, as in the Deucalion legend, coming into contact with Asiatic traditions, looked on Orchamus as one of the earliest rulers of the Babylonian monarchy, to which the Persians had succeeded.

Over and above the interest which attaches to this identification of the original home of Abraham, it may be noted that the facts thus brought to light give a certain measure of probability to the Jewish traditions which connect the patriarch's migration with his refusal to join in the worship of the sun and moon, which had been introduced by the early Babylonian rulers. “He looked,” so the legend runs, “at the sun, as it rose and set, at the moon as it waxed and

¹ Recent Assyriologists read the name as Lig-bagar (*Tomkins, Studies on the Times of Abraham*, p. 3).

waned, and his spirit craved for a God in whom was 'no variableness or shadow of turning,' the Eternal and Unchangeable." The occurrence of the name NIN-RIDU (as above) as belonging to a deity worshipped at Eridu in the same region as Ur of the Chaldees, may possibly (I speak with natural hesitation) connect itself with the legends which associate Nimrod with the later legends of the life of Abraham.

VII. THE FOUR KINGS OF GENESIS xiv.

It is obvious, at first sight, that the chapter which records this invasion, has the character of a fragment of history incorporated into the Book of Genesis from some earlier records. It gives the narrative of an attempt on the part of a confederacy of Mesopotamian rulers, the forerunner of later Assyrian and Chaldæan invasions, to establish their dominion over the land of Canaan and the valley of the Jordan, and though it obtained only a temporary success, it seems to have crushed or swept away many of the earliest known tribes of Palestine, such as the Emim, the Rephaim, the Zuzim and the Horim. It remains for us to see how far the inscriptions throw light on this remarkable episode.

The list of the confederate kings as given in Gen. xiv. 1, stands as follows: "And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations (Heb. *Goyim*); that these made war with Bera king of Sodom"

(1) The name of Amraphel has not been found as yet in any inscriptions, and Gesenius, while suspecting a Semitic derivation, despairs as to finding it; "pandat qui possit" (*Thesaurus*, s. v. *Amraphel*). Professor Rawlinson (*Herod.*, i. 446), on the other hand, suggests a Sanscrit analogue in *Amarapāla*, "the guardian of the immortals." The name of Shinar, however, especially if we identify it with the *Shumir*

of the inscriptions, points here, as in Gen. x. 10, xi. 2, with sufficient definiteness to the plains of Babylon, which included Babel, Erech, Calneh, and Accad, and is in fact translated as Babylonia in two passages of the LXX. (Isaiah xi. 11; Zech. v. 11). Possibly, as suggested by Professor Rawlinson (*Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Shinar*), the name may connect itself with the Hebrew word *Sh'nè*=two, and 'ar, which was used in Babylonia for "a river," and so may be identical in meaning with the Hebrew *Aram-Naharaim* (=Syria of the Two Rivers) and the Greek *Mesopotamia* (Gen. xxiv. 10; Deut. xxiii. 4), as applied to the same region. The fact that the name of Amraphel stands first indicates probably that, though the actual campaign was under the command of another leader, the king of Shinar had a certain precedence of dignity as the titular suzerain of the country.

(2) In Arioch, it is possible that we have another form of the name of Uruk, mentioned in the preceding section, and identified, with some probability, with the "Orchamus" of Ovid. The same name is found in Dan. ii. 14 as belonging to the captain of Nebuchadnezzar's guard, and this indicates a Chaldæan origin. It has been explained by Bohlen, Gesenius (*Thes.*, s. v.) and others as meaning "lion-like," as Nisroch (2 Kings xix. 37; Isa. xxxvii. 38) means "eagle-like" or "great eagle." Ellasar, which does not occur elsewhere in the Old Testament, has been identified with the *Larsa* which appears in inscriptions, and which the Greeks, as in Xenophon's *Anabasis* (iii. 4, 7), naturally turned into the form Larissa, with which they were familiar in their own country. Like Shinar, it belonged to the lower course of the Euphrates and stood on the left bank between Ur (*Mugheir*) and Erech (*Warka*), and the site is now known by the name of *Senkereh*.¹ From the ruins there we

¹ Lenormant, on the other hand (i. 349), identifies Ellasar with Asshur, and so connects it with Nineveh, Resen and the other Assyrian cities east of the Tigris.

have an inscription on a brick, which records the work of the king already named as the founder of Ur of the Chaldees (*R. P.*, iii. 10).

“To Samas (=the sun) his king
Uruk, the powerful man, king of Ur,
King of Sumir and Accad, his house built.”

In the form which corresponds to Ellasar we have the city named in the Annals of Sargon (*R. P.*, vii. 47) as subject to Babylon “Merodach Baladan forced a contribution on the towns of Ur, of *Larsa*, of *Kisik*,” and the antiquity of the city is shewn by an inscription of Nebuchadnezzar, found at Senkereh (*R. P.*, vii. 71), “The Temple of Tara, which is the temple of the Sun at Senkereh,¹ from extreme old age had mouldered into ruins,” and Nebuchadnezzar, in his favourite character as the great builder and restorer of temples, repaired it and made it “meet to be a divine dwelling-place.”

(3) The name of Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, occupies a peculiar position in the narrative. Though third in order, he is obviously the leader of the expedition. It is to him that the kings of the cities of the plain pay tribute for twelve years. He and “the kings that were with him” smote the Rephaim and other ancient tribes.

The name of this monarch has not yet been found in the inscriptions, but the kindred form of Kudur-Mabuk has been found at *Mugheir* (=Ur) as Lord both of Syria (Aram) and Elam, as a worshipper of the god Ur, as establishing his son, Ardušin, in singular agreement with the connexion between Elam and Ellasar in the Genesis text, as king of It is urged on behalf of this view, that *Larsa* was so near *Shinar* that it would probably have been under the king of that city instead of taking an independent part in the confederacy. The *Larissa* of Xenophon is described as being on the *Tigris*.

¹ It is to be regretted that Mr. Fox Talbot, who translates the inscription, gives the modern name instead of that presented by the cuneiform characters. The substitution of modern for ancient names seems at variance with the first principles of the task of a translator.

the Larsa which has been indentified with the latter city (*R. P.*, iii. 20). A second son, Rimagu, appears in another inscription, also from *Mugheir*, to have ruled over the whole Chaldæan region (*R. P.*, v. 64).

“Rimagu, the powerful man, the high ruler,
Established by Bel, nourisher of Ur,¹
King of Larsa, king of Sumir and Akkad,
Son of Kudur-Mabuk, Lord of Elam,
Ur the great he embellished.”

Another king of Elam, bearing a name with the same prefix, Kudur-Nanhundi, appears in the records of Assurbanipal (*R. P.*, iii. 8), as having invaded the temples of Babylonia at a remote period of its history.

“Kudur-Nanhundi the Elamite, who the worship
Of the great gods did not (fear),
Who in an evil resolve to his own force (trusted),
On the temples of Akkad his hands he had laid
And he oppressed Akkad
The days were full
For 1635 years² under the Elamites.”

The date is noticeable in connection with another passage in the “Annals of Assurbanipal,” in which he boasts that after that long interval he had avenged the sacrilege of the old Elamite conquerors (*R. P.*, i. 88).

“The dust of Shushan, Madaktu,
Hallemas, and the rest of their cities
Entirely I brought to Assyria.
For a month and a day, Elam to its utmost extent I swept.

* * * * *

Nana,³ who, 1635 years
Had been desecrated, had gone and dwelt

¹ Here probably the name of the Moon-god, and in l. 5, of the city called after him.

² The duration of the period is calculated by Mr. George Smith from the Chaldæan “2 *ners*, 7 *sos*, and 15 years.”

³ A Babylonian goddess.

In a place not appointed for her ;
 And in those days, she and the gods her fathers
 Proclaimed my name to the dominion of the earth,
 The return of her divinity she entrusted to me.
 Thus ; ‘ Assurbanipal, from the midst of Elam
 Bring me out and cause me to enter into Bit-Anna.’ ”¹

It is obvious, though we may be unable to identify either of the kings whose achievements are here recorded, that their inscriptions throw light upon the historical fragment of Gen. xiv. 1. We have a succession of kings of Elam, bearing names that begin with the same prefix. They appear as reducing the original Accadian people to subjection. They plunder the temples of Assyria, and make the kings of Shinar and Ellasar serve as their tributaries.

(4) The last of the four kings appears in our English version as “Tidal king of nations.” The LXX., however, gives the form Ther-gal, and this, as corresponding to the Ner-gal, which was the name of one of the Chaldæan deities (2 Kings xvii. 30), appearing in Biblical names such as Nergal-Sharezzer (Jer. xxxix. 3, 13), and admitting of an explanation as meaning “the great chief,” is probably to be accepted as the true form of the name.

From the peculiar title “king,” not of this or that city, but of Goyim or “nations,” we may reasonably infer that he was the head of a confederacy of nomadic tribes migrating from one district to another in different seasons of the year, and having no settled habitation. The name itself, however, appears in the inscriptions as belonging to a people at one time subject to the Chaldæan rule. Agukak-rimi, an early Babylonian king, thus describes himself (*R. P.*, vii. 4) :—

“ King of the Kassi (= Chasdim – Chaldæans)
 And of the Akkadi,

¹ Bit-Anna = House, or Temple, of Anu, a Babylonian deity.

King of the vast land
Of Babylonia.

* * * *

King of the Goim."

And these are identified with the tribes of northern Elam, the "old home of the Akkadi or highlanders," and as such, naturally subject to its rulers, such as Chedorlaomer.¹

So at a much later date, Assurbanipal (*R. P.*, i. 74), in the same inscription that records his victory over Elam, describes its king Ummanigas as stirring up to rebellion "the kings of Goim, Syria, and Ethiopia."

Assuming, with many recent scholars, that the chapter which records this invasion of the four confederate kings, is a document inserted from some lost history by the writer of the Book of Genesis, and that the writer of that history was, as we have seen, accurately informed as to the localities of Chaldæa, and the dynasties that ruled there, then comes the question, how was the writer of Genesis, who, whether we accept Mosaic authorship or not, wrote obviously as from an Egyptian standpoint, likely to become acquainted with those records? And the answer is the same as that which has been given to the like question, as to the striking parallelisms between the Genesis histories of the Creation and the Flood and the Tower of Babel, and the traditions of the Chaldæan and Assyrian inscriptions. Without entering into a discussion of the vexed question of the date of the Exodus, it may be sufficient to say that in the judgment of expert Egyptologists, the Pharaohs who were contemporary with the first eighty years of the life of Moses, according to one view (Canon Cook, *Excursus on the Bearings of Egyptian History upon the Pentateuch*, in the *Speaker's Commentary*, vol. i.), include Aahmes I., Thothmes I. and Thothmes II., while

¹ Mr. Budge (*History of Esarhaddon*, p. 145), identifies them with the tribes of the modern Kurdistan.

according to another (Lenormant, *Anc. Hist.*, i. 261), the Exodus coincided with the reign of Menepthah, the son and successor of Rameses II. the Sesostris of Herodotus (i. 237), and therefore after the reign of Thothmes III. It is sufficient for our purpose to note that on either supposition the kings of Egypt had been engaged, before the time of Moses, in long wars with the Canaanites, the *Rutenru* or Syrians, and had pushed their conquests as far as Mesopotamia, crossing the Euphrates at Carchemish, and leaving inscriptions to record their victories.

It may not be without interest, as illustrating this statement, to turn from the records of Assyria and Babylonia to those of Egypt, and to quote from the so-called "Statistical Tablet" of Thothmes III., in which we find the narrative (*R. P.*, ii. 24).

"In the year 33, when His Majesty was in the land of the Ruten (=Syria) . . . he placed another where was the tablet of his father, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, RA-MEN KHEPHER-KA (=Thothmes I.). His Majesty sailed to take the towns, and plough the country of the vile Naharaina (=the Aram-Naharaim of the Hebrew of the O. T.=Mesopotamia). . . . He then came to the city of Ninis (=Nineveh) on his return. Then His Majesty set up his tablet in Naharaina to enlarge the borders of Kami (=Egypt)."

It is obvious that continual campaigns of this character would make both the localities and the history of Chaldæa and Assyria familiar to the higher officials of the Egyptian court; and one who, like Moses, was brought up in the palace of the Pharaohs, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, might well in this way come in contact both with the earlier traditions of the pre-historic age of Gen. i.-x., and with the fragment of actual history now before us.