

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 Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

THE
CHURCHMAN

OCTOBER, 1903.

ART. I.—CHALDEAN PRINCES ON THE THRONE OF
BABYLON (ISAIAH XIII. 19).

I.

A CLOUD of mystery hangs over the Chaldeans. Their name, their nationality, the region from whence they sprang, and even their first appearance on the page of history—all is more or less involved in doubt and uncertainty. We may, however, take for granted that which scarcely admits of a reasonable doubt—viz., that the Kasdim of the Hebrew Bible, who figure in our Authorized Version as the Chaldees or Chaldeans, are to be identified with the Kaldi of the Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions and the *Χαλδαῖοι* of the Greek writers. Before the decipherment of the cuneiforms it was usual to regard the Babylonians and Chaldeans as one, and the same people, but the records of Assyria have now revealed to us the fact that they were really distinct peoples. Thus, to take a notable example, Sennacherib, in the annals of his reign recorded on the Taylor Cylinder, carefully distinguishes between Shuzub of Babylon and Shuzub the Chaldean. And now that we are thus enlightened from contemporary records, we can trace for ourselves the same distinction in the extracts from the Chaldean "History of Berosus" as preserved in the pages of Josephus. Thus, when Berosus makes out Nebuchadnezzar a Chaldean and Nabonidus a Babylonian,¹ we no longer look on these ethnic designations as equivalents. In spite, however, of this clear distinction between the two peoples, there is nevertheless sufficient evidence to show that the sovereign power at Babylon was for long periods in the

¹ Josephus c. Apion, I., 19, 20.

hands of the Chaldeans, thus abundantly justifying the description of the prophet Isaiah :

"Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,
The beauty of the Chaldeans' pride."¹

It is the design of this article, while collecting what little is known of this remarkable people, to trace out more especially their connection with the throne of Babylon.

The name *Kaldu*, according to Hommel, was originally *Kashdu* ; then, as early as the second millennium B.C., *Kardu*—whence the Kassite Kings of Babylon got the name *Kardunias* to designate Babylonia—and, finally, certainly from the ninth century B.C. and onwards, *Kaldu*, whence the Greek *Χαλδαῖοι*.² Delitzsch, on the other hand, considers the change from *Kashdu* to *Kaldu* as an instance of a rule very common in the Assyrian language, according to which a sibilant before a dental is frequently changed into "l."³ Schrader is of the same opinion.⁴ It will be observed, then, that, according to these three eminent authorities, the Hebrew *Kasdim* represents the older form of the name. However, this, too, is a point on which all are not agreed, for, according to Muss-Arnolt, in his valuable Assyrian dictionary, *Kaldu* is the original form of the name, whilst *Kashdu* is to be regarded as an analogical change after the word *kashādu*, "to conquer." A view put forward by Sayce⁵ that the Biblical *Kasdim* is in some way connected with the term *Kashi*, by which the people of Babylonia are designated in the Tel-el-Amarna Tablets of the fifteenth century B.C., has been proved untenable by Schrader, who points out that both the *Kaldi* and the *Kashi* are mentioned by Assur-natsir-pal,⁶ and that they must therefore be regarded as distinct peoples.

With regard to the nationality of the *Kaldi*, Professor Rogers assures us that they were undoubtedly Semites. He observes that "not only are their names purely Semitic, but their religion, manner of life, and adaptation to Semitic usages, all bear the same stamp, those of the Semitic Babylonians."⁷ On the other hand, Jensen has suggested that they were Semitized Sumerians, which Rogers justly characterizes as a guess, having no direct support in the inscriptions.

¹ Isa. xiii. 19. ² See "Ancient Hebrew Tradition," p. 212.

³ See Delitzsch's "Assyrian Grammar," p. 120.

⁴ See "The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament," vol. i., p. 118.

⁵ See "The Higher Criticism," p. 158, footnote.

⁶ See R.P., N.S. (= "Records of the Past," New Series), vol. ii., p. 164, lines 17, 24.

⁷ See "A History of Babylonia and Assyria," by R. W. Rogers, 2nd ed., vol. i., p. 310; London, 1901.

Another view, otherwise not improbable, that they were Semitized Kassites, is forbidden by the inscription of Assurnatsir-pal noticed above.

Whence, then, did this mysterious people make their way into Babylonia? To this question three answers have been given: (1) From the mountains of Kurdistan,¹ (2) from North Africa, (3) from Arabia. Of these the last is the one now very generally accepted by Semitic scholars. According to Winckler: "Perhaps from the eleventh century B.C., possibly earlier, they pressed forward from the east of Arabia into Babylonia, where they pushed on from the south to the north, and by degrees overran the whole country. From this time forward Babylonia had a Chaldean population in the open country, which was under Princes of their own, whilst to the old inhabitants, the Babylonians, only the towns remained with the territory belonging to them."² For those who, with the writer of this article, believe in the authenticity of the Books of Moses, the earliest notice of the Kaldi is to be found in the pages of Scripture. As early as the days of Moses, or possibly of Abraham, the very ancient city of Ur, near the mouth of the Euphrates, was connected with this people. "Ur of the Chaldees" was the patriarch's early home; and the position of this old-world city, in the extreme south of Babylonia, almost on the shores of the Persian Gulf, and also near the western deserts, marks it as the spot at which the Kaldi would obtain their earliest footing, on the supposition that they came from the heart of Arabia. It is, then, possible that the patriarch himself belonged to this people, and a fair argument for this supposition may be made out as follows: In Gen. x. 22 we meet with a list of the sons of Shem, "Elam and Asshur and Arpachshad and Lud and Aram." In this passage, as Hommel points out, Elam takes the place of Babylon, Babylon being then under Elamite rule; Asshur stands for Assyria, then in the infancy of her existence; whilst Arpachshad—*i.e.*, *Ar-pa-keshad*—represents the Kaldi, being, indeed, an exact equivalent of "Ur of the Chaldees," since *pa* is nothing less than the Egyptian preposition "of."³ Inasmuch, then, as Arpachshad figures in the genealogy of Abraham, it is not so far fetched to regard the patriarch as a Chaldee, of which, perhaps, we have a reminiscence in the

¹ It was thought that the Hebrew כְּשִׁיטִי was derived from a more ancient form, כְּרִי, still preserved in the name *Kurds*. See Gesen, *Heb. Lex.*

² See "Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament," by Eberhard Schrader. I. Hälfte, S. 22; Berlin, 1902.

³ See "Ancient Hebrew Tradition," by Prof. Hommel, pp. 294, 295.

name "Chesed," given to one of the children of his brother Nahor.¹

In the cuneiform records the first possible, but by no means certain, reference to the Kaldi is to be found in the Babylonian dynastic tablets.² According to these tablets the first Babylonian dynasty, consisting of eleven Kings, reigned for 294 years. Under this dynasty, which Hommel has shown to be of Arabian origin,³ Babylon first comes into the light of history, and appears as the capital of a kingdom as distinguished from a small city-state. Under its sixth monarch Khammurabi, the Amraphel of Gen., chap. xiv., she casts off the Elamite yoke, and achieves a position of proud independence. The second Babylonian dynasty, which also consisted of eleven Kings, and lasted 368 years, is called the dynasty of Uru-azagga or Uru-ku, and is believed by some scholars to have been contemporary with the first dynasty, and to have reigned in Uruk, the Erech of Gen. x. 10. The third dynasty presents us with a long list of Kassite Kings, who reigned over Babylon for 576 years. The Kassites, or Kashi, were mountaineers, who occupied the high valleys from the frontiers of Elam northward. As stated above, this is the name by which the Babylonian power is designated on the tablets from Tel-el-Amarna. The Kassite dynasty came to an end about the middle of the twelfth century B.C. It was followed by the fourth dynasty, a dynasty of Semitic rulers, which lasted for 132 years. Nebuchadnezzar I., the most distinguished of these rulers, and possibly the founder of the dynasty, has left us a long inscription of some interest, in which he records his victory over the Elamites, and claims conquests both over the Kassites and in the West.⁴ The fifth dynasty, however, is the one that most concerns us at present in our endeavour to search out the history of the Kaldi. This short dynasty, consisting of only three Kings, and covering the brief space of twenty-one years, is entitled on the Second Dynastic Tablet "the Dynasty of the Country of the Sea," and from this name it has been inferred that we have here to do with a race of Chaldean rulers, seeing that the "Country of the Sea," *mat tantim—i.e.*, the marshy district round the head of the Persian Gulf—appears about a century and a half later as one of the principalities of the Kaldi.⁵ When, however, we come to study the names of the three Kings of the dynasty, the

¹ See "Ancient Hebrew Tradition," p. 212.

² R.P., N.S., vol. i., pp. 1-41.

³ See "Ancient Hebrew Tradition," chap. iii.

⁴ See Budge's "Babylonian Life and History," p. 50. Published by R.T.S.

⁵ See R.P., N.S., vol. i., pp. 17, 21, and compare vol. iv., p. 79, line 7.

inference as to its Chaldean origin is seen to be most uncertain. Thus the first King bears the Kassite name of Simmas-sipak or Simbar-sikhu, whilst the name of his father, Erba-Sin, is Semitic. With the second King it is the other way about; his name, Ea-mukin-zira, is Semitic, but his father's name, Kha'smar, according to Professor Sayce, is the Kassite for "a hawk." The name of the third King, Kashu-nadin-akhi, offers a fresh puzzle, for, though Semitic in form, it points mysteriously to the nation of the Kassites. Perhaps the most natural solution of this series of riddles is that, instead of having here a dynasty of Chaldean rulers, we have rather a second dynasty of Kassites, whose names have been partially Semiticized by their Babylonian subjects, and who at this period were in possession of a district which became later the very centre and stronghold of the nation of the Kaldi.

So far, then, we have groped in vain. The Kaldi doubtless are in Southern Babylonia—witness the statement of Gen. xi. 28—but nothing is heard of them from cuneiform sources till they come into contact with the might of Assyria. Passing over, therefore, the short sixth dynasty, the dynasty of Bit-Bazi, which lasted only twenty years, and the still shorter seventh dynasty, consisting of a single Elamite monarch, who reigned only six years, we come, about the year 1,000 B.C., to the eighth dynasty, a dynasty, as I shall presently show, of Chaldean rulers. When this dynasty was more than a century old, the powerful Assyrian King, Assur-natsir-pal, in the year 879 B.C., conducted a campaign on the Euphrates.¹ Leaving the city of Anat, the modern Anah, he descended the river, and encountered at the fortress of Suru Shadudu the chieftain of the Shuhites² and his allies "the far-spread soldiers of the country of the Kassites." These allies of Shadudu were Babylonians, and Shadudu himself must be regarded in the light of a Babylonian vassal. Hence at the fall of Suru Assur-natsir-pal captured, so he tells us, "fifty cavalry horses, together with the soldiers of Nabû-apal-iddin, the King of Karduniash (Babylonia), and Zabdanu his brother, and Bel-apal-iddina the prophet, who went in front of their army." Further, the downfall of this fortress is represented by the Assyrian King as a great blow to the Babylonian power and to the Kaldi. "The fear of my sovereignty," he writes, "prevailed as far as the country of Karduniash; the might of my weapons overwhelmed the country of *Kaldu*. On the countries beside the Euphrates I poured out terror." Such is the first clear mention of the Kaldi. We gather from it

¹ See R.P., N.S., vol. ii., p. 164, lines 16-25.

² Job ii. 11.

(1) that they were settled at this time along the course of the Euphrates below the district of Karduniash—*i.e.*, Babylonia proper—and (2) that they were under the rule of Nabû-apal-iddina, King of Babylon, who was probably a Chaldean himself. But for some such close connection with Babylon the fall of Suru could hardly have inspired them with terror. Suru was at some distance from their country, and Babylon lay between. At Suru, as the next line of the inscription informs us, the Assyrian King erected a trophy of his victories, with the record of which he closes the narrative of this year's campaign, thus clearly showing that he advanced no further down the river. What, then, had the Kaldi to fear, unless their fortunes had been in some way closely linked with those of Babylon?

The second mention of the Kaldi occurs a little later, in 852 B.C., when Marduk-nadin-shumu had succeeded his father, Nabû-apal-iddina, on the throne of Babylon. Owing to a dangerous rebellion, headed by his lame brother, Maduk-bel-usate, this monarch was led to call in the aid of the Assyrian King, Shalmaneser II., the son of Assur-natsir-pal. After successfully putting down the rebellion, and offering sacrifices at the shrines of Merodach and Nebo in Babylon and Borsippa, "I went down," writes Shalmaneser, "to the country of *Kaldu*, I captured their cities, I received the tribute of the Kings of the country of *Kaldu*. The torrent of my arms overwhelmed as far as the *nar Marrati*—" *i.e.*, "the bitter river" or salt marshes at the head of the Persian Gulf, identical with the Merathaim of Jer. l. 21.¹ In the fuller account of this campaign, given on the gates of Balawat, Shalmaneser names three of the Kings of the Kaldi—*viz.*, "Adini, the son of Dakuri," "Yakin, King of the Country of the Sea," and "Mushallim-Marduk, the son of Amukkan."² These names are deserving of notice, for about a century later the Assyrian inscriptions make mention of the Chaldean States of *Bit-Dakuri*, *Bit-Adini*, *Bit-Amukkan*, and *Bit-Yakin*. Comparing these names with those just given, it is seen that these small kingdoms were called after the names of distinguished chieftains, just in the same way as the kingdom of Northern Israel was known as *Bit-Khumri*, "the House of Omri." A further inference is that they were capable of subdivision. Thus Adini, the son of Dakuri, seems to have divided Bit-Dakuri into two portions, one retaining the original name, and the other called after himself, Bit-Adini.

To the four Chaldean States just mentioned must be added

¹ See the Obelisk Inscription, lines 73-84, R.P., N.S., vol. iv., pp. 42, 43.

² See R.P., N.S., vol. iv., pp. 76-79.

three others—*Bit-Shilani*, *Bit-Shahalli*, and *Bit-Sala*. To fix the exact whereabouts of these seven small principalities is beyond our power. According to Winckler, *Bit-Dakuri* was the most northerly and nearest to Babylon. *Bit-Adini* and *Bit-Amukkan* bordered on *Bit-Dakuri*, *Bit-Amukkan* lying on both sides of the Euphrates, and adjacent to the territory of the *Pugudu*, the *Pekod* of Ezek. xxiii. 23 and Jer. I. 21. South of these lay *Bit-Shilani*, *Bit-Shahalli*, and *Bit-Sala*.¹ Further south still, at the head of the Gulf, and stretching down its western shore, was *Bit-Yakin*, "the Country of the Sea," the most famous of the seven. Thus, while Sargon includes among the kingdoms of the *Kaldi*, *Bit-Dakuri*, *Bit-Amukkan*, *Bit-Shilani*, and *Bit-Shahalli*, he excludes *Bit-Yakin*, apparently because in his day this last had attained to such prominence under its famous monarch *Merodach-baladan* that it seemed to hold a position of its own.² To *Merodach-baladan*, therefore, he accords the title, "King of *Kaldu*," as being over-lord of all the Chaldean States.³ *Assur-bani-pal* also distinguishes between the Land of *Kaldu* and "the Country of the Sea."⁴ The rulers of the States of the *Kaldi* are generally styled *Sharrani* "Kings"; in one place, by *Sennacherib*, *Nasikkani* "Princes."⁵

Continuing to gather up the scraps of Chaldean history, which meet us in the Assyrian annals, we notice that *Shamshi-Rammanu*, King of Assyria 825-812 B.C., in his fourth campaign marched into Babylonia, and at *Dur-Papsukal*, a city which stood on an island in the Tigris, attacked and defeated *Bau-akhi-iddina*, a vassal King under *Marduk-balatsu-igbi*, King of Babylon, who shortly after arrived on the spot with a large army drawn from the lands of *Kaldu*, *Elam*, *Namri*, and *Arumu*. The fact that *Kaldu* stands first on this list is suggestive that *Marduk-balatsu-igbi* was a Chaldean Prince.⁶ In 813 B.C., near the close of his reign, *Shamshi-Rammanu* undertook a second expedition into Babylonia. *Bau-akhi-iddina*, who by this time was seated on the throne of Babylon, was defeated by the Assyrian King and led captive to Assyria.

¹ See H. Winckler, "Untersuchungen," SS. 51, 52. And for the position of *Bit-Amukkan* as bordering on *Pekod*, see *Proceedings of Society of Biblical Archaeology*, vol. ix., pp. 247, 248.

² See the Triumphant Inscription, lines 21, 22.

³ *Ibid.*, line 122. In the time of *Tiglathpileser III.*, *Merodach-baladan* was only "King of the Country of the Sea." In *Sennacherib's* first campaign he is called "King of *Karduniash*," for he was then seated on the throne of Babylon, in virtue of which position he was also "King of *Kaldu*."

⁴ See the Annals, Col. III., 97, 91.

⁵ Taylor, Cylinder, Col. VI., 15, 16.

⁶ See the Monolith Inscription of *Shamshi-Rammanu*, Col. IV.

We are also informed that, after offering sacrifices in the sacred Babylonian cities, Shamshi-Rammanu went down to the land of *Kaldu* and received tribute of their Kings.¹ This was repeated by his son Rammanu-nirari in the year 803 B.C.² After this we hear no more of this remarkable people till the time of Tiglathpileser III., 745-729 B.C. The Babylonian wars of this monarch bear witness to the indomitable courage of the Princes of the Kaldi. Thus in 745 B.C., to quote the words of the ruthless conqueror, "Bit-Shilani throughout its extent I broke like a potter's vessel. Sarrabanu, their royal city, like a mountain wave I devastated, and carried away the spoil thereof. Nabû-ushabshi, their King, I impaled before the great gate of his city. His land, his wife, his sons, his daughters, his goods, the treasures of his palace, I took for a spoil. Bit-Amukkan, like a threshing instrument, I threshed the whole of its people and the substance thereof."³ Yet despite these severities the spirit of the Kaldi was still unsubdued. In 731 B.C. Zaqiru, Prince of Bit-Shahalli, who had "sinned against the ordinances of the great gods," was thrown into chains and carried off to Assyria, but his people, rendered desperate by fear, fought it out to the bitter end.⁴ In this year Bit-Amukkan, for a second time, encountered the might of Assyria. Its Prince, Ukin-zer, had but lately made himself master of the throne of Babylon. Having larger resources at his disposal, even as he had a greater issue at stake, he was able to hold out successfully in his fortress of Sapia. Meanwhile his palm-groves were cut down, his enclosures laid waste, and his cities burned with fire.⁵ In a second campaign, two years later, this valiant foe fell into the hand of the conqueror.⁶ However, it is no wonder that to some of the Princes of the Kaldi at this time prudence seemed the better part of valour. Accordingly, while Tiglathpileser was besieging Sapia, Balasu of Bit-Dakuri, and Nadinu of Larak, brought their tribute. At the same time came "Merodach-baladan, the son of Yakin, King of the sea, who in the time of the Kings my fathers had come before none of them and kissed their feet," but who now, "cast down by the fear of the majesty of Assur, my lord, came to Sapia into my presence

¹ See the Synchronous History of Assyria and Babylonia, Col. IV., R.P., N.S., vol. iv., pp. 33, 34.

² See the Slab Inscription of Rammanu-nirari, line 22, and compare the Assyrian Canon for 803 B.C.

³ See the Slab Inscription, lines 8-11.

⁴ See the Nimrud Inscription, lines 19-22, R.P., N.S., vol. v., p. 122.

⁵ *Ibid.*, lines 23-25.

⁶ Babylonian Chronicle, Col. I., 19-21, R.P., N.S., vol. i., p. 23.

and kissed my feet.”¹ But the wily Chaldean was not overwhelmed by the glory of Assur, as Tiglathpileser boasts; he was only biding his time to rise up, seize the throne of Babylon, and for twelve long years defy the arms of the great Sargon, a Prince whose military activity was such that the prophet Isaiah has aptly compared him to “a fiery flying serpent.”² But as this portion of the history of the Kaldi is very closely connected with the remarkable prophecy of Isa. xxi. 1-10—“The Burden of the Wilderness of the Sea”—I reserve it for a future paper.

Our study of the history of the Kaldi so far has brought us down to the era of Tiglathpileser, towards the close of whose reign Isaiah spoke of Babylon as

“The glory of kingdoms,
The beauty of the Chaldeans’ pride.”

At this point, then, we may suitably pause, and, turning aside to examine the Babylonian dynasties, endeavour to gain from them a yet clearer idea of the extent of the connection of this people with the throne of Babylon.

CHARLES BOUTFLOWER.

(To be continued.)

ART. II.—THE BOATS OF THE GOSPEL STORY.

IN the August number of the *CHURCHMAN* the Rev. J. E. Green endeavours to throw a new light on the nature of the fishing craft used by the Apostles by claiming a technical distinction between *πλοῖον*, “boat,” and *πλοιάριον*, “little boat.” The ordinary view of the vessels in which Peter and the sons of Zebedee pursued their calling receives a drastic correction, and we are presented with a picture of the Apostles plying “fishing-smacks” large enough to be served by (and therefore also to carry) “dinghies.” The former are supposed to be called in the Gospels *πλοῖα*, the latter *πλοιάρια*. As Mr. Green cites a remark of mine in a former number of the *CHURCHMAN*, to the effect that “John vi. 22-24 shows that there is no distinction in his use of *πλοῖον* and *πλοιάριον*,” and as I am convinced that the specific identity of these craft is recognisable all through the Gospel story, I propose to occupy a few pages with a consideration of this somewhat revolutionary theory.

¹ Nimrud Inscription, lines 26, 27, R.P., N.S., vol. v., p. 123.

² Isa. xiv. 29.