

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

his own purposes. That was enough to condemn it in the judgment of his fiery opponent. It was a *vitiatio scripturæ* for the nefarious purpose of giving to Paulinism an aspect of exaggerated antagonism to everything Judaistic. And so, the arch-heretic having gone to one extreme, the defender of the faith must needs go to the opposite extreme, and represent Paul as seeking the patronage (*patrocinium*) of Peter and the other apostles, and as exceedingly desirous to gain their approval and confirmation of his views; ¹ the real truth being that in the first two chapters of his Epistle to the Galatians the Apostle is evidently bent on making clear three things: (1) that he did not *learn* his gospel from the original apostles; (2) that they did not give him any additional instructions as to how to *preach* the gospel; and (3) that he had on the contrary to teach one of their number how to preach, or at least the true import of the gospel which he did preach, but did not carry into consistent practice.

A. B. BRUCE.

"AS OLD AS METHUSELAH."

A CHAPTER IN POSTDILUVIAN CHRONOLOGY.

IN a former paper in THE EXPOSITOR ² I have already explained and discussed the theory that, of the two dates attached to each name, and descriptive of the age, of the antediluvian patriarchs, in "the book of the generations of Adam" (Gen. v.), the former represents the natural and the latter the dynastic life of these "fathers of the world:" Adam, Sheth, and

¹ Ades ab illis probari et constabili desiderarat.—*Adv. Marcionem*, lib. v. 3.

² Vol. viii. pp. 449 *seqq.*

Enosh, living 130, 105, and 90 years respectively, while their sheikships, under these patronymics, extended in each case to many centuries. The Bible gives the parallel case of Pharaoh, whose reign under that title covers a period in scripture history of upwards of 1400 years. "God called *their* name Adam" (Gen. v. 2). The average term of human life, notwithstanding its innate and tried depravity, was not to be curtailed, but continued at 120 years (Gen. vi. 3). The names preserved are of those only who built cities and founded kingdoms, and are thus distinguished from other "sons and daughters," who did not. And, finally, the unmistakable marks of age in their immediate postdiluvian successors, such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, at even a hundred years, although, according to the common theory, they must have been contemporaries with Noah and his sons, lend weight and credibility to the hypothesis that the average from the beginning was 120 years. "How can we tell," asks Dean Alford in his posthumous work on Genesis, "what difference in conventional ways of reckoning, at present untraceable by us, may have assigned to Noah and Abraham, who were contemporaries during 58 years, to the former a life of 950 years, to the latter a life of 175 years?" Here we have plainly enough expressed, by one of the most industrious critical scholars of the age, a clear misgiving as to the accuracy of the common interpretation, and a hint as to the direction in which a truer solution may possibly be found. Professor Rask, of Copenhagen, suggests that the "years," *anni, annuli*, may be reckoned as *circles* of months, and thus reduced to the limits of credibility. But, as Bishop Colenso has justly pointed out in his recent volume, *The Pentateuch and*

Book of Joshua, "both the month and the day of the month are mentioned as well as the year; consequently the latter term can only have its proper meaning." Professor Owen¹ says these ages are "incredible and impossible if those men were constituted like other beings of the class *homo sapiens*, and the years were common years." Drs. Kalisch and Colenso, of course, regard the whole narrative as mythical and absurd.

Leaving such views to those who think it worth while to deal with them, let us consider some of the *objections* that have been, and may, not unnaturally, be urged against the reading we have adopted by those who accept the scriptures as the unerring word of God.

1. *First*, then, it is objected to this theory that Enoch (Henoeh) is said to have "walked with God, after he begat Methuselah, *three hundred years*" (Gen. v. 22).

We know so little of the history of this patriarch that only the slenderest basis is available for the construction of any theory of his life. Like the ancient Trojan, the student of this fragment of scripture must proceed,

Cæca regens filo vestigia.²

Nevertheless, something may be gathered from the typical character and life-mission of Enoch which may be helpful in solving the difficulty. He was "the seventh from Adam," a significant number as employed by Jude, according to a writer in Dr. Smith's Dictionary, and indicating "perfected humanity." He was, outwardly at all events, "blameless and harmless" in his generation; "a son of God without rebuke in the midst

¹ *Fraser's Magazine*, 1872.

² *Æneid*, vi. 30.

of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom he shone a light in the world." He was a prophet of the Advent. He "walked with God." He had, moreover, the testimony which, in its fulness, was borne only to his peerless Master in later times, "that he pleased God." Above all, he was translated to heaven "without tasting death." Clearly Hēnoch was intended in those primitive ages to be a lively type of the future Messiah, as Noah was unquestionably of the Divine Paraclete. But what typology would be complete that did not in some form or manner symbolize the death of the Redeemer? What gospel would be intelligible to the antediluvians that did not foreshadow the cross? If it be at all probable, therefore, that Hēnoch is the name of a dynasty, it is more than probable that one at least of the race must have died. As our Lord forbade his disciples to speak of his miracles of raising the dead till after his own death and resurrection, since till then their significance was sure to be misunderstood, so the translation of Hēnoch without reference to previous dissolution would, as a type, have been utterly meaningless and misleading. If, however, the first of the race died, and the last of the name, after walking in the same spirit with God before the world, was translated "without tasting death," we can all perceive how complete and scriptural the symbolism would be.

Apart, however, from the conjecture as to the typology of the case, there are one or two points in the brief narrative itself that lend some countenance to our hypothesis. There has been considerable discussion about the meaning of the name *Methuselah*, the son and successor of Hēnoch. Now these names were bestowed by parents on their children generally with reference to

some striking event in their own history. “Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and he called his name Sheth”—*appointed instead* (of Abel). Alford, therefore, has good reason for rejecting the definition of the word by Gesenius, “Man of the dart,” as that name could not possibly be conferred upon him at his birth, nor is its character analogous to that of names borne by this branch of Adam’s family. The word may be briefly rendered “*death-mission*.” Poole translates it, “*He dies and the sending forth of the water comes*.” In this he is partly followed by Wordsworth, who considers that the reference is to the Deluge. In the brief narrative of Henoah’s translation¹ there is noticeable a significant repetition and a slight but important alteration in the name Methuselah.

And Henoah lived five and sixty years.

And he begat Methusalah.

And Henoah walked with God

After he begat Methuselah
three hundred years.

And he begat sons and daughters.

And all the days of Henoah
were five and sixty years,
and three hundred years.

And Henoah walked with God;

and he was not, for God took him.

The vowel points, and rules regulating their uses, it is true, are a modern invention; but the LXX. in their version have adopted the reading *Methusalah*, and retained it (1 Chron. i. 3). The difference in meaning may be trivial—“sending forth,” “sent forth;” but that there should be a distinction made in the circumstance lends support to the supposition of his father’s death. It is not, however, absolutely essential to our

¹ Gen. v. 21-24.

present object to prove that that death took place ; it is sufficient to shew that such an interpretation is neither impossible nor improbable.

2. A *second* objection is that Noah is said to have been "six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth" (Gen. vii. 6). This would mean, on the principle of our theory, that the dynasty of "the Preacher of Righteousness" was in its seventh century at the period of the Deluge. The references to Noah and his family in the Old and New Testaments are comparatively few, and add little to our information regarding their personal history. Notable among these, however, is a quotation by St. Peter (2 Chap. ii. 5), probably from the apocryphal "Book of Enoch," or the lost "Book of Jasher," the public register of the Hebrews, from which all the sacred writers seem to have largely borrowed: "And spared not the old world, but preserved Noah, *eighth preacher of righteousness* (ἀλλ' ὄγδοον Νῶε δικαιοσύνης κήρυκα ἐφύλαξε), bringing in the flood upon the world of ungodly men." The facts that there were "*eight souls*" saved in the ark, that Noah was not the eighth "from Adam," after the analogy of Henoch's descent (Jude 14), nor in any conceivable sense "the eighth" from any progenitor, have produced a striking unanimity among expositors of this passage, all of whom contend that he was "the eighth *person*" preserved at the Deluge. But not to mention that the Apostle would not have spoken of the patriarch as the eighth, but as the *first* of the souls saved, this view, with its corresponding translation, has done unusual violence to the text. There is no article, yet it is of necessity "*the*

eighth;" no word for "*person*," which the Greek does not suggest; "soul" would have been ungrammatical, and "man" contrary to fact; hence the dexterous insertion of the term "person." Moreover, the indefinite article is prefixed to "preacher," although it had plainly been left anarthrous because it was known that Noah was *the* preacher. The Vulgate has happily avoided these difficulties by translating the words as they stand: "Et prisco mundo non pepercit, sed *octavum Noe*, justitiæ præconem, custodivit." Here then, at least, is one great authority acknowledging as a true reading "*the eighth Noah*." Moreover, if we are to follow the analogy of the Greek-speaking Hebrews in preference to the heathen classics, which on all Biblical subjects is the only safe rule, considering how often the Greek idiom was sacrificed to Hebrew modes of thought, we find the sacred writers ever reckoning downwards, and in no case, I think, upwards, in the scale, or inclusively. "Enoch" was "the seventh *from Adam*." "But the seventh (day) is the sabbath of rest" (Exod. xxxi. 15): it did not include other six days of rest. "The ark rested on the seventh month"—not till then. Josephus says of Abraham that he was "the tenth from Noah" (*Antiq.* i. 5). None of the Evangelists has spoken of Peter as the twelfth apostle, meaning thereby to include the eleven. Yet Blomfield, Alford, Webster, relying on Winer and Wetstein's examples from the classics, render it, "Noah the eighth *person, i.e.*, with seven others, according to a well-known Greek formula." But even this "well-known formula" requires, as Dean Alford admits, *αὐτός*, which is virtually introducing a parenthetical clause into the text, "himself being" the eighth. Winer's examples are

(1) from the classics only ; they are (2) insufficient in number and quality to establish a rule, without the pronoun ; and (3) they do not seem analogous to the case in dispute. We are thus left with the unexplained quotation of the Apostle on our hands, "Noah, eighth preacher of righteousness."

Now, if we reckon two of the race of Enoch, and six of the Noachidæ, as "preachers of righteousness," we arrive at the patriarchal average of 120 years ; or, even if this "preaching" be confined to the family of Noah, we have still a fair average of seventy-five years. "It is remarkable," writes Dr. Kitto,¹ "that the Phœnician annals ascribe the origin of the ark to the *fifth generation*: Usous having taken a fallen tree and broken off its boughs, was the first who dared to venture on the sea." If a generation is to be reckoned according to the patriarchal average of 120 years, this tradition would be literally correct. In the Hindu mythology, where Noah appears under the title of Menu, or Mon, we are informed by Sir W. Jones and Mr. Wilford that there were seven Menus, the ark-builder being *the seventh*.²

It will not have escaped the notice of attentive readers of the Narrative that, notwithstanding the extreme age of Noah, six hundred years at the deluge, the eldest of his sons was comparatively youthful : Shem was only a hundred years old, and his brothers, Ham and Japheth, were younger. There is then, at least, nothing incredible in the supposition that the "six hundred years" refer, not to the natural, but to the dynastic, life of Noah, the preacher of righteousness.

¹ *Daily Bible Illustrations*.

² Harcourt's *Doctrine of the Deluge*, vol. i. p. 79.

3. A *third* objection is urged, that Noah is said to have survived the deluge *three centuries and a half*. "And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years" (Gen. ix. 28). The Noachian title, sacerdotal office, supreme spiritual authority, and "Arkite" worship, held undivided and unquestioned sway in the world, over the postdiluvian families, till the revolt that culminated in the building of Babel. The significance of this great Helio-Arkite temple has scarcely as yet been estimated. Its erection was the signal for a crusade against the *Arkites*, or true worshippers of Jehovah, which went near to exterminate them; but that struggle has left its impress upon all the mythologies of the world. It is from the records—strange as we may think it, unusually abundant—of this earliest and most tragic of all religious wars that we must glean our evidence of the extent and duration of the Noachian rule.

Of the personal history of the patriarch himself after the flood little is to be gathered either from scripture or tradition. That he maintained the priestly character, evidenced in the building of the ark-temple, after the deluge, appears in the erection of an altar, and his offering thereon a sacrifice of "clean beasts" to Jehovah. In his later years "he began to be a husbandman," and is called by the LXX. "*the man Noah*"—*Nōe ἄνθρωπος γεωργὸς γῆς*—no doubt to distinguish between the acts of his private life and those of a more public and sacred character. In his official work, as ark-builder and preacher of righteousness, he was blameless; he was just and perfect in his generation, and found favour in the eyes of Jehovah. As a man he fell. His husbandry and its accompaniments

form no part of the sacred typology. Like Melchizedek, one of his successors in the dynasty of *Righteousness*, he "lives," and is to be remembered chiefly in his priesthood.

But all this proceeds on assumptions which I must now proceed to vindicate; and in what follows I will endeavour to shew (1) that, under the Noachian priesthood, the *Arkite* religion, or worship of Jehovah, God of the ark, held catholic supremacy on the earth for three hundred and fifty years; and (2) that it was then supplanted, and its votaries nearly exterminated, by the Helio-Arkites, or sun-worshippers, who borrowed much of its symbolism, but entirely altered its character.

I. THE ARKITES.—As this most ancient religion, of which we have the leading characteristics in the *Book of Job*, was by Divine command engrafted by Moses upon the Hebrew worship in the wilderness; as it modified, transformed, and, to a large extent, altered their simple ritual; and, above all, as it has outgrown and survived it in the present "order of Melchizedek," the subject will be seen to possess an interest for Bible students beyond that of our present inquiry. Fortunately, the means of forming a judgment about it are both ample and reliable. It may safely be said that there is no country in the world that does not inherit, in its language, customs, or mythology, some relic of the ancient Arkites. Every fresh ruin-exploration in Greece, Troy, Nineveh, Babylon, or Egypt, adds to the treasure-trove of evidence; whilst the Bible itself is available as an unerring test of the soundness of our conclusions. What, then, were the leading features of this Noachian dispensation?

(a) The Arkite Church was the natural and sole custodian of those sacred narratives of the Creation, Fall, and Deluge which still exist, in a more or less fragmentary form, in the various mythologies of the world. They had likewise in keeping the moral law of Eden, the institution of the sabbath, monogamy, with all those minute chronological dates, and early promises made to the patriarchs, of which we have an authentic record in Scripture. But it was certainly from no Hebrew source that these histories were derived. They were copied by the Chaldeans on the slabs of Babylon two thousand years before Christ, before the Jews as a nation existed.¹ They are found in the traditions of the Japhetic (European) nations, among the aborigines of South America and the Polynesian islands, at dates and localities plainly unreachable by the literature and worship of the Hebrews.

It was probably from some such Arkite source—Jethro's tent in Midian, for example, or, more likely, in that mystic spot in the Sinaitic desert, known before the days of Moses as *the “Mount of God,”* where some movable “ship-temple” may have stood—that the author of the Pentateuch collected the materials for the sacred narrative; and, with certain divinely authorized “Jehovistic” changes, incorporated them, as he found them, into the sacred text. Indeed, some such supposition is necessary to explain the words with which Jehovah despatches Moses into Egypt with their subsequent fulfilment: “When thou hast brought the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain” (Exod. iii. 12). When Moses, with Israel, did return to the spot, it was to receive the Divine

¹ *History of Babylonia.* By the late George Smith, Esq.

command to set up and enforce the entire Arkite ritual as henceforth the religion of the tribes. No change could well be more striking and complete than that which Moses effected in a few months upon the elaborately simple worship of the Hebrews. Hitherto they had had no temple—the father of the household had been the priest of the family; but now a tabernacle was to be erected according to a "pattern shewn to him in the Mount." What the "pattern" was we are not informed; but the tabernacle was *half the size of the ark* of the Deluge, and half of that of the temple of Solomon. Moreover, an "ark of God" is constructed, with its attendant rites and ceremonies. A high priesthood is instituted, and Aaron and his sons are ordained to the sacred office. Horeb is a witness also to the re-institution of the "sabbath" and other high observances; and, above all, somewhere on its lofty summit, Moses has put into his hands two stone tablets, containing a summary of the moral law of Eden, written with the finger of God Himself.

(b) The "*ship-temples*" of the Arkites furnished the root-idea, or ground-plan, of the world's temple building.

The ark of Noah was a ship-temple. As we have seen, it was the model of the tabernacle and of Solomon's temple at Jerusalem. It had temple-like proportions and arrangements as well as temple-like significance and use. Its "stories" corresponded to the sacred "courts." The division of the beasts into "clean" and "unclean" indicates its priestly character. Noah and his household were within, and were saved in it "when the flood came." In all ages it has been regarded as a type of the Church. "For this is as the

waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee . . . O thou afflicted, *tossed with tempests* [and] *not comforted*, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and *lay thy foundations* with sapphires" (Isa. liv. 9-11). The figure under which the Church is here addressed is that of an ark, or ship-temple, without the presence of Noah, *the comforter*. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews seems also to have the same figure of a "ship-temple" in his mind when he speaks of "hope" as an *anchor of the soul*, both sure and stedfast, which entereth into that within the veil; whither," he adds, "the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. vi. 19, 20).

The Greek races were the direct descendants of Father 'Ιαφετος (Japhet), and worshipped Neptune, "lord of the ship," who was their mythological Noah, and had his "ship-temples" on the shore. The connection between ship and temple is still traceable in the kindred words *ναός* and *ναῦς*, and has been preserved through the Latin *navis*, with the digamma, in our "nave" and "navy."¹ The *Navarchi* were officials common to both ship and temple. A still more curious and significant custom is recorded of those Arkite priests. Small models of their ark-shaped temples were carried about by them in their religious pageantries. Thus Champollion informs us that "the sacred arks were borne in procession by the priests."² "This ship," continues the same author, "is often represented both upon the Nubian and Egyptian monuments, sometimes

¹ Trench, *Synonyms*.

² *Twelfth Letter*.

standing still, and sometimes carried in procession; *but never anywhere except in the innermost sanctuary.*" A chief feature in the Dionysian festival at Smyrna, and also at Eleusis, was the carrying back of the ark to its place in the temple.¹ "Three coins of Philip the Elder, struck at Apameia, or *Cibotus*, as it was once called, bear on the reverse a square machine floating on the water, in which two persons are seen, and above the dove bearing a branch. Upon the ark is the word *Νωε.*"² And many similar instances will be found in the learned volumes of L. Vernon Harcourt.³ Thus the ark-led processions of the Hebrews are seen to be part of the once universal worship of the primitive Arkites.

(c) Two noticeable features of the Arkite worship were their ceremonial *ablutions* and the "*bread and wine*" of their sacraments.

It will readily be understood that among a people whose history dated from the Deluge the sacramental use of water should hold a conspicuous place. "From the destruction of sin which the deluge commemorated, and the regeneration of the world after the Flood, a hope arose that sin might be expiated by water."⁴ The Arkites have transmitted their ceremonial ablutions to all nations. The Hindu rites at the Ganges are well known. "Waters, mothers of worlds, purify us; for ye, divine waters, do remove every sin," as Sir W. Jones informs us, is a form of Brahminical prayer.⁵ "May the waters purify the earth, that she, being

¹ Aristoph. *Hipp.*, 563.

² Bryant's *Analysis*, ii. 230; Smith's *Bible Dictionary*.

³ *Doctrine of the Deluge*, vol. i. pp. 331, 343.

⁴ *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 495.

⁵ *Asiatic Researches*, v. ii. 180.

cleansed, may purify me." ¹ Thus Iphigenia is represented by *Euripides* ² as pleading for the purification of the strangers: "First, I would fain lave them in pure cleansings.

Thoas. "In the fountains of waters, or in the dew of the sea?"

Iph. "The sea washes out all the ills of men—
θάλασσα κλύζει πάντα τ' ανθρώπων κακά.

Thoas. "Does not the wave dash against the very temple?"

Hector dreads to bring his offering of "incensed wine to Jove" *with unwashed hands*.³

Occupat Æneas aditum, corpusque recenti
Spargit aqua.⁴

The Roman month of purification, *February*, is derived from *Februum*, lustration; and its rites, according to Ovid, "take away every crime, and every cause of evil." ⁵ "If I wash myself with snow water," says Job, the Arkite, "and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me" (Chap ix. 30, 31). Hence the *Laver* and its uses had not only a place in every ancient temple, but, with the engrafting of the Arkite worship on the Jewish ritual in the wilderness, held a prominent place in the tabernacle and temple of the people of God. "I will wash my hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O Jehovah" (Psa. xxvi. 6). "According to his mercy he saved us *by the laver of regeneration*" (Titus iii. 5). And St. Peter, after referring to the "eight souls saved by water" at the

¹ Maurice, *Indian Antiquities*, vol. ii. p. 226.

² *Iphigenia in Tauris*, 1201.

⁴ *Æneid*, vi. 635.

³ *Iliad*, ii. 266.

⁵ *Fast.*, ii. 35.

Deluge, adds, "The like figure whereunto baptism doth also *now save us*" (1 Peter iii. 20, 21). It may be noticed here as a curious coincidence that it was in the city sacred to Arkite memories, and as St. Jerome tells us, the place of Noah's sepulchre, *Foppa*, that St. Peter had the vision of "the *vessel*, as it had been a great sheet," full of "fourfooted beasts of the earth, and creeping things, and fowls of the air"—the ark in miniature, in short—when he was commanded to receive the Gentiles, no longer unclean, into the Church by baptism (Acts xi. 4-10).

The "bread and wine" of the Arkite festivals may have been the daily food of the patriarch and his family in the ark. Examples of these sacred feasts, where bread and wine alone were used, are found in the gatherings of Job's family; on Raguel's (Jethro's) meeting with Aaron and the elders of Israel "to eat bread before God (Exod. xviii. 12); on Melchizedek's meeting Abraham after the slaughter of the kings (Gen. xiv. 18), and when David returned with the ark (2 Sam. vi.)

(d) *Sacerdotalism* had its origin in the Arkite worship.

That Noah, before and after the Deluge, held some such office as priest-king, and was known as "Preacher of *Righteousness*," are facts to be gleaned from the Bible itself. We are likewise informed that he "lived"—in what sense remains to be seen—350 years after the Flood. We must suppose, therefore, that during those centuries of unquestioned and undivided rule, this priest-kingship of righteousness grew in extent and importance with the population of the world. "There must have been some distinguished character among the immediate descendants of Noah, to whom

the several branches of the patriarchal family laid claim as a common ancestor, assumed his name as chieftain of the tribe, regarded him as tutelary genius, and in their respective systems of theology in succeeding ages adored him as divinity.”¹ It was, no doubt, from this source that the ancient systems of the world, including those of Egypt, India, Greece, and Celtic Britain, derived their ideas of the priesthood; after this model that the Hebrews were commanded to consecrate Aaron and his sons; and to this order our blessed Lord Himself belongs, “a high priest for ever.” Four hundred years before the appointment of the Aaronic priesthood we get a glimpse, brief but clear, of these ancient people. To Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings a stranger, evidently of kingly rank and priestly office, presents himself at the valley of Shaveh. He carries with him, perchance after the manner of his race, a small model of the ark, brings forth the sacramental present of “bread and wine,” receives from the victor of the Elamites a “tenth of the spoils,” and blesses the patriarch in the name of his God. Who then is this? He is described as “Lord of Salem,” “King of *Righteousness*,” and “Priest of the High God.” None in Canaan can tell his genealogy. He is to them “without father, without mother, and without pedigree,” for the origin of his priesthood lies beyond the Flood. Had one of Cromwell’s Ironsides suddenly appeared in the days of Marlborough, in spirit, garb, and speech, he would probably have excited less astonishment than this ancient “Puritan” in the breast of “Abram the Hebrew.” Yet, it would appear, he understood his language; he promptly ac-

¹ Maurice, *Ind. Antiq.*, vii. 44.

knowledges his supremacy ; and, though himself the ancestor of a long line of high priests, kneels to receive his benediction. "Now without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better"—of the *elder* (Heb. Vers.) the title of Japheth in Genesis x. 21. Here, then, is one little tribe, with its priest-king of *Righteousness* at Salem—already, therefore, a sacred place and stronghold, apparently, of the persecuted remnant when assailed by the worshippers of the sun-god. We read, later, in Joshua's time, of Adoni-zedek, "Lord of *Righteousness*," and King of Jerusalem, who was slain among the enemies of the Jews (Joshua x. 1). So that we have it proved that there *was* a dynasty of "Righteousness;" that its priesthood was superior to Aaron's in its origin, dignity, and duration; that its headquarters from the earliest ages were established at Jerusalem, which thus becomes, in a new and significant sense, "the mother of us all."

But we have not yet done with Melchizedek. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, "He abideth a priest continually;" and "Here men that die receive tithes, but there [he receiveth them] of whom it is witnessed that *he liveth*" (Chap. vii. 8). Now Melchizedek could only be said to live for ever *in his priesthood*. The Bible speaks of him in the past: "Consider how great this man *was*." Four hundred years later one of his successors was slain by Joshua. To those, therefore, who will listen only to the letter of the word for evidence that Noah "lived" 350 years in his dynasty, or priesthood, I would commend the study of this New Testament phrase, "It is witnessed that *he liveth*."

Shall we notice here, in passing, the "Broad Church-

ism" of Abraham? his entire freedom from bigotry, narrowness, and sectarian prejudice? This priest of Salem is not of his sect, nor country, nor race, yet he recognizes him as a "better" man than himself, gives honour and tribute where it is due, and takes the blessing at his hands. The religion of Christ is older, wider, better than any sect. There are great and good men who "follow not with us;" and it is the mark of true greatness and goodness to acknowledge these whenever and wherever they are found. Notice also before leaving this subject that the Arkite religion, with its Ark of the Testimony, its ancient sacraments, its everlasting priesthood, is ours. The order of Aaron has long since been abolished, and is never to be restored. It is to this oldest of dispensations that the "lost tribes" of Jew and Gentile must gather. If Jerusalem ever again becomes the metropolis of Christianity, it will only be under the kingship of Him who is "a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

II. THE HELIO-ARKITES.—Although the grandeur and extent of the Arkite worship, under its priest-kings of *Righteousness*, are only demonstrable from its ruins, the fact is indisputable that for several centuries after the Deluge it held unrivalled sway over the entire human race. It has left such evidence as the ocean leaves in its shore-lines, visible to the scientist of all lands and ages. The strata of the globe have suffered upheaval, displacement, in some instances they have been overturned; but the proofs of their existence and ancient order are to unprejudiced eyes irrefragable. Every nation started on its life-mission with the knowledge of the true God and the inheritance of a pure

religion. Over all the earth, for the first ages, there was but "one Lord" (Jehovah), and his name one. Ruin, Redemption, and Regeneration, seen dimly, indeed, as compared with present light, were the essentials of its gospel; while to its priesthood were committed the divinely established ritual of its temple service and "the oracles of the living God."

It was scarcely, however, to be expected that a religion so pure, simple, and exacting could long be popular, or remain unchecked amid the rapidly increasing corruption and violence of those times. Men "knew God, but glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations . . . and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. They changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator who is blessed for ever" (Rom. i. 18-32). No words could more fitly describe the origin and development of the Hamite apostasy, and the consequent decline and overthrow of the Arkite religion. The name *Helio-Arkite* has been employed by all the higher authorities on this subject in preference to "sun-worship," as more accurately descriptive of that most popular superstition. No doubt the sun-god held the prominent place in their theogony; but the Deluge was too recent, the facts too notorious, and the belief in the Arkite religion too widely diffused, to permit the immediate abolition of the ancient ritual. Many of the names, rites, and symbols of the Arkites were retained. The crescent moon became the symbol of the ark; the bull became sacred from the confor-

mation of its horns ; Noah became Deucalion—*Deu Helion*—"the sun-god ;" Jehovah was probably the *Jove* of the Pelasgi, then the Zeus of Homer, and the father-of-the-day of the Japhethites. The ark of the testimony, according to Herodotus,¹ crowned the Temple of Belus at Babylon. Even the Philistines, in Samuel's time, gave the ark of the Hebrews a place beside their fish-god in the temple of Dagon ; and when they could no longer keep it with safety, they put it on a new cart, and watched to see whether the kine would, of their own accord, take the road to *Bethshemesh*—ancient "House of the Sun" (1 Sam. vi. 12).

The "350 years after the Flood" would bring us, according to accepted chronology, down to the call of Abram. Was Noah a contemporary of the patriarch ? Was the world in mourning for its second progenitor, in his 950th year, when the household of Terah left Mesopotamia ? Were his gigantic sons at the head of their nations in Isaac and Jacob's times ? There is no trace, even the faintest, of this in Scripture. On the contrary, we have abundant evidence that the priest-rule of the Noachidæ had all but passed away. The Shemitic ancestors of the Hebrews, according to Joshua (Chap. xxiv. 2), "served other gods." When Abram entered the country promised to him, "the Canaanite was then in the land," and Melchizedek alone, at the head of a small "remnant" of the Arkites, remained true to the "Most High God." If, as we suppose, Job lived in those times, "the greatest of all the men of the East," he was exposed to the inroads of the Chaldeans and Sabæans ; his own wife tempted him to abjure his religion ; and his

¹ Vol. ii. 582. (Rawlinson.)

"friends" argue against his "righteousness" from his misfortunes. Further, when Abram goes down to Egypt, he finds the ancient dynasty of Menes—Menu, *Noah*—already supplanted by the Pharaohs—P-RA, "the Sun;" and under them *Thebes*—"the Ark"—is giving place to Heliopolis, and the priesthood of *On*, or "Beth-shemesh," is occupying the place of honour. Everywhere the worship of the sun-god is in the ascendant, and the faith of the world has changed.

Much, no doubt, has yet to be said and written upon this deeply interesting subject before these data can be considered as conclusively established; yet a word may be permitted me in taking leave of it for the present. If the facts as here suggested can be substantiated, inferences of no slight importance may be drawn from them. Among others, these: the true place of the *Hebrews* in ecclesiastical history will be determined. They were converts, it will be seen, not originators; and their restoration will be effected "with the fulness of the Gentiles." The choice of *Jerusalem* will acquire fresh significance. Jehovah had "put his name there" before the Hebrews entered it; and by "all nations" He will be worshipped there when, possibly, *they* may be strangers in it (Zech. ii. 11; viii. 22; xiv. 16-19). The perpetual obligation of the *moral law* and the ancient *sabbath* receives new evidence. The unchangeableness of Christ's priesthood acquires a fresh illustration. And the *sacraments* of the Christian Church appear in a clearer light, and are invested with the interest of a more venerable antiquity. The Kingdom does not date from Abraham, but from Adam; its succession has been unbroken: a kingdom of righteousness "that cannot be moved."