

'Weiss and Beyschlag,' says he, 'rationalise this miracle after the same general fashion. The rebuke of the disciples grows into a rebuke of the elements, and the confidence of Jesus in His Father's deliverance into an assertion of His own power to still the waves. Holtzmann adds to this the presence in the narrative of Old Testament material, which has been used in building up the account. Weiss is not so rationalistic in this as the others, as he is contending only against the notion that Jesus performs the miracles Himself, instead of the Father. The command given to the elements, he thinks, would be an assumption of power over them by Jesus Himself. But any more so than the commands to the demons? He acts throughout as God's agent, but such an agent can order about demons and storms. Holtzmann is prepossessed against miracles in

general; Beyschlag against miracles in the sphere of inanimate nature, where spirit does not act upon spirit. But the apostolic source of the narrative renders this rationalising futile. The general fact of the miracles is established by this, and by their absolute uniqueness, conforming them to the unique quality of Jesus' whole life in the moral sphere. This leaves room to exclude individual miracles for special reasons, or even to discriminate among kinds of miracles, as Beyschlag does. But Beyschlag's principle excludes, e.g., the miracle of feeding the multitude, the best attested of all the miracles. And there is no other special improbability about this miracle of stilling the storm—on the contrary, a certain congruousness, a manifestation of the fact that the power resident in nature is in the last analysis spiritual, and that Jesus was the Agent of that Power.'

## Archaeological Commentary on the Book of Genesis.

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### CHAPTER II.

9. THE 'tree of life' corresponds with the palm of the Sumerian hymn. The wine made from its dates was termed, in Sumerian, *ges-din*, or 'draught of life,' a word which was afterwards transferred to grape-wine when the vine came to be introduced into Chaldea.

In the twelfth book of the great Babylonian Epic of Gilgames (the eleventh book of which contains the account of the Deluge), Gilgames is described as returning from his visit to the Chaldean Noah over the waters of the ocean which encircles the earth. Before he started, he begged for a slip of the 'tree of life,' which he might take back with him to plant in Erech, so that death might be expelled from the world. The request was granted, and he placed the slip in his boat. But he had gone only 210 miles on his way when, stopping at a fountain, a serpent suddenly appeared, stole the plant, and then vanished. Gilgames afterwards arrived once more at the margin of the ocean, in a spot beyond the Western night, where there were marvellous trees which 'bore precious stones as fruit,' while their twigs were of lapis lazuli (cf. Ezek. xxxi. 9).

Babylonian legend knew of a second tree at Eridu which had analogies with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This is called 'the cedar-tree, the tree which shatters the power of the incubus, upon whose core the name of Ea is recorded,' and it seems to be that 'holy tree of Eridu,' of whose 'oracle' Eri-Aku, or Arioch, of Larsa calls himself 'the executor.'

10. The river which was 'parted into four heads' is the Persian Gulf, which the Babylonians regarded as a river, and called *nár marratu*, or 'the salt river.' When Eridu stood on the seashore, the Euphrates, Tigris, Kerkah, and Pallakopas all flowed into the sea by separate mouths. Here, therefore, the great 'salt river' was divided into four 'heads,' as the tide ran up each stream for a considerable distance. Yet at the same time it was correct to say that the salt river 'went out of Eden' or the Babylonian 'plain.'

11. Havilah, or 'Sandy-land,' in the Old Testament denotes the eastern part of northern Arabia, of which the western part, adjoining the Egyptian frontier, was Shur (Gen. xxv. 18; 1 Sam. xv. 7). It was a country from which the Babylonians procured gold. The Pison would, therefore, be the wadi or old river-bed through which the Palla-

kopas (or Naarsares) canal was afterwards conducted. Pison is the Babylonian *pisannu*, the exact meaning of which is still uncertain, though it is probably 'water-basin' or 'canal-bed.'

12. Lenormant identifies *b'dolakh* with the Assyrian *budilkhati*, part of the tribute sent to the Assyrian king by Jehu of Israel. But the reading of the Assyrian word is not certain.<sup>1</sup> *Shoham*, however (A.V. 'onyx'), is the Assyrian *samtu* or *siamtu*, a blue-green stone, probably the turquoise, brought from Melukhha, the 'salt' desert of northern Arabia.

13. Cush is not Ethiopia here, but the land of the Kassi, as they are called in the cuneiform inscriptions, the Kossaeans and Kissians of classical writers. Originally they were inhabitants of the mountains of Elam, where they were still found by Sennacherib, but their conquest of Babylonia in the eighteenth century B.C. caused the Babylonians also to be known among their Western neighbours as Kassi.

In classical times the Susianians also went by the name of Kissians. The Hebrew form *Cush* is probably due to a wrong punctuation of the text, since the Babylonian form of the name is Kas, just as the Egyptian form of the Ethiopian *Cush* is also Kash. As the Kerkhah, the Ulai (Eulaeus) of the inscriptions, rose in the mountains of the Kassi, it must be the Gihon of Scripture. The name of Gihon, however, has not yet been met with on the monuments. It would agree in form with the Sumerian *gikhan*, borrowed by Semitic Babylonian as *gikhinnu*, the meaning of which is quite unknown; and *Sakhan*, which could be read *Gikhan*, is given as a name of the Euphrates.

14. The Hiddekel is the Sumerian *Idiqla* or Tigris. *Idiqla* was Semitised into *Diqlat*, which the Persians transformed into *Tigra*, and identified with their word for 'arrow.' *Idiqla* is also written *Idiqna*, and is compounded with the Sumerian *id* (abbreviated into *i*), 'river.' The *kheth* of the Hebrew form must be a corrupt reading for *he*. Assur is not Assyria, as the Tigris is said to be 'east' of it, but the old capital of the country Assur, from which it derived its name. Assur is now represented by the mounds of Kaleh Shergat on the western bank of the river.

<sup>1</sup> If *b'dolakh* means 'pearls,' for which the Persian Gulf has always been famous, it may be compared with the Assyrian *badulu*, which seems to signify the same thing.

The Pérath or Euphrates was called *Pura-nun*, or 'great water,' in Sumerian, as well as simply *Pura*, 'the water.' From *Pura* the Semites derived their *Purattu*, the Hebrew *Pérath*. The Persians made it *Ufratu*, and explained the prothetic vowel as *u*, 'good.' Hence the Greek Euphrates.

17. Compare the Sumerian Penitential Psalm from Eridu—

The transgression that I committed I knew not:  
The sin that I sinned I knew not:  
The forbidden thing did I eat:  
The forbidden thing did I trample upon.  
My Lord in the anger of his heart has punished me:  
God in the violence of his heart has revealed himself  
to me.

19. As Adam was already in 'the garden,' it follows that 'all' the animals brought to him must have been those only who were 'found' in it. Consequently no contradiction is intended of i. 24, 25, where God is said to have 'made' the animals before the creation of man. But the words used ('every' and 'all') show that an account of the Creation is being copied in which the animals were described as brought into being after the creation of man, and owing their separate existence 'after' their 'kind' to the names given them by man. In this account, moreover, man and the animals were said to have been 'formed' or 'moulded' as by a potter, not created or made as is stated in the first chapter. We may, therefore, conclude that the story of Paradise is taken with comparatively little change from a Babylonian original, which has not yet been recovered, and which contained an account of the Creation differing from that of the epic. In place of Merodach, who created by means of his 'word,' the creator in it will have been a potter-god, like the Egyptian Khnum, who is called at Philae 'the potter who fashions men, the modeller of the gods.' In one point, however, both accounts seem to have agreed: the plants were not created or formed, but produced spontaneously from the earth, and it is remarkable that the Hebrew writer has preserved, without alteration, this feature of the story (Gen. i. 11, 12, ii. 5, 9).

In the Babylonian hymns, 'name' and 'existence' are synonymous terms; it is the name which gives a thing its individual existence, and the phrases, 'all that has a name' and 'all that exists,' are interchangeable.

21, 22. An early Sumerian exorcism says of the

storm-demons that 'they bring forth the woman from the loins of the man.'

The Heb. *ishshâh*, 'woman,' is the Babylonian *assatu* for *ansatu*, from אָנָּשׁ, 'man.' In saying, therefore, that 'woman' was called Ishshâh from *Ish*, 'man,' the Hebrew writer was etymologically incorrect, the masculine of הַשָּׂאֵל being שָׂאֵל, not אָנָּשׁ, though he was right in point of sense. The statement indicates that the etymology has been derived from an account in which, instead of the Heb. שָׂאֵל, אָנָּשׁ was used. In Babylonian, however, while the abstract *tenisetu* is the common word for 'mankind,' the simple *enisu* is found only in a lexical tablet.

### CHAPTER III.

1. It will be noticed that the serpent is here included among the beasts of the field instead of in a class apart among the reptiles, as in ch. i. 24, 25, and the Babylonian Epic of the Creation. The article prefixed to the word 'serpent' seems to show that it was a serpent already well known to the readers of the narrative. More than one mythological serpent is referred to in the cuneiform literature of Babylonia; thus we have 'the serpent of darkness,' 'the evil serpent,' 'the serpent with seven heads.' Before the struggle with Merodach, Tiamat is said to have created 'huge serpents with pointed teeth, unsparing in attack; with poison instead of blood she filled their bodies . . . She created an asp, a raging serpent.' In opposition to the Babylonian belief that the serpents were a creation of Tiamat, the biblical writer expressly asserts that 'the serpent' had been 'made' by the Lord God. The writer's point of view is thus precisely the same as in ch. i., and the same verb 'made' is employed.

3. One of the Babylonian legends to account for the introduction of death into the world is contained in the story of Adapa, or Adama, as the name may also be read. The beginning of the story was brought to the British Museum several years ago from the ruins of the library of Nineveh, the middle part of it was found at Tel el-Amarna, in Upper Egypt, where it had been studied by Egyptians and Canaanites eight hundred years before the Assyrian copy had been made for the library of Nineveh. Adapa, the son of the water-god Ea, was the first man, and, when fishing one day in the sea, accidentally broke the wings of the

south wind, who thereupon complained of the act to Anu, the sky-god. In accordance with the instructions of Ea, Adapa ascended to heaven, wearing robes of mourning for the two gods Tammuz and Gis-Zida, who had vanished from the earth, and who now acted as the two guardians of the gate of heaven. Their favour was gained by Adapa's procedure, and they interceded for him before Anu. Anu then offered him 'the bread of life' and 'the water of life,' which, however, in accordance with Ea's advice, he refused, accepting only a garment, which he put on, and oil, with which he anointed himself. Thereupon Anu 'lamented over him: O Adapa, why hast thou not eaten or drunken? (eternal) life cannot now be thine.' Between this story and the biblical narrative there is little in common: the effect of eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was moral and intellectual knowledge, not eternal life, and it was to prevent Adam and Eve from subsequently eating of the tree of life that they were expelled from Paradise.

7. The fig-tree refers us to Palestine, and indicates that if a Babylonian poem underlies the biblical narrative, it must have first been domesticated in the West.

8. The anthropomorphism of this verse makes it probable that it has been taken with little verbal alteration from a Babylonian original, the insertion of the word Yahveh alone giving it a Hebraic character. The gods of Babylonia, it must be remembered, were represented as men.

19. The correspondents of the Egyptian Pharaoh in the Tel el-Amarna letters call themselves 'the dust beneath' his 'feet.'

22. 'Us,' as in i. 26, xi. 7, refers us to a polytheistic document which lay before the Hebrew writer.

24. The cherubim, as described by Ezekiel (i.), correspond with the figures of the winged genii who were supposed to protect a Babylonian or Assyrian house, and were accordingly placed at its entrance like the cherubim at the gate of Paradise. On Babylonian seals and in Assyrian sculptures we often find two cherubim, one on either side of the tree of life, which they thus protect. Sometimes they are kneeling, sometimes standing and reaching out their hands towards its fruit. At times they are eagle-headed, at other times they have the heads of men. Lenormant found the name of *kirubi*, in place of the usual *sedi*, or 'protecting

genii,' on an Assyrian seal, and the Assyrian words *kardbu* and *kuribbu* signify 'great' or 'powerful.' *Kurubu* was also the name of a bird.

The word *lahaṭ* is found only here in the sense of 'flame' or 'flaming.' In Ex. vii. 11, it means 'enchantment,' and Lenormant has suggested that it should be identified with the Assyrian *litti*, 'a sword.' In an early Sumerian hymn to Anu, the God is made to say: 'I bear the sun of fifty faces, the weapon of my omnipotence. . . . I bear my rounded scimitar, the weapon which like a vampire devours the dead. . . . I bear the sword (*litti*) of battle, the net of the rebel land. . . . I bear the

arc which draws nigh to man, the bow of the deluge. . . . I bear the bow and the quiver, which overpower the house of the rebel land: I bear the deluge of battle, the weapon of fifty heads, which, like the huge serpent of seven heads, has a yoke on its seven heads, which, like the terrible serpent of the sea, [attacks] the foe in the face, the over-thower of mighty battle, strong over heaven and earth, the weapon of seven heads, whose light shines forth like day, which binds the mountain, the establisher of heaven and earth, which makes powerless the evil one, the weapon which [fills] the world with the terror of its brilliance.'

## The Knocking Saviour.

REV. III. 20.

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THE verse noted at the head of this paper is one of the great texts of the Book of the Revelation. It is redolent of the wondrously blended grace and majesty so characteristic of the sayings of the Lord Jesus. How many impressive sermons have been preached from this text! Its essential meaning has certainly not escaped the apprehension of the Christian Church. But I venture to think that the form of the figurative representation which here meets us has been almost universally misconceived, and that it is possible to shed new and interesting light on this important passage. Many years ago I was engaged in meditating on these words of Christ with the view of preparing an address for a week evening service. I had read Gossner's famous German tract, *Der anklopfende Heiland* ('The Knocking Saviour'), and viewed, not without emotion, a picture on its outside page of the Redeemer knocking at the heart of the sinner. I felt sure that it would be an easy task for me to expound the place satisfactorily, and to draw from it some edifying truths suitable for the occasion. But to my sore disappointment the more I studied the passage the more I was perplexed. The view of it to which I had been accustomed seemed to involve an intolerable mixture of metaphors. I was about to choose another text, when it occurred to me that in the one I was pondering with such ill success the

Lord Jesus makes no mention of the *heart* of man. Of course I remembered that He is to be received into the heart, and that He dwells there by faith. But the first question to be decided was, How is the figure which He here employs to be understood? What is its simple, original meaning? I asked myself, When we read of a person knocking at a door, why should we not think of the door of a house? How will it suit to think here of the door of a house? I perceived that it suited admirably, and that it was the only explanation that would with any congruity admit of the coming in and supping which Christ speaks of doing after that the door at which He was knocking should be opened. The whole significance of the picture in its beautiful Oriental style was at once apparent. We have the key to the interpretation in our Lord's own conduct. When He was on earth He entered into the houses of the publicans, and sat at meat with them there. Hence He was called their *friend*. We know, too, that it was held to be unlawful for a Jew to eat with an uncircumcised Gentile, or to keep company with him. And in the Christian Church it was forbidden to keep company or to eat with a brother who was leading a scandalous life (1 Cor. v. 11). The Apostle John counsels the elect lady and her children not to receive a false teacher into their house (2 John 10). To come into a man's