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Archaeological Commentary on Genesis.

BY THE REV. A. H. SAYCE, LL.D., PROFESSOR OF ASSYRIOLOGY, OXFORD.

XIV. 1. It has long been recognised by Assyriologists that Arioch of Ellasar must be Eri-Aku, king of Larša, the son of Kudur-Mabug, the son of Simti-silkhak, who has left us contemporaneous inscriptions. Kudur-Mabug was an Elamite, the prince of Yavutbal, on the borders of Elam and Babylonia, and Babylonia was at the time under Elamite suzerainty. Eri-Aku is Sumerian, and signifies 'the servant of the moon-god'; the Semitic equivalent is Rim-Sin, as Eri-Aku was called by his Semitic contemporaries.

Besides his own inscriptions, numerous contracts exist dated in his reign. In one of his inscriptions, Eri-Aku calls himself 'the shepherd of the lands of Nipur, the executor of the oracle of the holy tree of Eridu, the shepherd of Ur, king of Larša, king of Sumer and Akkad,' the last title asserting his claim to supremacy in Babylonia. He calls his father 'the father of the land of the Amorites,' which implies that he held an official position in Syria and Canaan, and his name Kudur-Mabug, 'the servant of Mabug,' may also

indicate a connexion with the West, since Mabug was not an Elamite deity, while it was the native name of Membij, near Carchemish. Eri-Aku had a rival in Khammurabi, the king of Babylon, who eventually succeeded in overthrowing Eri-Aku and his Elamite allies, and uniting Babylonia under one ruler. Khammurabi was the sixth king of the first dynasty of Babylon, which had been founded by Sumu-abi, and he reigned fifty-five years.

Mr. Pinches has recently discovered four broken tablets which seem to relate to an attack upon Babylon by Kudur-Lagamar in the time of Khammu[rabi], and reference is made to Eri-Aku (written Eri-Âku), Kudur-Lagamar and Tudkhula the son of Gazza[ni]. Tudkhula is an exact transcription of Tid'al according to the pronunciation current in the Khammurabi and Tel el-Amarna periods which represented the Canaanite 'ayin by *kh*, and it has long been known that Laomer (Septuagint, Λογομορ) represents the Elamite deity Lagamar and Lagameri (also written Lagamal). The tablets themselves are of late date, but they are copied from older originals, and prove that the names recorded in Gen. xiv. are historical. See Pinches, *Certain Inscriptions and Records relating to Babylonia and Elam*, a paper read before the Victoria Institute, 20th January, 1896.

There is, however, a difficulty. There was only one other kingdom in Babylonia besides Larša, —that of Babylon; and according to the Old Testament, Babylon was the leading city of Shinar. The king of Shinar, therefore, must be the king of Babylon. Moreover, one of the cuneiform tablets above mentioned makes Khammu[rabi] the king of Babylon, the contemporary of Eri-Aku, Tudkhula and Kudur-Lagamar. It follows that Khammurabi must be the Amraphel of Genesis.

But the difference in the forms of the names is hard to explain. *Khammu* was also written *ammi* (as in *Ammi-zaduga*), which would be transcribed **AM** in Hebrew; but the proposal made by some Assyriologists to see in the latter part of 'Amraphel' the word *rapaltu* for *rapastu*, is inadmissible. In a cuneiform tablet, in which the names of the Sumerian, Kassite, and South Arabian kings of Chaldæa are interpreted in Semitic Babylonian, Khammu-rabi is translated *Kimtu rapastu*, 'widespread family.' But the feminine form (*rapastu* or *rapaltu*) is used only because *Kimtu* is feminine; with the masculine *khammu* or *ammi* it would be *rapasu*. It is possible that the reading

Amraphel is derived from the Babylonian *pal*, 'son'; the original Babylonian text being *Ammirabi pal sar Babilî*, 'Khammurabi, the son of the king of Babylon,' which would have easily passed into the present Hebrew text.¹

But, however the termination of the name Amraphel may be explained, it is now clear that the name must be the same as that of Khammurabi. Ellasar has been corrupted from Larša perhaps through a confusion with *al sarri*, 'the city of the king.' Goyim, the kingdom of Tid'al, may also be a corrupt reading, and Sir H. Rawlinson has suggested that we ought to read Gutium. Gutium was the Semitic form of the Sumerian Guti or Kurdistan, which embraced all the country east of the Tigris and north of Elam, and thus included the future kingdom of Assyria. Guti or Gutu (also Qutu) is interpreted in the cuneiform tablets by the Assyrian *quradu*, 'a warrior,' whence the name of the Kurds to-day. An inscription of a king of Gutium has been discovered, which is a good deal earlier in date than the age of Khammurabi; and in the astrological tablets of the same period, mention is made of 'the king of Guti.' In one of the inscriptions discovered by Mr. Pinches, however, we read: 'Who is Kudur-Lagamar the doer of evil? He has assembled the Umman Manda, and has washed the people of Bel and [marched] at their side.' The Umman Manda were the nomad hordes of Kurdistan, and the Babylonian expression is the exact equivalent of the Hebrew Goyim. Tudkhula or Tid'al may therefore have been the king of the Umman Manda, who adjoined the northern frontier of Elam, and were the subject-allies of Kudur-Lagamar.

The fact that some of the names in the present text of Genesis are corrupt, indicates that it must be considerably older than the age of the Septuagint. On the whole, however, the newly-discovered tablet shows that the names have been preserved with remarkable accuracy, and that in the case of Tid'al the Masoretes are more correct than the Septuagint (which has Thorgal). As the 's' of the Babylonian original is represented by the Hebrew **SH**, we are taken back to a time when it had not as yet become **SH** in Hebrew transcrip-

¹ Dr. Lindl has lately suggested that it represents a Babylonian *Ammirabi ilu*, 'Khammurabi the god.' Several of the kings of the age of Khammurabi were deified, and are styled 'gods' in contemporaneous inscriptions.

tion. This is earlier than the Assyrian epoch and the royal period of Judah, when Babylonian π is Hebrew ψ .

2. Monumental discovery has shown that Babylonian authority was recognised in Canaan long before the age of Abraham. Sargon of Akkad (B.C. 3800) had incorporated 'all the countries' of the West into his empire, and erected images of himself on the coast of the Mediterranean, while his son Naram-Sin, secure of Palestine in his rear, marched southward into Magan, the Sinaitic Peninsula, and made its king a prisoner. Inê-Sin, who was king of Ur shortly before the rise of Khammurabi's dynasty, conquered Zemar in Phœnicia, and his daughter received the fief of Markhasi or Mer'ash in Northern Syria. Kudur-Mabug was 'father of the land of the Amorites,' and Khammurabi himself claimed to be its ruler. One of his successors, Ammi-satana, the son of Abishua, calls himself king of Babylon, Kish, Sumer and Akkad, and 'the country of the Amorites'; and the Tel el-Amarna tablets prove that the influence of the Babylonian Government and culture must have been exerted over Canaan for several centuries. When they were written, the Babylonians were still intriguing in Palestine.

Shinab is the same name as Sanibu, borne by a king of Ammon in the time of Tiglath-Pileser III. If Shemeber is right, it will be the Assyrian Sumu-abir, 'the god Shem is strong'; but it may be a corrupt reading for Sumu-abi, the name of the founder of the dynasty to which Khammurabi belonged. For Bela, see note on x. 19. Zoar is found in the geographical cartouches of Kom Ombos in Upper Egypt (age of Ptolemy Lathyrus), where it is written in hieroglyphs, Zagher.

3. 'All these formed a confederacy (*khâberu*, like the Khabiri of the Tel el-Amarna tablets, see note on xiii. 18) in the vale of Siddim.' As Zoar remained to late times, the statement that the vale of Siddim was the Salt Sea must be intended to mean that it included the Dead Sea as well as the fertile valley immediately to the north of it.

5. Ashteroth-Karnaim (or rather Ashtoreth-Karnaim, 'Ashtoreth of the Two Horns') was a witness to Babylonian influence in the West. Ashtoreth was the Babylonian Istar, the goddess of the evening star, with the Semitic feminine suffix attached. As there was no moon-god in Canaan, Ashtoreth there became identified with

the moon. Ashteroth-Karnaim is the modern Tell 'Ashtere' in Bashan, east of the Sea of Galilee, and is called 'Astartu in the list of the conquests of Thothmes III. in Palestine. It is there followed by Anau-repa, which Mr. Tomkins makes On-Repha, and compares with the classical Raphon or Raphana, now Er-Râfeh. On-Repha would be 'On of the Rephaim.' The Zuzim of Ham are called the Zamzumim of Ammon in Deut. ii. 20. The difference of spelling can be explained if we suppose that Gen. xiv. has been copied from a cuneiform original. In the Babylonian cuneiform system of writing, *m* and *w* (or *u*) are expressed by the same characters, and no distinction is made, in writing, between *aleph*, *hê*, and *'ayin*, so that 'Ammi (for 'Ammon) could be read Ham, and Zamzummin, Zuz(w)im. That the narrative is taken from a Babylonian document is indicated by the fact that it is dated in the reign of the king of 'Shinar,' though his suzerain and leader in the campaign was the king of Elam.

6. Ramses III. states that he conquered the Shasu or Bedouin of 'Seir,' and 'plundered their tents.' For the Horites, see xxxvi. 20.

7. The site of Kadesh-barnea was discovered by Dr. Rowlands, and subsequently explored by Dr. Clay Trumbull, at 'Ain Qadîs, in the Jebel Magrah, about midway between the mountains of Seir and the Mediterranean. The name En-Mishpat, or 'Spring of Judgments,' shows that it was the legislative centre of the desert tribes long before Moses delivered his 'judgments' there.

The Amalekites of the Old Testament are the Bedouin of to-day. We learn from 1 Sam. xv. 7 that they occupied the desert south of Palestine as far west as the Egyptian frontier. The route followed by Chedorlaomer and his allies had already been traversed by Naram-Sin when he marched against the Sinaitic Peninsula.

10. The 'slime-pits' or naphtha-wells can still be traced.

15. Damascus (Tamasqa) was conquered by Thothmes III., and is mentioned in the Tel el-Amarna tablets.

18. The Tel el-Amarna tablets have shown that Jerusalem was already an important fortress and the capital of a considerable territory in the age of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty. Among them are several letters from its king Ebed-tob to the Pharaoh. The name of the city is written Uru-

šalim, and in a lexical tablet the word *uru*, originally borrowed from the Sumerian *eri*, is stated to be equivalent to the Babylonian *ālu*, 'city.' It is one of the words which show that Canaanite (or Hebrew) and Sumerian must once have been in contact. Salim means 'peace,' and is probably the name of the god of peace who was called Sulmanu or Shalman in Assyrian (cp. Isa. ix. 6). Ramses II. and Ramses III. call the city Shalema or Salem, and claim to have captured it. Salem, therefore, was the name by which it was known in Egypt in the Mosaic period.

With the name of Melchizedek we may compare that of Chemosh-zedek on a recently-discovered Moabite seal. Light is thrown on the position of Melchizedek by the letters of Ebed-tob. He declares that he is not like the other Egyptian governors of Canaan, but a tributary ally of the Pharaoh, and that he had received his royal dignity, not from his father or his mother, but from the arm (or perhaps oracle) of the Mighty King. As the Mighty King is distinguished from 'the great king' of Egypt, he must be the deity corresponding to 'the Most High God' of Genesis. In one of his letters Ebed-tob refers to 'the city of the mountain of Jerusalem, whose name is the city of the temple of the god Nin-ip, the city of the (Egyptian) king,' from which we gather that the deity was identified with the Babylonian Nin-ip, a warlike form of the sun-god. Like Melchizedek, accordingly, Ebed-tob was officially 'without father' or 'mother'; and as he had been appointed to his post by the god of Jerusalem, must have been a priest-king.

19. A similar phrase is found in Aramaic *graffiti* of the fifth century B.C. scratched on the rocks of Upper Egypt, where we read: 'Blessed be Augah of Isis!' 'Blessed be Abed-nebo of Khnum,' etc.

20. Compare a statement in one of Ebed-tob's letters: 'While there is a ship on the sea the arm of the Mighty King shall overcome Naharaim and Babylonia.' The *esrā*, or 'tithe,' was paid to the Babylonian temples from the earliest times. Thus a tablet from Abu-Habba gives the amount of the tithe which was paid by Belshazzar for his sister to the temple of the sun-god at Sippara at the moment when Cyrus was marching upon Babylon. The tithe was paid by Abram, not to Melchizedek, but to 'the Most High God.'

23. As Ebed-tob identifies the god of Jerusalem

with the Babylonian Nin-ip, so here Abram identifies Yahveh with the god of Jerusalem.

XV. 2. The text is corrupt and untranslatable as it stands, *mesheq*, 'cupbearer,' owing its existence to *Dam-mesheq*, 'Damascus.' Read: 'The son of my house is Eliezer of Damascus.' It is noteworthy that Abram had routed the Babylonian army in the neighbourhood of Damascus. Eliezer is a characteristically Damascene name, which is, however, Hebraised, *z* taking the place of the Aramaic *d*. Thus the Ben-hadad of the Old Testament is called Hadad-idri, *i.e.* Hadad-ezer, in the Assyrian inscriptions.

9. 'And one said unto him.' Was another deity than Yahveh mentioned in the original document? The division of the animals marked what the Hebrews called 'cutting,' that is, making the covenant, one-half of each animal belonging to one of the parties to it, the other half to the other.

10. Note that the four hundred years denote the period during which the Israelites were to be afflicted in Egypt, not the period of their sojourn there. The four hundred and thirty years of sojourn (Ex. xii. 40) includes the generation of Joseph, a generation being reckoned at thirty years. A similar period of four hundred years is mentioned on a stela of Ramses II., the Pharaoh of the Oppression, discovered by Mariette at Sān, the ancient Zoan. The stela commemorates a visit made to Zoan by the governor of the frontier about B.C. 1300, in the four hundredth year of the Hyksos king, Set-āa-pehti Set-nubti.

16. The 'fourth generation' does not agree with the four hundred years of oppression, or with the number of generations from the death of Abraham (ver. 15) to that of Joshua. It is generally explained in reference to the fact that Moses was the third in descent from Levi; but this does not harmonise with the context or with the genealogies of the daughters of Zelophehad (Num. xxvii. 1), and of Joshua (1 Chron. vii. 23-27). The fourth generation from Abraham would bring us to the sons of Ephraim who were slain by the men of Gath, apparently after the settlement in Egypt (1 Chron. vii. 21).

The 'Amorites' in this verse take the place of the Canaanites in accordance with the old Babylonian usage.

18. Sargon and Esar-haddon describe the *nakhal Muzri*, 'the wādi of Egypt,' the modern Wadi

el-Arish, as the Egyptian frontier. Here it is called a 'river,' like the Euphrates, and not a 'wadi,' as elsewhere in the Old Testament. This, however, must be from a Babylonian point of view, since it was not a river, but a *nakhal*, or waterless wadi.

19. The Kenites, or clan of nomad smiths, from *kain*, 'a worker in metals,' resembled the wandering smiths or tinkers of the Middle Ages, who jealously kept to themselves the secrets of metallurgy. They lived in tents (Judg. iv. 11; 1 Chron. ii. 55; Jer. xxxv. 6, 7), and it was doubtless their removal from the devastated land of Israel that enabled the Philistines to deprive the Israelites of the services of a smith (1 Sam. xiii. 19). Their wandering habits led them to associate with the Amalekites or Bedouin (1 Sam. xv. 6; Num. xxiv. 21). In the time of Ramses II, the ironsmith was already so fully established in Canaan that in the

story of the *Travels of a Mohar* in Palestine, the hero is made to turn aside to one as soon as his chariot is broken.

The Kenizzites were an Edomite tribe (Gen. xxxvi. 11), some of whom settled in Judah. Caleb and Othniel, the first judge, belonged to them (Josh. xv. 17). In the Tel el-Amarna tablets there is a land of Kinza north of Palestine, in the neighbourhood of Kadesh, on the Orontes. The Kadmonites or 'Easterns' are called 'the children of the East' in Judg. vi. 3; 1 Kings v. 30. In the Egyptian story of the political refugee Sinuhit, written in the time of the twelfth dynasty, the hero takes refuge, first in Qedem, in the south-western part of Edom, and then with the prince Ammu-anishi of the Upper Tenu, in what was afterwards the territory of Edom.

(To be continued.)

Sermons for Children on the Golden Texts.

I.

'The opening of Thy words giveth light.'—Ps. cxix. 30 (R.V.).

1. How many of you can repeat this 119th Psalm? How many of you understand it? How many love it? The psalmist who wrote it had great pieces of God's Word by heart, especially the Law of God; he understood it; he loved it. This long psalm is just a song in praise of the beauty of the Law he knew and loved so well.

2. So when he says, in our Golden Text, 'The opening of Thy words giveth light,' he means that when anyone tries to learn and understand any of the Scriptures he learns to know God. The words of God are God's way of making Himself known. And when God is known aright, He is greatly loved. The soul is dark that knows not the love of God.

3. But, as the Golden Text, these words are taken in a still larger, fuller meaning. The lesson tells us how Lydia's heart was opened; how she was rescued from the darkness of sin into the glorious safety of the grace of God. It was the preaching of the gospel that did it.

4. So the gospel gives light. The gospel is the good news that a Saviour has come, a Saviour from

sin. Now sin is darkness. He that does evil abides in darkness and hates the light. When the gospel comes it scatters the darkness of sin, giving us fellowship with Him who is Light. When Jesus was upon the earth, He said, 'I am the Light of the World,' and He bade His followers walk while they had the light. And in the City of God there is no night, for the Lamb of God is its everlasting Light.

II.

'Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house.'—Acts xvi. 31 (R.V.).

1. The Philippian jailer could not do that until he had heard who the Lord Jesus was. So the apostle took him and told him. He told him of the coming of the Son of God into the world; of His miracles, and how he went about doing good; of His death and resurrection. Then he would tell him that He came into the world to be the Saviour of the world; that this was His deliberate and only purpose—'I came . . . to give my life a ransom.' He would tell him that He saved the world by dying for it. And he would let him see that none but the Son of God could do that for the world.