

## On the Question of the Exodus.

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### I.

At last the soil of Egypt, too, begins to supply direct, contemporaneous information on the earliest history of the Israelites, and in particular on the question of their sojourn in Egypt, their Exodus, and their Wilderness Wanderings. What I have in view is the now famous stele of Merenptah, which, according to the competent interpretation of Navillé (in *Recueil de Travaux*, xx. 32 ff.), expressly establishes it as a fact that in the time of Merenptah the Israelites still resided on the eastern border of Egypt, and that for some reason not more specifically stated in the inscription they were hostile to the Egyptians.

This result may be commended to the attention of those investigators who treat the earliest history of the Israelites from a one-sided philologico-literary standpoint. By the discovery of the above-named stele the ground is completely cut from under their most important thesis, the unhistorical character of Israelitish history prior to Joshua. If the sojourn of the Israelites in Eastern Egypt prior to the close of the nineteenth dynasty is monumentally proved, we have no reason to doubt the historicity of Moses and his mission, or of the Wilderness Wanderings. It appears to me that these things must even on other grounds be clear to an unprejudiced investigator who calls to the aid of his demonstration all available material data, using the latter of course according to their intrinsic historical value, which must be ascertained by testing them critically. I will attempt to show that the biblical narratives, when examined even from the standpoint of rationalistic criticism, contain incontrovertible evidence of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt.

Let us first look at the different sources with reference to their origin. The majority of critics are agreed on one very important point, namely, in regarding the narrative of the so-called Jahwist (J) as the oldest component of the Pentateuch. A few followers of Wellhausen, indeed, and to these H. Winckler has also recently attached himself, give the priority to the so-called Elohist (E), but I may be allowed at the outset to remark that

the Jahwist is well informed about Egyptian conditions during the period preceding the Exodus, and hence that the source represented by his book must have originated at a time when the relations between the Israelites and the Egyptians were active, in fact those of neighbours, which of course was never the case subsequent to the Exodus. The relations of Solomon with the last king of the twenty-first dynasty, Pisebhanen II., were never of such a kind as to account for a source exhibiting so intimate an acquaintance with Egyptian conditions. It is of course not to be denied that the Jahwist's narrative is not necessarily contemporary with the events he describes, and I agree with Sayce (*The Higher Criticism*,<sup>8</sup> p. 228 f.) and Driver (*Contemporary Review*, 1894, p. 418), in admitting the supposition that the Jahwist simply committed to writing a tradition which had been already developed. Indications of an internal kind show that this writing of his must have preceded the first of the writing prophets. The commencement of the activity of the latter was perhaps connected with the frequently recurring pestilence noticed in the Assyrian Chronicle of the years 803, 765, and 759, and with the political misfortunes of the house of Jehu, and may be assigned to c. 800 B.C. Now, we can trace in these prophets, especially in Amos, the use of the already existent Jahwistic tradition, and we may conclude, accordingly, that the latter was reduced to writing about the middle of the ninth century, in the times of an Ahab with his friendly policy to foreign cults. In so far as a conclusion is permitted by the Jahwistic elements discoverable in the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua, we may assume that the author of the tradition in question had an accurate acquaintance with the past of his people; and his descriptions, true to nature, and free from recourse to the marvellous, suggest that he belonged to the higher grades of Jewish society. Under such circumstances, definite and uninterrupted knowledge of Palestinian conditions from the age of the Patriarchs downwards is what we should have expected

of him, but when we examine closely the contents of his tradition, quite the opposite is found to be the case. The fact is that the geographical and ethnographical colouring of Palestine in pre-Mosaic times has a fairly definite character only in such passages as deal with personal relations of particular Patriarchs, elsewhere we find a very confused notion of the geographical relations of the land as a whole. Worse still is it with his knowledge of the former conditions in the district east of Jordan. The only places specifically named in the patriarchal history are such as were famed as places of worship, and which at a later period served the Israelites as spots for sacrifice, e.g. Bethel, Shechem, Beersheba, Mahanaim, the Vale of Mamre, the Cave of Machpelah, etc. For the pre-Israelite population of Canaan the Jahwist employs only general designations such as Canaanites, Perizzites, or Hivites, nay, he does not hesitate, where correct information is wanting to him, to claim even the Philistines for the pre-Israelite period, although these cannot be proved to have occupied their later settlements in the low-lying country on the coast until after 1200 B.C., i.e. subsequent to the reign of Ramses III.

The Jahwist's acquaintance with the *history* of the pre-Mosaic period is equally meagre. There is no distinct mention of the Egyptian power which had held sway in Palestine for more than two centuries (from Thothmes I. till far down into the times of the twentieth dynasty), the land of Canaan is merely named constantly in company with Egypt, but without an understanding of the original connexion between them. The narratives the Jahwist hands down about the Patriarchs never get beyond the frame of family histories, which lack any definite historical background; their scene is, indeed, the land of Canaan, but they have lost their connexion with the history of the country and the people. What we owe then to the Jahwist is a tradition which grew up on foreign soil, and consequently concerned itself only with events upon which the religious and national life of the Israelites was built up. Not even the name *Canaanites*, which the Jahwist gives to the whole pre-Israelite population of Palestine, can be regarded as the original designation of all the inhabitants of the land, for in the contemporary records the name Canaan [Ki-na-aḥ-na, <sup>m</sup>Ki-na-na-at, <sup>m</sup>Ki-na-aḥ-ḥi, K-i-n-n'-nw] is sometimes given to that part of the Maritime Plain which was afterwards occupied by the

Philistines, at other times to the strip of coast at Acre, nay, it is several times applied in a collective sense to the low country *par excellence*, as opposed to the neighbouring hilly regions of Judah and Ephraim. In the Amarna tablets (lviii. London collection, xiv. Winckler), *šarrāni ša <sup>m</sup>Ki-na-aḥ-na*, 'the kings of the land of Canaan,' are opposed to the *Amilūti* of the land, and the dwellers by the coast in the neighbourhood of Acre bear (London ii., Winckler 7) the significant appellation *Ku-na-ḥa-ai-u* (= כנעניים), probably the earliest occurrence of this name, which of course at that time simply stood for an insignificant clan on the coast. Hence I regard the name 'Canaanites' as a purely conventional one, which originated presumably in Babylon, belonged in the first instance to the sea-coast population at Acre—the real state of the case is still dimly reflected in the geographical note in Gn 12<sup>6</sup> which was already unintelligible to the Jahwist—and did not become the general designation of the whole population of Palestine until the closing period of the eighteenth dynasty, as is suggested by the Egyptian gentilic name *Ka(or Ki)-n'-n-n<sup>3</sup>-w* (cf. W. Max Müller, *Asien u. Europa*, 207). This designation, of foreign origin, and whose earliest demonstrable occurrence is in cuneiform and hieroglyphic records, has been adopted by the Jahwist in his narrative, notwithstanding that he has already in the above-cited Genesis passage taken account, although unconsciously, of the real state of affairs. The original general name for the population of Palestine and Middle Syria was radically different. In the Amarna tablets, in Egyptian sources, as well as in the second Israelitish narrator, the so-called Elohist (E), there is agreement in giving to the whole aboriginal population of Palestine and Middle Syria, from Kadesh on the Orontes to the Dead Sea, the name *Amūri*, 'Amorites' (according to Gesenius = 'dwellers in the hills'), in the Amarna letters *A-mu-ri* or *A-mur-ri*. As inhabitants of the inland mountain region, the Amorites could be distinguished from the Canaanites, who were settled only on the coast, and as they had possession of considerably the larger part of the land, this led suitably enough to the oldest Babylonian designation of Syria as *<sup>m</sup>Martu*, 'the land of the Amorites.' The oldest central point of the Amorites is to be sought in *Aram Dammeseḥ*, which is called in the cuneiform inscriptions, *<sup>ai</sup>Imiri, māt ša Imiri*, 'the city *Imiri*,

'the land which is of the *Imiri*' (*i.e.* the Amorites). The ancient Babylonians thus looked upon the land of the Amorites as the 'West land' *par excellence*, and in what is demonstrably the oldest passage in Genesis, namely, chap. 14, we find in vv. 7-18, which should undoubtedly be connected with the official terminology in the archives of Canaan, the Amorites as inhabiting the whole of Palestine. Likewise, in the mural paintings at Medinet Abu, of the time of Ramses III., the captive Palestinian princes are designated 'princes of the Amori,' a circumstance of extreme ethnological importance, as indicating that even as late as the declining years of the twelfth century B.C. the whole population of South and Central Syria still bore the name *Amori*.

It is clear then that the Jahwistic narrator, when he gives to the population of Palestine prior to Joshua the name 'Canaanites,' is following a foreign usage, the usage, namely, of the people that lived nearest to the low-lying strip of coast of Palestine and the population of the same. These neighbours can have been none other than the then rulers of the Palestinian low land on the coast, *i.e.* the Egyptians, and specially those Egyptians who were the immediate neighbours of Canaan, namely, the inhabitants of the Eastern Delta districts, who from the time of the eighth dynasty were largely of Asiatic-Semitic origin. It is to the Egyptians then that the Jahwist owes a peculiarity which shows itself in the use of 'Canaanites' for the whole population of Palestine before the time of Joshua, and, since the story of the Patriarchs is inseparably connected with this designation, we may legitimately conclude from the latter circumstance that that story was brought from Egypt to Palestine by a narrator who was acquainted with the conditions in Egypt, but not with those in Palestine. It is characteristic of the Jahwistic narrator that he has no correct notion of the geographical details of the country, for, whenever he happens to speak of the Maritime Plain, he employs the designation, 'land of the Philistines,' which in the pre-Mosaic period is of course an anachronism. In the mouth of the Jahwist, 'Canaanites' is, consequently, a term whose connotation is of a purely conventional kind, resting no doubt on good old recollections, but without any proper knowledge of its connexion with the historical situation.

Still more clearly is the Egyptian origin of the

Jahwistic tradition indicated by the numerous comparisons it institutes with Egypt, and above all by its allusions to Egyptian conditions. We may note first of all the valuable ethnographical data of Gn 10<sup>13f</sup>: 'And Mizraim begat the Ludim, the Anamim, the Lehabim, the Naphtuhim, the Pathrusim, the Casluhim (whence went forth the Philistines), and the Caphtorim.' Here we have several geographical names, or perhaps simply concepts, which occur nowhere else, and for the most part still await a passable explanation. From the side of Egyptology it has merely been recognized that the Pathrusim owe their origin to the hieroglyphic designation of Upper Egypt as *p<sup>3</sup>-t<sup>3</sup>-r<sup>3</sup>'is*; Naphtuhim, again, may either have arisen as a corruption from פפתוהייע, based upon the hieroglyphic name of Lower Egypt, *p<sup>3</sup>-t<sup>3</sup>-m<sup>3</sup>ht*, or it may, like the Coptic *na-fthach*, be the name for the region about Memphis. For Anamim no explanation has yet been found, and as little for Casluhim. Regarding the Caphtorim, it was known merely that they were immigrants from a country or an island, כפתור, who had left Egypt and taken possession of the S.W. strip of Palestinian coast under the name of *Philistines*. These data, likewise, which are unknown to other sources, prove that the Jahwistic narrator has handed down a tradition closely bound up with Egyptian notions and information, a conclusion which is still further strengthened by the circumstance that during the winter of 1894 Sayce and de Morgan discovered at Kôm Ombo, in the neighbourhood of Assuan, a small Egyptian temple choked up with sand, in which was found a hieroglyphic list, based apparently upon an ancient authority, of lands and peoples in the times of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties. Now, in this list likewise the names *Ka(p)tar* and *Kaslohet* occur; the first is preceded by a strange conglomeration of names—Parsa, S(u)ša (Susa), Balbal, Punt, Upper Rṯnu, and Chita; the latter by the names Menti and Lower Rṯnu, which are followed by Zaghar or Zo'ar (Sayce in the *Academy*, 1894, i. 314). From this one sees that the names Caphtor and Casluhim are derived from Egyptian sources, but, as they occur in the Jahwistic tradition, the evidence is strengthened that this tradition stands in close connexion with Egypt, nay, that it is interpenetrated with Egyptian notions, ideas, and even names.

Keeping in view this standpoint we are able to

explain certain phenomena which appear to me to confirm the theory of the Egyptian origin of the Jahwistic tradition. For instance, in Gn 13<sup>10</sup> the tract of land by the Jordan is declared to be equal for fertility to the garden of Jahweh, like the land of Egypt. Again, the S. Palestinian Shur lies, according to Gn 25<sup>18</sup>, eastward from Egypt; according to 43<sup>32</sup> the Egyptians may not eat with the Hebrews, because the Egyptians consider themselves defiled thereby; according to 46<sup>34</sup> the Israelites, as shepherds who are an abomination to the Egyptians, have the land of Goshen assigned them to dwell in. With the geographical vagueness of the references to Palestine contrasts favourably the certainty in the localizing of the neighbouring districts of Goshen and the Eastern Delta, nay, even of more distant Arabian maritime districts, with which the Egyptians of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties maintained active relations. Hagar in her flight came upon 'the fountain in the wilderness, the fountain on the way to Shur; . . . wherefore that well was called Lahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered' (Gn 16<sup>7, 14</sup>).

Finally, we must emphasize also the surprising acquaintance with the conditions in Egypt, which one cannot help recognizing as a marked feature of the Jahwistic tradition. There has been much discussion of the notice in Gn 47<sup>20f.</sup>, according to which Joseph was regarded as the author of the law which appropriated the whole of the soil for

the king. Modern studies in Egyptology have actually shown that theoretically the king was viewed as owner of the whole of the soil of Egypt (cf. Erman, *Aegypten und aegyptisches Leben im Alterthum*, i. 112). The usufructuary of the land was, according to Egyptian conceptions, simply a tenant by the grace of the king, and was hence bound to pay to the latter a considerable portion of the produce. This impost might be heightened according to circumstances, until it might reach such an amount as to make the lot of the ancient Egyptian peasant akin to that of the modern fellah (cf. Erman, *l.c.* i. 179, ii. 590 f.). The priests alone were exempt from such dues: 'Only the land of the priests,' thus it is that the Jahwistic narrator describes Joseph's agrarian measures, 'bought he not, for the priests had a portion which the Pharaoh gave them, therefore they sold not their land' (Gn 47<sup>22</sup>). The situation of the priests which is thus depicted by the Jahwist, proves, then, to be in full harmony with the condition and privileges of the priesthood as hieroglyphic sources show these to have existed during the glorious eighteenth dynasty, and this supplies the proof that we owe the Jahwistic tradition to a race which knew intimately, and from personal experience, the condition of things in Egypt. Consequently, in the discussion of the questions connected with the Exodus, the Jahwist must be considered a witness of the first importance.

(To be continued.)

## The Great Text Commentary.

### THE GREAT TEXTS OF GALATIANS.

#### GALATIANS iv. 4, 5.

'When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them which were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons' (R.V.).

#### EXPOSITION.

'When the fulness of the time came.'—The ideas involved in this expression may be gathered from the context. It was 'the fulness of time.' *First*, in reference to the *Giver*. The moment had arrived which God had ordained from the beginning and foretold by His prophets for Messiah's coming. This is implied in the comparison *the promise of the Father*. *Secondly*, in reference to the *recipient*. The Gospel was withheld until the world had

arrived at mature age: law had worked out its educational purpose, and now was superseded. This educational work had been twofold: (1) *Negative*. It was the purpose of all law, but especially of the Mosaic law, to deepen the conviction of sin, and thus to show the inability of all existing systems to bring men near to God. This idea, which is so prominent in the Epistle to the Romans, appears in the context here (vv. 18, 21). (2) *Positive*. The comparison of the child implies more than a negative effect. A moral and spiritual expansion, which rendered the world more capable of apprehending the gospel than it would have been at an earlier age, must be assumed corresponding to the growth of the individual; since otherwise the metaphor would be robbed of more than half its meaning.—LIGHTFOOT.

'God sent forth His Son.'—That is, from Himself; from that station which is described in Jn 1<sup>1</sup>: 'The Word