

can ever shake off the urgency of the great commission: 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' Whoever may challenge the necessity of these orders, no disciple of Jesus can possibly do so. We must ever apply to ourselves the words which Mary whispered to the servants at the marriage of Cana in Galilee: 'Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it!' Besides, no one who thinks of the immeasurable difference between life in a Christian land and life in a heathen land, can profess that it matters little whether in the meantime the heathen receive the gospel or not. A true-hearted doctor will run all kinds of risks, and spend himself by day and by night, that he may deliver his fellows from bodily suffering. Are not the moral and social and

spiritual sufferings of the heathen world sufficiently dreadful to inspire Christ's people with the desire to bring deliverance without delay? And, further, we must remember this, that Future Probation does not mean certain salvation; it only means the full offer of Christ. Now we all know how greatly the disposition to receive Christ depends upon the moral and spiritual condition of the heart to which Christ comes. And men who have lived all their lives in heathenism go into the unseen world with their sins still clinging about their necks, blinding their eyes, warping their judgments, hardening their hearts and making it, to say the least, no easy thing that they should become as little children, and so enter into the kingdom of heaven.

On the Question of the Exodus.

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II.

ACCORDING to the Jahwistic tradition, the cradle of the Israelitish people was the land of Ur Kasdim, which is generally identified with the South Mesopotamian Ur. This was the seat of an important state and city, and in virtue of its commanding situation upon the right bank of the Euphrates (cf. on this point Heuzey, *Les origines orientales de l'art*, i. 110 ff.), it ruled over extensive districts on the lower course of that river and on the west coast of the Persian Gulf. Hommel and Winckler have put forward the view that the primitive kingdom of Ur is the same as the kingdom which appears in the cuneiform inscriptions as the Sumerian *Ingi-Urdu*, the Semitic *Sumir and Akkad*. The founder of this empire, Ur-gur, built also the capital, which was called Ur, and whose name took the place, in the mouth of the neighbouring nomads, of the official name of the kingdom, so that the latter also was spoken of simply as Ur. Now the progenitor of the Israelites in the land of Ur is called by the Jahwist Terah, and his son Abram is said to have left Ur and betaken himself, with his clan and that of his nephew Lot, towards the west to the land promised him by God (Gn 11²⁸⁻³⁰ 12¹⁻⁴). Abram

came as far as the spot where Shechem afterwards flourished, but where at that time the inhabitants of the land were accustomed to seek oracles from the deity under the shade of a terebinth tree (Gn 12⁶). Abram thus took what was the usual, and for larger expeditions the only possible way, which led from the Persian Gulf up the stream of the Euphrates through the Central Syrian valley (*Behaa*) to Palestine and Egypt. He would thus touch the soil of Palestine for the first time in the domain of the *Kunahaiu*-Canaanites who dwelt on the coast. It is only the Elohist (E) who mentions a very important intermediate station on this long journey, namely, the North Mesopotamian Haran (Gn 11^{31f.}), which from very early times, as the seat of an oracle of the god Sin, stood in close relations with Ur, the principal place of worship of the same deity.

There are three questions which await an answer. *Who* was Abram, or, as he is called in Palestine, Abraham? *Where* did he fix his dwelling-place in Palestine? *When* did he and his clan migrate to Palestine?

Let us commence by seeking to answer the first of these questions. It is a natural conclusion

that we are to see in Abraham the chief of a shepherd clan, who along with the members of his clan, his slaves, and his herds, went in search of new pasture-grounds; cf. Gn 13^{1, 7ff.} 18 14^{14f.}, where it is to be noted that, while Gn 13 belongs for the most part to the Jahwist, chap. 14 may be traced back to a remnant of ancient Canaanite literature, which stands quite isolated in our present Genesis. It is gratifying that the recognition of this, in spite of repeated objections from the rationalistic side (cf., among others, Peiser, *Mittheil. der vorderas. Gesellschaft*, 1897, 308 ff.), is making its way. It is Hommel (*Anc. Heb. Trad.* pp. 147 ff.) above all whom we have to thank for having proved the genuineness of this extremely important annalistic fragment from ancient Canaan. Now this trustworthy narrative puts us in the position of being able to fix the chronology of Abraham's time. Abraham was a contemporary of the kings Amraphel of Shinar and Chedorlaomer of Elam, in whom, according to the latest cuneiform discoveries, we have to recognize the founder of the Babylonian empire, Hammurabi, and the Elamite suzerain of Babylon, Kudurlugal, respectively. It may be, indeed, that Scheil's reading of the latter name (in *Const.* 1108) is due to a mistake (see Knudtzon's review in *Beiträge zur Assyriol.* iv. 89), but the name Kudurlugal still appears unquestionably in the poems of the Spartoli Collection (see Hommel, *Anc. Heb. Trad.* p. 183). Now the long reign of Hammurabi ended, according to my calculations, in the year 2259 B.C., and its middle point would be about 2280. This last date may thus be fixed upon as the approximate one for the time of Abraham.

Next it must be our task to trace the chain of historical events which led Abraham's steps towards the distant west. The name *Abi-rāmu* occurs in No. 111 of the ancient Babylonian letters of the Berlin Museum (published by Meissner in *Beiträge zur Assyriol.* ii.). A man named ša Martu, living in the reign of Apil-Sin, the grandfather of Hammurabi, calls himself the son of Abi-rāmu (see Hommel in *PSBA*, May 1894). The name was, accordingly, then current in Mesopotamia, and its bearer's son betrays already by his own name, ša Martu, certain relations to the Syrian 'Westland,' a circumstance which can excite no surprise when one considers that the Elamite conquests continued for long, and amongst others a king of Elam, Kudurmabuk, has

left us inscriptions in which he takes to himself the title of ruler of Syria (*adda mMartu*). Further, the demonstrably Arabo-Canaanite origin of Hammurabi and his predecessors in the first Babylonian dynasty must be taken into account here. South Arabia is to be regarded as especially the cradle of the Canaanite-Arab horde of peoples which in the second half of the third millennium B.C. overspread Syria and South Mesopotamia. But the same S. Arabia exhibits in its inscriptions a monotheistic cultus, whose traces Hommel (*l.c.* p. 84 ff.) has followed up with zeal and success. The name of Abraham is, consequently, proved to exist in the cuneiform inscriptions, his residence in Ur during the campaigns of Chedorlaomer and at the time of the beginnings of Hammurabi's activity in Babylon is in harmony with the latest cuneiform discoveries, and his monotheism is easily explicable on the ground of his S. Arabian descent. It is possible, however, that the sheikh, accustomed to a herdsman's life, could not accommodate himself to the conditions in S. Mesopotamia, and it may be presumed that the too great proximity of the Elamite oppressor was felt to be an inconvenience, so that he went in search of more suitable pasture-lands among his tribal connexions, the inhabitants of the West. Certain it is that Abraham led the clan of Terah out of Mesopotamia to S. Syria, probably by way of Haran, where, according to a later stratum of tradition, his brother Nahor settled down. This took place at the time of a general rising against the Elamite yoke, which Chedorlaomer sought to check by a great expedition. But, under the leadership of Abraham, the Elamites and their allies were defeated in the neighbourhood of Damascus, and it is a remarkable fact that from this time all mention of the subordinacy of the land of Martu ceases in Babylonian sources, with the exception of the title, which means nothing, *šar Martu*, which is still borne by some of Hammurabi's successors. This circumstance Winckler (in Helmolt's *Weltgeschichte*, iii. 16) has most recently sought to explain by the decay of the 'Canaanite' population, and a new Semitic immigration, namely, that of the Aramæans.

It is really astonishing that we should still hear doubts expressed by reputable scholars regarding the genuineness of Gn 14. What justification is there for such doubts? The reply must be that they are due solely to a prejudiced standpoint.

Since the contents of this chapter contain allusions to primitive Canaanite-Babylonian conditions, and since these are transmitted to us in the great history book of Israel, and since the rationalistic school rejects *in toto* a history of the Israelites prior to Joshua, therefore Gn 14 must have been first inserted in later times, during the Babylonian captivity. One who is otherwise a very estimable scholar, namely, Dr. Felix Peiser, has laboured with all earnestness to prove that a Jewish scribe composed this narrative during the Exile, and supplied to it a double date based upon good cuneiform sources (*Mittheil. der vorderas. Gesellschaft*, 1897, pp. 308 ff.). The man must truly have been a great scholar if he was able to write about things which were already unknown to the cuneiform scribes of the second millennium B.C. It is well worth while to follow the traces of the historical tradition about Hammurabi. We are, indeed, fairly well informed as to his rule and activity, since we have at our disposal contemporary records, proceeding to a large extent from the king himself; but the generations that followed him knew simply that Hammurabi was a great and powerful king, that he was perhaps to be regarded as the constructor of a canal bearing his name, and that he lived, in round numbers, 700 years before a king Burnaburiaš, of the dynasty of the Kassites. Information of that kind a Jewish historian of the Exile might obtain from his Babylonian authorities, but, what constitutes the merit of the biblical narrative, namely, the mention of the Elamite forays extending as far as the borders of Egypt, the name of the Elamite conqueror, and the contemporaneity of the kings who are named, those of Babylon, Larsa, and presumably Kiššati (for which the biblical *Gōyim* may be regarded as the current equivalent at the time)—all this was completely unknown in Babylon then, and the discovery of these highly important details was reserved for our own age of investigation. Apart from any other of its features, and when Gn 14 is examined on purely historical grounds, all doubts as to its genuineness and its antiquity ought to be banished.

We have now to ascertain from the sources accessible to us the conditions of the land in which Abraham found a new home. That he was not viewed by the inhabitants of Palestine as a stranger is evident from his friendly relations with the leading men of the country. There are intro-

duced by name three Amorite chiefs, Mamre, and his brothers Eshcol and Aner, whose friendly offices were placed at the disposal of Abraham in his conflict with Chedorlaomer. From what Sayce and Hommel have told us about the Arabian origin of the Babylonian dynasty, it may be assumed that Abraham was even racially allied to the Amorite chiefs in S. Palestine, seeing that his clan, as well as the then inhabitants of Palestine, are to be regarded as immigrants from Arabia or as the immediate descendants of such. In Gn 14⁷ the Amorites are further spoken of as in Ḥazazon-tamar, on the western shore of the Dead Sea. It is clearly established, then, that in the time of Abraham, in S. Palestine, particularly about Hebron, Amorites formed the main stock of the population. We shall not be wrong, therefore, if we regard the kings in the Jordan Valley, Bera of Sodom, Birsha of Gomorrah, Shinab of Admah, Semeber of Zeboim, and the king of Bela or Zoar, as also Amorites, for they, too, lived in friendly relations with the Amorites of Hebron; and if we assign to the same category Melchizedek, the priest-king of (Uru-) Salim, who in company with the king of Sodom went out in state to meet Abraham as he returned victorious. Abraham thus took up his residence in the midst of the racially allied Amorite population of S. Palestine, and, as an immigrant from the district on the Great River, he may readily have been called by the Canaanites אַבְרָם הָעֵבֶרִי (*Abram ha-'Ibrî*). We know the significance which the Euphrates as a boundary between Mesopotamia and Syria still possessed in the Achæmenid period, giving rise to the designation of Syria as the land 'beyond the River' (Ezr 4²⁰ 6¹⁸). There are also indications which justify the conclusion that, although to a limited extent, there was an affinity between the cultus practised by Abraham, and that of the S. Palestinian Amorites. Foremost among these is the venerable form of Melchizedek, the priest-king of (Uru-) Salim, where El Elyôn was worshipped in a fashion approximating to monotheism.

In Gn 14⁵ the Rephaim are named as neighbours of the Amorites, and the list of tribes subject to the Elamites permits the supposition that the Rephaim dwelt in the hill country of Bashan, whence after a time they penetrated also into the West Jordan land; there is, further, mention in Jos 15⁸ of the Vale of Rephaim to the north of Jerusalem.

Let us now consider the data furnished by the Jahwistic narrator. We note at the very outset that he concerns himself exclusively with the fortunes of Abraham and his clan, without bringing these into any connexion with the history of the land. The aid given by Abraham against the Elamites is unknown to the Jahwist. All that we learn from him regarding the further experiences of Abraham is confined, apart from what is of a purely family character, to two notices, which certainly deserve our attention. Abraham is said to have been the founder of the Jahweh sanctuary at Beersheba (Gn 21³³), and the Aramæans are viewed as racially connected with the Amorites, their tribal father Kemuel being represented as the third son of Abraham's brother Nahor, who according to E remained behind in Haran (Gn 22²²).

If we once more bring together what the Jahwistic narrator has handed down to us about the history of Abraham, and compare his statements with those of the monumental sources as yet ascertained, we may answer the three questions with which we started in some such way as the following:—At the time of the Elamite supremacy (c. 2280 B.C.) over Mesopotamia and Syria the tribe of Terah, which long before had migrated from S. Arabia to the kingdom of Ur, left their pasture-grounds on the right bank of the Eu-

phrates belonging to this kingdom, and under the leadership of their chief Abraham, betook themselves in the first instance to the north, where in the district of Haran they encountered the racially connected Aramæan tribe of Nahor, but pressed on from thence to S. Palestine, where amongst the Amorites, who had affinities with them in descent and religion, they found sufficient pasturage for their flocks, and themselves met with a friendly reception. They helped to free the land from the Elamite yoke, the consequence of which was to bring to an end the political supremacy of S. Mesopotamia in Palestine, which had existed for centuries. Among the Amorites the monotheistic conception was still traceable, and Abraham, who had remained true to the original S. Arabian monotheism, set up at Beersheba a sanctuary for the God Jahweh, who is first met with in S. Arabia. Abraham and his descendants worshipped their God Jahweh according to the traditional simple form, but their neighbours gradually adopted the native polytheism with its animistic tinge, the consequence being that the Terahites began to exhibit a marked distinction from the racially allied Amorites.

Thus far the Jahwistic tradition as to the first representative of the people afterwards known as Israel.

(To be continued.)

The Great Text Commentary.

THE GREAT TEXTS OF GALATIANS.

GALATIANS V. 6, VI. 15.

'For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love.'

'For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature' (R.V.).

EXPOSITION.

'In Christ Jesus.'—This means more than in Christ's religion. We had the phrase in chap. 3²⁸, 'All ye are one man in Christ Jesus.' It occurs frequently in St. Paul's writings; remarkable instances are supplied in Ro 16¹⁷, 'who were in Christ before me'; 16¹¹, 'which are in the Lord'; 1 Co 1³⁰, 'of him (i.e. of God) are ye in Christ Jesus.' It is perhaps best illustrated by our Lord's own Parable of the Vine in Jn 15¹⁻⁴. The spiritual union with Christ therein portrayed is maintained and operative

through the action of the soul habitually cleaving to and depending upon him, and constantly receiving from him responsive gifts of spiritual vitality and power.—HUXTABLE.

'Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision.'—We should not fail to note the perfect fairness of this. Freedom from Judaic observances is in itself no better than the keeping of them. Those who simply boast of their independence of all Judaic conditions meet here with a deserved rebuke. This form of language may have been very customary with St. Paul; for we find it three times, though in each case the sentence has a different conclusion.—HOWSON.

It is interesting to note the different ways in which the sentence is completed—

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but	{	Faith which worketh by love (chap. 5 ⁶). A new creature (chap. 6 ¹⁵). Keeping the commandments of God (1 Co 7 ¹⁹).
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