

a bird imprisoned in a cage. It is protected from certain dangers to which it would be exposed outside, but its wings are injured, its health is lowered, and to all sympathetic observers it is a sad sight. It is well that Christianity should indulge in negative commands, because we human beings are so prone to error; but our life is not complete merely if we avoid the pitfalls pointed out for us. That is after all a flaccid kind of existence.

We seek then for some positive antidote to the critical spirit. The development of the introspective habit and of the avoidance of particular sins is not nearly so effective a way of growing in spiritual stature, as energetic effort in the opposite direction. By this latter method the evils we seek to escape insensibly shrivel up and disappear. The antidote to the critical spirit is the spirit of love. Like everything else, this has in most of us to be cultivated. There are those happy natures, beloved of all of us, who almost from their birth breathe forth a spirit of love, kindness, and sympathy; but most of us are not built that way. For many, the attainment of such a grace may be

the result of lifelong prayer and struggle. We are so obsessed by our own point of view that we find it very hard to understand that of another. One way to break down barriers is to cultivate kindly *action*. If our fault is greed, let us freely give something we shall really miss, to some one else. So, if we are inclined to be critical, we should let ourselves go in commendation, when we can honestly do so. That will release some obstruction within us, and our mental attitude will gradually become more charitable and kindly. After all, what we really want is to be conformed more and more to the spirit of our Master. Let us study His life more and more closely, and pray for His Spirit to help us. We shall at last be free from the judging spirit and full of the spirit of love. 'Love suffereth long and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.'

The Scape-Goat in Babylonian Religion.

BY STEPHEN H. LANGDON, M.A., PH.D., READER IN ASSYRIOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

THE problem as to the existence in Babylonia of the practice of communicating the sins of a people to an animal, which is then driven away into the wilderness, has not been treated thoroughly in any popular or scientific publication.¹ The word *scape-goat*, although based upon an erroneous interpretation of *Azazel* in the Greek and Latin versions of Lv 16,² accurately describes this widely spread act of magical atonement in ancient religions. Since the word came into our language as descriptive of the goat to whom the high priest magically transmitted the sins of the Hebrew people in

¹ Apparently the first to discover this principle in Babylonian texts was Professor John D. Prince, 'Le Bouc Émissaire chez les Babyloniens,' *Journal Asiatique*, 1903, 133-156, a detailed and successful defence of his theory formerly advocated in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. xxi. 1-22 (1900).

² See Benzinger and Cheyne, in *Encyclopedia Biblica*, 395; Kennedy, in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, 77.

Lv 16, the idea which the term naturally conveys to us is that of a live goat driven away into the wilderness with the sins of a whole race. As has been often pointed out, a similar idea lies in the ceremony of Lv 14, where a dove is released to carry away the contagion of leprosy. In the latter case the taint of disease and uncleanness, primarily evidence of sin in any aspect, is that of an individual, and the transmission of the uncleanness is through a second dove whose blood had been sprinkled upon the patient and upon the scape-goat bird.

It is true that no certain traces of the scape-goat condemned to bear the sins of a people can be detected in the many ceremonies of purification and atonement extant in Babylonian religion. We have to do here invariably with the atonement of individuals, and so far as our sources give us clear evidence, only with a scape-goat which is slain, and

whose members, having been placed upon the corresponding members of the sinner, are said to take upon themselves the evil spirit abiding in the man. The curse of the consecrated priest, the mystic acts, and the holy words in the name of the god of Eridu cast out the demons, who escape into the dismembered goat, which is then thrown away in a desolate place. If we may employ the word *scape-goat* in this sense, then this form of atonement is richly represented in Babylonian religion. The statement occurs above that here the ritual always concerns individuals, and that the idea of a national atonement is absent in the Babylonian records. The parallel with the Hebrew cult is, however, much more close than would at first appear. In a considerable number of the Babylonian texts the scape-goat bears away the sins of the king, who evidently represents the people.

Hebrew possesses no specific word for the scape-goat, but Babylonian does possess a word for this mystic idea, a word borrowed from Sumerian, whose derivation does not offer difficulty, viz., *mašhuldubbū*,¹ composed of *maš*, goat, *hul*, evil, *dub*, pour out, i.e. 'goat on which evil is poured out.' The first text which I shall translate concerns the atonement and healing of a man seized upon by the demon *ašakku*, some kind of malady.²

73. 'Take a white goat of Tammuz.

Place it near the patient.

Its heart pluck out.

Place it at the hand of the person.

Cast the curse of Eridu.

The goat whose heart thou hast plucked out, the breads and kneaded cakes³ of the person remove.

86. The censer and torch cause to go forth.

Into the street pour them out.

The person with meal *zisurrū* outline.⁴

The curse of Eridu cast. By the soul of the great gods name him (the demon)."

¹ So far as my knowledge of Assyriological literature extends, I believe Zimmern to have been the first to translate *mašhuldubbū* by *scape-goat* (sühne-zicklein), *Berichten der Philologisch-Historischen Klasse der Königlich Sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaft zu Leipzig*, 1903, p. 129.

² *Cuneiform Texts of the British Museum*, vol. xvii. 10f. See also Thompson, *Devils and Evil Spirits*, ii. 33 ff.

³ i.e. bread and cakes employed in the ritual to absorb the uncleanness.

⁴ Here a line was placed around the patient by running consecrated meal on the ground, so as to keep away the cast out demons.

Here eight demons and several diseases are named and cursed severally. The ritual note adds, 'This is an incantation by means of the scape-goat.'

From a similar ceremony we select the following passage:⁵—

'At evening twilight the scape-goat to the body of the person, son of his god, bring near. The head of the scape-goat to his head bind.'

Undoubtedly the most important document which can be adduced for the ceremony of the scape-goat is the Sumerian ritual upon which Professor Prince first based his investigations.⁶ We have to do here with the atonement of the king, and in the last section (which is not well preserved) possibly with a live goat driven away to the wilderness.⁷ Assyriology has made rapid advance in the interpretation of this class of literature, and I consequently venture to think that a new translation of this important document will be of use to all interested in the history of religion.

Obverse.

2. 'Incantation: The horned wild goat, whose fleece is thickly grown,

The horned wild goat, goat of the mountain,

The horned wild goat, which grew strong on the plains,

5. The horned wild goat, which grew up in the mountain,

Unto which the shepherd's staff should not come nigh,

Which a shining copper bowl has not touched;

—him unto fate he destined,

Yea Marduk unto the horned wild goat called.

To arrange the plan of the hut in the field,

10. For the man when he comes forward,

To utter the curse of Eridu the sage he sent (saying):—

"Go to utter the curse of Eridu.

Unto the house of washing the cane staff *urugallu* which has been fabricated,

The meal-water, the torch, the censer purificator,

⁵ *C. T.* xvi. 35, ll. 30-34.

⁶ K. 138 + 3232; in Haupt's *Akkadisch-Sumerische Keilschrift-Texte*, pp. 104-6.

⁷ The text has been translated also by Chas. Fossey, *La Magie Assyrienne*, No. 44.

15. Let the king son of his god, in his right hand,
in his left hand take up.

The horned wild goat let one remove.¹

The evil *utukku*, the evil ghost, the evil *gallū*,
Witchcraft and all evil-doers verily I will
curse.

Unto the plain place of desolation may they
take their feet.

20. As for the king—may Sin and Shamash before
him and behind him walk.

In the land of life² may he be established.

The magic formula, words of Ea,

The curse of Marduk of the deep, utter.

May Ea open for him the ritual chamber.

25. May the evil *utukku*, the evil *alū*,

From the body of the king stand aside.

May the good *utukku*, the good *šēdu*, lordship
and regal power of the land,

In his person cause to endure.”

28. INCANTATION BY MEANS OF THE HORNED WILD GOAT.

29. *Incantation*: ‘Scape-goat, which the mighty
one³ purified (*sic*),

30. Marduk, son of Eridu, its consecration by great
decrees has spoken.

Nināḥakuddu, lady who utters incantation,

Its purification has wrought.

Ea, lord of the deep, to his son Marduk spoke.

“Go my son Marduk,

35. A man by a curse is bound.

The scape-goat take

Its head to his head place.

The king son of his god atone.

His poisonous tabu into its mouth may be
cast.

40. May the king be pure, may he be clean.

He who knows not the curse by which he is
cursed,

From his body may he chase it away.

May the demon of this device stand aside.”

¹ The ritual of slaying the scape-goat and applying its members to the patient is omitted. It is not likely that this crass ritual was performed when the king represented the people. We may make such inferences as we may from the silence of our text. It may be that the sins of the divine representative of the people were communicated to the scape-goat by the laying on of hands, as in the Hebrew cult.

² The meaning is, ‘among those who have good health, and are free from the attacks of the devils.’

³ *i.e.* Ea, the water-god.

44. INCANTATION BY MEANS OF THE SCAPE-GOAT.

Reverse.

Incantation: ‘When the lord in the plain
walked,

When the great lord Ea in the plain
walked,

The cattle which thrive in the field (the
demon) seized upon.

The wild goats, the antelope, and the rams
afar (?) they caused to go.

5. The kid and the full-grown kid of the field
he seized upon.

The kid and the full-grown kid he hunted.

Like the wind he overwhelmed, like lightning
he struck down.

Ea beheld that with violence they caused
them to go forth.

Marduk beheld it. [Unto Ea he went, entered
into the house and related these matters
and asked for instructions. Ea answered]
‘What I know thou also knowest. Go
my son Marduk.

10. Let Girra, son of Shamash, shepherd of what-
ever exists,

Bring thee a goat of the field.

Let Niniginagarbu, great carpenter of Anu,

Bring thee a bow made with clean hands.

The kid which wandered on the plain before
Shamash place.

15. Unto the king son of his god give the
bow,

When unto the house of washing he goes
up.

The kid before Shamash may he smite.

When the king upon the kid with the bow
shoots,

May *namtar*,⁴ *asag*,⁴ sickness, witchcraft, evil-
doing,

20. . . . any evil arising (?) before (?) Shamash,
whatsoever in his body is,

Like the arrow (?) from his body may these be
separated.

Let the king, when with the bow upon the kid
he shoots (??)

The evil *utukku*, the evil *alū* . . . name by
name.

[The kid?] unto the plain let loose.

25. When [the kid?] unto the plain goes forth,

⁴ Demons.

When he smites
 evil mouth, evil tongue,
 may be smitten
 [The king son of his god] pronounce clean
 send forth.

The translation of line 24 of the reverse is not altogether free from doubt, but if the rendering be correct we have a precise parallel to the Hebrew scape-goat of Azazel. In all three sections the king represents the people, particularly in the last, where the demons ravage the flocks of the land. The king communicates the sins of his people, the curse and ban of the devils, to the scape-goat by shooting it with an arrow, an example of sympathetic magic of advanced type.

In the late period the theologians regarded the many vessels, cult objects, bread, meal, etc., employed in the ritual of atonement as symbols of various deities. In this system 'the scape-goat which is placed at the head of the bed of the patient is Ninamašazagga.'² This deity is explained by the grammarians as 'shepherd of the sacred she-goats (*sic*) of Enlil,'³ and in a liturgy, 'the faithful shepherd.'⁴ The scape-goat, therefore, represents the genius of the flocks, the patron of the herdsmen, and it is this deity in which we most probably find the prototype of the Hebrew Azazel. He represents a protecting deity, not a demon. Into his power the devils are given over after they are cast out. Like the Hebrew *sa'ir*, goat-demon or satyr, Ninamašazagga is essentially a good demon and a friend of man, who not only supplies the scape-goat, but takes it again into his protection and disposes of the demons. The principle here set forth, the connexion between the satyr Ninamašazag and the Hebrew satyr Azazel, is a theory only, but one which has considerable probability. Without the support of the Babylonian evidence, Professor Cheyne has already adopted the same general conclusions,⁵ a gleam of his penetrating genius which has illumined many other dark paths of Biblical interpretation.

In addition to the *mašhuldubbū* the priests

¹ Only the ends of a few lines are preserved.

² *Z.A.* vi. 242. 22. ³ *C.T.* xxiv. 11, 37.

⁴ *Vide* Langdon, *Sumerian and Babylonian Psalms*, 155, n. 15.

⁵ *Ency. Bib.* 397. For another and more commonly accepted interpretation, see Driver, in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. i. 207.

employed also the *giš-huldubbū*, probably a rude wooden image of a man. The word itself means 'wood upon which evil is poured out.'⁶ The only known ritual which illustrates the use of this sort of wooden scape-goat is one of great literary power.⁷ The passage which contains the ritual of the *giš-huldubbū* follows the pilgrimage of Marduk to Ea with the news that Gibil the fire-god had discovered the seven devils prowling on the mountains of sunset:

136. 'To walk the shores of the nether sea they
 have come nigh.
 Go my son Marduk,
 A cedar *huldubbū* is his⁸ watchman,
 In which Ea has spoken his name.
143. Accompanied by the great curse of Eridu
 which is pure,
 Touch the top and bottom with fire. To
 the sick man may the seven not
 approach.
 Like a vast net in a wide place cause it to
 lie, throw it away.
 May the fire-god night and day be con-
 stantly at his head.
 By night or by day on street or road may
 he⁹ carry it⁹ in his hand.
153. At midnight when he dreams at the head of
 the suffering man may he stand con-
 stantly.'

The method of transmitting the taint of sin to the wooden scape-goat is by fire. The meaning of the magic act escapes me; as does also the transmitting power of the blood in the well-known ritual of the doves in *Lv* 14. In any case the fire-god casts out the seven devils, chases them into the wooden scape-goat, which is then thrown away.

One of the names of the twelfth month, Adar,¹⁰ is 'month when the *huldubbū* goes forth';¹¹ and in an Assyrian letter concerning rituals of atonement, reference is made to an incantation, 'Oh *huldubbū*

⁶ The grammarians translated this Sumerian term by the Semitic word *amišu*. [Some doubt about the reading of this Semitic word previously existed, but Mr. King of the British Museum has examined for me the passage in which this word occurs, and confirms the reading *a-mi-su*.]

⁷ *C.T.* xvi. 42-49 (310 lines) = Thompson, *Devils and Evil Spirits*, i. 184-211.

⁸ *i.e.* the person to be atoned. ⁹ *i.e.* fire.

¹⁰ In the Assyrian period probably February-March.

¹¹ *arabū hūl-dub-ba ē*.

go away.¹ If we may assume that *huldubbū* stands here for *maš-huldubbū*, then we might infer that in the month Adar the Babylonians instituted a day of atonement.²

In THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, vol. xxii. No. 8, I have already called attention to a passage of a Babylonian ritual for the purification of a temple.³ To avoid redundancy I shall not repeat the translation here. In this passage the priest of incanta-

tion apparently touches⁴ various parts of a shrine with a decapitated goat, incenses the building with a censer,⁵ and carries the goat out of the city (Babylon) toward the west and throws it in the river Nala, after which he must remain outside the city seven days.⁶

The material discussed in this article is exhaustive at the present stage of Assyriological information. I trust that the inferences and parallels which have been drawn are not unwarranted, and that the material will be of service in the study of this form of ancient magic.

⁴ This is evidently the meaning of *ukappār* in this passage.

⁵ *niknakku*, censer, not 'platter,' as Professor Rogers translates, *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, p. 197. For the meaning of *niknakku*, v. *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, 1909, 75 ff.

⁶ See also Rogers, *l.c.*

¹ *hul-dub è-ba-ra*, Harper, *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters*, No. 24, Rev. 9; cf. Behrens, in *Leipziger Semitische Studien*, ii. pt. 1. p. 90.

² References to the scape-goat *mašhuldubbū* occur in Zimmern, *Ritual Tafeln*, No. 26, i. 20, ii. 4; and No. 54, i. 19; also in K. 9287, i. 11, *Revue Semitique*, vol. ix. (Boissier).

³ *Revue d'Assyriologie*, viii. 49, 10-20, text published by Dhorme.

The Great Text Commentary.

THE GREAT TEXTS OF CORINTHIANS.

I COR. XV. 58.

Wherefore (A.V., therefore), my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord.

I. THESE words close the marvellous chapter in which Christ's rising from the dead is set forth as the great fact without which the Gospel would be no Gospel at all, and in which His return to life is declared to be the promise that we too shall rise again. That chapter passes through several changing moods of feeling. In it St. Paul sometimes argues, sometimes delivers a message as with authority from above, sometimes tells what has already happened, sometimes declares beforehand what is yet to come, sometimes almost fiercely rebukes, sometimes cheers with stirring words of encouragement. Towards the end he rises into an exulting hymn of praise. Beyond that we might think he could not go. We might expect him to leave off there on the highest stretch of uplifted feeling. Or if he had reasons for not pausing there, we might think that at least the Church in her burial service might well have broken off there, and sent forth the mourners with that song of triumph ringing in their ears as the last sounds

heard before they leave the house of God. But no! St. Paul does not stop there, and the Church does not stop there. Calmer and quieter words follow, words of encouragement but also of command, which lead our thoughts away from the sorrow of the present and the hope of the future, and fix them on the work of this present life which still lies before us who remain.

One of the fairest flowers in the Alps blooms on the verge of the eternal snow. Around it, like the sheeted dead, the great mountains lie, silent and motionless, while this one sign of life blossoms into a loveliness all the more striking from contrast with the gaunt and dreary barrenness which it invades. So these brave words, bracing our hearts afresh for present duty, bloom, like that Alpine flower, on the very fringe of death. They conclude a chapter which, more than any other in the Bible, links itself in with our saddest and most solemn memories. Here, I think, we have one proof among many of St. Paul's surpassing skill in generalship. It is said that the true soldier displays his genius not so much by winning the victory as by following that victory up when it is won. An inferior commander would have suffered his troops to rest upon the great triumph with which the chapter draws to a close. After crying 'thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ,' how natural, and how welcome sweet repose would have been. But St. Paul knew that the moment of victory is often the most opportune for pushing forward; and into that one connecting word 'wherefore' he pressed the whole