

## 515TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.

MONDAY, MARCH 20TH, 1911.

DAVID HOWARD, ESQ., VICE-PRESIDENT, OCCUPIED THE CHAIR UNTIL 5.30, WHEN THE REV. JOHN TUCKWELL TOOK HIS PLACE.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read and confirmed.

The names of two associates, elected by the Council this day, were announced, viz. :—

Miss Churchill and Miss Dreaper.

The CHAIRMAN, in asking Dr. Pinches to read his paper, said that no introduction was really needed, as Dr. Pinches was personally so well known, and his work still more widely. The Chairman also referred to the wonderful fascination of these cuneiform writings, and commended their study to the Members of the Institute. Dr. Pinches then read his paper.

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*THE NEWLY-DISCOVERED VERSION OF THE STORY OF THE FLOOD.* By THEOPHILUS G. PINCHES, LL.D., M.R.A.S.

IN all probability there is no phenomenon of nature described in the Old Testament which has attracted so much attention as the account of the Deluge, though many may say, that the sun standing still at the command of Joshua would be found to enter into competition with the great cataclysm of earlier date. Since the reading of the first Babylonian version of the Flood-story by the late George Smith about thirty-six years ago, however, interest has centered rather in that wide-spread catastrophe than in the cause of the great Israelitish leader's victory; and this interest in the account of the Flood has rather increased of late years in consequence of the discovery of other versions—a second one by George Smith when engaged on the *Daily Telegraph* Expedition; another still, to all appearance, by Father V. Scheil, a few years ago, and still a fourth, by Professor H. V. Hilprecht last year.\*

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\* See *The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania*, Series D; *Researches and Treatises*, edited by H. V. Hilprecht; vol. v, *Fasciculus I, The Earliest Version of the Babylonian Deluge Story, and the Temple Library of Nippur*, by H. V. Hilprecht; "Eckley Brinton Coxe, Junior, Fund," Philadelphia; published by the University of Pennsylvania, 1910. *Der neue Fund zur Sintflutgeschichte, und der Tempelbibliothek von Nippur*, von H. V. Hilprecht; Leipzig, Hinrichs, 1910.

The most complete version of the Babylonian account of the Flood is the first one here referred to. This document forms the eleventh tablet of the Gilgameš series, and, as fate (or Providence, if you will) would have it, this portion of the legend is more perfect than any of the remaining tablets—twelve in number—of the series. Layard, Rassam, G. Smith, have all contributed, by the fragments they discovered, to its completion, and the last-named recognised and adjusted, with infinite patience, practically the whole of the fragments (one little piece only fell to my share during the time of my employment at the British Museum) of which that eleventh tablet is composed. It is pleasant to think that one of our own countrymen was able to do such a good piece of work, and thus lay the foundation of a really trustworthy text of these important documents, besides attending to numerous fragments of tablets in almost all the other sections of Assyro-Babylonian literature.

Before proceeding to speak of Professor Hilprecht's recent discovery, however, it would perhaps be well to place before you a very brief outline of the contents of the Gilgameš series in general, in order that you may understand how it comes that the story of the great deluge—the very same deluge as that related in Genesis, finds a place in it. Gilgameš is the Babylonian hero, king of Erech, whose name was at first read Izdubar and Gišṭubar. The reading of Gilgameš is furnished by a Babylonian bilingual list excavated by Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (we had to deplore his loss only last year) about thirty years ago, and the pronunciation, as we have it, is therefore authoritative. This hero has been identified with the Gilgamos of Aelian, in his *De Natura Animalium*, xii, 21, where he is described as having been the grandson of Sevechoros or Sacchara. The daughter of this Babylonian king had been confined by her father in a citadel in order that no offspring of hers should take her father's kingdom, as the Babylonian sages had predicted. A son was born to her notwithstanding this precaution, and the daughter's guards, to save themselves, threw the child down from the tower. A sharp-sighted eagle, however, saw the falling infant, and flying beneath it, caught it on its back, and let it down safely in a neighbouring garden, where it was found by the caretaker, who, noticing the beauty of the child, took a great liking for him, and brought him up. It was he who, under the name of Gilgamos, became king of the Babylonians. Aelian points out, however, that this is not a unique instance of this kind of legend, another being the

story of a noble Persian who was likewise saved by an eagle.

There is nothing of this in the Babylonian legend of Gilgameš, but the details of his infancy may come to light at any time, for the version which we possess refers mainly to his manhood, unless there were references to his childhood in any of the numerous gaps which the earlier tablets of the series, in common with the others, display.

The first tablet of the Gilgameš series begins with the words which form a kind of title by which the whole was distinguished—the ancient method of naming books. The words in question are: “He who saw all (things)”; and to this is added, “the Record of Gilgameš,” this second phrase being something of the nature of a real title in the modern sense of the word. The beginning of the text is extremely imperfect, but where it becomes again readable, we have what is apparently a description of the hero, who knew the wisdom of the whole world, saw secret and hidden things, and brought news of the time before the Flood, travelling a distant road, and suffering dire fatigue (?). All his journeyings and toils were apparently inscribed on stone, and record of them thus left for future ages.

Gilgameš, as we learn in the course of the narrative, was king of the city called *Uruk supuri*, or “Erech the walled,” so-called, apparently, on account of the enclosures which surrounded it. To all appearance, when Gilgameš assumed the reins of power, Erech was in a state of depression, and the walls were so ruinous that enemies from without were able to besiege the city for three years, when

“The gods of Erech the walled  
turned to flies, and hummed in the streets;  
the winged bulls of Erech the walled  
turned to mice, and went out through the holes.”

What enemy it was who besieged the city so long does not appear, but it would seem to be probable that the Elamites under Humbaba, whom the hero afterwards slew, are intended.

After this the text is mutilated, and the sense difficult to follow, but in this mutilated portion there would seem to have been a further description of the hero, who is said to have been “two parts god, and the third part man.” To all appearance there was none in all his realm like him, and also no companion suitable for him, though he collected to him all the young men

and maidens in the land. The goddess Aruru was then called upon to make another in his likeness, who could be his companion, and this resulted in the creation of Ea-bani, or, as the Sumerian inscription of his name has it, Enki-du. It was long, however, ere that physically and mentally peerless being, who was a kind of wild man of the woods, was caught and induced to enter Erech and take up a position at the court. After this, the pair did various things together, one of their exploits being the defeat and killing of the Elamite Humbaba. Later on the hero attracted the attention of the goddess Ištar, who wished him to marry her. Her reputation at Erech was so bad, however, that he refused to have anything to do with her, the result being that Ištar, in her anger, sent a winged bull against them, and Enki-du succeeded in slaying the animal. This brought about more misfortunes for Gilgameš, the severest being the sudden death of his companion, whom he mourned with bitterness; and possibly to distract himself, he set out on his long and celebrated journey, apparently to ascertain whether there were any means of bringing his dead friend to life again. Wonderful were the things which he saw on the way—the scorpion-men guarding the gates of the sun; the goddess Siduri sitting on the throne of the sea; and probably many other adventures befel him, though these are lost by the mutilation of the record. At last, however, he falls in with the sailor Sur-Šanabi, who was to take him to the Chaldean Noah, Ut-napištim, or, according to another text, Uta-naištim, from whom, apparently, he hoped to gain comfort, counsel, and the aid he sought.

Gilgameš and Sur-Šanabi started together, and after passing through a forest, embark in a ship, and reach at the end of a month and ten days, "the waters of death." Other events are recorded, and in the end Gilgameš sees Ut-napištim, the Babylonian Noah, afar off. They converse together, and Gilgameš explains to the Patriarch the reason of his visit, and relates his adventures. In the course of the conversation, Ut-napištim refers to the continuity of the things which take place on the earth, and says that Mammitum, the maker of fate, has set, with the gods, death and life, but that the days of death are not known. Replying, Gilgameš refers to the appearance of Ut-napištim, whose features were not changed—he was like Gilgameš himself, and he begs him to relate how he stood up and sought life in the assembly of the gods. In answer to this Ut-napištim says that he will tell him the story of his preservation.

There was once an old city on the banks of the Euphrates called Šurippak, and the gods dwelling within it decided in their hearts to make a flood. One of the principal gods, Nin-igi-azaga, better known as Ēa, the god of the sea and of fathomless wisdom, communed with the others, and repeated their decision to the earth, calling upon both field and farm to hear and to understand the words which were announced to them. To the Šurippakite (Ut-napištim), son of Unbara-Tutu, however, he made a special recommendation, namely, to destroy his house, and build a ship; forsake riches, and seek (eternal) life; hate gain, and save life (the lives of the living creatures of the earth); and take the seed of life, of every kind, into the ship. Instructions as to the building of the vessel follow, and Ut-napištim was told to launch the ship, when built, into the deep. Promising obedience, he asked what he was to say to those who questioned him as to the work upon which he was engaged, "Thus shalt thou say unto them," was the answer: "Know, then, that the god Ellila hates me—I will not dwell in . . . and I will not set my face in Ellila's domain. I will descend to the deep, with (Ēa) my lord will I (constantly) dwell. As for you, he will cause abundance to rain down upon you." In the succeeding lines something is said about a storm, and the raining down of a heavy downpour.

A description of the building of the ship, and its provisioning, follows, but this portion is mutilated, and therefore difficult to translate. Its bulwarks seem to have risen ten measures, and a deck is apparently mentioned. Its interior was caulked with six *šar* of bitumen, and its outside with three *šar* of pitch, or bitumen of a different kind. Oil for the crew and the pilot is referred to, and oxen were slaughtered, possibly as a sacrifice to the gods on the completion of the vessel. Various kinds of drink are described as having been brought on board, plentiful (such is apparently the word to be supplied here) "like the waters of a river." In this, to all appearance, we have an indication of the Babylonian character, for they were great lovers of intoxicating drinks. This description ends with a reference to certain details of the construction—holes for the cables (seemingly) above and below, etc.

Ut-napištim then collected all his goods and chattels, and entered the ark or "ship" as it is called in the Assyrian text. His silver, gold, the seed of life, his family and relatives, the beasts of the field, the animals of the field,\* and the sons of

\* Cf. also Professor Hilprecht's fragment, p. 146, line 21.

the artificers—all were sent up into the ship. Šamaš, the sun-god, then appointed a time, and the “bringer of gloom” caused a heavy downpour to rain down. Fearing to look at the storm which had now burst upon mankind, Ut-napištim entered into the midst of the ship and shut the door. The “great house,” as he calls the ark, was then given, with its “goods”—meaning, apparently, all its contents, animate and inanimate—into the charge of a pilot or sailor called Buzur-Kurgal.

When the morning dawned, a dark cloud arose from the horizon, in which Rimmon (Adad) thundered, and in front of which the gods Nebo and Šarru went. That the ark had moved from its first position is indicated by the words which follow, which state that “the throne-bearers” went over mountain and plain—probably the alluvial plain of Babylonia which they were quitting, and the mountains of the northern tract which they were nearing. Here follow several fanciful statements about the gods, which we shall probably understand better when we know their attributes more fully—Ura-gala (Nergal, god of death) dragged at the cables, Ninip or Nirig, god of war, cast down destruction, the Annunaki raised their torches, illuminating the earth with their brightness, whilst Rimmon’s destruction reached even to heaven, and everything bright turned to darkness, in the midst of which the storm sought the destruction of the people. Brother saw not brother, and the people were not to be recognised in the cataclysm which had fallen upon them. Even the gods feared and fled, mounting up to the heaven of Anu, the god of the heavens. There the gods, kennelled like dogs, crouched down in the enclosures. Then spoke Ištar, the counterpart and representative of Merodach’s spouse Zēr-panitum, the “seed-creatress,” making her voice resound: “All that generation has turned to corruption. Because I spoke evil in the assembly of the gods, when I spoke evil in the assembly of the gods, I spoke of battle for the destruction of my people. Verily I have begotten man, but where is he? Like the sons of the fishes, he fills the sea.” The explanation of this strange speech in which the goddess expresses her discontent probably is, that as she was goddess of war as well as of love, a glorious death for her people on the battlefield would have satisfied her more. The Annunaki, or gods of the heavens, shared Ištar’s grief, and crouched down in lamentation, covering their lips. The next section is best reproduced in the Patriarch’s own words:—

“For six days and nights the wind blew, and the storm and flood overwhelmed the land. The seventh day, when it came, the

storm ceased, the raging flood, which had contended like a whirlwind, quieted; the sea shrank back, and the hurricane and deluge ended. I noticed then the sea making a noise, and that all mankind had turned to corruption.\* Like a bay (?) the shore (?) advanced. I opened my window, and the light fell upon my face—I fell back dazzled, I sat down, I wept: over my face flowed my tears. I noted the region—the shore of the sea—for twelve measures the land arose. The ship had stopped at the land of Nişir. The mountain of Nişir seized the ship, and would not let it pass.”

For six days the ark rested there, and at the end of that time Ut-napištim, it being then the seventh day, sent forth a dove, a swallow and a raven. The first two came back to him, not finding a resting-place; but the third, seeing the floating corpses, fed on them, and did not return. This portion of the account is rather difficult to understand, but probably the Babylonian writer did not regard the plucking off of a leaf as sufficient proof that the waters were shallow enough for the animals which were in the ark to find safe and sufficiently dry resting-places. The raven, however, according to the Babylonian version, “ate, waded, croaked, and did not return.” The water having receded so that the raven could go about, it was to be supposed that there were sufficiently dry tracts for most of the animals which were with him in the ark, and also for Ut-napištim and his family. Coming forth, therefore, he made an offering on the peak of the mountain, † pouring out a libation, and setting incense-vases in sevens, with incense of cane, cedar, and myrtle. The sweet savour which arose from this offering attracted the gods, who clustered around the sacrificer like flies, so content were they to receive again the homage and the incense-offering of a human being. Then came the goddess Maḥ, the great mother of mankind, raising on high the great signets which Anu, the god of the heavens, had made for her. She conjured the gods not to forget these dreadful days for ever; and though the gods might come to the sacrifice, Enlila (Ellil or Illil) was not to come, for he had been inconsiderate and made a flood, consigning her people to destruction.

It has been supposed, and probably correctly, that the signets raised by Maḥ, and the lapis-stone of her neck, which she refers to, was the rainbow, set in the sky as a sign that such a visitation should not come upon the earth again. Enlil, the god who

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\* Lit. “clay.”

† Gen. viii, 11.

‡ *Ziqqurat šadi.*

had made the flood, however, was to all appearance unmoved by this demonstration made against him by the goddess, for seeing that some of the condemned race of mankind had been saved, he was exceedingly wroth, and filled with anger against the gods who had enabled Ut-napištim and his family to escape the general destruction. Ninip (or Nirig) then spoke, pointing out that it was Êa (AĈ) who had done the thing—*i.e.*, warned the Babylonian Noah that a flood was coming, and thus enabled him to build the ark and escape from the catastrophe. It may here be noted as a curious point in Babylonian mythology, that Enlil, "the god of lordship and dominion," should have been conceived as ignorant of what was passing on the earth. Professor Hommel and other Assyriologists have already pointed out that the name of Êa was in all probability connected with Jah, and this would seem to be a confirmation of that theory, for Êa, who revealed the coming of the Flood to the patriarch, is mentioned by Ninip as one who knew every event; and he, therefore, was the Babylonian prototype of the great Omniscient One.

Êa himself then spoke, uttering what seems to be an admonition to the god Enlil, telling him that he had not been considerate, and had made a flood; the objection apparently being, that such a visitation was calculated to destroy all mankind, which the gods did not want. Should it be needful to destroy the inhabitants of the earth on account of their wickedness, wild beasts, such as the lion and the hyæna; or famine, or pestilence, would sufficiently lessen their number, and serve as the instruments of the gods' wrath. And here occurs a little quibble on the part of the god Êa, who pleads that he did not reveal the decision of the great gods—he simply caused Atra-ḥasis (Xisithrus, another name for the Babylonian Noah) to have a dream, and then he heard the decision of the gods, without its being communicated to him.

Next comes the deification of the patriarch, which took place at the hands of the god whom he worshipped, namely, Êa, who went up into the ship, and taking the hand of Ut-napištim and his wife, touched them and blessed them, saying: "Formerly Ut-napištim was a man, now let Ut-napištim and his wife be like unto the gods, even unto us; and Ut-napištim shall dwell afar at the mouths of the rivers." Thither was he transferred, and there Gilgameš visited him, and heard this wonderful story, the personal narrative, according to the Assyro-Babylonians, of the hero of the great Flood, when all mankind was destroyed, and he only, by the favour of the god whom he worshipped, and



as a reward for his faithfulness, was spared, with his family and those who had helped to build the ark—spared to carry on the race, and tell the story of his deliverance.

After this comes the account of what was done to Gilgameš to free him from some malady from which he was suffering. After the mystic ceremonies performed for his benefit, the Babylonian patriarch told him of a wonderful plant which made the old young again, and Gilgameš, on his way to his Babylonian home in company with Sur-Sanabi, the sailor or pilot, gets possession of one of these desirable things. Stopping at a well, apparently to perform a religious ceremony, a serpent smells the plant, and afterwards a lion comes and takes it away. The hero greatly laments this loss, for he had not benefited by its possession, but the lion of the desert had gained the advantage. Whether, in consequence of this, there was any legend in existence of one of these kings of the Plain of Shinar having renewed his youth, and preyed upon the people, is unknown; but the Babylonian poets are hardly likely to have carried the legend any farther. This section, which forms the eleventh tablet of the legend of Gilgameš, ends with a reference to his return to Erech, and the rebuilding of the walls of the city.

Of the twelfth tablet only a comparatively small portion is preserved, but from it we learn that the hero still lamented his friend Enki-du, whom he had lost so long ago. Being unable to obtain his resurrection, and thus again enjoy his companionship upon earth, he is at last favoured with a sight of his friend's spirit, which arose from the earth like a mist. At the request of Gilgameš, Enki-du describes to him the place of the departed spirits, where he now dwelt. It was a place of misery for those who had not found favour with their god, but an abode of happiness for the blessed, and for the warrior who had fallen in battle. It was needful, however, that the body of the dead should have been duly buried, and not lie on the ground without a caretaker. The description of the world to come is dramatically and poetically given, and it is with this that the twelve tablets of the Gilgameš series come to an end.

As the story of the flood is related to Gilgameš by Ut-napištim, it is told in the first person. The fragment of another legend, afterwards discovered by the late George Smith, was at first thought to fill in the wanting lines where the entry into the ark, as related by the eleventh tablet of the Gilgameš series, is referred to. This, however, is not the case, as we now have the account of that entry told in quite different words, on fragments which Smith himself joined to the main tablet.

The fragment discovered by Mr. Smith,\* moreover, appears in the form of a separate legend referring to the flood alone, and the narrative seems to be related in the third person. The first paragraph gives the instructions of the god Êa to Atrā-ḥasis (not Ut-napištim in this version) to build the ship, enter therein, and close the door, taking into the midst of it his grain, furniture, and goods; his family, relatives, the artizans; the beasts and animals of the field, as many as the god should send to him, and his door was to protect them. Atrā-ḥasis answers, apparently stating that he had not (= never) built a ship, but apparently expressing his willingness to do so now, and seemingly asking that its form and plan should be shown to him. The question naturally arises, whether this may not be a portion either of the legend published some time ago by Father Scheil, or whether it may not belong to the new fragment published by Hilprecht, and of which I shall presently treat.

Turning to the version first published by Father Scheil, which is now in the J. Pierpont Morgan Library at New York, we find an exceedingly fragmentary text. The first column mentions someone who "did not go," and has the word for "royal insignia," or "regnal years." There is also a reference to "their cry"—perhaps the cry of the people, the pronoun being feminine, and the word *nišu*, "people," the gender of which is feminine, may have stood in the gap. After this "mankind" is spoken of. A few lines lower down we come upon the phrase, "May Rimmon (or Hadad) cause to be slain," followed by fragments of words and doubtful phrases, of which no connected sense can be made. The second column is in a more perfect state, but it cannot be said that the record it contains is more satisfactory. There is a statement about (apparently) killing and destroying, and a phrase asking that destruction may be caused to rain down in the morning. Ruin was to be made great, and a cry caused to ascend on high.

At this point the tablet is broken, and the text is wanting until the seventh column is reached, when Êa appears, asking why the deity referred to in the text wished to kill the people. After this comes a reference to the promised deluge, from which Êa seems to state that he intends to free his people. Everything, however, is doubtful, and the four lines of the last column (the eighth) of which two are imperfect, do not yield

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\* It belongs to the *Daily Telegraph* collection.

any real information, though Atrā-ḥasis, the Babylonian Noah, is again referred to, and the speech which he was about to make will be found on the next tablet, when it is discovered. From the colophon we see that this version was written in the reign of Ammi-zaduga, the date being that corresponding with his eleventh year, 1800 or 1900 B.C., that in which he built Dûr-Ammi-zaduga at the mouth of the River Euphrates.

It is therefore refreshing, after such a mutilated and therefore unsatisfactory tablet as this, to come to the little fragment found and translated by Hilprecht, imperfect as it is, for one can at least find a certain amount of information in it—trustworthy and untrustworthy, according as the lines are well preserved or otherwise, and the words certain as to their meanings or the reverse.

The fragment in question was found in a low stratum in what is known as "Tablet-Hill," at Niffer, identified with the Biblical Calneh—one of Nimrod's cities, where the excavations made by the Americans have had a considerable amount of success. It measures only 9.6 cm. by 6 cm. ( $3\frac{3}{4}$  inches by  $2\frac{3}{8}$  inches). Its greatest thickness is  $\frac{7}{8}$  of an inch. The colour of the tablet is described as being dark brown, and the clay unbaked—as is frequently the case with tablets from Babylonia. Originally it was inscribed on both sides, but one of them is so damaged, that the writing has completely disappeared, the ends only of three or four lines being visible on the edge. As the obverse and reverse are generally easily recognized on account of the former being flat and the latter rounded, Professor Hilprecht has come to the conclusion that the well-preserved side is the reverse. The characters are archaic, and, in his opinion (in which he is supported by several well-known Assyriologists), it belongs to the period between 2137 and 2005 B.C. As already stated, however, it is a mere scrap, having only the latter parts of fourteen lines of writing. I give herewith a transcription of the fragment according to Professor Hilprecht's reading of the text, compared with an excellent photograph which he has sent me:—

- 1—. . . . . ša a-ši-ri-ia . . . . -ka
- 2—. . . . . a-pa-aš - šar
- 3—. . . . . ka-la ni-ši iš-te-niš i-za-bat
- 4—. . . . . - ti la-am a-bu-bi wa-ši - e
- 5—. . . . . -a-ni ma-la i-ba-aš-šu-u lu-kin ub-bu-ku lu-pu-  
ut-tu ḥu-ru-šu
- 6—. . . <sup>su</sup>ēlippam ra-be-tam bi-ni-ma
- 7—. . ga-bi-e gab-bi lu-bi-nu-uz-za

- 8— . . ši-i lu <sup>tsu</sup> ma-gurgurum ba-bil-lu na-at-rat na-piš-tim  
 9— . . . -ri (?) zu-lu-la dan-na zu-ul-lil  
 10— . . . . . te-ip-pu-šu  
 11— . . . . . [ka-a] (?) u-ma-am ši-rim iṣ-ṣur ša-me-e  
 12— . . . . . ku-um mi-ni  
 13— . . . . . - ka (?) u kin-ta-ka (?) . .  
 14— . . . . . u (?) . . . . .

TRANSLATION OF PROFESSOR HILPRECHT'S NEW FRAGMENT.

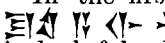
- 1— . . . . . of my descent (?) . . . . thee,  
 2— . . . . . I will loosen,  
 3— . . . . . all men together it shall sweep away.  
 4— . . . . . before the deluge cometh forth ;  
 5— . . . . . as many as there are, I will bring overthrow,  
     destruction, annihilation.  
 6— . . . . . build a great boat, and  
 7— . . . . . all divisions shall be its structure.  
 8— . . . . . that . . . . let it be a houseboat carrying what has been  
     saved of life.  
 9— . . . . . cover with a strong deck.  
 10— . . . . . thou shalt make,  
 11— . . . . . beast of the field, bird of the heavens,  
 12— . . . . . like (*or* instead of) the number (?)  
 13— . . . . . and thy family . . . .  
 14— . . . . . and . . . . .

Free rendering with attempts to fill in the gaps, partly in accordance with Professor Hilprecht's indications:—

[*Note.*—These completions make no pretension whatever to do anything more than give a connected sense pending the discovery of a more complete copy of the inscription.]

[On the day] of my descent(?), [which I have announced to] thee, I will loosen [the confines of heaven and earth; I will make a flood, and] it shall sweep away all men together; [but seek thou life] before the deluge cometh forth; [for over all living things], as many as there are, I will bring overthrow, destruction, annihilation. . . . Build a great ship, and let its structure be [as one which is] all divisions. [As for] that [ship], let it be a house-boat carrying what has been saved of life . . . . cover (it) with a strong deck. [The ship which] thou shalt make, [enter into it and bring therein ever]y beast of the field (and) bird of the heavens—[all of them] instead of the number [which I have fixed,] and [thou shalt bring therein] thy family . . . . and(?) . . . .


It cannot be said that the fragment is of any great extent, but, as Professor Hilprecht has remarked, if we had wished to choose the portion which we would have liked to be preserved, it is just this part; though all scholars would naturally add, that whilst desiring these very lines we should have preferred them to be complete. The photograph sent me has enabled me to examine the text of the reverse very carefully, and when doing so, I have thought that certain doubtful characters might be read differently—whether my suggestions are improvements upon his readings time—and a duplicate—alone will show.

In the first line the characters certainly look to me like  *ša a-ši-ri-ia*. The meaning of *aširu* here is doubtful. I have regarded the word as coming from the root *āšāru*, “to descend,” but as there are about three roots which resemble this, the meaning, in the absence of a clear context, is doubtful. Moreover, I am not satisfied with the form, which is that of a participle.

In line 2 the completion is that of Professor Hilprecht. He gives the probable Assyrian words of “the bonds of heaven and earth” as being *uṣurāt šamē u ērṣitim* or *kippat šamē u ērṣitim*.

In the third line he restores *ābuba ašakan-ma*, “a flood I will make, and.”

Professor Hilprecht’s suggested restoration of line 4 is *u atta-ma še’c* (or *bullit*) *napišti*, “and thou then, seek thou (or save thou) life.” The *-ti* of *napišti* occurs after the break.

In line 5 the first traces look to me like the aspirate , and if this be the case, the completion of the line is more difficult than seemed at first glance. Professor Hilprecht speaks on page 52 of his book of the word *gab’āni*, “heights,” and this may be the word to restore here. In that case some such completion as “over all the high places, as many as exist, will I bring overthrow, annihilation, destruction,” might be suggested. The difficulty in this, however, would be, that there are no high places (*i.e.*, natural hills) on the Babylonian plain, the “high places” of the Babylonians being the artificially-constructed *ziqqurāti* or temple-towers—indeed, Ut-napištīm, the Babylonian Noah in the Legend of Gilgameš, calls the Armenian mountain-peak, on which he made sacrifice on coming out of the ark, a *ziqqurat šadî*, “high place of the mountain,” as we may here translate it. It remains to be seen whether any other word was ever used for these heights which the Babylonians constructed in connection with the worship of their gods. *Gab’āni* would be a masculine plural, and correspond nearly in meaning with the Hebrew גִּבְעָה, *gibeah*, the name of several

cities situated on hills. Other completions are possible—*pir'āni*, "seeds" = "offspring"; *ma'āni*, "mighty ones," from *ma'u*, etc. *Ubbuku* is the Pu'ul of *ābāku*, "to overthrow"; and *luputtu* (from *lapātu*) is practically a synonym of that word. *Hurušu* is possibly for *hurrušu*, from *ḥarāšu*, "to grind," "crush."

The different expressions for "ship" in lines 8 and 9 are noteworthy. The usual word is *ēlippu*, "boat," and in the eleventh tablet of the Gilgamesh series it is also called *ēkallu*, "palace"—literally "great house," and *bītu*, "house," simply. In Professor Hilprecht's new fragment, however, it is called a "ship," literally a "great boat" (*ēlippu rabētu*). What kind of vessel the *ma-gurgurum* was, and wherein it differed from other ships, is doubtful. The root *gur* is Sumerian, and means "to enclose," or the like, and Hilprecht's explanation of the word as meaning "houseboat" seems very probable—indeed, a gigantic structure which was to be a ship and a dwelling-place is just what would be expected. It is not improbably connected with the non-reduplicate form *ma-gur*, Semiticised as *makurru*, "shrine" or "ark" of a god. In any case, these two words would seem to be the equivalents of the Hebrew אֲבִיבָה *tebah*, "ark," "shrine," "coffin," borrowed from the Egyptian.

*Gabē gabbi* in line 7 the translator of this fragment renders as "total height"—"total height shall be its structure." In this case it may be supposed that a numeral preceded—" (so many) cubits in total height," or the like. This is naturally a possible rendering, and I have nothing to say against it. Nevertheless, it seemed to me that an alternative might be suggested, especially as *gabē* may be for *qabē*, whose singular is rendered "stable," "fold," "pen"—a good meaning for such a passage as this. But I am not satisfied that the rendering is the right one, notwithstanding the excellent sense which "all pens let its construction be" would make.

Professor Hilprecht has some interesting remarks upon the nature of the "strong deck" (*zulula dannā*) in line 9, with which the craft was covered in. He quotes a similar line in the Gilgamesh version: *kima apsi šāši ḡullil-ši*, "like the abyss, as for that (boat), cover it in"; and also the second Nineveh version: [*ḡulul-ša*] *kima kippati šamē li dan ēliš*, "let its covering be strong above like the vault of heaven." All this suggests a structure like a domed roof, possibly circular, even though the boat itself may not have had the same form; though it is noteworthy that circular boats have been used on the Euphrates and Tigris from time immemorial.

Though I agree with Professor Hilprecht with regard to the

rendering of the two words *kum mini* remaining in the twelfth line, I am inclined, on reflection, to regard the phrase of which they formed part as differing somewhat from his conception of it. His rendering is "two of everything instead of a number," and here again, with the instinct which has carried him through many a difficult passage, he may be right. Nevertheless, it is best to be cautious, and complete the phrase as though it referred to a change in the intention of the deity—the preservation of every living thing instead of a selection only.

I see traces of  $\sum\text{[}\sum\text{]}$ , *ka*, as the fifth character of the last line, making "thy family," instead of "the family."

In conclusion, I give the comparisons with the version in Genesis which, with one exception, Professor Hilprecht has suggested:—

Nippur Version.	Gen. vi. 13-20; vii. 11.
Line	
2. . . . "I will loosen."	vii. 11. "all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened."
3. . . . "It shall sweep (or 'take') away all men together."	vi. 13. . . . "behold, I will destroy them with the earth."
4. . . . "life (?) before the deluge cometh forth."	18. . . . "but with thee I will establish my covenant."
5. . . . over] "as many as there are, I will bring overthrow, annihilation, destruction."	17. "and behold I do bring the deluge upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on earth shall perish."
6. . . . "build a great boat, and "	14. "make thee an ark."
7. . . . "its structure shall be all divisions."	14. "rooms (Heb. nests) shalt thou make in the ark."
8. . . . "let it be a houseboat carrying what has been saved of life."	16. "A roof shalt thou make in the ark, in its entire length thou shalt
9. . . . "cover it with a strong deck."	cover it; and the door of the ark thou shalt set in the side thereof; with lower, second and third stories shalt thou make it."

10. . . . "[the boat] which thou shalt make,"
11. . . . [bring therein ever]y "beast of the field, bird of the heavens."\*
13. . . . thy (?) . . . "and thy family."
19. "And from every living thing, from all flesh, two from everything shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female."
- vii. 3. "of the fowl also of the air."
- vi. 18b. "and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee."

There is no doubt that this text of the Flood contains a goodly number of parallels with the version in Genesis, and the learned Professor may be congratulated\* on the discovery which he has made. Though only an isolated and imperfect fragment, it is not only exceedingly important in itself, but it also gives promise of more material of the same character. From this we see, moreover, how rich Assyro-Babylonian literature was in Flood stories, as it seems certainly to have possessed three, and may even have had four. But this is not to be wondered at—the Assyro-Babylonians certainly had at least three Creation stories, all of them of considerable interest, though their differences are much greater than are to be found in the versions of the Flood which form the subject of this paper.

#### DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN: Our thanks are due to the lecturer for his most interesting account of a very curious fragment. Particularly interesting because it was a further evidence of the existence of traditions which were freely floating about in Babylon a very long while ago, all variants of a still older story. This does not imply that they were not true. On the contrary, they bore evidence to the undoubted antiquity of the Genesis account of the flood. It is impossible to imagine anyone centuries later writing such descrip-

\* This is to all appearance the only Assyro-Babylonian version of the Flood mentioning birds.

Note.—The verbal form *lúkin* in line 5 may be translated either "I" or "he will bring" (lit. "set").



tions and giving them the curious local terms which show alike their antiquity and source.

Mr. MARTIN ROUSE, B.A., said: I have been away from this country for three years, and am very glad to be once more at a meeting of the Victoria Institute. I am particularly glad to be present on this occasion, and to hear Dr. Pinches' views concerning this fragment of a fourth and most ancient version of the Assyrian story of the Deluge, and his comments upon it and reviews of the other versions.

In comparing the much later but more complete version discovered by Mr. George Smith with the Bible narrative, I would first point out that whereas, according to Sayce's rendering, Ut-napishtim brought into his ship his family and his *concubines*, at the end the god Éa took his hand and that of his *wife*, and uttered a decree that thenceforth they two should be like gods and dwell in a heavenly abode. Thus the truth breaks through the corruptions with which Eastern voluptuousness has overlaid it, and Noah appears as in the Bible "perfect in his generations."

Again, when the Flood had made havoc of all mankind outside the ship, the goddess Ishtar is said to have raised this bitter lamentation, "I have begotten man, but where is he? Like the sons of the fishes he fills the sea." It has been suggested, and this episode bears out the inference, that the Egyptian Isis, first queen of Egypt and the world, is identical with the Babylonian Ishtar, and that both names are modified forms of Isha, the earlier name of our first mother, of whom Adam said, She shall be called Isha (woman) because she was taken out of Ish (man).

The Assyrian story notably displays its inferiority to the Biblical in the undignified flight of the gods to remote corners of the universe where they "kennelled like dogs," and in the dissension of the gods during the catastrophe Ishtar disapproving of a Deluge because it wrought a too wholesale destruction, whereas Bel, or Enlil, could not endure that even one family should escape. On the other hand, certain unique details show the two stories to be of one event—the smearing of the ship inside as well as outside with pitch, the sending out of the raven and the dove to test the redrying of the ground, the offering of a "sweet savour" to Heaven by the good man just after his exit from the ship, and the appearing of some beautiful phenomenon in the sky in token of Heaven's acceptance.

This obviously means the rainbow (but is called signets, or seals, as though displayed to ratify a covenant—that covenant which God made with Noah and his sons that He would never again destroy the earth with a flood).

But again it is clear that if the good man was prudent enough to send out the dove once and it came back to him because it could find no dry ground to rest on, he would, as the Bible story tells and as the Assyrian story does not, have sent the bird out a second time, ere he ventured forth himself with his family and his great living cargo. And then, too, whereas the “seven days’ rain” of the Assyrian poem were wholly inadequate to flood the whole earth or even the whole habitats of man, the Bible first says that “the fountains of the great deep were broken up,” and then that rain fell during “forty days.” (The thought that Êa or Aê may be a form of the divine name Jah is strengthened by the title that Ea elsewhere receives of “the wise and open of ear.”)\*

The Babylonian story is approached in clearness and detail by the traditions of the first doings of mankind, recited by the Masai of East Africa at their annual convention in the hearing of the German Resident.† And, as it had been previously stated, that this world-wide tradition was unknown to the negroes, I might add that a Mr. Hewitt, who had worked among the raw heathen, of the Upper Congo, told me that the Ballolo recount that Khangî (God) and his wife made man and his wife and put them into a beautiful garden, and that they disobeyed some command of his and were turned out, while Khangî sailed down the river and was never more seen by men; and that a great while afterwards, when men had become very numerous and very wicked, Khangî destroyed all but a very few with a mighty flood. And, lastly, I would say that among the North American Indians, legends of the flood are so abundant that the late Mr. Owen D. Orsey, whom as Vice-President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, I had heard lecture upon a group of six Indian languages, told me that every Indian tribe that he came across possessed the tradition.

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\* Pinches, *O.T. in the Light*, p. 18, cf. 21.

† See an article in the *Contemporary Review* for 1901 by Professor Emil Reich.

Rev. JOHN TUCKWELL, M.R.A.S., said: I should like to give expression to what I am sure will be the feeling of all present of deep indebtedness to Dr. Pinches for his very valuable paper. He has grouped together the various records of the Flood, discovered in Babylonia, in a most concise, luminous and interesting way. It may have seemed surprising that so much could be got out of so small a fragment. Its similarity to the Genesis account is certainly instructive. It indicates the great antiquity of the Genesis story wherever it came from. Professor Hilprecht's opinion that the story upon this fragment goes back, at least, as far as 2000 B.C., appears to be well-founded. But the story was apparently a very old one then. Hence it must go back far beyond the time of Moses, and gives the quietus to the attacks of those critics who endeavour to make the Hebrew account a matter of comparatively modern times.

Another point indicated by the two records is that the Hebrew account was not derived from the Babylonian. The Hebrew account has no local colouring. It gives no indication of the part of the world where the ark was built. Possibly in some inland region now submerged. Who knows whether it may not have been in what is now the bed of the Mediterranean sea? The breaking up of the fountains of the great deep might certainly refer to the ocean overflowing the land. But in the Babylonian accounts there are many indications of Babylonian thought and custom. The part the gods play; the structure being a ship, not an ark; the pilot being put on board natural enough for a people accustomed to the use of ships. A pilot is of service because he has been there before, but a pilot in a Deluge!

It is interesting to observe that in both cases we have what purports to be a personal narrative. The writer speaks of what he saw and experienced. As Dr. Pinches has pointed out, there are no "high places" in Babylonia, so that even the Babylonian account could not have originated there. The mountains or high places must in both cases have been those which the writer observed, not all the high mountains everywhere all over the world. Hence it leaves the question of the extent of the Flood to be settled by the geologist.

Professor Prestwich, many years ago, in a paper read before this Institute, pointed out that there were indications along the northern

shores of the Mediterranean Sea of a great diluvial catastrophe within the human period which must have swept, at least, over the whole of Europe and carried away every living thing. He found great masses of bones of carnivora and herbivora mingled in inextricable confusion which had been washed down from the higher lands to the sea-level. No doubt there are evidences of similar catastrophes everywhere, though not all of the same period.

Another interesting question raised by this fragment is the dissection of the Hebrew narrative by modern critics into Jehovistic and Elohist elements with any number of additions by the Redactors. But the Babylonian story contains both these so-called elements and even into this little fragment a bit of the Jehovist's narrative has found its way in the reference to the "bird of the heavens." Is it credible that the Babylonians should have had so detailed an account of the Deluge containing the "Yaweh-Elohim" elements 2,000 or 3,000 years before Christ, and that the Hebrews should not have made up their story containing these same two elements until about 500 B.C., or the time of the exile. The fact is the exile is a deep pit into which the critics conveniently pour their difficulties, and the sooner this "Yaweh-Elohim" theory is given up the better.

Miss O'REILLY asked: Are the gods referred to in this story the angels ruling the elements?

A speaker asked if the Gilgamesh Epic might possibly be a zodiacal myth.

The Rev. E. SEELEY, in seconding the vote of thanks, asked for explanation of an apparent contradiction between the newly-discovered tablet which states that the same god (Êa ?) who caused the flood, also revealed it beforehand and commanded the building of an ark; whereas on another tablet (quoted pp. 141 and 142) Illil (or Enlil) is mentioned as the causer of the flood, and Êa as the causer of deliverance by means of an ark. This may perhaps show that the newly-discovered tablet agrees in this respect more closely with the Hebrew record than with the other Babylonian tablets.

He drew attention to the statement in Genesis that all the mountains under the whole heaven were covered; which he thought affirmed the universality of the flood. He added that some years ago it had been suggested at a meeting of the Victoria Institute, that the sun might have become hotter for a while and melted the

polar ice and snow, and also caused much greater evaporation from the seas, resulting in the tremendous rain mentioned in Genesis, and the greatly increased weight of water on the wide expanses of land resulting in depression of the land, the sea rushed in and magnified the subsidences.

He then referred to a quarry near Weston-super-Mare, mentioned by Professor Prestwich, at which the workmen told him (Mr. Seeley) that they were present when the fissure containing the mingled bones was opened and they said emphatically, "It stunk us out." The remaining presence of such decomposing matter with such bones seemed to indicate that the date of the collection and of its sealing up with clay could not be more remote than the date of the Deluge on a reasonable estimate. And if, as Professor Prestwich affirmed, such collections of bones in rock fissures (not caves) have already been discovered from Britain to Asia Minor, the cause, if one and the same, must have been very widespread.

Dr. HEYWOOD SMITH asked whether the lecturer thought that the title "makurru" referred to could have any relation to the word "Maru," used by the Japanese to indicate a merchant ship?

Mr. TUCKWELL, who had now taken the chair as Mr. Howard had to leave, called attention to the fact that Professor Tindall in his volume, *Heat, a Mode of Motion*, had remarked that enormous accumulation of frozen vapour at the two poles producing enormous pressure and maintaining glacial movements, necessitated a proportional evaporation in the equatorial regions.

Mr. MAUNDER desired to thank Dr. Pinches for his most admirable and instructive paper, and especially for the clearness with which he had pointed out how far the translation of this interesting tablet was established, and how far it was conjectural. A former speaker had asked whether the Gilgameš Epic might be a zodiacal myth; the hero representing the sun in his progress through the 12 signs. The eleventh tablet on this theory described the Flood because Aquarius was the eleventh sign. But as he had already explained in his book, *The Astronomy of the Bible*, certain of the southern constellations bore evident reference to the Genesis narrative of the Deluge, and equally to the supposed "Priestly" and "Jehovistic" components; yet the constellations were designed about 2700 B.C. At that period Aquarius was the tenth sign, not the eleventh; it did not become the eleventh sign until after

700 B.C., much later than any date which they could assign for the present Deluge Tablet.

With regard to the question as to the source from whence the water of the Flood came, it was quite clear that no amount of rain could by itself account for it. If, however, they supposed that there was a considerable subsidence over a large area of the land surface of the world, and that the sea rushed in, followed by the rising of the land again later, then the Flood in one sense would be merely local. Yet such an event would certainly give rise to a succession of gigantic waves in the oceans, which would sweep round the entire world, and might supply the evidence of sudden devastation, alluded to by a former speaker, as shown by many coastlines. Professor Delitzsch, in his *Babel and Bible*, regards the Genesis account of the Flood as derived from the Babylonian, and he said that the Babylonians divided their history into two great periods, the one before and the other after the Flood. Then he adds a remark which is quite incompatible with this, viz., that Babylon was in quite a peculiar sense the land of deluges, being exposed to terrible floods of a special kind, due to cyclones and tornadoes. But it is clear that if the Babylonians were continually having floods, they would not be likely to date their history from the Flood. Whilst in floods of that description, a big ship like the Ark would be a veritable death-trap, seeing that it had neither rudder nor steam. Every one remembered the story of the great cyclone of Samoa, from which the "Calliope" was only able to escape because she possessed such powerful engines that she could make her way out to sea in the very teeth of the hurricane.

Dr. PINCHES then replied fully to the comments and the vote of thanks which had been given :—

I am glad to see Mr. Rouse back again at a meeting of the Institute, and to hear his remarks upon the paper which I have just read. I do not remember having said anything with regard to the Babylonian Noah and his slave-wives, nor have I ever written upon the subject; and in any case I should feel inclined to doubt that rendering (for *salat-ia*, "my kinswomen," or the like). With reference to Istar and mankind, her children, I cannot believe that that goddess is the same as Eve. The derivation of the name and its connection with Isis (late Egyptian *Ise* for an earlier *Iset*) and *Ishah*, the Hebrew for "woman," present serious difficulties,

notwithstanding that an Aramaic docket represents *Ištar* by *Iš* simply. I admit that Professor Hilprecht regards the animals as having been sent to the Babylonian Noah by twos, but that is his own idea as to the completion of the fragment. I have already suggested an alternative rendering. The reading of the group formerly transcribed *Bél* as *Enlil*, *Ellil*, or *Illil*, is based upon Aramaic dockets found on tablets from Niffer. Enlil was the same as the older *Bél*, who, like other gods of the Babylonian pantheon, gave his name to Merodach; and Merodach could therefore be styled *Enlil* or *Bél*, notwithstanding that he was an entirely distinct divinity.

Turning to the identification of *Éa* or *Aé* with *Jah*, I cannot help admitting that this is not satisfactory. The first syllable of his name, *é*, is the same as is found in the word *ékal*, "palace," a word which has gone into the other Semitic languages in the form of *hékul*, with the meaning of "temple." It is therefore improbable that the sound of *y* was ever heard at the beginning of the name, and the old transcription as *Hea* instead of *Éa* may therefore turn out to be more correct, and this would carry it a step farther away from *Jah*.

I have often wondered whether the legends of floods among uncivilized nations were really of any great value. When I was quite young I remember reading somewhere about a story of the Flood among a North American tribe, which, as it afterwards turned out, they had simply obtained from the missionaries.\* Such legends ought, therefore, to be accepted with a certain amount of caution.

I quite agree that the new version contains many parallels with the account in Genesis. If all the words on the fragment are

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\* See the *Races of Mankind*, by Robert Brown, M.A., vol. i, p. 143: "An eminent ethnologist once told me that, after great trouble, he had, at least as he thought, got hold of a tradition of the flood among the north-west American Indians, but he could only get it bit by bit out of the old man who was the repository of this and other such-like lore. It cost my friend many blankets and other presents, and the labour of hours to write it down from the aboriginal language. At last he came to the finale. 'Now what was the man's name who got away with his wife in the big canoe?' The old Indian could not recollect, and went in search of another who knew the name. The two came back in pride, and related to my breathlessly eager friend, 'His name was Noah!'" (Cassell, Petter, and Galpin. No date.)

attributable to the same personage, then the God who sent the Flood was also the God who prepared Noah for it. This is naturally a most important point in the parallel with the account of the flood in Genesis. I am not sure that I was right with regard to the rendering "pilot"—the word used (*malahū*) might just as well be translated "sailor"; but the argument is nearly as strong, and shows that the Babylonian mind ran, as the Rev. J. Tuckwell has indicated, upon things maritime.

The question of the date of these legends of the Flood is of considerable importance. Father Scheil's fragment shows that that document at least is as early as 1800 B.C., and the date of this cannot be disputed. Also it is worthy of note, that the story itself must be earlier—perhaps much earlier—than the dates of the documents which have come down to us.

In answer to Miss O'Reilly's question, "Are the gods the angels?" I fear the answer must be in the negative. To the Babylonians the gods were not angels. All the gods—or, at least, the principal gods—were identified in some way or other with Merodach. Thus, the Moongod (Sin) was Merodach the illuminator of the night; Enlil was Merodach of lordship and dominion, etc.

As to the possibility that Gilgameš was a mythical character, Mr. Maunder has already answered this question from the astronomical point of view. There are inscriptions, moreover, which refer to him as a real historical character, as the legend of the hero implies. Coming to the universality of the Flood, I remember reading as a boy a reference (I think it was in an edition of Goldsmith's *Natural History*) to this catastrophe, and the difficulty felt of finding enough water to cover all the earth. With regard to this it was stated (I believe by the editor, in a footnote) that a certain scientist had found enough, and more than enough, in the tail of a comet! Either in this same or in some other work the author (or editor) did not think it needful to assume that the Flood covered the whole earth. All that the account in Genesis implies was, that it extended as far as Noah himself could see.

In conclusion, I thank you not only for the attention and interest which you have shown in the subject of my lecture, but also for the cordial vote of thanks which has been so heartily proposed and carried. It is gratifying to feel that one's efforts are appreciated.