

and the well-known Egyptian picture representing the wicked soul conveyed to hell in the form of a pig. The Oannes figures take the place of the two goddesses, who in Egyptian designs stand at either end of the mummy, and who form the prototypes of the two angels for whom the pious Moslem provides seats at the head and foot of his tombstone. Perhaps the miserable horse who stumbles under the weight of the gigantic lion goddess, may represent the unhappy soul itself, while the three ears of corn (if I am correct in so calling them), remind us of the grains of corn which have been found in skulls dug up in Syria by Captain Burton. Corn is intimately connected with Dagon, the Syrian fish-god.

This curious tablet is, I believe, unique, and affords strong evidence of the similarity of Egyptian and Assyrian beliefs. The Egyptians are now generally acknowledged to have belonged to an Asiatic Aryan race, and the fact that the mythology of Africa, of Greece, and of Rome, had its origin in the far East is too well known to require notice; but the Assyrian mythology is as yet but imperfectly known, and the present monument, which was brought from Palmyra by a peasant, who sold it at Hamath, comes from a district directly on the line of the Phœnician march from their first settlements near the head of the Persian Gulf, to their home on the borders of the Mediterranean. I understand that M. Ganneau is anxious to study the original tablet, which I have been fortunate enough to see, in order to decipher some of the more obscure details, and intends, for that purpose, so soon as his health permits, to visit Beyrout, and to examine this interesting relic.

CLAUDE R. CÓNDER, R.E.

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## THE HITTITES.

### I.

#### THEIR SACRED CAPITAL.

THE announcement that Lieutenant Conder had discovered the Sacred capital of the Hittites on the shore of Lake Kades, cannot fail to interest Oriental scholars; and it may lead to more important discoveries in the history of that very ancient and remarkable people. It will be remembered that the Hittites are mentioned in Genesis among those nations who inhabited Canaan during the patriarchal period, and that it was from one of their Princes Abraham bought his burying place, the cave of Machpelah. Joshua incidentally describes the position of their country:—“From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the river Euphrates, *all the land of the Hittites.*” They are not often mentioned in sacred history, but we have a few suggestive notices of their power, wealth, and warlike character.

Many years ago I visited that remote region in the valley of the Orontes where the Hittites had their chief stronghold and settlement,

and I examined with considerable care its topography and ruins. I made full notes on the spot, and perhaps if I now give, in a condensed form, the substance of those notes, it may help to stimulate further inquiry, and in some measure to direct more thorough research.

Leaving the site of the Biblical Riblah, I forded the Orontes, and rode to Tell Neby Mindow, six miles distant. It is a large artificial mound on the left bank of the river, with a village and a Muslem tomb on its top; from the latter it gets its modern name. Around it lie extensive ruins, the remains doubtless of *Laodiceia ad Libanum* mentioned by Strabo and Ptolemy, and placed by the Itinerary of Antonine 18 Roman miles from Emesa. Polybius says it lay near a lake. Some of the ruins, and the large mound, indicate a much earlier origin for the town which first occupied the site.

About a mile farther I came to a small village called Um el-Adam, where there are also ancient remains. On the right bank of the river, about half-a-mile distant, is a large rectangular enclosure surrounded by an earthen dyke, with mounds at the corners as if for defence. It seems to have been an intrenched camp; and it may perhaps mark the site occupied by the army of Nebuchadnezzar, while one of his generals was engaged in the siege of Jerusalem.

I rode on to another mound on the right bank of the river, from which I had a good view of the southern section of *Lake Kades*, and of the place where the Orontes falls into it. Thence I followed the winding shore, passing the village of Kefr Ady. Here my attention was arrested by an island some distance out in the lake, with a large artificial mound upon it; examining it carefully with my glass I thought I could discern traces of ruins on the mound, and I was sorry I had no means of reaching it, for it would most probably repay close inspection.

Continuing along the shore northwards, I passed in succession two villages, one of them on a mound, and at length reached a lofty artificial mound near the end of the lake. Ascending it I obtained a commanding view, not only of the entire lake, but of the whole surrounding country; and I here observed that across the northern end of the lake is a *dam of solid masonry*, about a quarter of a mile long, built to raise the water to such an elevation as would serve to irrigate the plain and vale beyond, and also to supply the town of Emesa. Leaving my horse, I walked along the top of the dam to a square tower at its western end, so that I might examine it more carefully, and, if possible, form some idea of its age and object. It is evidently very ancient, and is one of the most remarkable engineering works in Syria. The centre is about 14 feet high, but it decreases toward the ends. It has often been broken and repaired; and I thought I could detect in it specimens of the masonry of the ancient Syrians, as well as of the Greeks, Romans, and Turks. There can be no doubt that the dam greatly increases the size of the lake, and perhaps the statement of Abulfeda, the Arab historian, is correct, that "if the embankment were destroyed the water would flow off, the lake would cease to exist, and would become a river." The length of the lake is now

about six miles, and its greatest breadth two. Traces of the ancient canals which led the water off at a high elevation are seen, and some of them are still used for purposes of irrigation. The plain around the lake, and on both sides of the Orontes, southward as far as Riblah, and northward to Emesa, is studded with artificial mounds, each of which was doubtless the site of a primeval city, village or castle. Some of them are very large, and are covered or encompassed with ruins. Here is an ample and most inviting field for research and excavation.

Such, in substance, are my notes, written twenty-five years ago. I may observe that an account of my first journey to Lake Kades and Emesa was given in the first edition of my "Five Years in Damascus," published by Mr. Murray in 1855. I afterwards travelled through the same region several times.

If Lake Kades be artificial it would be interesting to know when and by whom the embankment was first built. It must have been before the days of Polybius, for he mentions the lake as I have already stated. There can be no doubt that its name is derived from *Kades*, the primeval capital and stronghold of the Hittites, and that city is often mentioned in the account of the wars of Thothmes I (*circa* B.C. 1630), given on one of the Egyptian tombs (see Brugsch's "Egypt," I, 291); and, still more frequently, in the stirring history of Thothmes III (*Id.* pp. 334 *seq.*). Kades was captured by Seti I, king of Egypt (*circa* B.C. 1366); but the greatest battle fought there was that between the Hittites and the Egyptians under Rameses II, most probably the Pharaoh in whose reign Moses was born. The story of the battle is contained in a contemporary papyrus still extant, and there are also pictorial representations of it on the walls of Karnac and Luxor. The latter are most interesting, as they show that the field of battle was *on the banks of a river or lake* (see Brugsch, II, p. 48). In an Egyptian poem composed by a certain Pentaur, a Theban, about two years after the battle, a translation of which is given in "Records of the Past," II, 65, *et. seq.*, I find the following words used to define the position of the Hittite army:—"They were at *the lake* of the land of the Amorites," and, from what follows, it is clear that the lake was close to the city of Kades. Another inscription of the same age, on the wall of Karnac, gives the full text of a treaty of peace drawn up between Rameses and the Hittites after the battle ("Records of the Past," IV, 25). The Hittites were themselves a literary people, and it is quite possible that among the ruins of their old capital some most interesting records of those early struggles might be found. I have now little doubt that those singular mounds which stud the plain on the banks of the Orontes, and the more ancient ruins near them, are all relics of the Hittites. The Hittites also seem to have been the original founders of that great embankment which dams up the waters of the Orontes, and forms the lake Kades. The discovery of the exact site of their ancient sacred capital *Kades* "the Holy," and the excavation of its primeval remains, would rank among the most valuable results of Palestine Exploration.

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