bloom of Hebrew nationality in the ages following those of David and Solomon,[1] — just as the struggles of the nation for existence, in later times, ripened that Messianic idea in which Jahveh came to his most exalted form.[2] In the same way, out of the sense of a separate national personality, will, and destiny, grew up the reverence for the one national God as *holy*. This word (*kâdôsh*) in later times, the highest term for moral and spiritual purity, was constantly applied to Jahveh, in its natural sense of separated, exalted, unapproachable, isolated, in correspondence with distinct national existence and purpose. The one was the matrix and nurse of the other.[3] When we read such phrases as "the Holy One of Israel," we must remember that the idea of contrast with other national gods, — that is, of Egypt, Phœnicia, Edom, etc., — was always present with the writer; and that the *moral* allegiance implied in it had its foundation and force in this sense of a community of relation, origin, purpose, aim, in the nation as a whole. From beginning to end, Jahveh was indeed more or less God of the Hebrews; every saint, patriarch, genealogy, conquest, law, temple, prophecy, has its authority more and more in the service it pays to the national destiny. It is because the religious and national ideals thus reached form and sustain each other, that we find such tremendous persistency in Hebrew faith, and such absorption of this race in itself as the chosen of God. This intense local concentration of Will has nourished a commanding self-confidence, and the world has naturally, not supernatu-

[1] In the earlier legislation of the *Torâh*, as seen in the Book of Exodus, a free worship at local shrines, unknown to later times and mixed with Canaanite traditions and rites, made such national unity impossible. But what are called the "Middle Books" of the Law, dating from the reforming kings, show the vigorous effort to counteract this want of religious nationality, by which the great kings fell into Baal-worship, through legislative institutions like those of Deuteronomy. But not till the exile, whose results are seen in Leviticus, was religion genuinely nationalized.

[2] Goldziher: *Mythology among the Hebrews*, p. 272.

[3] Kuenen: *Religion of Israel*, i. 43.

rally, yielded to its religious sway. It has furnished the leading type of monotheism so far for Western nations in its ideal of absolute personal Will. It has thus become in the religious sphere what the Assyrian kings were in the political or military. Christianity, its offspring, held obediently to its literature and prophetic inspiration, even after theology had advanced far beyond its national limitations. The development of nationality was by no means easy. The Hebrews were a mixed people — half Arab, half Canaanite — for centuries, and their special Law (*tôrâh*) was a slow evolution, but by singularly natural stages, largely from these elements. There was in fact a remarkable absence of break in this process where all has been imagined to be miraculous; and nothing can so perfectly refute the miraculous theory as the manner in which each stage in Hebrew legislation interlocks with the preceding, from the oldest covenants and simplest free usages on through the Deuteronomic and then to the post-exilian Levitical institutions. Never till the latest epochs had the Hebrews a recognized religious law. The national god had no constitutional support or statute. The influences of the Babylonian exile, as already shown in a previous chapter, were the culminating force to this result, ending in the popular consecration of religion to nationality. In the great meetings called by Nehemiah[1] and Ezra after the return from Babylon, the earlier migration covenanted to build a State and establish Jahveh in the centre of his people on a throne of historical laws.

The early aspirations of the Hebrews after a tribal god are the substance of the Mosaic tradition as now worked over in the Old Testament books. They furnish the key to their Abrahamic call and covenant, to their Exodus epos, to their exchange of the more generic name Elôhîm for that of Jahveh, as sign of unity, supremacy, holiness.

[1] See Nehemiah, x. 29. Kuenen: *Religion of Israel*, ii 229

It was as natural for them as for the other tribes, all of whom had their local divinities, and all were mixed in the Hebrew mind. It is difficult to describe a process, each step of which has been covered by the succeeding one, and by the reconstruction of ideas, traditions, and literature in a new interest, down to the great reconstruction of the traditions and laws into the Levitical institutions by Ezra and the other priestly scribes, from 538 to 458 B. C., under the influence of the Babylonian exile, and brought to Judea by him at the latter date.

But we may specially note the great—later, I cannot but think—recognized significance of the name *Jahveh*, "He that is," with a future as well as present force; in other words, simply *the real God*, as contrasted with all other national gods, who were rejected because held to be false. It is obvious that the original selection of this term did not imply positive monotheism nor exalted purity; but it was well fitted, in the developed use of it, to imply the concentration of thoroughly earnest minds on truth. Here was a germ of moral allegiance, which promised, in Semitic hands, to press forward into passionate rejection of that indifference to contrasts of name and quality which inheres in polytheism. In the higher minds at least, it would be developed into an intense hatred for the unconscious immoralities of old Semitic worship. The moral exaltation of Hebrew prophecy, that grandest gift of Semitism to the human race, was thus in some measure foreshadowed by the Hebrew tribes in their earliest conscious acts of free religious choice. It was not, as Robertson Smith would argue, a supreme proof "that the Old Testament religion is no mere natural variety of Semite monolatry, but a dispensation of the true and eternal religion of the spiritual God."[1] It is a perfectly natural Semitic development. They did not stand in the "secret counsel of Jehovah,"—

[1] *Lectures on Old Testament*, p. 273.

there is no such secret counsel. They did what idealists do on given conditions. The full ripening and purification of that noble germ was very gradual. The Jahveh of the later Isaiah was no immediate inspiration of unity and holiness. He grew (as we have already shown) from a beginning not essentially different from the Asshur of Assyria or the Chaldean Adrammelech. His palpable associations were with the solar fires, the destroying and productive forces of Nature, vitalized with conscious purpose, omnipotent to create or to kill, knowing no impulse towards the disobedient but to exterminate them,[1] and specially determined in his volition by the peculiar fortunes of the Hebrews in Egypt and Canaan, as well as by the free traditional worship on the high places practised by the tribes to a comparatively late period. Made thoroughly earnest by tribal sufferings and the extremes of desire and defeat, they gradually shook free their ideal from these material investments, and made it at once a supreme personality and a righteous law. But through every subsequent phase it never escapes that first anthropomorphic, arbitrary meaning of Jahveh, — a conscious Will, dividing right from wrong, determining the true, rejecting and destroying the false, with two-edged sword, rewarding obedience and punishing disobedience in ways of its own choosing. This institution of morality and holiness by force of an omnipotent Will is just as true of the Christ of the Last Judgment as of the Jahveh of the Exodus and the Asshur of the Ninevite kings.

The phases of this natural evolution were determined by the national destinies. The God of Amos, as of the later Isaiah, was an outgrowth of secular causes, a product of the whole history of Hebrew relations with the human race. Whatever cultivated their sense of nationality, those Semitic instincts of personal and tribal will, of

[1] Genesis, vi. 7.

exclusiveness in the claim of authority and in the sense of devotion, went to the formation of the religious ideal. Its roots therefore are in Canaanite as well as Chaldean soil, and the parallel strata there show the universality of this rule. That seething mixture of humanity and barbarism in the old Hebrew laws and life was analogous to the combination of military frenzy and industrial ardor in the Assyrio-Babylonian world. And that majesty of righteous law which bowed the souls of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Jesus, and inspired their immortal protests against the vice and formalism of their times, came slowly in the fires of spiritual experience out of the primal concentrated aim to find a separate tribal god. In this began the sense of *holiness*. For separateness meant inviolability; in other words, reverence, awe, authority of conscience, and faith. The same word (*kâdôsh*) signifies *apart*, and *holy*. And that aloofness, which was at first the symbol of tribal pride and ambition, became a *purity*, which spurned the pretences of formal piety and the pride of human tyrannies, and hastened with impartial thunders to the help of the weak and oppressed.[1] Thus the petty passions of undisciplined and roving clans are slowly transformed into universalities of immortal principle. Such is spiritual evolution. Not mere creation of the greater by the less, but the implication of natural intuition, the sacred sense of obligation, the cosmic unsearchable beauty and order in every step of growth.

Nor is the transformation at an end. Even the highest forms of thought and feeling in Hebrew experience, as in that of other early races, were very crude stages of this implication. They were conceived as external revelations, words of Jahveh spoken to his prophets or his people, and through them to mankind. A divine Will,

[1] So the purity of Ahura in the Avesta is most conspicuous in his abhorrence of sin. *Yaçna*, xxxi. 13.

analogous to their human ideal, a voluntary choice between two opposites, a distinctly conceived motive and purpose, impressing itself on man as an instrument, were posited outside man and the world as the ultimate source of truth and ground of righteousness. This personal relation was so intensely conceived by the Hebrew prophets, that their language assumed them to be under a divine possession, and took the form of a religious and moral absolutism, imposing enough to bring all civilizations to their feet. But, overwhelming as they are to the anthropomorphic instinct, these conceptions have always ignored the direct participation of human nature itself in all the truth and right it is cognizant of, and the impossibility of receiving either the one or the other form of experience from a Will outside of the nature of things and of man. To suppose such a Will, selecting definite methods of education for a special people, and communicating these to chosen instruments, not through experience or study, but by direct influx, was but a Semitic exaggeration or extreme form, though primary, of what has always been, and still is, the popular idea of religious truth. For the notion of personal commandment is here intensified by its connection with the passion for national unity, expressed by a central theocratic ruler, and his extension to world-sway. It was the natural theistic instinct of the Hebrews that made them insist on having a king; an instinct which a troop of judges or seers could not satisfy. The Semitic God is the divinized king, and when lifted above all earthly kings is the king still; holy because separate, and awful in the power to do, not as he ought, but as he wills. This is the Hebrew theocracy, so potent in its persistence in the Christian church. I have no doubt that monotheism is, as a rule, reached through tribal or national consciousness, and that Hebrew and Semitic history herein represents a decisive phase in the history of mankind.

In thus ascribing monotheism in a large degree to a political experience, I do not discredit what is called the intuition of God, which in fact merely takes its conditions therefrom. This intuition cannot properly be defined as teaching any special form of deity; it is simply the perception of substance as higher than phenomena, and as necessary to their existence, and associates itself more and more with the intuition of duty, holiness, right, without which no conception of God can exist. Its highest form is the result of the deepest religious and philosophical culture. For this reason, no conception of a personal voluntary agent, apart from the universe, can finally satisfy it. Substance, as inscrutable and indefinable, the infinite reality that underlies all order, beauty, goodness, and contains all intelligence, all principles and laws, is thus, properly speaking, the universal significance of the intuition of God. To this highest form Semitism, in its great religions, does not consciously attain, however it be involved in their logical evolutionary necessities, as in those of all other great faiths of mankind. Not more in the Old Testament of the Hebrews than in the tablets of Asshur, is this pure conception of deity found. The New Testament religion is also worship of a personal Will; a pure monotheism. It is anthropomorphic, and creates a God in human form outside of and above humanity; and, although bringing this God into closer relations with individual feelings and freedom than the older faith from which it grew, does not pursue unity or holiness as an ideal with more ardor than did the Hebrew nationality, which required the surrender of all private desires to an all-embracing sovereign Will, separate in its personality from the human soul.

It is in tracing this passion for national unity in its religious expression, that we learn the vast indebtedness of the Hebrews for their whole religious development to

the stimulus of those foreign nationalities which they regarded as its foes. The legends in Genesis, which purport to give the earliest history of mankind, are palpably shaped by a purpose to identify the passions of Israel with the will of Jahveh as maker and governor of the world. In this marvellous series the sovereign claims of the chosen people are affirmed, and their destiny fixed from the beginning by the Supreme Cause of all things. In the oldest portions there linger polytheistic hints and traditions,[1] and there are marks of spontaneous poetic faith which indicate an early origin. But with the crude exclusiveness of the tribe are combined elements of universality, — a conception of history as a whole, a direct recognition of other nations, and of a common origin and interest for all mankind; an effort to deal, in a simple half-conscious way, indeed, with the problems of social order, of human relations, of life and death, with the law of national retribution and the sense of a secular providence, which can only be explained by the action of some great force in various ways developing and counteracting the primitive instincts and desires. This was Babylon, where the old national traditions were worked up, during the Captivity, under the stress of national sorrows and reviving hopes, amidst a vast concourse of nations (*πάμμικτος ὄχλος*), their collision of interests, commercial, industrial, military, and their cosmopolitan experience. Here the earnest theism of Persia and its large toleration not only permitted the Hebrew exiles to study their own fortunes and those of the human race in quietness of mind, but even stimulated their productive faculty to the great task

[1] The latest Biblical studies prove conclusively that the present form, and in large degree the substance, of the Genesis stories, the special Levitical legislation and the historical books, — in short, the body of the Pentateuch, — is the result of elaboration and construction during and after the exile. But these historical studies of portions of the text are not our main reliance. The more primal origin of the whole series is equally obvious. Earlier borrowing from Babylonian, as well as Canaanite and Phœnician, must explain the basis of these legends. Kuenen: *Religion of Israel*, ii. 159-168.

of literary and religious construction, never before fairly undertaken. But besides bearing an important part in the final shaping of the Genesis myths, Assyria and Chaldea were in large degree the sources of their earlier forms.

The Hebrews themselves conceded to Babylon an immense antiquity, as the city of Nimrod,[1] in the third generation after Noah.[2] It is inferred from the cuneiform inscriptions that a scientific astronomy centred there two thousand years before Christ,[3] resting on the zodiac, the division of the great circle into three hundred and sixty degrees, and all the large and small divisions of time known to us, — the planetary week, the gnomon, the solar and lunar years.[4] According to Diodorus, the Babylonian had conceived of the world as an established divine order, and as regulated by guardian powers, each in his station, planetary or stellar.[5] It is obvious that no comparatively rude race like the Hebrew could have come into close relations with a civilization so ancient and so ripe, without drawing largely on its fund of traditional beliefs. Here indeed we find the cradle of Semitism; the natural key to those imaginative Hebrew myths which have been regarded as the gift of an inspired race to the religious nature of man.[6]

The Genesis story of creation gives a divine authority to the Hebrew Sabbath as the day of rest for the national God after six days creative work.[7] This is manifestly the motive of the distinctive Hebrew legend, which in many respects grew out of the vast elaboration of the Sabbatic idea by the priestly legislation after the exile, though of

[1] Genesis, x. 10.

[2] Carré: *L'Ancien Orient*, ii. 445.

[3] Lenormant: *Essai de commentaire des fragments cosmogoniques.*

[4] Lenormant: *Manual of Ancient History of the East*, ii. 185.

[5] Carré: *L'Ancien Orient*, ii. 469, 470.

[6] It is only in accord with its whole history that the Jewish people have concentrated their highest traditional respect on the Babylonian Gemara (or Commentary on the Mishnah) instead of the Jerusalem. Wünsche: *Der Talmud.*

[7] Genesis, i. 1; ii. 3.

course the Hebrew Sabbath is not due to this alone, being of far earlier origin.[1] But the division of days by sevens is far older than the Hebrew Sabbath. It belongs to the earliest fund of religious traditions. It is not founded on any recurrent period in the order of Nature, yet it is not arbitrary, still less mystical.[2] It is a part of that primitive astronomy which was the infantile unity of science and faith, and appears on a gigantic scale in all the cosmogonies of antiquity. The central figures in this cultus of the stars are the five planets, with the sun and moon, observable among all the heavenly host by their relative change of place and apparent specialty of function. They were symbolized by the seven stages of the Babylonian and Assyrian *ziggurat*, or towered temple; in the seven walls of Babylon, and in the seven days of the week, the seventh day being consecrated as a day of release from labor. An old Accadian calendar,[3] probably of the seventeenth century before Christ, gives the special festival for every day, the seventh being always designated as a Sabbath (*Sabattu*); on which the king himself shall not change his garments, nor ride, nor sacrifice, till night, nor even administer the government. From this royal rest appropriated by the Semitic races of Chaldea, it was but a step in the intenser anthropomorphism of the Hebrews to make their own God the example of Sabbatic release, and to pronounce it as his command. The second Jahvistic account of creation[4] has more signs of antiquity and originality than the other, and is referred by Kuenen to a possibly earlier period than the exile; but on doubtful grounds. In the Chaldean cosmogony, as reported by Berosus,[5] in the Phœnician of Sanchoni-

[1] Kuenen: *Religion of Israel*, ii. 280.

[2] See Philo's absurd reasons for a supposed sanctity in the number seven. Vol. I. chap. xxx.–xliii.

[3] *Records of the Past*, vii. 157.

[4] Genesis, ii. 4, *et seq.*

[5] Time of Alexander. Berosus drew his account from ancient sources, and his fragments are preserved in Polyhistor, Arbydenus, and Eusebius.

athon, and in the cuneiform inscription, which is now believed to be Assyrian and not Accadian, the beginning of things is the formless chaos, full of incomplete germs and half-made creatures, — *Tiamat* (*Tiamtu* of the Assyrians, *Tauthe* of Damascius, *Thalatta* of Berosus) meaning the sea in the sense of abyss. The Hebrew expression for this first material of the world is *Tehôm*, the same word as *Tiamat*, and characterized as without form and void. Compare the first sentence of the Genesis story with the cuneiform Creation-tablets: [1] —

"When above were not raised the heavens, and below on the earth a plant had not grown, and the bounds of the abyss had not been opened, the chaos of waters was the producing mother of all things. And the waters were gathered into one place. But a tree had not grown: a flower had not unfolded, when the gods had not yet sprung up, and order did not exist. . . . Then were made the great gods. All that was done by the great gods was delightful [very good] to them."[2]

"He (Anu) constructed constellations, like figures of animals (zodiac); by them dividing the year into twelve months: planets also for rising and setting ("signs"). Wandering stars to shine, harmless, in their courses. He made the gates strong, right and left. He set the moon to rule the night. . . . And the sun arose in glory."

The lunar phases are perhaps described, yet in a passage extremely obscure; [3] while in another connection there is recorded the institution of the Sabbath,[4] though we know from other sources that the seven-day week and Sabbath rest are really Accadian institutions for kings and people.[5] The close resemblance between this very ancient cosmogony and its Hebrew analogue is broken by the single circumstance that it symbolizes the steps of creation by successive pairs of male and female powers, and seeks

[1] *Records of the Past*, ix. 167.

[2] Smith: *Chaldean Account of Genesis*. In Sayce's edition (1880) a different translation is given, p. 57.

[3] Smith: *Chaldean Account of Genesis* (Sayce), pp. 64, 65.

[4] Ibid., p. 308.

[5] Ibid., p. 89.

to express their stability rather than any special order of production. The successive steps of creation, of which so much has been made by the harmonists, are not very well made out, and their enumeration by days I find myself unable to recognize at all as yet.[1] The account, so far as it is rightly interpreted, may however, as Sayce suggests,[2] rest on older traditions; and although of comparatively late Assyrian, not Accadian, origin, it is certainly older than the present form of the Hebrew story. But a fragment, now missing, is believed to have described the emergence of light, atmosphere, land, and plants.

Finally, man appears, created by Hea, and is commanded to worship daily in fear of his Maker.

"That they might obey (?), he has created mankind; the merciful one with whom is life. May he establish and never may his word be forgotten in the mouth of the black-headed race whom his hands created."

"May he also remove mischief; may he overcome it for the future. Because all places he made, he pierced, he strengthened. Lord of the world is his name, called even Father Bel. The names of the angels he gave to them."

"With friend and comrade speech thou makest. In the underworld speech thou makest to the propitious genii. When thou speakest also he will give."[3]

What we must specially notice is that the Chaldean account, as at once combining in one system many primitive elements of belief which do not appear in the Hebrew, and resting upon ideas which could not possibly have been evolved from the Genesis story, is obviously more original, while the Hebrew is its adaptation to the

[1] Of the hypothetic number of tablets, only four have been discovered, of which that called the seventh is so called only provisionally; and those conjectured to be the second and third are in the highest degree doubtful, to the uninitiated eye certainly, affording no evidence whatever of the special-creation works the translators have found in them. (Sayce's Smith: *Chaldean Account of Genesis*, pp. 62, 63.) The first ascribes the generation of heaven and earth to "the boundless deep," "the chaos of the sea," conceived as a female, and before the existence of the gods themselves. Ibid., pp. 57, 58.

[2] Smith: *Chaldean Account of Genesis*, p. 22.

[3] Ibid. (Sayce), p. 73-78.

supremacy of the national God. In Semitic cosmogonies, as given by Berosus and others, the water is the first material of creation. The Phœnician and Hebrew "deep" was a waste abyss over which wandered the wind, or breath. So Chaldean and Phœnician civilization began with amphibious deities, having fish heads above the man's; and the probably Semitic-Polynesian myth makes the father of gods and men fish up the earth from the sea.[1] It is obvious that such beliefs as these point to centres of civilization on the seashore. The intimation is confirmed by numerous records going to show that the shores of the Erythræan Sea were the great point of departure for civilized Semitism. But the cosmogonies which begin from ocean as a chaotic abyss, containing the germs of things, rest on a wider basis than any such special geographical location. They are found among mountain tribes as well, and at the root of Aryan as well as Semitic mythology, and even of the oldest philosophies. Their ocean is the brooding atmosphere of space, conceived as preceding the gathering of all floating seeds of life into a living world,[2] the appointment of planetary courses, and the orderly voyage of the Sun scattering the powers of life and growth around him as he moves. Even here water plays an important part. The interest is mainly centred in the conflict of the lightning or the sunbeam with the piled and rolling raincloud, — the storm-struggle which opens the mysterious storehouse of waters hidden in the black roaring deeps. As Indra slays "the enveloping" (Vritra) serpent in the writhing clouds in Hindu mythology, as Tistrya fights the demon Apaosha and expels him from the great sea Vouru-kasha, and Thraê-

[1] Fornander: *The Polynesian Race*, p. 63.

[2] Eckstein (*Les Sources de la Cosmogonie de Sanchoniathon*) has explored this field. Berosus' Chaldean cosmogony traces all things back to Thalatta or Tiamat, containing forms of mixed creatures, — a semi-scientific recognition of evolution and progress from the crude and confused forms of life to higher beauty.

tona slays Dahâka, both dragons in Iranian, — as Apollo pierces the Python in Greek, — so Bel divides in two the Serpent (Tiamat), queen of the Chaldean Chaotic Sea. The association of vast resource and far-reaching expansion with roaring and rolling waters is as natural for pastoral as for littoral tribes. Space and sea are equally parents of these amazing fertilizers and producers; and similar names and legends would be associated with these infinitudes of living power.[1]

Look over a boat-side on a breezy day, following the wind out to sea, and you will easily understand the simple instincts to which the waters were the primal cosmogonic element. What productive energy in this undulating mass, vital in every atom; in these multitudinous waves, so swift to break up sunshine into fiery flakes, and fling it off in a rain of delight! How mobile this liquid element, obedient to stir of wind, to lead of tide! To some unseen brooding Will it seems to say, "Shape me as you will, I am ready for your largest purpose, for your light and your law!" And were they not right who said, with foregleam of science, that the earth was product of water? Are not the green islands its offspring, the continents its heaped sediments, the record of its secular art? Has it not piled the countless layers, — its footfalls, its world-architecture? And as the living creatures came swarming in their times, has it not numbered and fed them and laid them to rest under its gentle rain of atoms, — the continents crumbled as they had been builded by its hand? Well might we fancy this rippling laughter, this pulsing rise and fall, this long commingling and commotion, to be the very quiver of the fecund life swarming beneath, — a life that foreshadows all forms elsewhere existing, and has its foretypes of all strivings towards the human, gracious and hateful, noble and mean. How universal the sea! The very hordes of

[1] See the *Bundahesh* story of the sea Vouru-kasha (vii. xiii.).

its tide-water pools mirror all greeds and competitions of man, — his Tartar raids, his hermits, and his parasites of thought. Its fine sands mingle scent of sea-weed and stir of minute life, the gleaming dust of shells, and the friction of abraded stone; no element of that earth-plasm forgot, which is to bloom into herb and flower, and beast and man. Its shores suggest what an infinitude of moods, emotions, aspirations, passions; what stress of resistance and endeavor; what tones and harmonies! The very pebbles it rolls and heaves into barriers to its own march resound monotonous with the familiar, ever unsolved mystery of life and death, the cry of whence and whither that ceases not from man's infancy to his latest maturity; and all is folded in a deeper silence and peace, where the mightiest waste of unrecorded history lays its hand on man's loneliness and fear, with gentle compulsion to trust. The Greeks held Ocean to be the father of Nemesis, — irreversible moral sequence; ethical requital. "Retribution," says Sophocles, "grows slowly, like the wave that rolls up the black sand." All nations have used it as the symbol not only of slow retributory law, but of wisdom hid in fathomless depths, — Mimir-wells, where the eye even of a god is lost in gaining it; of strength from patient discipline, of toil that earns the victory, of far ventures for ideal ends, — man's eternal monitor to courage and progress.

For the sea is no mere heap of salted waves; it is an idea; nor would it otherwise have been the mighty reservoir of mythology and faith. How full is man's speech and song of its ideal meaning as lord of wisdom and providence! Glaucus the mythic fisherman, longing for an ocean birth, and fascinated by the taste of briny plants, became a sea-god, blessing the people of the isles and shores with divine forewarnings; builder too of that mystic Argo which bore the tragic freight of sympathies and conquests for the Mediterranean races. All the old sea-

gods are prophets and teachers of the arts of life. Out of ocean-depths comes up Oannes, Cadmus, Melkarth of Tyre. Into them sails away Mexican Quetzalcoatl, fugitive from the world he has blessed, to return in better days. Out of deluge-waters emerge good men, in arks and with sacred words unlost, to re-people and rebuild the earth. Out of the welter of a ruined world, the twilight of the Scandinavian gods, uprise new isles, in whose springing grass are hid the dice of Destiny unharmed. So new religions rise from the chaos of outworn beliefs, to prove the eternal youth of the soul, whose births are cyclic, like the returning tides. Proclus said with reason that "Ocean is the cause of all motion, intellectual and natural." To the ancients these symbols were the ocean itself; for the moderns they must be read between the lines of its visible outward movement.

Thus conceived, the primal deep, whether of sky or sea, is not a material waste, but a prolific idea, in the religious consciousness of man. Whether personal Will, which in the Chaldean, Phœnician, and the Hebrew cosmogony is the creative force,[1] is emphasized as the organizer of chaos (*Bel*), or as shaper of it (*Elôhîm*) in the beginning, —whether as a mysterious desire (*Pothos*) inspiring it, or as Tauthe, the intelligible creator who brings wisdom into the Phœnician world of man, — is not matter of essential difference. The Chaldean Chaos, as well as the Phœnician, is itself conceived as a person; and so is the Hebrew Chaos. "Creation out of nothing," that intense monotheism which has been ascribed to the Elohistic will, is indeed as contrary to primitive intuition as it is to science;[2] it is a

[1] How much more strongly pronounced is this element of Will here than in Hindu mythology, which draws the world out of the One, — the unity of Being, "breathing not," neither "existence nor non-being," creating the worlds with a thought! Hesiod, again, like the Phœnician, rests creation, not on will, but on desire or love. It is in the *Avesta* that is seen this Aryo-Semitic will-power fully recognized as the creative force.

[2] The Hebrew word *bârâ*, rendered "created," properly meant *shaped*, out of some given material, and so *brought forth* thence. See Fürst and Gesenius.

modern abstraction unknown to the Hebrew myth, as to the other analogous ones, from El to Zeus. In these cases the abyss remains behind the personal act, which shapes it to orderly heaven and earth. And the imaginative aspect in which the abyss presents itself forbids us to regard it, so far at least, as a materialistic conception: Nature was full of personal, human meaning, the invincible Pothos or Eros of the Phœnician and Greek.[1] The difference seems to be that in the Chaldean creation this personality is divided into a series, beginning with chaos conceived as female; while in the Hebrew it has completer unity through all stages, as Elôhîm conceived as a man. Even this unity is of later origin, and the very plurality of Elôhîm is strong evidence of an original concurrence of many wills. The stricter monotheism belongs to the prophetic and post-exilian theology, and is certainly the Jahvistic elaboration of ideas closely resembling the Chaldean.

That half-disguised personal Will in the Chaldean Tiamat, at the beginning, is worthy of notice. Damascius[2] — who derived his Chaldean cosmogony from ancient sources — gives a series of male and female principles, preceding the positively creative work, which coincide with the birth of primal gods in the tablet inscriptions, — all centring in Tiamat, the living abyss. From these comes Belus, the demiurge or positive framer of things. The imagination of the ancient world always filled up the unity or space of religious conceptions with multiplications of names, either of special functions or successive generations or times. So Elôhîm says, "Let *us* make man in our image, after our likeness." But personality is always involved. To suppose that by chaos a material origin is intended, is a delusion read into the old texts.

1 Cory: *Ancient Fragments*, p. 92.
2 Lenormant: *Chaldean Magic*, pp. 122, 123.

Early mythology is imaginative, and never conceives of creation otherwise than as the evolutionary act of living force; not always of direct personal volition, but of life in some form. The cosmos itself swarms with individual being, and there is nothing inert or dead. Desire is as old as the world, and inherent in its elements. Intelligence lives in the plasmic germ, and does not wait for man's upright form to hold it. The waters of Tiamat teem with strange monsters, not accounted for save by her living sway. Order enters when Bel, the male principle, proceeds to divide her substance, destroying the crude abortions of the dark, and separates heaven and earth, slaying her dragon life, in whose far-stretching monstrous folds all elements were involved. A Hebrew reminiscence of this myth survives in the seventy-fourth Psalm, where God is praised for breaking the heads of the sea-monsters, and notably giving the dead leviathan for meat to his people; and again, in the prophecy of Isaiah[1] concerning Babylon, where judgment is invoked upon her as "leviathan, the piercing serpent, and the dragon that is in the sea." The pictures of the sea-monster in the one hundred and fourth Psalm and in Job[2] may be added in proof of this traditional association of the waters with monsters of uncontrolled power, — quite as likely to be a reminiscence of the chaos-myth of Bel and Tiamat as of the Egyptian crocodile. The grand intuition, here worth all other mythic elements together, is the universal derivation of order from strife and strength of Will, from oldest Ophion and Cronos to Hellenic Zeus, — the supreme secret of philosophy and conduct, the meaning of Dualism in all ages of the world. Not less striking is the human form given in both cosmogonies, and the rationality of man as partaking of the Divine mind. Elôhîm creates man in his own (physical) image; and in the second account, Jahveh-

[1] Isaiah, xxvii. 1. [2] Job, xli.; iii. 8.

Elôhîm makes him out of his breath and the dust of the earth. In both cases the materials are palpably sensuous, and the likeness is doubtless mainly physical.[1] So in the Polynesian-creation myth, which follows the Hebrew, even in details.[2] Man, whether formed of dust and breath, or of earth and brain, can be like his Maker only in the sense that the latter is in human form, a colossal omnipotent man; and this is precisely the fact concerning the conversing, walking, planning, and punishing powers of the Hebrew Jahveh-Elôhîm.

But here again the substance is ideal; and the root and type of man is found in the highest known personal life. The intenser monotheism of the Hebrew Creator, as compared with the Babylonian, who represents a brotherhood of gods, is due in part to a stronger sense of tribalism, and partly to the combination of Persian Ormuzd-worship with the prophetic spirit fostered in the Hebrews by the exile. The Avesta legend of creation, deriving man and woman[3] from the blood of the Bull (genius of earth), is a comparatively late construction of primitive Aryan myths.[4] But the older theism of the Yaçnas, in the second part,[5] is quite pure enough, as well as sufficiently spiritual and practical, to have had a large part in the formation of the highest Jahvistic conceptions. Ahuramazda is upholder of the pure creation, and first fashioner of the same; to him belongs all that is best and fairest, — the good spirit, the good law, the good wisdom, the kingdom and the power.[6] Nothing could have helped the Hebrew mind to positive monotheism so powerfully as this Persian god. The order of his creation, however, as described in the nineteenth Yaçna and

[1] Von Bohlen: *Genesis*, p. 18.
[2] Fornander: *The Polynesian Race*, p. 61.
[3] Mashya and Mashyâna are generic terms for man and woman, like Adam and Eve.
[4] Darmesteter: *Ormazd et Ahriman*, p. 287, *et seq.*
[5] *Yaçna*, xviii. *et seq.* [6] Ibid., xix.; xliv. 1; xxxvii. 4; xliii.

developed in the much later Bundehesh, has but slight resemblance to the Hebrew. It is completed not in six days, but in three hundred and sixty-five; and its order is as follows, — heaven, water, earth, the Bull (cattle), trees, fire, pure man; and it is very doubtful if, in its oldest form, this order represented a succession in time. Still, there are points of resemblance: Creation is produced in six periods, Gahanbârs taking up a year.

Seen in the strong light of modern worship of an Infinite Person, this Hebrew story of creation is in the highest degree poetic. A will analogous to the human brings all things into being by word of mouth. "Let there be light: and there was light." "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The idea of such creative word is common to the Hebrew and the Persian (*Debar-Jahveh* and *Ahuna-vairya* are kindred conceptions), and to all races which worship pure Will, in distinction from impersonal ideas or principles, which were represented in ancient time, on the other hand, by the Hindu conception of the world as creation by pure thought. But we must remember that this conception of the cosmos is neither intellectually nor scientifically true. To say that the world is made by the word of God is no truer than to say that it is made by the sword of Bel-Merodach, cutting off his own head, or dividing the female principle from the male. Days, in any sense, do not exist before the sun; nor light earlier than the seeing eye of man; nor the heavenly firmament or the grass of the field before the sun and moon. And probably when the truths of evolution, the sciences of unfolding laws, are truly conceived, the eternal unity of the world with its substance will require no such anthropomorphic images to express its sublimity; these will cease to be poetically sublime, because supplanted both in the poetic and the philosophic mind by forms more adequate to the sense of truth. "The world,"

says even Philo, "could not have been created in time, because it is itself necessary to relations of time, and the heavens themselves mean mind."

The purely human interest of the Hebrew story appears more fully in the second account of creation, in which God is called Jahveh-Elôhîm.[1] It centres in the formation of man. It would explain, out of the national conception of deity, how man is closely related to this God; how he comes to be gifted with speech, so as to name creatures and things, and how woman comes to be inferior and dependent. In the first account nothing is said of distinction between the sexes; nor is there any hint of Adam's intimacy with the Maker, and of the gifts and commands that attest it. Other differences have been ingeniously noted,[2] not so important nor so certain, — that the first account appears to belong to a river country (like Babylon), where water would naturally be held the first condition of things; and the last to a dry-land, where production seems spontaneous or instantaneous, where men and trees might seem formed from the dust, and mists from the earth, not rain, water the land. More striking is the very sensuous conception of Jahveh-Elôhîm,[3] and the mystical etymology of the name of woman (*'ishâ*) from that of man (*'ish*).[4]

I. In view of the manifest dependence of the Hebrew story of creation on Persian influence, as well as on a developed nationality, we can hardly be mistaken in regarding the elements which it has in common with the Chaldean legend as borrowed from the latter, rather than as suggesting it. And this judgment is confirmed by the antiquity of the cuneiform record, and by the confession of the Hebrews as to their original home, the locality of their Eden, and the point of departure for varieties of tribes and

[1] Genesis, ii.-iii.
[2] Von Bohlen.
[3] Genesis, ii. 18-21; iii. 8.
[4] Ibid., ii. 23.

languages at Babylon. The assertion of Rawlinson,[1] that "the inspired author of Genesis has preserved the genuine account of a primeval tradition of creation common to the race, while the Chaldeans disfigured it with evident mythology, such as the cleaving of the woman Thalatth in twain, and the beheading of Belus," betrays notions of the receptivity of primeval man for information as to his own origin for which science can have little respect. The origin of such assumptions in preconceived ideas of Biblical infallibility is obvious. A purer example of elaborate mythological construction than the Hebrew story of Creation can hardly be imagined. But beyond Chaldean antiquity, into the mists of prehistoric time, it is idle and impossible to follow this myth of creation.[2]

II. The *Eden Legend*[3] testifies to its origin in the vicinity of the Euphrates and Tigris, — the names of the other two rivers being words that simply mean "flowing waters," and used as generic terms for the purpose of making up the number *four*, the conventional sign of completeness in all Eastern mythologies. It has been noted that the mention of the name Euphrates, without comment, as already well known, points to a Babylonian origin. The conjecture of Von Bohlen that Eden is Eran, with the change of *r* into *d*, is less probable. Eden corresponds with Persian "parks," but not with the Avesta paradise of Yima, which is a form of social relations and polity conceived as ideally perfect, free from sin and disease, the heaven of a few pure Zoroastrian disciples. The Genesis myth is in fact a conscious generalization of history, with the purpose of explaining moral evil and the stern necessity of labor as results of disobedience to a

[1] *Ancient Monarchies*, i. 144.

[2] See Halévy (*Rev. Crit. d'Histoire et de Litérature*, December 13, 1880)

[3] Sir H. Rawlinson, in 1869, deduced from the cuneiform inscriptions the full conviction that the Genesis paradise was meant to be *Gan-Duniyas* or Babylonia; and the belief is not now seriously opposed.

personal commandment. Crude as the idea was, it came to be combined with the really philosophical notion of bringing the living creatures to man to receive their names. And this alone would indicate the late origin of the story. It has evidently grown out of developed views of the primacy of mind over matter, of a natural harmony of man with the universe, and his dependence on conformity with its laws.

When we add that the terms "Eden" and "Garden of God" belong especially to the exile-period,[1] it becomes very certain that the myth received its distinctive form in the midst of the advanced civilization of Babylon. This philosophical interest in the problems of life and character apparent in the Genesis legends as a whole, could hardly have been combined with the childlike qualities originally conspicuous in them without a long period of incubation in a much wider horizon than the narrow nationality of the Hebrew could supply. But behind the whole, and determining its animus, is the nomadic temperament, jealous of its license, hating labor, and reluctant at its slow conditions; trusting spontaneous Nature, and absorbed in the imperious will of a tribal chief; making protest against inevitable contact with a more complex and progressive civilization. Thus far, nothing corresponding to the Genesis paradise has been found in the cuneiform records, but it is hardly possible that such a feature should be wholly wanting.

III. These elements come out more forcibly in the *Legend of the Temptation and Fall.* We have here the Hebrew, and more distinctly the Semitic, conception of the origin of evil, in a rebellious conflict of the will of man against the will of God, his Creator. No other or deeper ground enters into the theory of this legend; no reason for the command to abstain from the tree of knowledge

[1] Ezekiel, xxviii. 13.

but the arbitrary will of God; no explanation of disobedience but the arbitrary will of man. In the Avesta it is the *falsehood* of the tempter's teaching that makes the sin of yielding to it. In Genesis, what the tempter teaches is true, and the sin is simply in the refusal of the human will to be led by the Divine. Ahriman does not rebel against the will of Ahura as such; he chooses the dark as Ahura chooses the light, — the one the false, the other the true. In both cases, the origin of moral evil is in disobedience to a personal Will; but in the Avesta the rights of this Will rest on the deeper ground of truth and light; in Genesis they have no ground beyond themselves. Thus in the Persian the ethical claim dominates and explains the personal; in the Hebrew, the personal is absolute and all-controlling. The older Avesta has nothing corresponding to the special legend of Adam's fall. In the later Bundehesh, the story of Mashya and Mashyâna has few resemblances to it beyond the facts that in both stories a primitive couple, born innocent and taught the right way, are tempted by the power of evil, break the law of duty, and are punished. In one case the punishment is by expulsion from Eden; in the other, by demoralization of habits, and by condemnation at last to hell, the details of which are given in the Bundehesh.[1] In neither case is there the slightest approach to a solution of the great problem of evil.

Again, the ethnic distinction already noticed between Iranian and Hebrew conceptions is here well illustrated. (1) The cause of Yima's fall is "lying speech," as in itself the crime of crimes; while that of Adam consists in disobedience to the special command of an arbitrary Will to refrain from a certain kind of food. Aryan worship of personal power is wont to find some foothold in the nature of things as foundation of moral allegiance, while the in-

1 Chap. xv.

tense Semitic form of the same worship rests on the pure rights of an absolute Will. (2) In the Paradise from which Yima falls, labor is the blessed condition of freedom from age, disease, and sin; and Yima's toils fill his dominion with seeds and harvests, with cattle and men innumerable. In the Adamic Eden, God himself has planted the garden, which man has only to dress and keep, being bidden to eat freely of every tree of the garden but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And *labor* becomes the penalty he incurs in being exiled from it; the *cause* of exile from the nomadic heaven of exemption from manual work, — a free roving life in Nature. Here, as in the succeeding legends, especially that of the murder of Abel, the nomad signifies his dislike of the settled agriculturist and industrial races, his reaction against that Babylonian civilization, probably, from which he had emigrated in the early time. The later experiences of the Captivity fostered the inborn instinct. And the subtile myth in its present form consciously reproves the curiosity of man for knowledge as sin against an imminent Will, whose prerogative it is to govern through jealous monopoly of the wisdom that entitles to sway. It has even been said that the hatred of the nomad for labor was the source of the story of the Fall. This hatred of labor was transmitted to the later Jews, who, however, escape the old prejudice in their Talmud.[1]

The childish fear of a tribal god has become developed by later associations — among which subjection to a highly enlightened conquering state was not the least impressive — into the conception that progress in knowledge is marked by Divine displeasure as sin; and the recklessness of the nomad for the morrow survives all experiences of a better culture, ending as it began in pronouncing labor a curse, and warning against that desire to know, that curiosity

[1] Schreiber: *Talmud*, p. 46.

to construct and aspire, of which labor is the instrument and the crown. At the same time, the Hebrew had been obliged to admit that this form of life makes men resemble gods, and that the arts and inventions of society have proceeded from these apparent crimes against the nomad and his rights. Cain built a city east of Eden and called it Enoch, after his first descendant (compare Assyrian *enuk*, "wise"), an evident reference to Chaldean centres; and his subsequent line discover music and metallurgy.[1] All this Jahveh has cursed as the fruit of fratricide, the martyrdom of the nomad. Such the connection of the Hebrew legend with historical and ethnic relations.

Nothing, however, answering to the Genesis Fall of Man has yet been discovered in Chaldean inscriptions or traditions. The Deluge is, perhaps; it would seem so from one passage, — "the doer of sin bore his sin, the blasphemer bore his blasphemy."[2] But the figures supposed by Smith to represent the temptation scene — the man and woman under the tree eating fruit, with the serpent erect behind them — turns out not to picture the two sexes; and the Creation-tablet, referred to the same idea by Smith, is now shown by Oppert to require a very different translation.[3] Nevertheless, Lenormant finds very close resemblance to the old naturalistic use of the serpent as the representative of evil and temptation.[4] And his zeal for orthodoxy leads him to emphasize the idea that the inspired writer of Genesis, in making this use of an unhistorical tradition among the old races around him, was moved solely by the desire to give it a moral meaning, in explaining the Fall of Man through misuse of evil

[1] Genesis, iv. 16-22.

[2] Smith: *The Chaldean Account of Genesis*, Izdubar col. v. 15, p. 288 (Sayce).

[3] Ibid., p. 75.

[4] *Les origines de l'histoire*, p. 93. Very similar representations have been found on Roman sarcophagi, imitated by early Christian artists, of the Fall, and on a Phœnician vase of the sixth century before Christ, discovered by Di Cesnola in Cyprus.

will. And this he thinks has been the "only" solution of this redoubtable problem "to be found in history."[1]

The various motives combined in the story of the Fall show it to be the result of late elaboration. The shame at sexual relations alone would mark a late origin. Could such ascetic quality be natural to the Hebrews? What other infantile people ever coupled the desire of knowledge with shame at discovering their own nakedness? But we may now recognize the elements which point to a very ancient fund of Semitic beliefs. The attempt to justify the dependence of woman upon man, "bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh," by making her from his rib, and to hold her responsible for his violation of a command which the legend does not pretend that she had heard, appears to indicate a dogmatic motive rather than an early instinct. But the martyrdom and fall alike of Semitic gods and heroes are always mythically associated with the female as instrument of the evil fate, as we have already shown. Far back in Accadian times, the epic hero Izdubar refuses the love of the goddess on account of the innumerable woes caused by her enchantments and temptations. But in one respect this older disparagement of the female element differs from that of the Genesis legend. It refers moral evil back to the lower passions in human nature; while the other, in conformity with the general spirit of Hebrew thought, makes it a positive wilful revolt against higher will. The Persians had no such associations with the female sex, as responsible for man's fall. Falsehood, not woman, was the weapon of Ahriman; by that he corrupted Yima, by that he seduced Mashya and Mashyâna from their primitive innocence. In this later legend of Creation the sexes were so united as to be indistinguishable, and only quarrel after Ahriman has deluded both.[2]

[1] Lenormant: *Les origines de l'histoire*, p. 108.

[2] *Bundehesh*, xv.

The choice of the serpent, in human form, as tempter of Eve to become equal with God, might seem a natural selection of the great type of intelligence throughout antiquity, to represent that forbidden thirst for knowledge which was the Hebrew's peculiar dread. But so special a reason is not required. The name *nâchâsh* (serpent) is Aryan.[1] The serpent belongs to the Ahrimanic creation, and is even Ahriman himself, — the symbol being easily traceable to the hostile meaning of the wreathed rain-withholding cloud in that incessant atmospheric warfare of light with darkness round which Aryan mythology revolves. It is extremely probable that the Semitic hate of the serpent rests primitively on these same apparently universal phenomena. But the direct origin of the latter is evidently in Chaldean traditions. The two-edged swords of the cherubim are identical with the winged bulls of the Assyrian palaces;[2] and though there is no mention of a forbidden Tree of Knowledge, there is at any rate a Tree of Life both in the tablet monuments and in the legends. The old Babylonian seal represents two figures sitting beside a tree and holding out their hands to its fruit, while a serpent is in the background. That the date of these Chaldean elements must be at least 2000 years B. C. is attested by numerous seals and inscriptions. The serpent Ophion, first a god, precipitated into the sea by Cronos, holds the position of evil power in the Phœnician mythology. In contrast with these traditions, strong proof of the comparatively late origin of the Hebrew story is to be found in a complexity of structure and purpose, which even the simplicity of its elements and style cannot cover, — the prostration of the serpent, and its thoroughly dogmatic explanation; the manifest purpose to justify the subjection of woman; the punishment of man for yielding

[1] It is given by the Buddhists to the primitive tribes of India and Thibet.

[2] Lenormant: *Les origines de l'histoire d'après la Bible*, p. 129.

his will to the sex which should represent the passive as he the active elements; the jealous God, deliberately testing his offspring, and enforcing an obedience which touches hidden springs of character; the pains of child-bearing, the burden of toil, referred to highly artificial causes in human disobedience to arbitrary will. Here is obviously the result of an elaborate construction to meet a state of mind in which religious preconceptions and speculative questions were curiously intermingled. The air of simplicity is due to that intense consciousness of personal relations with God which the Hebrew inherited in his Semitic nationalism. This imminent personal Will is distinctly human; walks in the garden, converses, gives way to emotions; guards his exclusive right to immortal life by Chaldean cherubim and waving sword. Of course, the cherubim are the winged creatures at the gates of Assyrian palaces, and the sword is the weapon of Bel which "waved four ways."[1] The autocratic jealousy which says, "Behold now! man is become like one of us," differs most decidedly from the aristocratic contempt of Zeus for that "wretched race of men" whom Prometheus had exalted. Greek mythology, indeed, explains the dark side of nature and life by the jealousy of its Olympian powers. Pallas and Hera and Poseidon are jealous deities; and from the play of their exclusively human loves and hates come the wars and woes of mortals, the tragedy and epos of the world.[2] But the balance of powers and tendencies in polytheism involved these conflicts of motives and claims: they testify to an inward protest against exclusiveness in the interest of beauty and freedom. The jealousy of Jahveh is immitigable, and cannot relent in face of opposition; it is absolute as his unity, as arbitrary as his creative will.

[1] *Records of the Past*, ix. p. 136.

[2] See *Odyssey*, v. 119.

Modern theology, dating from Paul of Tarsus, has read into this doctrinal myth of the expulsion from Eden a more startling dogma, of which it is entirely innocent, — that of the representative Fall of the first man, and its consequence, inherited sin; of which the theory of redemption through an incarnate God is the necessary correlative. A striking instance of the Bibliolatry with which scientific studies are still confused and disabled, is in Lenormant's elaborate collection of mythologic resemblances in the description of the Fall of Man by various races,[1] to prove that an original tradition, revealed to men, "of the events by which the fate of humanity was decided," preserved "in a mysterious symbolic memory," had been distorted by the spirit of error among the Gentiles, and partially among the Hebrews also, but restored to its true significance "by the inspired author of Genesis." It should be needless to say that no such events are shown, nor is any "symbolic memory" of them proved; and that the version of the Fall in Genesis has no monopoly of ethical or spiritual meaning.

The leading purpose of the legend seems to have been to bring out of Adam a twofold race, — one representing the accursed slaves of labor, the other the happy favorites of freedom. The grudge of the nomadic against the settled races, which thus betrays itself in the penalty of the Fall and in the overthrow of Babel, is more boldly confessed in the story of Cain and Abel, whose very names express the antagonism. This prejudice appropriated to its uses the old wide-spread myth of the foundation of cities by fratricides, whose diffusion equals that of the Deluge, yet is not used by Lenormant to prove a primitive revelation, because it would hardly suit his purpose. Its real meaning consists, of course, in the social antagonism of the settler and the nomad. As we go on, the

[1] *Contemporary Review*, September, 1879.

proofs multiply of a Hebrew reaction against that splendid industrial civilization from which the materials for these stories were inevitably drawn. No less striking is the contrast with the agricultural tendencies of the Avesta. The reaction referred to was in fact a reinsistence, in the interest of national association, on the beliefs and habits of a tribe which, wandering from its Chaldean home, made the deserts and mountains of northern Mesopotamia its halting-place, where it unfolded that antagonism between the inhabitants of highlands and those of plains along the navigable streams, which belongs to early epochs in Aryan and Semitic races alike. This antagonism, too, had much to do in producing the famous genealogy of nations in the tenth chapter of Genesis, and is clearly traceable in the distinct parallelism of the names of the two lists of Adam's sons, — the Sethites and Cainites, — in which each name is slightly modified in the one list to produce an opposite moral meaning to that which it bears in the other.[1]

In the list of Shem's descendants this is not so evident. The names of the ten patriarchs had their foretype in Chaldean tradition. The ten antediluvian kings of Berosus' chronology cover four hundred and thirty-two thousand years, — evidently an astronomical cycle,[2] the great year of the stars,[3] — and their names have been ingeniously derived[4] from the animals of the zodiacal and sidereal signs, first marked and named by the Chaldeans. The same number of progenitors appears in most ancient cosmogonies, — in the Persian Peshdadians, the Hindu great gods, the ancestors of Odin, the Chinese mythic kings. But whatever their astronomical meaning, the names of these Chaldean antediluvian kings are mostly compounds of Anu, oldest and chief of Chaldean gods. The number

[1] Lenormant: *Les origines de l'histoire d'après la Bible*, p. 181. Von Bohlen: *Genesis*.
[2] Lenormant: *Essai des fragments cosmogoniques*, p. 230. Diod. Sic. ii. 7. 36.
[3] Ibid., p. 216.
[4] Ibid., pp. 249, 250.

ten has a universal mythic value, which has even been traced back to the name for the fingers of the hand.[1] The only direct point of attachment of the ten Hebrew patriarchal names with these solar traditions is the lifetime of Enoch, which has precisely the length of a solar year. Yet not only their undoubted origin, but their elaboration at Babylon, must have associated them with physical and even solar phenomena.[2] Some of them are found to be Babylonian and Phœnician.[3] They were taken from a pre-existing fund of materials for mythic construction, since they are mainly the same with the previous list of Cain's descendants, and have been used to serve very different purposes in such construction. The main point is that they are now shown to have belonged to the so-called "Book of Origins," compiled by a priestly writer in the Captivity. The very limited lifetimes ascribed to the patriarchs, as compared with the Chaldean kings,[4] indicate that the purpose of this writer was not like that of the latter enumerator, to fill up the vast void of past time with human or divine lives, but a very different one; probably to show that disobedience has gradually diminished the actual duration of a lifetime, and to exalt Jahveh as ordainer of the law that virtue assured length of years, and vice early death. God's spirit would not endure long strife with evil-doing; and so from Adam to Abraham, the allotted period shrinks from nine centuries to less than two.

These mythic procedures do not yield us any light on the transition from patriarchal to civil forms of government, nor should we expect any such historic or political

[1] Eckstein: *Les Sources de la Cosmogonie de Sanchoniathon.*

[2] Goldziher: *Mythology among the Hebrews*, pp. 18, 19.

[3] Smith: *The Chaldean Account of Genesis* (Sayce), p. 316.

[4] Lenormant imagines that he finds one of the exact scales on which these earlier cyclic numbers were diminished by the Hebrew mythologer (*Les Origines de l'histoire*, etc., p. 276) in the reckoning of each patriarch's life down to the birth of his oldest son. Oppert thinks he put a week for every five years of the Babylonian figures (Ibid., p. 277).

sense in the Hebrew tribes. We have here simply a genealogical tree of the Hebrew race, constructed on the principles already stated, to meet the demand for some account of that primeval epoch which the religious importance of the Deluge made of high interest.

IV. In view of the derivation of all things from a watery chaos at the divine command, the notion of Floods overwhelming disobedient races, whose life had proved the failure of this creative process, was perfectly natural. The fact that many races, especially Semitic and Aryan, have the idea embodied in myths, does not prove a common origin, still less a primeval revelation. It was simply a recurrence of the mind to the primitive waste and disorder, as a state which would give opportunity to the good-will of God to evoke a new human order by a repetition of the first process, or by one analogous to the first. The large significance given by ancient mythology to the term *ocean*, would make it easy for a people dwelling beside great rivers like the Euphrates and Tigris to ascribe world-wide destructive effects to their inundations, and to make these the basis of moral and social renewal. The class of myths to which the Deluge belongs grows out of the demand of the human mind for cyclic movement, for rhythmic recurrence of conditions, as a sign of continued purpose, harmonious relation, and providential care. The safe return of the circle into itself guarantees perfect order. So the soul is set to rhythms of its own, and instinctively seeks alternation in the destinies of the cosmos as in the details of experience. It keeps constant regard to its past steps, will have familiar nodes, recurrent refrains, that make its movement ideal, and turn even its limits into liberties. And so cyclic destruction and renovation belong to the very framework of positive religions,[1] confessions of the mingled faith and fear on

[1] Brinton: *Myths of the New World*, p. 198.

which these are strung. The Deluge-myth is moreover too widely spread in various forms to be referred to anything less universal than such a demand as is here described.[1] But historically the Hebrew story is evidently of Chaldean origin, as its extreme resemblance to that of Berosus and that of the Izdubar epic is sufficient to show.[2] The Xisuthrus of this very ancient legend is the Hasisadra of the cuneiform epic,—as found and translated by George Smith, and improved by later interpreters. The Izdubar epic is far older than the Hebrew version, and even more nearly identical with it than the account in Berosus,[3] since it explains the Deluge as a penalty for sin; as does also the Greek legend of Deucalion. The corresponding Hindu legend, on the contrary, in which Manu is saved by the fish as an incarnation only, has no hint of this. The Chinese "Deluge of Yao" is no deluge at all, but a myth of agricultural industry. The originality of the story of Hasisadra is shown by the fact that it makes a part of a great epopee, and that its whole setting, as well as spirit, is Chaldean. It could never, by any possibility, have been borrowed from the Genesis record. The points of resemblance are decisive; those of difference few and trivial, relating only to petty details. These differences,—such as the size and form of the ark, the location of the mountain, the smaller number of persons saved in the Hebrew Deluge to re-people the earth, the translation of Hasisadra like Enoch to heaven or some remote region, his voice heard in the air bidding his companions take up the books

[1] What has been said of Lenormant's effort to show a wide-spread similarity in creation-myths to justify his conclusion of a primeval revelation, is still more applicable to his collection of parallel Deluge-legends. The advocates of such a revelation have little or nothing to stand upon, loudly as they have proclaimed the Noachic story. Behind the Babylonian epic it is impossible to penetrate. This has been satisfactorily shown by the criticism of Halévy on Lenormant's *Les origines de civilization* in the *Revue Critique de l'Hist. et Lit.*, Dec. 27, 1880. See also *Revue de l'Hist. des Religions*, ii. 1; iii. 2.

[2] Cory: *Ancient Fragments*, p. 54 (extract from Syncellus).

[3] Given in Polyhistor and Arbydenus.

of the law buried at Surippak and give them to the world, — are part of the local coloring, and do not throw doubt on the conclusion above stated. In no case is the indebtedness of the Hebrews more evident. The command to build the ark, the threat to destroy mankind, the entry of the animals, the opening of the windows and sending forth of birds, the altar built on leaving the ark, the pleasant savor of the offering to the senses of Jahveh, the promise that the earth should not again be drowned, the covenant and the blessing, — all show that the Hebrew copied from this original. Not only is the ark coated with bitumen in both legends, but precisely such gopher-wood structures navigate the Euphrates to this day.[1]

The origin of the ark-form of the Deluge-myth is probably in the notion of an enclosed vital energy, which breaks forth out of chaos to make or renew. World-egg, vessel, chest, basket, various symbols of this envelopment are conceived; and the mythology of Deliverance is traceable throughout antiquity by these varied forms of one idea.[2] The vital energy of the world or sun, in manifold forms of struggle against the powers of darkness, or of triumph over chaos or death, is ever represented.

Osiris, Adonis, Dionysus, Melkarth, are forms of what the Egyptian funeral ritual invokes as "the Great One in the chest," or ark. The sacred ship that bears gods or heroes or divine men to world-mastery or redeeming work, sails through every mythologic sea, and is borne in every festal train. The egg breaks asunder, and life, order, deity emerge by the law of birth out of death, which nought escapes. The infant king of Assyria, and the babe who is to deliver Israel, alike lie exposed in baskets among the rushes of the river, and must be saved themselves before they can save others. The arks of Sargon and of Moses

[1] Loftus: *Chaldæa and Susiana*, p. 69.

[2] See this well put in Brown's *Great Dionysiak Myth*, i. 196.

are after all the same symbol as the mystic basket of the Persian ritual and the Deluge-arks whence the world is renewed. Finally, the old land of exile itself becomes the world-egg, or sacred chest for a new Messiah, of whom it was written, "out of Egypt have I called my Son."

The Hebrew relaters of the Flood differ from all others in laying the scene of world-renewal in a region remote from their own, thereby confessing their indebtedness to a foreign source. They have, in addition, set the beginning of the rain at the autumnal equinox, which time, in Chaldea, actually opens the rainy season.[1] Undoubtedly the Euphrates furnished the materials of the story by its inundations, which still cause the whole land to become "pools;"[2] and these materials were used in the later Hebrew theological revival, as well as in the Chaldean epos, to enforce the idea of chastisement by a personal God for disobedience to his will. In the early time, all the Nature-gods come in to help Hea, the god of waters, bring on the storm; and Bel, as deliverer, takes Hasisadra by the hand. This fact alone would prove the Hebrew version, as strictly monotheistic, to be the later. Nevertheless, Rawlinson as usual assumes that the Hebrews have preserved the tradition of the Deluge in its primeval truth, while the Chaldean account adds these points in which the two stories differ, "because not content with the plain truth"!

The Hebrew legend, though more monotheistic, is at the same time more exclusive, arbitrary, and dogmatic in

[1] Lenormant: *Le déluge et l'epopée Babylonienne.*

[2] At this day "the waters which descend every year from the Armenian mountains are sufficient to make several such rivers as the Euphrates, which breaks over its banks and cuts new channels, and but for incessant canalling would keep the rich lands of Mesopotamia under water every year. The peasants told Kadree Pasha that the overflow of the Euphrates was in the hands of God. 'I am not going to look into that matter,' answered the unbiblical Moslem official; 'what concerns me is how you have spent the twelve thousand pounds appointed by the government to regulate it.'" Geary's *Journey through Asiatic Turkey*, vol. i chap. xi. 1878.

tone than the Chaldean. It carries the worship of personal Will to a more extreme form, centring in a jealous Individual, whose whole dealing with man is by tests and retributions. In no other way could the sovereignty of a national God be displayed; and so the later mythologies explain the mysteries and burdens of life as penalties of his inflicting. The first man and woman are made to sin that the Creator may subject the one to the burden of labor and the other to the pangs of childbirth and the will of her husband.[1] Next, all mankind sin, that the Omnipotent Individual may doom all to death; He finds Noah only worthy to be saved, in order that in this one family the whole future of mankind may be concentred. He is evidently laying down the (mythic) rule, according to which all history should converge to a single people, as alone fit to be chosen for his own. And so the whole primeval history of man is shaped into a chain to bind the human race into the service of the Hebrew and his God.

The Chaldean story of the Deluge, on the other hand, was simply an episode in an epic, based on natural phenomena describing the work of Nature-gods, and had no special motive beyond transporting a holy man to a remote place of blessedness, where the hero of the epos may consult him, far away along the Erythræan shores consecrated by traditions of the primal ocean, of the first revelation of social wisdom, the earliest schools, libraries, and priesthoods. There is no purpose of extolling the gods of Assyria or Chaldea, nor of expounding the philosophy of penalty, nor of accounting by personal inflictions for the evils of life. These old materials of a common Semitic fund the Hebrew revisers, under the new national impulse, elaborated in the conscious interest of a God who from the beginning chooses out one man to receive his favor, while

1 Genesis, iii. 16–19.

all the rest suffer the penalties of disobedience to his sovereign will. No indication of the nature of this sin is given, beyond the charge that men took wives at their will. The assertion ascribed to Elôhîm, that every imagination of man's heart was evil continually, and that he repented having made him, is evidently a late product of dogmatic motive. No early social epoch of civilization could be guilty of so pessimistic a view of human nature. It is devised for the purpose of setting off the righteousness of Elôhîm, and justifying his choice of a special people: his rage at his own work and his resolve to destroy it are not less characteristic of autocratic will. Noah (renewal) is interpreted to mean *comfort:* one man only, a type of the chosen people, with his family, is saved from the deluge of evil in the surrounding world. The intense earnestness of this motive gives a simplicity to the style, which renders it at once naïve and sublime. All description of Nature is wanting, because the motive has no regard either for Nature or beauty as such. It is absorbed in the absolutism of Divine Will. It culminates in a commandment to be fruitful and multiply, and to avoid eating flesh with the blood, or the shedding of blood, — traditional precepts, marking early transitional steps towards civilization, — and in what is called the Noachic covenant, of which the sign is the bow in the cloud. Of this exclusiveness the Chaldean story has not a trace. It lays no emphasis on Hasisadra being the only good man: his servants, male and female, and "the sons of the people" are saved with him. The gods do not act arbitrarily nor autocratically. Hea tenderly remonstrates with Bel, dissuading him from severity towards men; and the final propitiation, answering to the promise to Noah in the rainbow, is induced not as in his case by the sweet savor of a sacrifice, but by the reasons, suggested through Hea, that a sweeping penalty would be unjust, and by the sympathy of Ishtar,

who with the other gods compassionates mankind with covered lips.[1] The only form in which the idea of a Deluge appears in the Persian books, is the battle of Tistrya to purify the great waters of Ahura from the poison of Ahriman.[2] The rain falls for ten days and nights, and the earth is covered to the height of a man, and all evil creatures are drowned. A great wind sweeps the waters into a great sea, which Ahura sends Tistrya to free from the poison of Ahriman's dead; and in the great battle he is aided by mighty rains, which afterward serve to fertilize the earth. This is evidently wholly disconnected from the penal deluge of the Semites, and forms but a natural phase of the great War of Deliverance which Mazdeism carried through all the elements and forms of Nature. The waters are not penal; they are healing, the pure gift of Ahura, serving only to bless mankind. They are invoked, in the Avesta legend, by the serpent Dahâka, for aid in destroying men; but in the form of the spotless Ardvî-çûra they refuse him the boon,[3] while she grants the prayer of Thraêtona for aid to destroy the serpent.[4] "Come, O ye clouds, come! Let the waters spread, fall, and spread abroad! Pour ten thousand waves, —speak, O holy Zarathustra! for the destruction of disease and death, of the evils sent by evil powers; for the destruction of all that injures men. Let the earth, plants, all healing things, be renewed."[5]

V. The ethnographical study in the tenth chapter of Genesis, purporting to be the descending line of Noah's sons, is a carefully prepared record of the nations known to the Hebrews of the exile, and of those only, — each treated as a distinct person, instead of a mixed community. It illustrates again how powerful was the Semitic impulse

[1] Sayce's Smith: *The Chaldean Account of Genesis*, p. 287, *et seq.*
[2] *Bundahesh*, vii. [3] *Abân-Yasht*, 7. [4] Ibid., 8.
[5] *Vendidâd*, xxi. 3–14; Harlez. See also *Yaçna*, lxiv.

to give a personal form to every object of thought. Of linguistic relations there is really no more conception than would be conveyed by the fact that the nations are grouped according to their geographical position, as Herder recognized long ago.[1] Such a study was possible only in a centre like Babylon. The Hebrews, in their early tribal isolation, could not have conceived such a synthesis. *Ham* simply means black tribes of the hot south; and *Japheth*, whether signifying the "brilliant" or the "far-spread," is really a term for the nations of the West.[2] Canaan is oddly enough placed among the Hamites, though Canaanite and Hebrew were certainly of the same ethnic origin, of which the writers were probably unaware. The Philistines are wrongly traced to Egypt. Elam was not Semitic, but Accadian. The reference to Sidon proves a late origin.[3]

VI. This geographical character of the distribution, which explains the ethnological errors, modifies the national interest of the myth;[4] but such an interest becomes very evident, not only in the treatment of the family of Ham, but especially in the legend of the Tower of Babel. A cuneiform tablet recently discovered speaks of a confusion of counsels relating to a piece of tower-work, and of its destruction by the anger of Anu.[5] Berosus helps confirm the probability that this is the original story of the Tower of Babel, by his own story that the gods in early time, angry at men's efforts to scale the sky, overturned their work by great winds, and caused confusion of speech, which had before been one and the same.[6] But this, so

[1] Herder: *Ideen zur Geschichte der Menschheit.*

[2] Goldziher's solar etymologies on these points are extremely unsatisfactory.

[3] Rawlinson (*Origin of Nations*) has an elaborate effort to show that nothing in the table is disputed by science. But his argument is a palpable failure, full of hypotheses, and after all finding a mere fraction of the designations historically verified.

[4] Von Bohlen: *Genesis*, ii. 202.

[5] *Records of the Past* (tr. by Boscawen), vii. 129. Smith: *The Chaldean Account of Genesis*, Sayce, pp. 163–165.

[6] Cory: *Ancient Fragments* (from Alexander Polyhistor), p. 75.

far as it goes on the ethnology of Babel as "confusion," must have come from the Hebrews; no Chaldean would ever have supposed Babel to mean anything but the "gate of God." Whatever may have been the earliest form of the story, the anger of God at the pride of man which sought to scale heaven is thoroughly Hebrew. The hatred of the nomad for settled life, which constructed the tale of Cain's fratricide, and ascribed to his descendants the first cities, sciences, arts, and which perhaps moved the ancestors of the Hebrews to go out from "Ur of the Chaldees," was stimulated by the great gathering of races at Babylon and their diversity of speech. These were an offence to the nationality of the exiles. The unfinished tower of Belus, the mighty ruin with its haunting legend of offended powers, was taken as the sign of a becoming jealousy in their own God; the vitrified bricks around it proved a fall by lightning, — and so the story reached its present shape in the Jahvistic revisal of traditions after the exile. Rawlinson again gives the Hebrew the credit of preserving the original revelation, and the Chaldean the discredit of having tampered with its interest for mankind for the sake of enhancing certain "sacred books" of their own, — a charge really applicable to the Hebrews, whose interest in mankind is confined to bringing the whole race under the power and wrath of their national deity. Later still, the Christian writers Cyril, Eusebius, Syncellus, and others, citing Berosus who says the gods overturned the tower of Babel, falsified the text to make it correspond with the Bible, substituting "God" for "the gods."[1]

In Bible apologetics of the kind we have given, Rawlinson simply follows the traditional method of the Christian Church. The relation of the Hebrew myths to the ethnic ones which they so much resemble, when not positively inverted so as to make the latter the borrowers, is mis-

[1] Carré: *L'Ancien Orient*. ii. 462.

represented as being the introduction of a wholly new and higher spirit, universal and divine as the others are human and special, and as revealing the one true God as distinguished from the false gods of the Asiatic races. But the Hebrew introduced no such new foundation of authority, no such new ground of certitude. What the Abrahamite really demanded was that his God should have a more human volition and selection, if possible, than other gods; that a covenant should be made with him as between two men, promising a special care and the multiplication of seed on the one side in return for obedience on the other. After the exile had somewhat purified this personal relation by a consciousness of ethnic connection and dependence; after maturer thought had applied it to the solution of social and moral problems; after the prophetic spirit had breathed upon it, — the same monotheistic separatism and exclusive interest still remained firm, although obliged to concede somewhat to these enlarging influences. The national theocratic writer who worked up the old mythology in its present form was mainly intent on bringing the history of mankind into the line of Jahvistic providence and guidance. Now the historic value of this step is simply that which belongs to the idea of personal Will as the substance of God. This idea we have already stated to be characteristic of all the religions of Iran. We have here its culmination in a series of acts by which Jahveh chooses a single people as his typical heirs and representatives for the government of the world. It is this expansion of the Iranian type of worship by the Hebrews that makes their traditional mythology interesting in our present inquiry. As a stage in the progress of man to universal religion, the Iranian conception is still predominant; and the Hebrew phase of it is of immense historic importance.

But neither the Iranian conception, nor its Hebrew or Semitic expansion, is for us the measure and test of uni-

versal truth. This mode of conceiving the substance of the universe can no longer remain unquestioned, even in its still more expanded form, as Christian theology. We have seen that the Hindu mind tended to worship abstract unity and super-personal being as more satisfactory than any definite personal conception. In its pantheism a conscious personal choice of human instruments, men, or nations would be out of place. The Chinese, on the other hand, have not separated deity from the concrete detail of the universe; and here again such a personal choice would not be rational. Modern science has still other objections. Science abolishes supernatural volitions acting from without, and so tends to reject the idea of a personal Creator, in the commonly received sense of the words. Universal Religion, reaching to the inscrutableness of Infinite Being as the substance of the cosmos itself, shrinks ever more and more from ascribing personal motives, intentions, or individual volitions to this Substance. The authority of principles whose root is in realities behind all personal wills, which must be based in them, not they in it, becomes the foundation of absolute morality. The Semitic religions, — Judaism, Christianity, Islam, — were enfolding sheaths of anthropomorphic mythology, needed for a time to protect the growing sense of essential cosmic order, until that which they instinctively groped after should come, as they had come, successively, in their day. That Christianity gave noble meaning to the doctrine of a divine Will, by emphasizing the element of Fatherhood therein is true, and hence its immense historic value; but that did not and could not destroy the essential character of sovereign Will as arbitrary, finite, external. With all its tenderer, freer materials, Christianity did not alter the Hebrew way of conceiving God. Still less did the Jahvism of the post-exilian Hebrews, though improving in some ways on the old Chaldean mythology, substitute a new method. And

we can no longer set off the Hebrews from other more Oriental branches of the Semitic family, in respect of theistic beliefs, as a supremely chosen people, with gifts to humanity of a wholly new and specially providential kind. To abandon this error is the grand edict issued to religious thought from the new-risen tablets of Nineveh and Babylon.

The result of these Genesis-studies may be briefly stated. The religious mythology of the Hebrews, rooted primarily in an old Chaldean and Semitic fund of legend, and the national aspiration for an exclusive deity, were worked over, under an influence which intensified the longing for national independence by a bitter sense of loss, and at the same time expanded their vision and gave it philosophical and historic direction. This influence came from Babylon, in the exile. Here was a concourse of races which could not fail to inspire the idea of humanity as a whole. Here was a large historic, traditional, and poetic literature, from which the Hebrew annalists and psalmists drew much of their tone as well as material.[1] Here were legends of the origin of things, of divine purposes, of penalties for sin, of physical and moral conditions, and of national destiny. Here, as their whole subsequent record shows, the tribes had opportunity to learn spiritual discipline and the devoutness of resignation and trust, and to fit themselves for world-wide service in the realm of religious culture. We may even say that at Babylon began their literary sense as well as their ecclesiastical organization. Here they dropped their Hebrew tongue and assumed the Aramaic, in the sixth century before Christ. Here was adopted the astrological and demonic imagery of the book of Daniel, so fertile for their future apocalyptic writing. Here the spectacle of the rise and fall of empires taught them a kind of uni-

[1] Schrader (*Allgemeine Zeitung*, Augsburg, June 19, 1874).

versality in theoretic scope, without disturbing that intense self-consciousness which made them interpret all history as centring in themselves. In the Chaldean exile originated that strange mixture of opposites which imposed itself on the world as the one only true philosophy of historic providence, and which has had its day in the Christian method of constructing history around a chosen people and a personal Messiah. Instead of finding the evolution of human nature in history, this providential Judaism saw simply an omnipotent personal Will working on mankind and shaping its destinies in the interest of the Hebrew tribes; while the modern method, still the orthodox one, as in Bossuet's day, differs from it only in changing the objective point of the same set of events and data, and so using them as to make the providential Will act, not in their interest as tribes, but in the interest of a Hebrew-born human God, whose claims they declined to accept. The theories of religious authority and divine government which have predominated in Christendom down to the present moment, the recognized foundations of theology and solutions of life and the world, we repeat, began to take shape and direction in the experience of the Hebrew exiles by the rivers of Babylon, weeping when they remembered Zion, their harps hung on the willows. Accursed Babylon was the mother of Christianity.

These beliefs enter naturally into the history of human development; they represent a maturing stage in the evolution of religion considered as the worship of personal Will. This is the key to their imperfections, their want of universality, their rejection by science. This worship of individual Will is the real substance of the exclusive and jealous claims of the ancient Hebrews, — of their nomadic hatred of other races settled in their habits and regulated by laws. This explains their substitution of arbitrary commandment for rational freedom; their superstitions

concerning divine rewards and penalties; their dread of knowledge as a religious trespass; their fear of the Gentile as one under curse, or as ignorant of the conditions of safety.

The Genesis-legends which grew out of these elements are found to lack simplicity and spontaneity; to be a mixture of myth and dogma, and evident elaborations of early and largely Chaldean materials for special apologetic purposes, — such as justifying the institution of the Sabbath, the right of man over woman, the exclusion of foreign races from divine favor, the claim of Jahveh to do according to his will. Even Lenormant admits in his elaborate discussion of their origin, that the writers availed themselves of myths already prevalent in the nations around them for dogmatic purposes, to represent more strongly the violence of the iniquity of the world outside. But we shall not explain their origin in human nature by merely detecting their errors. Behind these are moral and spiritual facts, which history has here, as elsewhere, been constructed to meet and illustrate, — the demand of the religious nature of man for a solution of the problems of his experience, for reconcilement to the conditions of existence and the order of the universe; the demand of his nature for a philosophy of history, for a concentration of motives on some central truth, for unitary movement in human progress; demands which from age to age find new meanings, but always testify to the common nature and aim of man.

More definitely, these antique gropings of imagination and faith, with all their dross of hatred, desire, and fear, are outgrowths of the conscience, — of the eternal dread of penalty, natural and personal, when the soul is under consciousness of evil doing; of the ideal in man when he reflects on the defect of promised good, conceived as somewhat for which he was born, and whose loss is a fall

from Paradise; of the infection of evil in man and Nature, giving the aspect of a poetic justice to deluges, fratricides, and the shortening of human life; and of the hardship of toil, — sole inevitable condition of wisdom and success.

Realities like these, not mere word-changes nor solar phenomena, are what construct myths, make Bibles, found religions. In the crudities of their early history and the persistent illusions of maturer ages, there is no more powerful agent than the fears and hopes involved in the worship of personal Will.

POLITICAL FORCES.

I.

BABYLON, CYRUS, PERSIA.

BABYLON, CYRUS, PERSIA.

THE foregoing section has given some idea of the complexity of those race-qualities that were to be gathered up by the Persian empire into a dynamic basis for the civilizations of the West. All the nerve-fibres of historic force were in fact converging into one massive ganglionic centre, of whose coming energy that spray of races dashed by the will of Xerxes over heroic Greece gave but a feeble and transient sign.

The Babylonian Chaldeans called themselves the nation of the Four Tongues; and we have seen that they contained Semitic, Turanian, and Cushite elements, probably Aryan also. The "mixed multitude" that thronged the streets of Babylon furnished food for the imagination of Greek dramatists[1] and Hebrew mythologists and prophets. Even Egyptian features are visible through the dusky civilization of the Euphrates valley. The cuneiform records of Assyrian conquests astonish us by the immense number and variety of tribes that had reached distinct names and fames at so early a period, and were swept into subjection to a common master. Nineveh was substantially Semitic in her religious and sensuous intensity, in her passion for the universal sway of her national gods, and in her concentrated worship of personal Will. Then came the semi-Aryan Mede, — not Aryan, for the Medes were largely Turanian, the very name of their country being a proof of it; and the Aryans were but a dominant class,—one of six classes, as Herodotus tells us. Oppert even considers the

[1] Aeschylus: *Persæ*.

great Median kings, whose history he records, beginning with Deioces, the founder of the State, as of the Turanian race. A hardy mountain people, for two centuries subject to Assyria, bursts in on the overgrown giant, spread out, inert and loose, and, after hurling aside with barbaric treachery hordes of purely destructive Scythian intruders, shapes the elements into that first great international bond of fellowship in human history, — the League of Lydia, Media, and Babylonia, 610 B. C.

This Median empire was but a flash of nerve-lightning. It lasted less than a century; but when it had passed by, the nations were found possessed, like iron-filings beneath a magnet, by a stupendous force of coalescence. The full organization of these materials, which Semitic Assyria bent on conquest only could not begin to effect, even semi-Aryan Media had to transmit to a mightier hand. The function of the Mede was, with a Turanic *élan*, to break up the fixed soil, and to open channels for a more creative fire. This was not difficult, for the confluence of nations was but mechanical, and without organic relations. Herodotus tells us that Nineveh fell, not from internal strife nor decay, but by the revolt and desertion of her allies; and the cuneiform tablets record one incessant struggle to hold together an empire always crumbling at every point. Cyaxares the Mede, we are told, was the first really to organize an Asiatic army, combining the confused hordes which mere conquest brought together. He was a great personality, and Median history centres in him. But the main function of the Mede was to introduce the Persian, first absorbing the little kingdom of Achæmenes, then in turn being absorbed by his descendant, the great Cyrus. He must decrease, that the returning Achæmenide might increase. He came and went, leaving no trace. The wooden pillars of his palaces speedily perished;[1] his

[1] Rawlinson: *Ancient Monarchies*, ii. 265–277.

sculptures d[illegible] and but one [illegible]
to tell [illegible]

[illegible] some shad[illegible]
wo[illegible] [illegible]he filmy outlines of primeval sea-rovers, which we had [illegible]es find tenderly spared by Nature through her metamorphosis of rocks. Recent researches, too, seem to indicate that the Magi of Herodotus, whom it is no longer possible to identify with the Mazdean fire-priest (*Áthrava*), represented the old religion of the Turanian Medes, especially its demonology, in many respects antagonistic to the Persian faith, which the conspiracy of Gomates, the pseudo-Smerdis, under lead of these Magi, succeeded for a time in striking do[illegible]n.

The Medes, it must also be observed, maintained their language, in spite of Aryan dominion, through the reigns of the greatest Achæmenidan kings; and Darius held it in such honor as to give it precedence of the Assyrian, in the great trilingual inscription in which he recounted his exploits to his subject States. These are signs of an energetic national life, however brief its glory, and make plausible enough the features which we may gather from Greek history to construct their portrait. Tall, handsome, graceful, merciless, and brave, the compact troop of "horse-archers" swept down from their mountains, to pierce the Ninevite armor with their long spears, and open ways for a more vigorous life. There is a fine ease of movement in these irresistible cavaliers, who touch their appointed handwork with the free grace of their own fluted caps, or of the [illegible]llared arcades which they introduced into Oriental art, — a large genial handling, typified in their taking the colors sacred to the five planets and the sun and moon to make

[1] Rawlinson: *Ancient Monarchies*, ii. 321.

walls; a grasp which laws, not to be prostration, and who withdrew at their despotic seraglios where eunuchs kept gu

The religious motor of modern civilizations has been the worship of personality. It is natural to find their springs in that succession of Asiatic empires, each of which was the sudden triumph of some petty tribe, forcing its way to power over the mass by its individual compactness and unity, and by the inspiration of a definite aim. The course of the present chapter will amply illustrate this law of history.

Even Babylon revives from her subjection to Assyria at the touch of the Mede, and for a little while wields a sway wider than either over the ferment of nations. Again the pregnant atom of personal purpose rules the chaos of tendencies: the smallest of States holds the mass by its magnetic force. But unlike the Mede, the Babylonian embodied in himself the whole substance of these ethnic elements in their finest forms, — as history, tradition, institution, accumulated mental resource.

His rise to supremacy, therefore, as we have already said, shows the scope of that prophetic construction which was going on in the Iranian world. The Babylonian kings, all gathered up at last into one speech, one apparel, one record of arrow-head syllables, are of many races. Berosus tells of Arabian, Chaldean, Median, Semite dynasties. Many of their names are still linguistic riddles, and some (such as Hammurabi) point to races now unknown. They had found room in their pantheon for all the older gods, every one the ideal of some tribe of men. It is no

longer an adventurous troop of warriors taking in hand a decaying empire, but a vast historic result, gathering into imperial personality the arts and sciences of a thousand years of growth, and the product of interfused races and religions, temples and priesthoods, on an unexampled scale, and in possession of a literature that summed up the wisdom of the race,—an industrial achievement surpassing all that Asia had known; a passion for national construction far beyond the Assyrian, and culminating in Nebuchadnezzar's reconstruction of every historical monument, city, or great canal in the Babylonian land; its metropolis with the full dimensions of a State, with an area of two hundred square miles, condensing the commerce, wealth, and religion of a hemisphere. Babylon, "hammer of the nations," forcing their tributes before her feet, and their hordes into her legions, was infinitely more; she was mother of arts to the teachers of Phidias and Apelles, the builders of Athens and Italy. She guaranteed that not one gift or tendency in them all should be lost, not one acquisition of humanity fail of circulating through coming time. Babylon, "key of history," was the prophecy of unity, of culture, of universal religion. Nebuchadnezzar, in the Hebrew legend cast down among the beasts for his pride, was not proud enough to boast, or even to know, the grandeur of his function among men.

Observe again what it is that controls the elements to ends beyond itself or them. Personal will has here almost reached its absolute form, so far as the monarch's power is concerned. Another master is yet to come, with greater genius for sway, because it is the genius of a whole tribe concentrating its forces in one man. Babylonian autocracy rests on religion; Persian, on self-conscious gift and positive culture. Nebuchadnezzar is Merodach; Nabonidus is Bel. Every royal name is here a compound of gods and the dealings of gods with men.

Even the rage that tore and the heel that crushed the nations were but conditions of this personal sway, by which direction was given to the thought and faith of coming ages; and in the succeeding European civilizations, whose central force has been always some factor in the worship of will-power, have not these Babylonian conditions of such worship, in one or another form, maintained their ground?

In spite of that remorseless indictment by the Hebrew prophets, echoed by the Christian seer, which have made this queen of Western Asia a hissing on the lips of ages, the strongest unconscious testimony to the significance of her work comes from these enemies themselves. On the one hand, the prophets have nothing to charge against her of which they do not confess that their own people were guilty to the full extent of their power. The pseudo-Jeremiah's[1] picture of Babylon's licentiousness and idolatry is surpassed by Ezekiel's description of the abominations of Jerusalem of that day,[2] and pales before the mournful confessions of the later Isaiah in the name of his rescued nation. Nevertheless, the Hebrew asserted the unaltered claim of these desperate rebels to be the children of Jahveh's mercies and the future crown of his rejoicing,[3] while Babylon had forfeited the right to live. On the other hand, Jeremiah, noblest of the prophets, who dared to speak his mind in face of princes and priests on the meaning of public events, who, undismayed by foul dungeon or patriotic rage, denounced the great national crime of re-enslaving freemen, and launched Jahveh's thunders at the head of a cruel and treacherous king, and who outlived the charge of treasonable sympathy with the foreigner, to find his insight justified by the course of events,—this one statesman

[1] The denunciation of Babylon (chaps. l., li.) at the close of his prophecies belongs to a period after his death, and is manifestly the work of a later hand.

[2] Ezekiel, viii. xvi. xxii.

[3] Ibid., xx. 33-44.

among the prophets has nothing but welcome and honor for the Chaldean city, as Jahveh's avenger and the appointed refuge of his people.

Not till the tread of the Persian marching to Babylon's destruction broke on the Hebrew ear, was Jeremiah's name used by another to pull down the honorable prestige he had built up for her; not till then do we hear of the "golden cup" that has made the nations drunk and mad, whose end is come, and the measure of whose covetousness is full, inhabited only by hyenas and owls. It was the Hebrew's way to construct events when they had passed into fulfilment as inspired predictions of his own absolutism.

But none other than the prophet himself whose lips were glowing with the grandest gospel of political and religious liberty that stands between the lids of the Bible, — "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them,"[1] — none other than he it was who said to foolish kings, in the same great Name, Behold, I have given all these lands into the hand of the king of Babylon, *my servant*; and the nation that will not serve him will I punish with the sword. Hearken not to lying prophets, but serve the king of Babylon and live.[2] And to the captives from Jerusalem, "Seek ye the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried, . . . and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace."[3] "Jahveh's sword is in his hand," says Ezekiel, of the Chaldean, "and Pharaoh's arm shall be [illegible]n."[4]

[1] Jeremiah, xxxi. 33, 34. [2] Ibid., xxvii. [3] Ibid., xxix.
[4] Ezekiel, xxx. In the Talmud the Jewish Rabbins ascribe the destruction of Jerusalem to neglect of popular education and the decay of schools (Schaff, 119); also to the stern literalism with which the law was executed, to the neglect of its milder spirit. (B. Meziah, 306.)

And what, after all, was the special offence of a people from whom Jahveh was bringing deliverance to the debased tribes, and from whom was to come their full fruition? "Because ye rejoiced and exulted, O ye plunderers of my inheritance, because ye wantoned like a thrashing heifer and neighed like a stallion, your mother is utterly confounded; she that bore you is put to shame." "Because she hath exalted herself against Jahveh, . . . therefore shall her young men fall in her streets, and nothing of her be left;" because also the years of captivity had gone on, as Jeremiah had predicted they would, and still "the oppressor" refused to let "his people" go.[1] In short, it was because the national God of the Hebrews was ignored and set aside, that their religious zeal dared to put upon the dead lips of Jeremiah himself those invented directions to his disciple, to cast his "book of the woes of Babylon" into the Euphrates, bound to a stone, saying, "Even so shall Babylon sink and rise no more."[2]

And yet it is from their own admissions that we learn to ascribe to this "oppressor" a treatment singularly generous and kind. The later romance of Daniel gives evidence at least that the Babylonians exercised a hospitality, religious and intellectual, unequalled in any other State; that their sovereign was accustomed to seek out unblemished men from foreign lands, skilled in all outside wisdom and science, so that the learning of the Chaldeans might be sown in choice soil for public service;[3] and that he had the insight to discern in a Hebrew youth abilities beyond all his astrologers and magicians, and liberality to reward him with the highest official station.[4] If this native culture is denounced as sorcery, let us not forget Daniel himself was but another among the king's

[1] Jeremiah, l.
[2] Ibid., li.
[3] Daniel, i. 4.
[4] Ibid., ii. 48; vi. 3.

preters of dreams. In the same way it accorded with later Hebrew associations to represent Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus, — the Pharaoh and the Messiah of the national exile, — as alike converted to the worship of Jahveh, and to sound their praises in the language of the national psalms.[1] Surely there was more justice in this acknowledgment than in the bitter complaints of oppression that broke out from the exiles, when they heard the advancing tramp of the Persian host, — "Woe to the spoiler, who showed no mercy, proud against the Holy One of Israel! She shall be snared and taken, so that none shall escape; she shall be dealt with according to her works."[2] Nor can we help accounting for the later Isaiah's tender wail over Israel in exile, "as a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief," by the long-pent feeling of national thraldom, rather than by any special severities on the part of the master. But this indignation found freer vent in the later Hebrew legend, where Babylon figures, to meet the exigencies of an anti-Syrian passion, as a nest of cruelties and idolatries, a fiery furnace for the martyrs of Israel's God, a haunt of lying priests, who befool king and people till Daniel outwits them; the throne of a dragon-god, till the same prophet chokes him with a bolus to prove him mortal; a den of lions for a prophet, who is fed by one brought from Judea by the hair of his head, till the tyrant, who is no other than Cyrus himself, is forced to confess the Hebrew God.[3]

It is easy to understand that religious exclusiveness should combine in this way with patriotic wrath, especially when we remember the despondency of the Jews after the exile, at Jahveh's failure to bring the promised Messianic age. But Babylon was not the persecutor of nations and faiths; it was their gathering-place, and the germinal

[1] Ezra, i 2–4. [2] Jeremiah, l. 29.
[3] See Apocryphal Books of the Old Testament.

point of their unity. As Jeremiah had counselled the exiles to pray for the peace of Babylon, so Ezekiel's conferences with their elders show that they were allowed to retain their civil and religious institutions, governed by a chief of their own, although by his own testimony they were altogether unworthy of the privilege.[1] The exiles were not only protected in life and property, they were represented at court. Nehemiah was royal cup-bearer. Jehoiachin, their imprisoned prince, was released and treated with distinguished honor.[2] They increased in numbers, and while three times as many persons were ready to return, upon the permission of Cyrus, as had been carried away two generations before, the large and influential number of those who stayed in Babylonia, notwithstanding the exertions of Ezra and his friendly coadjutors in literary and legislative activity, is a proof of the strong root that had been struck in the peace and prosperity of their Chaldean home. Nor could the patriots fairly complain of the manner in which the interests of their country were looked after by the conquerors. Gedaliah was doubtless the best governor who could have been appointed for Judea, and his foul murder by his own countrymen was anything but encouraging to royal benefactions. The free choice of Zerubbabel and Jeshua as leaders of the return was no better sign of the friendship of Cyrus than of the normal condition of Hebrew institutions in the land of exile. How prodigious the contrast with their utter degradation and the ruin of the Palestinian remnant and the fugitives in Egypt, a glance at the record shows. Never did a people exhibit less political capacity under difficult relations with their stronger neighbors than did these children of an exclusive religious zeal upon their own soil. Nothing but the crash that flung their quivering fragments into the fostering arms of a

[1] Ezekiel, xx. 33–38; xxiii.

[2] Jeremiah, lii. 31.

hated foreign civilization like the Persian, highly regulated and organized, whose very success stimulated them with mingled mortification and hope, saved those germs of future influence upon human history that lay hidden in their very self-isolation. The secret of their tragic destiny is revealed in that seething of undisciplined passions which mingled in one volcanic outbreak against Babylon the tenderest pathos of homesick exiles and the merciless rage of savages. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. O daughter of Babylon! happy shall he be who dasheth thy little ones against the stones."[1]

When the returning exiles have come under Ezra's Law in their own land they are a new people; properly for the first time a people; possessed by a conviction of national and religious unity, due in no slight measure to the stimulus of the exile and return. Jahveh is now the centre of the one national ritual. Israel, the servant of God, suffers for the popular sins, redeemer of the world. How they put away their very wives and children in the name of national duty! A more or less permanent written constitution has been accepted, whose main peculiarity is a compromise between the two elements until then existing in sharp antagonism,—the prophetic and the priestly. Both are in fact transformed; and while the ecclesiastical system becomes far more hierarchical and vicarious in form, the prophetic has lost its individual inspiration, is recognized as having no more the old fire which had glorified the days of tribal discord, but is diffused more widely in the popular mind in a spirit of reaction against the exclusiveness and pride of the second Temple, and in an increase of religious and national enthusiasm fostered by the instructions of the scribes. The Temple of Jerusalem is now, as vainly proposed by Josiah, the only place of

[1] Psalm, cxxxvii.

Jahveh's presence; the law is a systematic ritual; the old Levitical rights to priesthood are suppressed as punishment for the national sin of free worship on the high places, while the sons of Aaron are exalted into an exclusive hierarchy, a high-priest of mediatorial dignity at their head,[1] splendid in dress as in function, with sacrifices, vows, festivals reorganized in their interest.[2] The sorrows of the exile have intensified religious nationality, or, we may say, created it in the form of an aristocracy. Yet, on the other hand, this very official and aristocratic spirit compelled a certain democratic quality, a free many-sidedness, in which lay the germs of the Maccabean heroes, of Hillel and Jesus, of Essenic sainthood, of the moral and philosophical sublimities scattered through the ecclesiasticism of the Apocrypha, of the free doubts and varying dogmatic questioning of the "Preacher" and the Son of Sirach, of the lawless treatment of historic facts and laws by the Chronicler, of the stimulating strife of factions in Asmonean times, of the growth of sects and of those Greek sympathies of Herodian times which did so much to counteract the legalism of the church, and, especially, of the efforts to escape anthropomorphic views of deity, which appear both in Judea and Alexandria. The epoch bore the noblest poetry in the psalms of the Temple, full of popular love and longing for its holiness; while the Persian satrap and the remoteness of the Temple of Jahveh's presence, aided by the synagogues spread over the land, could not but combine to foster local independence and protest.

Moreover the Law itself, in its reformations, brought with it a sense of national remorse which made it provide for many wants and claims of the masses. Contrast Nehemiah's Sabbatarian bigotry and his rage against mixed marriages with his rebukes of rich usurers and his release of poor debtors from their hands. Note the limitations

[1] Zechariah, vi. 9–15. [2] Kuenen: *Religion of Israel*, ii. 259.

set in the post-exilian law to the blood-avenger's rights and powers,[1] and the scheme for a Sabbatical jubilee-year of release from debts and alienations of land, with the many laws facilitating redemption.[2] These humanities stand in relief against the many barbarous injunctions inspired by the fear of heathen interference with the separation of the holy nation to Jahveh.[3] When we read the grand humanities of Malachi and the later Isaiah, who wrote upon the eve of the great national metamorphosis, we cannot help thinking that these last and grandest utterances of the prophetic spirit point not only backward to the expanding and softening influences of the exile, but forward to those noble landmarks of universality, — the books of Jonah and of Ruth. Between these stands the whole distinctive Levitical legislation into which Hebrew tradition and life, from the old free tribal usages[4] through the Deuteronomic reformation, crystallized at last, as ecclesiasticism does crystallize, — traced by the keen analysis of recent scholarship to the labors of the Babylonian Jews of the exile, beginning with Ezekiel, but mainly after the first emigration of Zerubbabel and Jeshua, during the eighty years between 538 and 458 B. C., and even later, at Jerusalem itself. Here, as well as previously at Babylon, Ezra and his companions were compiling, constructing, collating his Book of Laws[5] for the use of the new people of Jahveh, for whom these scribes saw in a regulated priestly ritualism the nationality required.[6] They did their best to join these to the old, forgotten, and the recognized statutes and usages of the land; but they did not scruple to alter and add to these very largely, always in the interest of ecclesiastical centralization and authority.[7] For them the

[1] Numbers, xxxv. 9-34.
[2] Leviticus, xxv. 1-7.
[3] See Numbers, xxxi. 49.
[4] Exodus, xxi.-xxiii.
[5] Levitical *Book of Origins* (Ewald).
[6] See Kuenen, ii. 152, 153, 233.
[7] So the author of Chronicles, who seeks to give Davidic authority to their later ecclesiastical laws.

great age of the prophets was dead and gone. It had not united Israel, nor saved her. The age of written law must come; of the hedges of the scribe about it, and the right of the priest to administer it. Yet see what lessons the rude Hebrews must have learned at Babylon, what breadth even in hating and repelling what was too great for them to ignore; and how the Persian universalism followed them up in the edict commanding Ezra "to instruct all the people in the laws of their God."[1] Of the influence of Zoroastrianism itself in the hundred years of Persian sway over Judea we shall speak elsewhere; Babylonia is our present subject.

These Hebrews have learned the arts, traditions, literature of an ancient and great civilization. Their priests and prophets have been working out, amid these large resources, a reconstruction of their nomadic mythology, a systematic religious code and ritual which shall reconcile the differences of their past and present, of their formal and spiritual elements, and bind in one meaning the Elôhîm of their fathers and the Jahveh of their faith. Nothing is more manifest in their post-exilian literature, unreliable as it is, than the purpose to give unity to their history by making these two names of deity, which represent distinct stages in the growth of the religious idea, completely interchangeable. And this they did so successfully, that the words probably conveyed no more suggestion of difference than we find in the terms "God" and "the Lord," by which they are respectively rendered in the English Bible. They were even joined in a single title, *Jahveh-Elôhîm*, the "Lord God." There can be no surer sign of cosmopolitan experience in a people than the effort to give unity to their religious history. To gather up all its germinal stages into an ideal purpose, is a step which involves previous intercourse with larger forms of

[1] Ezra, vii. 25.

civilization. And this result of the captivity was the opening for constructions of universal history, like those in Daniel and the Apocryphal books, as well as in the ethnic genealogical table of Genesis;[1] all of which, however marred by national and ecclesiastical exclusiveness, at least indicates that this was giving way to a supreme interest in human history as a whole. For this pregnant education of Judaism, Christianity, its offspring, should credit the much-abused banks of "the river of Chebar." We may maintain that the age of prophecy was dead; but after all, till the day of the exile the Hebrew prophet was, with all his moral ardor and protest, truculent, narrow, and extravagant, extremely wild and irrational. There, as the exile sat and mused, were opened larger heavens than those of Ezekiel's vision or Ezra's priestly ritualizing. The whole future of his people shaped itself then among the heathen laws and hospitable liberties he held accursed. No one could condense the evidences of this stimulating influence better than Dean Stanley has done in one sentence in his "History of the Jewish Church,"—"The captivity bore the greatest of Hebrew prophets, the chief of Hebrew scribes, the founder of Hebrew law, the fathers of Hebrew literature." Ezekiel is possessed with the picture of Israel's history. His lamentations over this, and his tracing out through all, of Jahveh's justice, is the earliest great construction of national history on moral and religious principles,—of a Divine administration of affairs, and of the supreme authority of a personal Will. The interpretation of the Law by the best collected mind of the nation was substituted for the dogmatism of the prophet; the constitution of the theocracy for the arbitrariness of kings and priests.

But a greater social and political renewal than any of these must be noted. There in prevailing Pârsî customs,[2]

[1] Genesis, chap. x.

[2] Kuenen: *Religion of Israel*, iii. 35.

we may add, began the democratic element in Hebrew religious forms, — the recognition of the human element in the law for the instruction of the people, the Sabbath meeting in the synagogue, the expansive legal studies of the Scribes and growth of the oral law, the public assemblies called to reconstitute nationality,[1] and the reshaping of the old prophecies and histories. So also began there the devout listening to the history of Jahveh's dealing with their fathers,[2] the public reading of the Law, and the freer interpretation of the Scriptures that bore such a leading part in the origins of Christianity when the Scribes had overcome the priestly power, degenerating indeed into the narrowness of the later Palestinian sects, but holding its own in that larger survey of principles which distinguished Babylonian from Judean Talmudists, and which afterward suffered from Judean narrowness as did early Christianity.[3]

To Babylon, then, the Hebrews owed their later language, calendar, and religious imagery; but, above all, an expansion of mind, a historic sense; germs of universality, hopes of national life, an emotional experience of sorrow and faith that was no less than a change of heart, and which flowed forth in psalms of resignation and aspiration, of humble trust and spiritual yearning, of noble purpose and happy praise. Here the nation saw, through its old and now established rite of slaughtered rams, even by reaction against this ritualism to the nobler meanings of sacrifice, in the heroic sainthood that suffered for the sake of all, the pious servant of God, the true Israel of exile, who was bruised for the iniquities of his people, and by whose stripes they were healed. Here in the hospitable shadow of a great empire they grew into that home-trust which could after-

[1] Nehemiah, viii. 10; Ezra, ix. 6–15.

[2] Nehemiah, ix. 5.

[3] Geiger: *Das Judenthum und seine Geschichte*, ii. 31, 32. Mühlfelder: *Rabb. ein Lebensbild zur Gesch. d. Talmud*

wards say, "He who emigrates from Babylon to Jerusalem commits a crime, breaks a command."[1] Here had indeed been, and here was again to be, when eight or ten centuries had passed, in the great age of Talmudic teaching, and under many of the Persian Sassanidæ, through the Christian persecutions of Constantine and Justinian, a Harbor of Refuge, such as Judaism could not find elsewhere in the civilized world. That the Jews themselves were in some degree conscious of their debt of gratitude, for a time at least, appears from the refusal of the high-priest to transfer the national loyalty from Darius to Alexander after his great victories over the Persian king.[2]

It has been too long the fashion to see this great historic city in the lurid light of Hebrew denunciations, and to regard its destruction as evidence at once of prophetic inspiration and of the wrath of the God of the Bible against national iniquity. The absorption or passing away of States is not a penalty for their sins, any more than their expansion is the reward of their virtues. Without disparaging the part played by moral forces in the movement of civilization, we must regard historical conditions as quite too complicated to be reduced to a mere formula of ethical retribution. A Hebrew who ascribed the overthrow of Jerusalem to the corruption of Jahveh-worship, might as well have pretended that the extension of Nebuchadnezzar's sway was due to the virtues of his people; and he would then have had, in consistency, to demonstrate that these same virtuous Babylonians had been transformed in half a century into criminals fit only for the destroyer! This logical continuity was wanting to the Hebrew mind, which ascribed the success or failure of the chosen nation to the terms on which they stood with their God, while it failed to accord the same condi-

[1] Jost: *Gesch. d. Judent.*, iv. 305. Also Milman's *History of the Jews*, chap. xxi.
[2] Josephus: *Antiquities of the Jews*, xi. 8, § 3.