

their successors, then became, as mentioned above, the centre of an important kingdom. Ur was then at the mouth of the Euphrates, a maritime commercial town, but its ruins are now 150 miles from the sea. We have seen that it first came under notice in the time of Lugalzaggisi, of Gishu. Ur is first mentioned in our Bible, and in the German Bible, in Genesis xi., 28. But the Septuagint says that Arrhan died in the country of the Chaldeans, and does not give the name Ur.

But what we are most concerned about here, to-night, is the Religion of the Sumerians and pre-biblical people. You know that all great religions have originated in Asia. This is equally true of the Sumerian religion, by far the oldest and earliest we have heard of. On this account it is of intense interest to us; but this interest is more than doubled when we remember that the Sumerians were the first inhabitants of that place where Abraham, and his father before him, was born and educated. The religion of which I am going to talk to you was practised at Ur thousands of years before Abraham. They began, as we do, with the origin of things.

The following is the bilingual translation of the Sumerian account of the creation of the world made by the Chaldean priests, as mentioned above, some 4,000 years ago:

"As yet was the pure domicile, the domicile of the gods on earth, not made;

Not yet one reed sprouted, not yet a tree created;

No brick yet fashioned, no tile yet formed;

No house yet made, no city yet built;

No town yet made, no earthly habitation yet reared;

Nippur was not yet made; the temple of Bel, Igurra,* not yet built;

Erech was not yet made; the temple of Istar, I-Anna, not yet built;

The ocean not yet made; NUN-KI (the abode of the god, Ea), not yet built;

Even the pure domicile, the house of the gods, its site was not yet made, the whole of the Lands and the Sea;

Then the waters were moved, and in those days was NUN-KI (the site of the earthly paradise) made;

The temple of I-sag-illa was built where in heaven's ocean the god Anu, King of the abode of glory and purity, dwells;

Babel, the gate of God, was made; and the temple, I-sag-illa, completed.

The Angels of heaven's ocean had he made all at once.

* Explored by the Americans, Harper and Helbrecht; chief temple was Igurra, dedicated to Inlilla or Bel.