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FEATURE AND

The Toronto Sunday Morld

May 3, 1914

em lacoveries bout the Bibl



for more than 25 years, who explored the old storecity of Raamses built by the Israelites while in Egyptian bondage, and is recognized as one of the ablest of

After carefully considering the Old Testament as we have it, and all of the circumstances under which it was composed, Dr. Naville announces without any hesitation that the original language in which it was

written was the Babylonian, and the script used was

the cuneiform, or wedge-shaped characters, known to us by the clay tablets and stone monuments of the

Dr. Naville is led to this conclusion by two notable

discoveries mad- within recent times. The first was

the finding of the now famous "Tel-el-Amarna tablets"

in Egypt, which proved that in the time of Moses the

language used for communication between the power-

ful nations Egypt and Babylonia was nothing but

Babylonian, and that this was the acknowledged lan-

that the Jewish Bible coald not have been written in

Hebrew is the discovery of the Aramaic records pre-

served amid the ruins of the old temples at Elephan-

fact that the written language in Palestine, and not

in that country alone, but in the whole of western

Asia from Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean, was

Babylonian cuneiform, the conclusion which occurs

naturally to our mind is that Moses wrote in Babylon-

especially when they were supposed to have been dic-

tated by God himself. Moses, an Aramean, certainly

had heard of Hammurabi, the great Babylonian law-

giver; he had been educated at the court of the King

"This was pre-eminently the language of laws,

Island of Elephantine in the Nile, Where the Art

This great scholar says: "Taking the historical

The other discovery which convinces Dr. Naville

writers and investigators in these fields.

Babylonians and Assyrians.

guage of records used in that day.

tine in Egypt.

Sensational Announcement by Dr. Naville, One of the Greatest Modern Authorities, That the Old Testament Was Not Written in Hebrew, But in Babylonian Cuneiform, Familiar to Scholars of Moses' Time.

governors of vassal cities, but even with the sovereigns of Mesopotamia, was in Babylonian cuneiform. He learned that language and that script in the palace of on is made by one of the greatest living auin scriptural writings, Edouard Naville, D. C. "He may have spoken, with his countrymen, the dialect they had brought from Canaan, and which can



The Famous Picture by E. Armytage, R. A. Showing Moses Destroying the Tables of the Law. be perceived in the letters of the governors, but this was certainly no written language; it was the popular and colloquial idiom. "The fact that all the narratives in the early books of the Bible were written not as a running book, but on tablets, changes completely the character of the composition. It explains repetitions, as the summaries of what has been said in previous tablets. Also, we can distinguish to the those which were written sepa-King of rately and joined together afterwards in a book, like the be-B. C. 1380.

ginning of Genesis, from those which were to form a series and are therefore more closely linked together. The Last Words of Moses.

"Deuteronomy, a copy of which I believe to have been put in the foundations of Solomon's Temple, certainly bears the character of the last words of Moses, the character of a time when the people were in the sight of Canaan, when they could see better in what country they were going to settle and what were the inhabitants and their customs.

"If the Pentateuch is the work of Moses, as his-

Fragment of the Oldest Hebrew MS. of the Bible, Dating from the Ninth Century,

> cannot have been written in Hebrew, which, if it existed at all at that time, was only a spoken idiom and not a book language; it must have been written in Babylonian cuneiform. "The first transformation it went through was to be put into Aramaic, and this I attribute to Ezra. Such an enterprise seems to be in accordance with the character of Ezra as described in his book, and more

tory and the contents of the books seem to prove, it

especially in that of Nehemiah, and also with rabbinical tradition concerning him. "That was the epoch when cuneiform was more and more being abandoned for the popular language. Aramaic was the language in which Ezra conversed with the King; the King's letters and decrees were in Aramaic, as was also the law of the King, which was

to be obeyed like the lew & Con. (Bzra, VII.: 24.) "Although Ezra Carried in the Books of Mass, a guite possible that, as the tradition of the rabbis alleges, he also settled the canon of Scripture of the Old Testament; he perhaps collected and sifted the writings which were to form the sacred volume. As it came out of his hands, the volume was entirely Aramaic."

Thus, Dr. Naville essays to prove that the actual words of Moses were written in Babylonian, which is a Semitic language, very much like the Hebrew, and he explains at the same time why Moses took two tables of stone to inscribe the Ten Commandments on them in the cuneiform character, for it was a custom among the Babylonians to use stone in this way for laws, while ordinary matter was inscribed upon clay tablets.

On This Tablet, Showing a Merenptah Hieroglyphic Inscription, Are the Words "Ysiraal, People," the Earliest Known Mention of the Name Israel.



