

found in another name, *Akabi-Yawa*, *Yahveh* will seize, or supplant. This name would be *Akabiah* in Hebrew, but does not occur in the Bible. It does, however, occur in the Mishna. The Babylonian tablets also afford the names *Akabi-Ya* and *Akabu-Ilu*. There can be no question that *Ilu* means *God*, corresponding to the Hebrew Divine name *El*. We then have as variant or corresponding forms, *Akabi-Ilu*, and *Akabi-Ya* or *Akabi-Yawa*, the two Divine names *Ilu* and *Yawa* interchanging as is frequent in such Hebrew doublets as *Nethaniah* and *Nathaniel*, *Uzziah* and *Uzziel*. There can be then no question that the Divine name under its varying forms *Ya*, *Yau*, and *Yawa* was known to the Assyrians and Babylonians, and that the last form, *Yawa*, the precise equivalent of the sacred tetragrammaton, was familiarly pronounced in the time of the captivity.

One other question is raised by this discussion, but not answered by Mr. Pinches. It is whether the older form is not *Yah*, of which *Yahu* would be the old Semitic nominative case, and the longest form *Yahveh*, or *Yahwah*, or *Yahwahah* would be a prolongation. Mr. Pinches suggests that as the addition of the consonants *v* and *h* has lengthened the primitive *El* into the more formal *Eloah* (as written in Hebrew), so the same letters may have been added to *Yah*, giving us the sacred name *Yahveh*.

SERMONIC SECTION.

"HE IS BESIDE HIMSELF."

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And when His friends heard of it they went out to lay hold on Him; for they said, He is beside Himself.—Mark iii. 21.

THERE had been great excitement in the little town of Capernaum in consequence of Christ's teachings and miracles. It had been intensified by His infractions of the rabbinical Sabbath law, and by His appointment of the twelve apostles. The sacerdotal party in Capernaum apparently communicated with Jerusalem, with the result of bringing a deputation from the Sanhedrim to look into things, and see what this new Rabbi was about. A plot for His assassination was secretly on foot. And at this juncture the incident of my text, which we owe to Mark alone of the evangelists, occurs. Christ's friends, apparently the members of His own family—sad to say, as would appear from the context, including His mother—came with a kindly design to rescue their misguided kinsman from danger; and, laying hands upon Him,

to carry Him off to some safe restraint in Nazareth, where He might indulge His delusions without doing any harm to Himself. They want to excuse His eccentricities on the ground that He is not quite responsible, scarcely Himself; and so to blunt the point of the more hostile explanation of the Pharisees that He is in league with Beelzebub.

Think of that! The Incarnate Wisdom shielded by friends from the accusation that He is a demoniac by the apology that He is a lunatic! What do you think of popular judgment?

But this half-pitying, half-contemptuous, and wholly benevolent excuse for Jesus, though it be the words of friends, is like the words of His enemies, in that it contains a distorted reflection of His true character. And if we will think about it I fancy that we may gather from it some lessons not altogether unprofitable.

I. The first point, then, that I make, is just this—there was something in the character of Jesus Christ which could be plausibly explained to commonplace people as madness.

A well-known modern author has talked a great deal about "the sweet