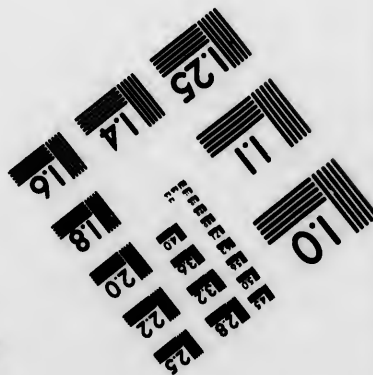
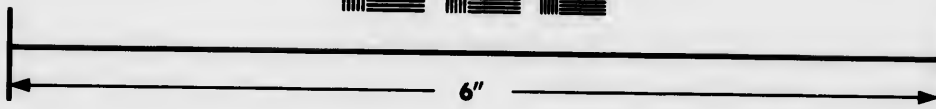
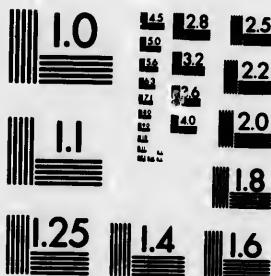


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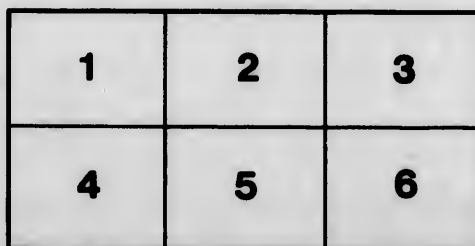
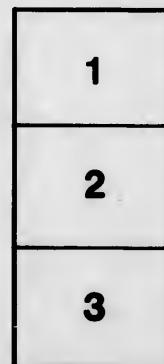
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THE HISTORICAL DELUGE

In its Relation to Scientific Discovery
and to Present Questions.

BY

SIR J. WILLIAM DAWSON, C.M.G., LL.D.,
F.R.S., ETC.

Author of

'THE CHAIN OF LIFE IN GEOLOGICAL TIME,' ETC., ETC.



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No. 76.

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Argument of the Tract.

THE narrative of the Deluge in Genesis has recently been a subject of much discussion, in consequence of the bearing on it of early Assyrian and Chaldean literature, and of its apparent relation to some questions much agitated among Geologists and Archæologists. The terms of the record itself have also been subjected to the most severe and searching criticism; and it is scarcely too much to say that it has often been unfairly dealt with. In the midst of these controversies the value of the history of the deluge in a religious point of view, and its connection with the present and the future, as stated in the New Testament, seem to be in danger of being overlooked. The time seems, therefore, fitting to prepare for the use of general readers a concise statement of the actual import of the Biblical narrative, and of its relation to scientific discovery and to the present and future religious interests of the world. This will be attempted in the following pages by a short statement of the present position of certain questions relating to the Noachian deluge, and by a discussion of—(1) The account of the flood given in Genesis; (2) The information afforded by secular history and tradition; (3) The testimony of geology and archæology; (4) The use made of the deluge in the New Testament.

667

27.11.56

Esther Pierce

THE HISTORICAL DELUGE.



HE Deluge of Noah is to the student of the Bible the great dividing line in human history and in God's programme of the world's progress. It was the close of one term in God's dealings with fallen man, and the beginning of another of very different character. Perhaps its importance in this respect is scarcely sufficiently appreciated even by devout readers of the Bible, either in its relation to the physical and spiritual history of early man, or to the character and prospects of the present age.

General aspects of the deluge

In its spiritual aspect, we are told by Jesus Christ that 'as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man,' or, as elsewhere stated, 'at the coming of the Son of Man,'¹ and Peter places the former destruction of the cosmos by water in comparison with an approaching destruction by fire.²

¹ Matt. xxiv. 37; Luke xvii. 26.

² 2 Peter iii. 5, *et seq.*

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Esther Pierce

In its physical aspect it has close connections with results of modern inquiries as to the later geological periods and the early history of man. The spade of the excavator has disinterred the remains of men who, without reasonable doubt, correspond to the antediluvians of the Bible—men who lived under different geographical and climatal conditions from those now prevailing, and at a time when many of the animal inhabitants of our continents were different from those with which we are now familiar—men who disappeared in the great physical changes which closed the period in which they lived, and inaugurated that of the present day.

Farther, we now know that the deluge of Noah is not a mere myth or fancy of primitive men, or solely a doctrine of the Hebrew Scriptures. The record of the catastrophe is preserved in some of the oldest historical documents of several distinct races of men, and is indirectly corroborated by the whole tenor of the early history of most of the civilised races.

Historical
and other
evidence of
the deluge.

As to the actual occurrence of the deluge as a wide-spread catastrophe affecting, with a few stated exceptions, the whole human race, we have thus a concurrence of the testimony of ancient history and tradition, and of geological and archæological evidence, as well as of the inspired records of the Hebrew and Christian revelations. Thus no his-

torical event, ancient or modern, can be more firmly established as matter of fact than this.

In these circumstances it is evident that this event has the most profound bearing on human history, on our views as to the relations and development of the races of men, as to the origin and antiquity of arts and of religions, and as to the connection of the ancient history of the world with its future destiny, down to that time when the Christian expects a 'restitution of all things.' At the same time it must be confessed that the subject is one at present encompassed with difficulties and misapprehensions. These arise largely from the circumstance that so many students of the Bible are uninformed as to the natural causes involved in a catastrophe of this kind, and are influenced by old opinions held, it may be, by eminent men in times of comparative ignorance. On the other hand, students of nature are often destitute of accurate knowledge as to the statements of the Bible, and are thus unable to compare what they know from other sources with the written history. It is to be feared that in some cases exaggerated ideas of uniformitarianism, and even a certain animus against religion and revelation, tend to bias the minds of modern students of nature, and the influence of these causes is intensified by the intolerant dogmatism of the prevalent hypotheses of organic evolution. Hence

in many cases the treatment of this part of Scripture history, whether by scientific men or theologians, by believers or unbelievers, betrays a lamentable incompleteness and inaccuracy. To afford some remedy, however imperfect, and to make the leading facts of the case accessible to the ordinary reader is the object of this tract. With this end in view it will be proper to consider the following topics:—

General
arrange-
ment of the
subject.

(1) The actual narrative as given in Genesis, and illustrated by later Biblical writers.

(2) The parallel statements of secular history and tradition.

(3) The recent discoveries of antediluvian remains, and the information which they afford.

(4) The spiritual teaching of the deluge for ourselves and our time.

I. THE BIBLICAL NARRATIVE.

Character
of the
narrative
in Genesis.

In reading those chapters of Genesis which contain the record of the deluge, we cannot fail to be impressed with the archaic simplicity of the narrative, its attention to details, and its absence of any mythical or imaginative complexion. It is obviously a document intended for simple and primitive people conversant with nature rather than with artificial modes of life, and its author is impressed with the conviction of the existence of a just and careful Ruler of the universe, and is

earnestly on the side of truth and righteousness. Other than this, he has nothing to connect him with the philosophy or special religious ideas of later times. Such a document demands respectful consideration, and that its genuineness and truthfulness should be accepted till we can obtain evidence to the contrary.

But we may ask how the memory of an event so remote in the past could have been transmitted in so clear and accurate a manner, even to the time of Moses, to which we have a right to refer the compilation of Genesis. The most likely way would evidently be that the testimony of survivors should be handed down orally for a time, perhaps in some set form of words committed to memory, and afterwards permanently preserved by being inscribed on tablets of baked clay. We might also suppose that even if the knowledge of writing did not exist as early as the time of the deluge, there may have been such means of preservation of records as those in use among most rude nations of modern times, by means of pictographs, wampum belts, or knotted cords. In regard to the early Bible history, however, there is no need to suppose such contrivances, since we know that in Chaldea writing existed nearly, if not altogether, as early as the time to which the Hebrew chronology refers the deluge. It is interesting in this connection to observe that the old Chaldean deluge tablets, to

**Manner of
preservation
of the
history.**

Testimony
of eye-
witnesses.

which we shall refer in the sequel, purport to give the testimony of Hasisadra, the Chaldean Noah, himself, and that the form of the narrative in Genesis is also that which might be expected from witnesses of the events which they record. If, therefore, we are to attach any historical value to the narrative of the flood, we must be prepared to accept it as the testimony of those who took part in the events related, and this very little if at all modified by any subsequent editorial work. Here, as in the later historical books and in the Gospels, we must hold that our narrative is an original document based on human testimony, and that the inspiration of the writer is only that which enables him to make a true and faithful statement of the facts in his possession.

Simplicity
and
profundity
of the
treatment.

The validity of this view of the case will be tested by our subsequent inquiry, and we shall find that this old story, however simple and childlike, goes, like the statements and questions of children, to the very bottom of the matter in hand. In this it resembles all the other parts of early Bible history, which, while in some respects 'milk for babes,' are in others strong meat for the adult, and sometimes not quite digestible even by the stoutest intellects, when not quickened by the Spirit of the Author of the book.

Causes of
the deluge—
Moral
causes.

What were the causes of the deluge? Morally it came of the fall of man, and we must not be too

ready in the pride of our modern material wisdom to decide that moral causes may not lead to physical effects. They do so in human affairs, and why not in the Divine plan? The Book of Genesis, in absolute accord with geological and biological science, traces man back to an Eden which, like the Assyrian Genesis and the maps of modern anthropologists, it places in the finest valley of South-western Asia.¹ From this Eden, according to Genesis, man was expelled as a penalty for moral aberration. This was a very real physical evil, involving a change from happy abundance and freedom from exhausting toil, which all histories and hypotheses as to the origin of man must assign to him in his earliest estate, to privation, exposure, labour, and struggle for existence in a wilderness-world. We shall find hereafter that it was also a very real deterioration of his environment, a curse of uncongenial climate and uncongenial animals and plants.

Deteriora-
tion of the
environ-
ment.

Such new conditions must have reacted on man, and practically placed him in that position of struggle for existence which some modern theories assign to the whole animal creation. Viewed as a punitive or reformatory agency, such influences may have operated either for good or evil. Rightly

¹ Even Haeckel, the apostle of 'monistic' evolution, has to trace the affiliation of the races of men back to this region. See his *History of Creation and Evolution of Man*.

Effects of
punitive
visitations.

Condition
of ante-
diluvian
society.

used, they may have prevented farther moral aberration, and may have promoted mental activity and sagacity, useful invention and energy of character. Taken in a bad spirit, they may have had a directly opposite tendency, and may have degraded the man both physically and spiritually. The latter effect seems to have been that predominant in antediluvian times, and races of men arose, rude, bloodthirsty, hunters of animals and slayers of their fellow-men, by whom the world was filled with violence, and who became so lost to all but merely material interests that they ceased to fill the proper place of reasoning responsible man, and became fixed in a low and brutal condition without any prospect of improvement. We shall find, in the sequel, that even the geological and archæological evidence respecting the earliest prehistoric men leads to this conclusion.

It would seem that, if there were central and civilised communities, these had ceased to exert any influence for good, and that those who wandered far from these centres became and remained barbarous and unprogressive. Finally these rude and wandering tribes, and especially those mixed races who had more energy than their fellows, began to react on the more cultivated centres, and to invade them with lawless violence; and the prospect was one of progressive degradation, and contests in which only the worst and most godless

elements of humanity would survive. Such a condition of the world furnishes the occasion for the wholesale destruction of man by the deluge, and the selection of a few of the best men of the time to renew the world in a new and better age. The catastrophe which swept these men away has thus its distinctly spiritual aspect, though, physically considered, it was of a kind which had occurred over and over again, more or less, in the history of the world before man came upon it, and which had more than once removed one fauna from the land and substituted another in its place.

This leads us to inquire as to the physical causes assigned to the deluge in Genesis. We must bear in mind, however, that these causes are not presented to us as the results of any scientific investigation, but merely as the phenomena obvious to an intelligent observer, regarding them not so much in connection with secondary causes as in relation to the fiat of the Almighty. Translating the words as literally as possible, we are told that 'all the cisterns or wells of the great deep were broken up, the chimneys or hatches of the sky were opened, and there was a great rain upon the earth.'

Physical
causes—
The great
deep,
subsidence
of the land.

Now in the Bible, from Genesis onward, the 'great deep' is primarily that ancient universal ocean from which the dry land was raised, and whose waters were gathered together by the Creator, and are restrained by His decree. Ac-

according to the Bible, it is the dry land that is the uncertain element on the earth's surface, liable to submergence at any time when the bounds placed on the sea by its Maker shall be loosened. For it is God who 'gave to the sea His decree that it should not pass His limits,' who 'shut up the sea with doors,' who 'appointed to the waters bounds that they may not pass, that they return not again to cover the earth.'¹ No doubt the original statement in Genesis, that the land is a product of the deep, and the occurrence of the deluge, have impressed this great geological fact on the minds of the Hebrew writers. Yet it is nevertheless certain that they recognized the truth that the 'element of mutability is in the solid earth' rather than in the sea, and hence that deluges are always possible, provided that the cisterns of the great deep can be broken up, and that it can return to cover the earth. We have here, therefore, a definite statement—that the first and most potent cause of the deluge of Noah was an irruption of the ocean over the land, which must have been caused either by subsidence of the land or elevation of some large portion of the ocean bed. In so far as the narrator is concerned, it was a great irruption of the waters of the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, rising upward even to those mountains of Armenia to which it drifted the ark.

¹ Prov. viii.; Job xxxviii.; Psa. civ.

This at once removes Noah's flood from the category of river inundations, even if supplemented by the high tides sometimes caused by cyclones.

The second cause assigned is less easy of explanation. The word translated 'window' in the English version means rather an opening in a roof, which might be either a chimney or a hatch; as applied to the sky, it has usually been regarded as equivalent to the downpour of heavy rain, making it the same with the third cause assigned.¹ There is, however, reason to doubt this. In a passage in Isaiah² the term 'windows of heaven' is applied to volcanic orifices, and it must be borne in mind that the region towards which the ark is said to have drifted is one of modern volcanic action. The expression may also refer to waterspouts or 'cloudbursts,' as they are termed in Western America, which often accompany great storms and tornados. The Chaldean narrative refers to such great disturbances as accompanying the deluge and adding to its terrors.

The hatches
of heaven,
waterspouts
and
tornados.

Lastly, the heavy and continued rains, in themselves not unlikely accompaniments of rapid submergence, would alone cause much inundation of lower grounds and torrential action, and would be a feature very apparent to a spectator.

The great
and
continued
rain.

¹ The Septuagint translators seem to have adopted the meaning 'flood-gates.'

² Isa. xxiv. 18.

Not a river
inundation,
but a great
continental
sub-
mergence.

This threefold causation was what presented itself to the narrator; but that one which relates to the inflowing of the oceanic waters must have been the most important, and also that which would most powerfully impress the mind of an onlooker familiar with ordinary river inundations, but having no experience of this portentous influx of oceanic waters, which appears to have drifted the ark far inland, and against the levels of the country. In this connection Prestwich well remarks:—

‘It is not easy to believe that any local river or land-flood could have given rise to so sustained a tradition as that of the deluge, whereas a submergence of this vast extent, and of so exceptional a character, would be in accordance with the magnitude of the recorded catastrophe, and of the deep and lasting impression produced on those contemporary peoples who were sufficiently near to be cognisant of its results. Nor would it accord less well with the remoteness of the event, and the dimness of the tradition.’¹

In so far as Genesis is concerned, of course, we should read ‘survivors’ for ‘contemporary peoples’ and the dimness of tradition does not apply to our record.

The ark as
a means of
safety.

In the Hebrew, as in the Chaldean deluge narrative, the survivors are saved by an ark, not by taking refuge on some eminence out of reach of the waters; and this seems to be a feature common to most of the histories of the event. This part of the tradition, and the amount of

¹ *Transactions Victoria Institute*, 1894.

progress in the arts of life which it implies, has been a fertile source of objection, and even of ridicule. It is to be observed, however, that in this Genesis is consistent with itself, and with what we know of early post-diluvian history. In Genesis we read of antediluvian agriculture, stock-raising, cities, metallurgic and other arts. Even more advancement in art is implied in the Chaldean deluge poem, and the inscriptions of Tel-loh, a very ancient Chaldean city, show great advancement in the arts of life, and the existence of shipping and maritime expeditions, within a short time of the deluge of Noah. It is true that the remains of antediluvian man hitherto unearthed show but a low degree of civilisation; but then, as we shall see, the more important centres of civilised life before the flood are probably still under water, or very deeply buried in alluvial deposits.

It is interesting, that though the Hebrews, long before the time of Moses, must have been familiar with Phœnician shipping, and while Jacob is represented as speaking of ships,¹ the vessel built by Noah is called an ark, or chest. This may indicate either the very primitive date of the document, or the fact that the ark was not actually a ship intended for locomotion, but rather a great rectangular box adapted to mere driftage.

Description
of the ark.

¹ Gen. xlix. 13.

As in the Chaldean version, the Biblical history begins with the specification of the structure of the ark. On this it is only necessary to say that the dimensions of the ark are large, and well-adapted to stowage rather than to speed, and that within it was strengthened by three decks, and by a number of bulkheads, or partitions, separating the rooms, or berths, into which it was divided. Without and within it was protected and rendered tight by coats of resinous or asphaltic varnish, and it was built of the lightest and most durable kind of wood (gopher or cypress). Only two openings are mentioned—a hatch or window above, and a port or door in the side. There is no mention of any masts, rigging, or other means of propulsion or steerage. The Chaldean history differs in introducing a steersman, or pilot, and even a sort of trial-trip—indications these of a later date, and less natural than the Hebrew idea of building the ark on elevated ground, and probably in the vicinity of suitable timber, and simply waiting till it should float.

Notes of
voyagers in
the ark.

The mention of the floating of the ark, and of its going or drifting away, and that of the depth of water covering the hill-tops, convincingly prove that the narrator was an inmate of the vessel. We can imagine him watching the gradual rise of the water for forty days. He then becomes aware that the ark floats, and immediately after, watching

some neighbouring hill, he finds that it is 'going,' or moving in a definite direction, and probably rising and falling on the waves. He next thinks of the possibility of the unwieldy vessel being stranded on some rock or hill, and going to pieces, and knowing that its draft of water is about fifteen cubits, or say twenty-four feet, he gratefully records that in the direction of its driftage every elevation is covered to a greater depth.

I have referred to a single narrator; but it is true that certain critics profess to have discovered that the narrative, as it now stands, is made up of two distinct, and not always quite consistent, accounts. If so divided, it will be found that both narratives are of a kind implying the testimony of eye-witnesses, and that their separation depends largely on different ways of referring to time, and on an iteration of certain particulars, which is not uncommon in very ancient documents, and applies to the Chaldean narrative quite as much as to that in the Bible. In one sense it would be satisfactory to have thus the collated testimony of two independent witnesses; but I fear that a careful consideration of the evidence would lead any unbiassed person accustomed to human testimony, to regard the dual character of the history as possibly imaginary rather than real.

Is the
narrative a
double one?

Duration of
the deluge.

The whole time of the deluge, from its beginning to its close, in the region of the narrators, which must have been that of the Euphrates valley, is stated as extending from the 600th year of Noah, on the seventeenth day of the second month, to the 601st year of the patriarch, on the twenty-seventh day of the second month, or rather more than a year. These dates in themselves dispose of the theory that the deluge was merely a river inundation. No men conversant with the floods of rivers, whether of the Euphrates, the Nile, or the Jordan, could have imagined such a duration. But if the sea waters were pouring from the Indian Ocean into interior Asia, and from the Atlantic over Europe, such movements would imply a quite different lapse of time. Even these, however, would have time to retire without the destructive *débâcles* imagined by some writers on the subject,¹ though locally there would, of necessity, be strong currents.

Recession of
the waters.

In connection with the recession of the waters, there are, however, some interesting notes of time and circumstance. One of these relates to the slow subsidence of the water, and its intermittent character—'ebbing and flowing.' Two months after the grounding of the ark, the tops of neighbouring hills began to be seen, and even this apparently intermittingly, as by tidal or

¹ In the Chaldean version the time allowed is shorter.

earthquake waves. All this is very natural, and it accounts for that anxiety which caused the patriarch to wait for forty days before opening the hatch in the roof of the ark. Even then he trusts to winged messengers rather than to his own eyesight, for possibly the air was still obscured by mists.

The birds selected by Noah were very appropriate. The raven is a wanderer, remarkable for power of flight and keenness of vision. So long as it made the ark its head-quarters, 'going and returning' in search of food, it might be inferred that no habitable land was accessible. The dove sent out afterward is of different habit, and was probably already domesticated. It is no scavenger of the waters, but would leave only when it found land clothed with vegetation, and could obtain seeds for food. The Chaldean narrative adds the swallow. This is evidently a later interpolation, purely childish and trivial, and probably due to the familiar habits of the swallow, which in the circumstances might be supposed to cause it to haunt the ark as a place of safety, and to its being in some sense a sacred bird. The swallow, if in the ark at all, would be incapable, from its habits of life, of affording any information. Nothing could more illustrate the modern divorce of knowledge of nature from certain forms of learning, than the fact that Schrader and others

Birds sent
from the
ark.

actually prefer, on this ground, the Chaldean version as the more complete of the two. The veracity of the Bible is often to be learned as much from what it leaves unsaid as from what it says. Even after the departure of the dove, and the apparent drying of the ground, Noah seems to have waited for a distinct intimation of the Divine will before leaving his shelter, so timid had he become under the strange and terrible ordeal to which he had been subjected.

Selected
animals in
the ark

Regarding the narrative of the flood as the production of an eye-witness, we have a right to regard him as vouching merely for what came under his own observation, or could be known to him by investigation or inquiry after the event. It is in this sense that we are to understand the terms of universality, in which he speaks of the destruction of men and animals, and, indeed, as we shall see in the sequel, geological facts prove that the destruction of life extended far more widely than he could have known. He also takes pains to inform us respecting the animals preserved in the ark, which are in any case to be taken as those of the region or country of the narrator, covering a district extending from the Persian Gulf to the mountains of Armenia, and containing one of the most rich and varied faunas of the world, and that of all others most suited to the requirements of civilised man. Out of this

fauna a selection is made, including cattle, or domesticated quadrupeds, birds, presumably those most under the control of man, and creeping things, probably the smaller quadrupeds—not reptiles as such. This list is repeated several times, as if to obviate all mistake, and to prevent the absurd supposition that the ark contained all the animals in the world. On the other hand, the destruction of the animals not in the ark is represented as total for the district of the narrator, including every air-breathing animal.¹ The ark is in reality represented as a place of safe-keeping for those animals especially which man would require to sustain him in a state of civilisation, after the flood had passed away. It was not a menagerie, like the toy 'Noah's arks' prepared for children.

We are now in a position to inquire as to the meaning of the questions regarding the so-called 'Universality' of the deluge, respecting which so much that is loose and inaccurate has recently been written. Here, in the first place, we may note that if the deluge was caused by a subsidence of the land bringing the waters of the ocean over it, there can be no question of the 'piling up' of water preternaturally over a limited area, on the one hand; or, on the other, of a supply of water sufficient to

Universality
of the
deluge.

¹ 'Every living substance on the surface of the land,' Gen. vii. 23.

raise the ocean over the tops of all the mountains in the whole world without any change of level of land and water. Either of these miraculous and even preternatural suppositions would be perfectly gratuitous, and, as we shall find, quite incompatible with the known geological facts. Rejecting then as altogether outside both of the Biblical narrative and the natural facts the idea of a stratum of water added to the ocean sufficient to cover the whole globe, land and sea, to a depth equal to the height of the mountains, we find that there are the following senses in which the deluge of Noah might be affirmed or denied to have been universal.

In what
senses
universal.

(1) The deluge may have been universal in the sense of being a submergence of the whole of the land, either by subsidence of the land or by elevation of the ocean bed. Such a state of things may have existed in primitive geological ages before our continents were elevated; but we have no scientific evidence of its recurrence at any later time, though large portions of the continents have been again and again submerged. The writers of Genesis i. and of Psalm civ. seem to have known of no such total submergence since the elevation of the first dry land, and nothing of this kind is expressed or certainly implied in the deluge story.

(2) The deluge may have been universal in so

far as man, its chief object, and certain animals useful or necessary to him, are concerned. This kind of universality would seem to have been before the mind of the writer when he says that 'Noah only,' and they who were with him in the ark, remained alive.¹

(3) The deluge may have been universal in so far as the area of observation and information of the narrator extended. The story is told in the form of a narrative derived from eye-witnesses, a form which seems to have been chosen or retained purposely to avoid any question of universality of the extreme kinds referred to above. The same form of narrative is preserved in the Chaldean legend. This fact is not affected by the theory already mentioned, that the narrative is divisible into two documents, respectively 'Jahvistic' and 'Elohistic.' I have elsewhere² shown that there is a very different reason for the use of these two names of God.

It is thus evident that the whole question of 'universality' is little more than a mere useless logomachy, having no direct relation to the facts or to the credibility of the narrative. On the other hand, this, and the other considerations above referred to, show that we have in the sixth, seventh,

Un-
assailable
character
of the
narrative.

¹ Gen. vii. 23.

² *Modern Science in Bible Lands*. See also as to details of the deluge, *The Origin of the World*.

and eighth chapters of Genesis, a narrative of a cataclysm which must have occurred about 3000 years before the Christian era, and contained in a document most simple and primitive in its style, which is yet so constructed that it provides beforehand against every objection urged against it by the most scientific and critical minds of the nineteenth century. This is surely a marvellous quality from the negative point of view. Its positive merits and present uses we shall have to consider in subsequent pages.

II. PARALLEL STATEMENTS IN HISTORY AND TRADITION.

Widespread traditions of the deluge.

It has long been known that traditions of a deluge exist among most of the old civilised nations of Europe and Asia,¹ and similar traditions have even been found in America, more especially among the more civilised peoples of the south. Every tribe naturally refers the cataclysm to its own locality, but this is merely an evidence of the antiquity and originality of the story. Even unwritten traditions of this kind, though perhaps mixed with much that is childish and fabulous, must not be despised, for oral tradition, if fixed in a definite form of words, or connected with known natural objects or with any recurring festival or ceremony, becomes, like fossil footprints, imperishable.

¹ See Lenormant, *Beginnings of History*.

The greatest amount of attention has, however, been fixed on the deluge narratives of Chaldea, as being the oldest, and those pertaining to the earliest abodes of civilised man. They were at first known through the fragments preserved to us of the Chaldean history of Berosus; but the discoveries made by Layard and others of records inscribed in clay tablets in the ruins of the library or archive-chamber of Assur-bani-pal, king of Assyria, have not only shown that Berosus founded his history of the event on ancient documents, but have given us many details not otherwise accessible. The tablets of Assur-bani-pal are of comparatively late date, as he was a contemporary of the kings of Judah, but they purport to have been copies from ancient records preserved in Chaldean temples, and representing the earliest history of a people who possessed letters before the age of Abraham.

These records, the now celebrated Chaldean tablets, are in European museums, and have been translated by the late George Smith and others,¹ so that they now constitute one of the oldest known portions of primeval literature. The Chaldean account is apparently connected with the history of an ancient hero-hunter whose name has been read Gisdubar, and who is known to be identical in date, character, and actions with the Biblical Nimrod. This post-diluvial hero is reported to have sought

The
Chaldean
deluge
tablets.

Gisdubar
and the
Chaldean
deluge.

¹ See Translation, by Mr. T. G. Pinches, in Appendix.

an interview with Hasisadra, the Chaldean Noah, who was believed, as an immortal and deified man, to have his abode at the mouth of the Euphrates and its confluent streams, as if set to watch that the waters of the great deep should not return to overflow the land. The translated and glorified patriarch is made to relate in poetical and imaginative guise his own experiences in the great flood.

Character of
the
Chaldean
epic.

We thus have a poetical version of the deluge narrative prepared by a very ancient author, who probably had access to original documents now lost to us. He weaves this into a complex mythological form, containing the different gods of the Chaldean pantheon as actors in the drama, just as Homer brings in the gods of Olympus in the *Iliad*. Of course the comparison of such a production with the plain prosaic statements of Genesis cannot yield any very certain result. There are, however, such coincidences as compel us to believe that the authors of Genesis and of the Chaldean poem have had access to the same facts. On the other hand, the differences are sufficient to show that the one cannot be copied from the other, and the balance of probability is altogether in favour of the Biblical account being the older and more accurate of the two. The account in Genesis is, as we have already seen, a plain narrative of the nature of contemporary annals, while the Chaldean story introduces many imaginary deities, and expands the story by a

number of accessory matters, having the aspect of additions to increase the attractiveness and 'sensational' character of the story, or to adapt it for liturgical use in temple services. The agreements relate to matters of fact, capable of being ascertained by observation. The differences consist in fanciful and mythological additions to the Chaldean version. In both records the moral element is the same, Divine wrath against the sins of men. In both, the means of deliverance for the godly family is an ark or ship, built under Divine direction, and coated with bitumen; in both, animals are preserved as well as men; in both, the physical agencies appear the same; in both, the patriarch uses birds as his messengers. These features cannot be accidental resemblances; but the accessories of pilot and mariners, the addition of the swallow to the birds, and the complex machinery of gods and goddesses in the Chaldean version, must be attributed to the imagination of the poet, whose work we have a right to assume is founded on facts derived from a document similar to that which we have in Genesis.

Differences
v. resem-
blances, as
compared
with
Genesis.

The
Chaldean
more
complex,
imaginative
and later.

Another line of historical parallelism, in my judgment quite as important, is that which relates to the state of civilisation of the antediluvians and the survivors of the deluge. I have already shown that in this Genesis is consistent with itself. But its testimony is borne out by the external evidence. The Chaldean narrator sees no anachronism in the

Post-
diluvian
history
corroborates
the deluge
narrative.

Civilisation
before the
flood—its
limits.

Early
Chaldean
civilisation.

construction of the great box or ark, nay, gives to it more of the character of a ship. He concurs in the existence of the mechanical, agricultural, and pastoral resources necessary to the building of the ark and the supplying it with provisions. He goes even further, and implies the knowledge of metallic tools, and of some form of writing before the flood. Of course neither he nor the author of Genesis affirms that such civilisation existed everywhere, for example, over the wide plains and forests of antediluvian Europe. Even in post-diluvian times it would be absurd to infer from a description of the arts of ancient Chaldea and Egypt that a similar advancement of social life must have existed in Northern and Western Europe. The evidence now before us that Europe was at the time inhabited by barbarous tribes does not invalidate either the Chaldean statements or those of Genesis. But the evidence of old Chaldean monuments, extending almost as far back as the deluge, gives us positive confirmation of these statements, since it shows that at a period much too early to allow of the rise of civilisation from barbarism, the Akkadians and their *confrères* in Chaldea were erecting magnificent temples and temple towers, were practising the arts of metallurgy, pottery, sculpture, agriculture, and navigation, in a manner scarcely if at all inferior to that of their successors in later historic periods. In point of fact, the early civilisations of Chaldea,

Egypt, and Phœnicia are inexplicable, except on the supposition that the survivors of the great deluge were civilised men ; and if so, there must, in certain localities, however limited, have been civilised communities for ages before the flood. It follows therefore that, if we discredit the Biblical history of the waters of Noah, we must with it give up the earliest history and traditions of the most cultivated races of mankind, and must be content to regard the early civilisation of the East, and that which spread from it into Europe in the earliest historic times, as absolutely miraculous, or else altogether unaccountable.

Survivors of
deluge
civilised
men.

III. PARALLELISM WITH THE REMAINS OF PALANTHROPIC AND NEANTHROPIC RACES.

In all parts of the world as we trace human history backward in time, written documents gradually fail us, and at length we arrive at what may be called prehistoric time. In Western Asia we may now be said to have written inscriptions even as far back as the deluge. In Western and Northern Europe we have nothing of this kind earlier than the time of the Roman republic. In America we have nothing earlier than the voyages of Columbus, or at most than the scanty narratives of those of the Northmen in the tenth century. In Polynesia and Australia our written history extends no farther back than the voyages

Prehistoric
remains.

of Cook and his contemporaries. But though the term 'prehistoric' may thus refer locally to very different dates, in all these countries, even the oldest historically, we find under the soil remains of man and of his works, in regard to which we have no historic testimony. Let us take, in illustration of this, Great Britain itself, and the neighbouring parts of Western Europe.

Prehistoric
Britain as
an example.

When the Romans invaded Britain they found there tribes of two races, which had made their way in prehistoric times over the narrow seas. One of these, and presumably the oldest, inhabited chiefly the western parts. These people were small in stature, dark in complexion, delicate in their features, with moderately long or dolichocephalic skulls. They were not altogether barbarous, but practised agriculture, and possessed domestic animals. They were in, or just emerging from, the period of the use of stone implements and weapons. They buried their dead in long chambered mounds, which have been called long barrows. They are the ancestors, in part at least, of the Welsh, the Milesian Irish, and the Scottish Picts, and were allied to the original Bretons and Auvergnats of France and the Basques of the Pyrenees; collectively they may be designated the Iberian race. They originally spoke languages of Turanian type, and would seem to have been the first wave of human population which passed into

Iberian
race in
Britain

Europe in post-diluvian times. Associated with these people, sometimes intermixed, sometimes hostile, were other tribes of larger stature, with shorter heads and lighter complexions, speaking languages of the Aryan class, and allied to the Gaelic. They were in about the same stage of civilisation with the Iberians, perhaps a little more advanced. They were certainly more vigorous and warlike. They buried their dead in round barrows, are supposed to have been later immigrants, and to have introduced the use of metals instead of stone for weapons. They were known to the Romans as Celtæ. Both of these peoples must have migrated by water to the British islands, and the earlier probably supposed themselves to have been the first inhabitants.

Celtic race
in Britain.

If, however, they had been geologists, and had proceeded to dig in the alluvial clays, river gravels, and the floors of caverns, they would have found human bones, flint implements and *débris* of food, indicating that they had been preceded by other men who had ceased to exist before their arrival. If they had critically examined the bones of these predecessors, they would have found that they had been men of great stature and strength, and that they used stone weapons and implements of more rude and massive make than their own. The study of the broken bones found in the kitchen-middens of these extinct people would further

What the
early
colonists
may have
found.

Remains of
extinct men
and
animals.

have shown that they had been mighty hunters of great and formidable beasts, for among the *débris* of their feasts they would have found the bones of a species of elephant, the mammoth, not known in modern times, of a rhinoceros, of the wild horse, of the reindeer, and of such carnivora as the great cave bear, a relative of the grizzly bear of Western America, and of the cave lion, an ally if not a variety of the lion of Western Asia. These animals, like the men who hunted them, had perished from the land.

Geo-
graphical
changes.

Had our early Iberian colonists been familiar also with the problems of palæo-geography, they would have found evidence that at the time when these extinct people inhabited England, that country was not an island, but connected with the mainland of Europe; that in their time wide steppes and wooded plains had existed in the German Ocean, the Irish Sea, and far out into the Atlantic; that, in short, they and their islands had been preceded by a greater people and by greater continental lands. These things were probably unknown to our Iberian and Celtic ancestors, though if they had chanced to find any bones of these perished men and animals, and if, as is not unlikely, they brought with them the tradition of the flood, they might have said with awe-stricken hearts: 'These are the bones of the wicked giants of old whom God destroyed in the waters of Noah.'

Modern geological investigation has demonstrated all these facts, and our museums now contain abundance of specimens of human bones, weapons, and implements of flint and bone, ornaments made of pierced shells, even carvings in bone and ivory, showing the forms of animals now wholly or locally extinct. We thus know much of the physique, the brain development, and the habits of life of these perished people, and of the animals their contemporaries. We may name them the men of the *Mammoth age*, or of the *Palanthropic* or ancient human period, as distinguished from the Neanthropic or modern time in which we live; and the question arises to what extent these ancient people correspond or are identical with the antediluvians of history. This question may be asked (1) with reference to their age, mode of occurrence and relations to modern men; and (2) with reference to their history and the manner of their disappearance.

Specimens
indicating
primitive
man.

Under the first head we have the fact that the close of the existence of these early people in Western Europe is in immediate contact with the dawn of post-diluvial history. The precise chronology of the early post-diluvian nations is no doubt in some uncertainty, but we may fairly assume that the history of such peoples as the Chaldeans and Egyptians goes back to 3000 years before the Christian era. Some assume a still

Geological
relations
of older
human
period—
Palan-
thropic.

Relations of
Neanthropic
age.

longer period, but we need not discuss this question. In any case, the remains of Palanthropic men are in the layers immediately below those of the modern time, or only separated from them by a layer of rubble drift, or inundation mud. Yet no passage has been shown from the one to the other. In like manner, the bones of the older race show that it was not a distinct species of man, but merely a variety of the existing species, yet a race or variety so well marked as to be readily distinguished. The separating layer, however, when it can be distinctly recognized, serves to show that the dividing line between the two periods is caused by the deposits of an inundation. In other words, the wide continents of the Palanthropic age were submerged, and when they rose again they did not attain to their former dimensions. We have thus three points of separation of these otherwise so closely united ages: (1) The occurrence between their deposits of a bed indicating the temporary action of wide-spread currents of water;¹ (2) the disappearance of the mammalian fauna of the older period; (3) the permanently diminished size of the continents, and consequent change of physical geography in the modern age. These changes, along with those more immediately referring to man, are amply

¹ Rubble chips of Prestwich and contemporaneous beds.

sufficient to divide the human or Anthropie period into two distinct ages. As to the amount of the submergence involved, I think it can be proved that in Western Europe it extended to about 2000 feet, and to at least an equal amount in Western Asia. Elsewhere we have scarcely as yet the means of measuring it. In regard to horizontal extent, it must have affected all the land of the northern hemisphere, though perhaps not everywhere to an equal amount. As to date, it intervenes between the close of the glacial age, say 8000 years ago, minus a sufficient time for the introduction and extension of antediluvian man, say 2000 years, and the earliest post-diluvian history, say 5000 years ago. These are round numbers based on very uncertain estimates, both of human and geological chronology ; but they cannot be very far wrong.¹

Succession
without
mixture.

Destruction
of old
world by
sub-
mergence.

Date of
glacial and
post-glacial
periods.

If then such a submergence can be proved by physical evidence to have intervened between the earlier and later human periods, dividing the whole Anthropie age into two parts, can we be wrong in supposing that it is this wide-spread cataclysm which has impressed its memory on

¹ Upham in America, and Hansen in Norway, have summed up all the available facts as to the date of the glacial period, with the result that its close must be placed on geological evidence at from 7000 to 10,000 years ago, *Nature*, June 28, 1894. See also the *Canadian Ice Age*, by the author.

nearly the whole human race as the great historical deluge? It need scarcely be said to any one conversant with geological facts, that submergences of this kind have occurred at various periods of geological time, antecedent to the introduction of man, and that they have been a means of selection, whereby some groups of animals have been removed, and room has been made for the introduction and increase of others. We now have evidence that man has been a witness of the last, and one of the greatest of these submergences. Having arrived at this conclusion, there are certain special points which must now shortly engage our attention, and some of which may reflect light on the Biblical history summarised in the first section.

Question of
barbarism v.
civilisation.

The first question which occurs here relates to the apparent contradiction between the barbarous condition of the men of the caves and gravels, and the civilisation attributed to the antediluvians. I have already referred incidentally to this, but it deserves more deliberate attention. It is evident that we cannot expect to find remains of the antediluvian populations living on those low grounds still submerged, as, for instance, on the land then fringing the eastern Mediterranean, or the west coast of Europe, or the great plain now under the German Ocean. Nor could we expect, at least without excavations not heretofore possible,

to find their remains under the alluvial deposits which must have buried the bones of the people then living in the Euphratean plain, or at the head of the Persian Gulf. Yet these are the localities in which the greater seats of civilised population are likely to have been placed. It would be fair also to infer that the seats of civilisation would be few in comparison with the great area occupied by rude and wandering tribes, that the metals and good works of art would be scarce, and little likely to find their way to such tribes. Among them we might find some faint reflection of the arts of more cultivated communities, but not their full perfection. This is precisely what we do find, for the objects of art found with the men of the Palanthropic period convey the impression that they have been outlying bands connected with more cultivated races elsewhere. Their great cranial development, and the effective carving of their bone implements and tablets, equally lead to this conclusion. We may well imagine, therefore, that the west of Europe was still in the stone age, while metals may have been well known to more civilised peoples in Western Asia. We have already seen how strongly this possibility is confirmed by the early development of the arts in post-diluvian times.

Another question relates to the races indicated

Varieties of
Palanthropic
men.

by the skulls in the cavern deposits. It would seem from these that men of a coarse and brutal type, the so-called Canstadt race, comparable in their form of skull with some of the lowest modern races, existed in Europe in the Palanthropic age. But there also occur, especially in the later deposits of this age, remains of gigantic men with large skulls of great cranial capacity, though with somewhat coarse facial forms. These are the so-called Cro-magnon people. Lastly, a few remains indicate a race, that of Truchère, of finer type, and closely approaching to the Iberian race of the early post-diluvian period. These last seem to have been rare and possibly only accidental visitors to Europe. Their principal sites must have been elsewhere. Now this threefold division of Palanthropic men approaches very closely to that of the antediluvians in Genesis. We have only to suppose that the Truchère race, whose headquarters may have been in the East, represent the aboriginal men of the Sethite race, the Canstadt men, the ruder members of the Cainite peoples, and the Cro-magnon race, the mixed progeny of gigantic and forceful mould produced in the later antediluvian time by the union of the two, and we have a sufficiently exact parallel with the antediluvian ethnology of Genesis. Farther, we find that we are here in the presence of a selective process, effected by natural means, whereby two

racess of men unfit for the higher progress of humanity are destroyed, and the best individuals of a third permitted to survive to repeople the earth. If not a process of 'natural' selection, this would at least be a Divine selection by natural means.

Deluge a selective process.

An interesting light is thrown by geological facts on that deterioration of the environment of primitive man indicated by the 'cursing of the ground' on his account, to which we have already referred in general terms. Something of this kind presents itself to us in several aspects in connection with the geological history of primitive man.

Cursing of the ground because of man.

It is a law of palæontology that every new type placed on the earth shall enter on existence under favouring conditions, and that as it expands and extends itself to the limit of its range, way shall be made for it by the removal of hindrances and the extinction of older and rival forms. In the case of man, as a naked, unarmed, and frugivorous creature, he must have been produced in an Eden of plenty, safety, and uniform temperature; and if he was to extend his range widely over the world, these favouring conditions must be extended in preparation for him over wider and wider areas. Otherwise he would be a failure, because deprived of the advantages accorded to all other new forms of life in the development of the cosmos. Now it seems that, for some reason not known to geology,

Arrest of development, deterioration of climate.

man was deprived of these ordinary advantages. We find him in the palanthropic age in a climate becoming more rigorous as the age went on, living amidst the great and dangerous animals surviving from the Pleistocene age, obliged to use artificial clothing, to become a carnivorous creature, and as a hunter to invent and use instruments of destruction not needed in his pristine state, and finally, as a natural consequence, to turn upon and destroy his own kind, in a manner unexampled among other beings. Man thus appears to the geologist as a fallen being, out of harmony with his environment; and this is the case even if we were to adopt the theory of evolution, for how else could a harmless descendant of frugivorous apes become a ferocious and bloodthirsty savage?¹ Besides this, man not only came into contact with a more ancient and formidable fauna, which under ordinary circumstances would have been removed out of his way, but his attempts to cultivate the soil to obtain vegetable food and to cherish domestic animals were assailed by the irruption of that composite flora of thistles and other weeds, whose recent origin and still more recent geographical distribution are well known, and which still dogs his steps even in the distant lands of Australasia.² In

Invasion of
new weeds.

¹ I insisted on this in my work *Archæia*, published in 1860, and later in *The Origin of the World*, and *The Story of the Earth and Man*.

² Hooker, *Antarctic Floras*, *Flora of Australia*, etc.

connection with all this, the relations of man to the other members of the animal kingdom have become a cruel tyranny, whereby in every land where he establishes himself, whether as a savage or a civilised man, the nice balance of nature is upset, and untold misery inflicted on the lower animals.

This is the testimony of nature, but the Bible has some singular echoes of it. One of these is the prediction of the Sethite Lamech,¹ who expresses the hope that his son Noah would be the means of comforting them 'because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.' It was given to him to foresee that this dire evil under which the men of his time were groaning was remediable; but perhaps not to see that the remedy involved the destruction of the greater part of them. His prophecy is fulfilled in the fact that a new world has arisen, and that physically the new world is better, in that the continents are more limited, and the climate improved, while the giant beasts of the quaternary have passed away.

Lamech's
prophecy of
ameliora-
tion.

Still, as we too well know, the whole effects of the curse are not yet gone; and Paul can speak in the New Testament of the whole creation groaning because of man, and rejoicing in his final renovation.² It is probable that Paul's reference is mainly to that portion of the curse inflicted through the

¹ Gen. v. 29.

² Rom. viii. 19-22. *Ktisis* here probably refers specially to the animal creation.

tyrannical and lawless agency of man himself, and which still continues to the full, and will continue till 'the revelation of the sons of God.'

Want of apprehension of facts as to deterioration of environment.

It is singular that so many Christian writers have failed to appreciate this physical cursing of the ground. The following is an example :

'Modern science,' says Gaudet, 'seems to prove that the present condition of the earth is a natural result of the whole previous development, and that the miseries belonging to it are rather remains of the primitive imperfection of matter than the effects of a fall which intervened at a given moment.'

Science, rightly understood, teaches the direct contrary of this, as I endeavoured to show as far back as 1860; but it seems as if even Christian students would rather take their views of nature from the uncertain theories of current forms of philosophy than from science properly so-called.

A remarkable deliverance as to deluge.

I may close this part of our subject with a summary of the parallelism detailed in this and the previous sections. But before doing so I wish to notice here, as one phase of modern thought, a saying of an eminent writer of our time on this subject, which, if I am not mistaken, will appear very strange to the scientific men of the near future.

At the present time it is difficult to persuade serious scientific inquirers to occupy themselves in any way with the Noachian deluge. They look at you with a smile and a shrug, and say they have more important matters to attend to.'

This may have been true of a certain clique in London in 1890, when it was written, but the facts now known should stamp such an attitude as neither wise nor philosophical.

The following short table from a recent paper by Prof. Prestwich,¹ who stands at the head of English students of the later tertiary, may show the present attitude of the more conservative and cautious geologists:

C. ALLUVIAL BEDS	{ Contain the remains of the <i>existing Fauna</i> and of <i>Neolithic Man</i> .	Tabular view of post-glacial succession.
B. RUBBLE-DRIFT...	{ Contains the scattered remains of a post-glacial land surface and fauna, with scanty traces of <i>Palæolithic Man</i> .	
A. VALLEY GRAVELS and CAVES of Post-glacial Age.	{ With abundant remains of the late <i>Quaternary Fauna</i> , including the great extinct mammalia (mammoth, woolly rhinoceros, various deer, horse, bovidæ, etc.), together with a large number of rude stone implements of <i>Palæolithic Man</i> . This fauna, marks the close of the glacial period.	

In this table the period—

A represents that of antediluvian man.

B represents the deposits of the subsequent submergence.

C represents the recent deposits holding remains of modern races of men and modern animals only.

The following more detailed table gives the whole sequence, with its relations to history:

¹ *Trans. Victoria Institute*, 1894.

*General View of the later Geological Periods as
connected with the Deluge.*

General
view of later
geological
periods.

AGES.	CONDITIONS AND EVENTS.
NEANTHROPIC, MODERN, or POST-DILUVIAN.	Extent of continents as at present. Modern animals and Neocosmic men of existing races, climate as at present. So-called ages of polished stone, (<i>Neolithic</i>), bronze and iron. Modern alluvial deposits.
SUBMERGENCE or DELUGE.	Deposits of rubble-drift, loess, argile à blocaux, plateau gravels, fissure deposits, etc. Remains of man and animals of the previous period.
PALANTHROPIC, POST GLACIAL, or ANTEDILUVIAN.	Great extension of continents, rich land fauna, including species now extinct, Palæocosmic men of extinct races, mammoth, woolly rhinoceros, etc., in Europe, Asia, and America, climate mild in earlier part, becoming cold toward close. So-called <i>Palæolithic</i> men. Men of older cave and river deposits.
PLEISTOCENE or GLACIAL.	Partial submergence of land, cold climate, great extension of glaciers and floating ice, deposits of boulder clay and of marine clays and gravels. No certain evidence of man, Arctic and boreal animals and plants.
PLIOCENE.	A continental period, with mild climate, much aqueous erosion and volcanic action, a rich mammalian fauna of southern aspect. No certain evidence of man.

The whole of the above belong to the later tertiary or kainozoic. The beds of the middle and

lower tertiary contain remains of land animals now extinct, and indicating genial climates in the northern hemisphere; but as yet we have no certain evidence that man was introduced so early. The alleged discoveries of chipped flints in the middle tertiary of France and India await confirmation, and their reference to human agency is uncertain. This question, however, though of great interest, is beyond the scope of our present inquiry.

We may now sum up the whole of the subject of this section under the following general statements:— (1) Man and the land animals, his contemporaries, are the latest tenants of the earth, the latest terms in the long succession of animal forms which has extended throughout geological time. (2) The earliest races of men known to geology are separated from the modern world of ordinary history by a great physical cataclysm, involving the permanent diminution of the area of our continents and the destruction of the majority of men, and of many forms of animal life. (3) We have every reason to believe that the modern races of men are descended from survivors of these physical changes. (4) While traces of these changes remain in superficial deposits, the history of the great submergence exists in our sacred records, and in the traditions of most ancient nations. (5) The deluge thus becomes one of

Summary of
comparative
results.

the most important events both in human history and in the study of the later geological periods, and must ever enter into the fabric of rational anthropology and geology, so that any attempt to discuss human origins, or the history of primitive man or his arts or his religion, without reference to this important factor, must necessarily be fallacious. (6) There is thus good ground for the prominence given to this great catastrophe in the Word of God, and for the use made of it by the writers of the Bible, and which we shall find in our closing section is not exhausted even in our own time.¹ (7) We may, I think, fairly add that the confirmation of the accuracy of this ancient record by independent discovery in modern times, has a great evidential value in favour of the truth of the early Bible history, and, in connection with this, in support of its moral and spiritual teaching. (8) If, finally, we ask the question—Was the deluge a miracle or a natural event? the answer will be that it was both, since it was an intervention of Divine power and justice, but carried out by natural agencies. In this it resembles the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues of Egypt, and the destruction of Pharaoh's host

¹ For more full details on the Anthropic period reference may be made to a work recently published by the Religious Tract Society, entitled, *The Meeting-place of Geology and History*.

in the Red Sea. The Creator has infinite resources of miracle within His own natural energies and laws.

IV. THE DELUGE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

There are two important references to the deluge in the New Testament, on which we may base some notice of its religious significance in the present and the future. The first is in the teaching of Christ Himself, as given in Matt. xxiv. 37, *et seq.*, and in the parallel passage in Luke xvii. 26, *et seq.* The occasion, as stated in Matthew, is a question on the part of the disciples as to the destruction of the Temple, and the end of the world, or of the age, respecting which He had previously been warning the people of Jerusalem. As given by Luke, it comes in a similar connection, first in answer to the Pharisees, and then as a teaching to the disciples. In both places it is in connection with the end of the age, that is, of the Christian dispensation, and with the coming of Christ again in the character of 'the Son of Man,' predicted by Daniel; that is, as a heaven-descended human personage coming to replace the dominant wild beasts by which the prophet represents the anti-Christian political powers. The idea is that when the Messiah shall come to establish His kingdom, the state

Christ's
reference
to the
deluge.

Resem-
blance to
close of
present dis-
pensation.

of affairs on earth will be similar to that in the time of Noah. The majority of men will be wholly occupied with material interests, and careless or ignorant of their approaching doom; only a few will, like the family of Noah, be willing to enter the ark of safety: 'As it came to pass in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of (or at the coming of) the Son of Man. They ate, they drank, they married, and were given in marriage, till the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.' The antediluvians and the latter-day sinners are here accused of having no interest in spiritual things. They are men to whom nothing but material things has any reality. Their morals are not be worse than those of others, but their religion is a religion of negation. The teaching is that men are lost by not accepting the offer of salvation, that Christ comes as the vindicator of Divine justice as well as the Saviour, and that He will regard entire devotion to the things of this life, though in themselves harmless, as a sufficient ground of condemnation.

Peter's
reference to
the deluge.

The second New Testament notice of the deluge we owe to Peter, who evidently has before his mind the warning of Christ, but enters somewhat more into details. In this Peter speaks as the Noah of the new dispensation, the preacher

of coming judgment to the scoffing unbelievers of the last days. The passage, when literally translated, is a very remarkable one:—

'For this they wilfully forget, that there were heavens¹ from of old, and land² established out of water and by means of water, by the Word of God, by which same means the world³ that then was, being overflowed with water, perished, but the heavens that now are and the land, by the same word, have been stored with fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.'

He had previously stated that he refers to scoffers who carried the principle of uniformitarianism so far as to affirm that the present order of nature cannot be disturbed, and that all things continue as they were from the beginning, while there seems to be no fulfilment of the promise of the coming Judge and Avenger. He accuses these sceptics of wilful ignorance, because they have not only the Old Testament and the New, and the testimony of universal history, but the evidence of the land itself as having been produced by water, and rising out of water, or, as we may now say, the physical evidence of the rubble drift and the bone caves. Wilful also because they neglect to think of the Almighty Word which raised the earth out of the

Scoffers of
the last
days.

Their
doctrine of
uniformity.

Their
failure to
appreciate
evidence.

¹ Atmospheric heavens, because here in relation to land and waters.

² *Ge*—not the earth as a whole, but the land as distinguished from the waters.

³ The word here is *Kosmos*—the order of things, not the material earth.

Future
destruction
by fire.

waters, and could depress it again, and make the very means of its birth the cause of its destruction. He now warns them that the earth and atmosphere are stored with potential heat, and are reserved for a very different fate in the end. He invokes the aqueous cause of the deluge in evidence of the reasonableness of the plutonic cause of the final conflagration.

God's
forbearance
and man's
duty.

It would, however, be unjust to the apostle to regard him as a prophet of woe alone. He proceeds to say that God delays this just vengeance from age to age, 'Not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance,' and should, as children of God, not dread, but earnestly desire the coming of the Lord, and joyfully look forward to 'new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Seeing then that we look for these things, give diligence that we may be found without spot, and blameless in His sight.' Noah is said to have warned the antediluvians for 120 years. But Peter's preaching comes down to us through the whole of the eighteen Christian centuries, with many other inspired notes of warning that we live in the last times, and are nearing the final catastrophe of the present Cosmos.

APPENDIX.

THE BABYLONIAN STORY OF THE FLOOD.

FROM THE 'INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS' BIBLE.'

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THE Babylonian story of the flood is inscribed on the eleventh tablet of the series recounting the exploits of the Babylonian hero Gilgames (pr. *Gil-gah-mess*, with hard g). The hero had become smitten with some disease (for which, in his own land, there was no remedy), and with the desire for immortality. He therefore set out with a companion named Ur-Sanabi, 'the boatman,' to seek Um-napistim, the Babylonian Noah, who dwelt 'in a remote place at the mouths of the rivers,'¹ which was reached by water, and which is supposed to be the island of Bahrein. Whilst yet afar off, they saw the patriarch, and a conversation took place, in which Gilgames mentions wonderingly Um-napistim's unchanged appearance, and asks him how he has attained immortality. In answer, the deathless sage tells the story of the flood. The gods, who dwelt within the city Suripak, or Surippak, on the Euphrates, decided to make a flood, and Ea or Ae (Oannes), god of the sea, repeated their decision to the earth, saying: 'Land, land; field, field—O land, hear; and field, understand! Suripakite, son of Umbara-Tutu,² destroy thy house, build a ship (cf. Gen. vi. 14) . . . cause the seed of life, all of it, to go up into the ship' (cf. Gen. vi. 19-21). The god Ea then goes on to tell him the dimensions of the ship, and Um-napistim asks the

¹ The Tigris and the Euphrates.

² Regarded as the Greek Otiartes, incorrectly written for Opiartes.

god concerning it.¹ After a mutilated portion and a break, the building of the ship is described, how it was caulked, within and without, with bitumen (cf. Gen. vi. 14), and how it was provisioned. Um-napistim then collected all his property, including his silver and gold, and made all the seed of life to go up into the ship, together with his family, his female slaves, and all the beasts and cattle of the field (cf. Gen. vii. 7-9, 13-15). Samas (the sun-god) appointed the time, and gave directions to Um-napistim to enter the ship, for he was about to cause a heavy storm to come. Um-napistim then says: 'Four days I watched his (the sun-god's) image—the time to be observed. I was afraid; I entered into the midst of the ship, and shut the door. To close the ship, I gave to Buzur-Kurgal, the boatman, the great house with its goods.'

At dawn, there arose from the horizon of heaven a dark cloud, in the midst of which Hadad thundered. In front of it went Nebo and Sarru (=Merodach), and the bearers of their thrones² carried them over mountains and plains. The weapon of Uragal (Nergal) cast down, Ninip went, causing the storm to descend; the spirits of the earth (Anunnaki) raised their torches, lighting up the land with their brightness (cf. Gen. vii. 11-20); then Hadad's raging waters sought even the heavens, and everything that was bright turned to darkness. In the next column the text runs as follows:—

Like a battle against the people, it sought [to destroy].

They saw not each other—the people in heaven recognised not each other.

The gods feared the tempest, and

Drew back, they ascended to the heaven of Anu—

The gods like kennelled dogs lay down in the dwellings.

Istar cried out as one travailing (variant: filled with anger).

¹ In one part the patriarch seems to ask what he was to say to the people in case they should inquire why he was building the ship. He was told to answer, "Because Bel hates me, even me, I will not dwell in [you]r [city], and upon Bel's earth I will not place my head (literally: face). I am going down, therefore, to the abyss; with Ea, my lord, shall I constantly dwell," etc. See Jensen, *Kosmologie*, p. 371.

² These were in the form of animals.

The Supreme One (variant: the lady of the gods) made known her goodness:

'The past¹ hath turned to clay

Because I spoke evil in the presence (variant: assembly) of the gods.

When I spoke evil in the presence (variant: assembly) of the gods,

For the destruction of my people I spoke of battle.²

Have I begotten mankind? Where is he?—

Like the sons of the fishes he filleth the sea!

The gods above the Anunnaki (spirits of earth) were weeping with her.

The gods sat bowed down in lamentation,

Pressed together were their lips [in all?] the assemblies.

Six days and nights

The wind blew, the flood and hurricane destroyed.

The seventh day, when it came, that hurricane, and the advancing flood,

Which had stricken down like a whirlwind,

Ceased, the sea became calm, and the storm and flood stopped (cf. Gen. viii. 1, 2).

Giving a shout, I looked upon the surges,

But the whole of mankind had turned to clay,

Like beams the billows advanced.

I opened the window, and the light fell upon my face,

I sank back dazzled and sat down—I wept—

Over my face went my tears.

I perceived the regions of the brink of the deep,

For 12 (measures) the district arose—

The ship had reached the land of Nisir.

The mountain of Nisir held the ship, and would not let it move (cf. Gen. viii. 4).

The first day and the second day the mountain of Nisir held the ship, and would not let it move.

The third day and the fourth day the mountain of Nisir, etc.

The fifth and sixth the mountain of Nisir, etc.

¹ Lit.: "That day," apparently meaning "the generation which has just ceased to exist."

² Istar was goddess of battle, as well as of love and reproduction.

The seventh day, when it came,
I sent forth a dove, and it left. The dove went, it turned about.

It found not a resting-place, and it returned (cf. Gen. viii. 8).
I sent forth a swallow, and it left. The swallow went, it turned about,

It found not a resting-place, and it returned.

I sent forth a raven, and it left.

The raven went, and the rushing of the waters it saw—

It eateth, it gorgeth, it flieth away, it returneth not! (cf. Gen. viii. 7).

I let (them) go forth also to the four winds, I sacrificed a victim,

I made a libation upon the peak of the mountain,

I placed the libation-vases by sevens,

Beneath them I strewed cane, cedar, and sweet-brier (cf. Gen. viii. 20).

The gods smelled a savour, the gods smelled a sweet savour (cf. Gen. viii. 21).

The gods collected like flies around the sacrificer.

Then the Supreme One (= 'the lady of the gods¹'), when she came,

Raised the great rings which Anu had made according to her wish:

'These gods—by the lapis-stones of my neck!—will I not forget—

These days will I remember, nor forget them for ever.

Let the gods come to the libation,

(But) let not Bel come to the libation,

For he hath not considered, and hath made a flood,

And hath consigned my people to (their) doom.'

Then Bel, when he came,

Saw the ship—then was Bel enraged (and)

Filled with anger on account of the gods and Igigi (spirits of heaven):

'What soul has come forth?—let not a man escape the doom.'

Ninip opened his mouth and spoke, he saith to the warrior Bel:

¹ See the preceding page, line 1.

'Who but He (Oannes) arrangeth the matter?
For He knoweth everything.'
He opened his mouth and spoke, he saith to the warrior Bel:
'Thou wise one of the gods, warrior,
Indeed thou hast not considered, and hast made a flood—
The sinner has done his sin, the evildoer has done his
misdeed—
Be considerate—let him not be cut off; stop—let him not
be [bound?].
Why hast thou made a flood? Let a lion come and let
him reduce the people.
Why hast thou made a flood? Let a leopard come and let
him reduce the people.
Why hast thou made a flood? Let a famine happen, and
let the land be laid waste.
Why hast thou made a flood? Let Ura (pestilence) come,
and let him destroy the people (cf. Gen. viii. 21).
I have not revealed the counsel of the great gods.
I caused Atra-khasis (=Um-napistim) to see a dream, and
he heard the counsel of the gods.'
Then he (Bel) decided (what he would do). Bel ascended
to the midst of the ship,
He took my hand and brought me up, even me;
He brought up (and) caused my wife to come to my side,
He turned us to each other and stood between us and was
gracious to us:
'Formerly Um-napistim was a human being,
Henceforth let Um-napistim and his wife be regarded as we
gods ourselves, and
Let Um-napistim dwell afar at the mouths of the rivers.'
They took me and caused me to dwell afar at the mouths of
the rivers.
Now, as to thyself whom the gods have chosen, and
The life which thou seekest and hast asked for, even thou—
Go to, inhabit not an enclosed place 6 days and 7 nights;
As (one who) dwelleth in the midst of his tent,
Something like a breeze bloweth upon him.
Um-napistim said to his wife:
'See, the man who desireth life,
Something like a breeze bloweth upon him.'

His wife said to him, to the remote Um-napistim:
'Invest him, and let the man be transformed.
He hath performed the journey, let him return in peace;
He hath come forth from the great gate, let him return to
his country.'

The text after this is mutilated and difficult, but it is easy to see that the ceremonies by which Gilgames became transformed are given, after which he was cured of the disease from which he was suffering, and returned, with his companion Ur-Sanabi, to Erech-Suburi, his city in Babylonia.

Besides the account already given, there was another story of the Flood, told in the third person, in which the principal personage is called Atra-khasis (as in line 23 of the reverse translated), the Xisithrus of the Greeks. Fragments only of this version exist.

*(Translated by THEO. G. PINCHES, M.R.A.S., and specially
revised by him for this Tract.)*

NOTE.—This account of the Deluge is given to enable readers to judge for themselves as to its character in comparison with the record in Genesis.



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