

Tablet 1. Description of the pre-creative state and the first day.

Tablet 2. The creation of light and the war between light and darkness.

Tablet 3. The victory of the former and the separation of heaven and earth the banishment of the dragon of chaos to the depths of the under world.

Tablet 4. The creation of the earth and vegetation.

Tablet 5. The creation and the ordering of the heavenly bodies.

Tablet 6. The creation of cattle and creeping things and the creation of man.

The portion of the first tablet that has been deciphered, reads:

1. At that time on high, the heavens were unnamed.

2. Below, on the wide earth, a name are not recorded.

3. The first-born ocean was their generator.

4. The chaotic sea was the bearing mother of them all.

5. Their waters, as one, were folded together.

6. The cornfield was unharvested the pasture had not sprung up.

7. When as yet the gods had not come forth any of them.

8. A name was not recorded, order did not exist.

9. Then were made the great gods.

10. Lachonn and Lackamn came forth.

11. Until they spread.

12. Far extended were the days until gods An-Sar and Ki-Sar were made.

13. The god Anu.

The numerals at the first indicate the lines as they were inscribed upon the tablet.

The tablets then go on to tell that the great serpent of chaos and night was slain. The imprisoned earth was released and divided from the heavens, and three great gods came forward to assume the government of it.

The first of the three gods was named Anu, and bore the title of "Father of all the Gods." The second was called Bel, and he performed the duties of guardian of the country. He was the establisher of riches, wealth and possessions, and also lord of the mountains.

The third god was named Ea. He was the lord of the ocean; the protector of good men; the lord of the house of knowledge; the lord of the far-seeing eye; the lord who knows all things.

In this way the tablets point out how the heavens, the earth and the mysterious under world were first occupied by divine rulers. The position occupied by Ea in these writings was a great similarity to that occupied by Jehovah in the Bible.

The tablet relating to the creation of animal life and of man is very much mutilated. The portion of it that has been deciphered, however, compares with the sixth day in the Hebrew account, and tells the creation of cattle and creeping things. The lines read:

1. When the gods in their assembly had created great beasts.

2. They made perfect the mighty monsters.

3. They caused the living creatures to come forth.

4. The cattle of the field, the wild beasts of the field, and the creeping things.

5. For the living creatures.

6. The cattle and the creeping things of the city they sent forth.

7. The assembly of creeping things and all the creation.

8. Which is the assembly of my family.

9. Ea, the lord of the illustrious face, the multitude of creeping things he made strong.

This inscription, as will be seen, bears in parts a strong resemblance and a dissimilarity of the Bible version.

The lower part of this tablet is in such a mutilated state that the translators have not been able to make out the inscription. It is here, probably, that the account of the creation of man was inscribed, and it is the hope of the translators that other fragments of this tablet will be unearthed, with the help of which they may be able to decipher the story. The fragments of the lines that they are able to make out read:

For thy redemption did he create mankind; even he, the merciful one, with whom is life.

In another corner are the words:

Mayest thou be great, for a noble companion art thou. Let thy manhood be increased. With the dominion of all the gods I have caused thy hand to be filled.

If this applies to the creation of man, as it certainly appears to, it is a remarkable parallel to the Biblical account, although it is, of course, in a very different style of wording.

Further down on the tablet are the still more wonderful words:

Woman from the flank of man was called.

Which certainly accords with the creation of Eve as recorded in the Bible.

The fifth tablet relates to the creation of the heavenly bodies and of the making of day and night. It corresponds with the fourth day in the Biblical account. The first twenty-four lines only have been translated. They read:

1. He made pleasant the position of the great gods.

2. The constellation he arranged them; the double stars he fixed.

3. He ordained the year and appointed the zodiac signs over it.

4. The twelve months of constellations by threes he fixed.

5. From the day when the year commenced to its close.

6. He established the position of the crossing stars, and for the seasons their bounds.

7. Not to make fault or error of any kind.

8. The abode of Bel and Ea along with himself he fixed.

9. He opened great gates on either side.

10. The bolts he made strong on the right hand and left.

11. In the mass he made a stairway.

12. The illuminator he caused to shine to rule at the night.

13. He appointed him to establish the night until the coming forth of the day.

14. Saying "each month without fail by thy disk keep thy watch."

15. "At the beginning of the month, at the rising of the night."

16. "Horn shall shine forth to announce the night."

17. "On the seventh day to a disk it fills up."

18. "Open thou and cause the rays of thy fact to shine."

19. "At that time the sun on the horizon of heaven at thy coming."

20. "Shall divide the form."

21. "Toward the path of the sun thou drawest near."

22. "Then the shining of the sun shall change."

23. "Seeking his path."

24. "Set thou as by law decreed."

This shows how day was created out of the eternal night, and also the instructions given to the moon, which is mentioned as the "illuminator." It also shows that the moon was created before the sun, whereas in the Bible the sun is given the priority. This difference in these two accounts is very important, affecting as it does the whole story of the work of the creation on the fourth day. It is still more important from the fact that it illustrates clearly that the account could not have been copied from ancient Chaldean

records. Besides this, it would appear that the opening chapters of the Bible, were not compiled until centuries after the beliefs, as inscribed on the tablets, had been forgotten. It will be noticed that these tablets which, are at least 2,000 years older than the Bible, give a much more detailed account of the creation than the Old Testament does. It is not, therefore, reasonable to believe that the Bible was copied from such records as these, as the copyists would hardly have been likely to give such an entirely different account of the work on this particular day. Other fragments of inscriptions on this tablet show the Babylonians' great love for the moon, and in the lower corner is a hymn to it. The inscriptions speak of the moon as "The lord of the night" and "The giver of everything that benefits mankind." Another line says:

Thou holdest the lightning, protector of all things; there is no God who hath at any time discovered thy fullness.

The portion of the tablet relating to the creation of the sun speaks of it as "the child of the moon," and further on says:

1. Oh, Lord, illuminator of the darkness, opener of the face of the sky.

2. Merciful God, who setteth up the fallen, who keepeth the weak.

3. Unto thy light turn the great gods.

4. The spirits of earth gaze toward thy face.

5. The tongues of the host as one cry thou directest.

6. Smiling, their heads they look to the light of the sun.

7. Like a wife thou art—glad and making glad.

8. Thou art the light in the vault of the far-off heavens.

9. Thou art the eye center of all the widespread lands.

10. Men from far and near behold thee and rejoice.

11. The great gods smelt the sweet savor, the food of the shining heavens.

12. He who hath not turned his head to sin, thou wilt prosper.

13. He shall eat of thy food and be blessed by thee.

The inscriptions on the tablet relating to the Sabbath are very remarkable, as they lay down the commandment that mankind shall abstain from all labors and pleasures on that day. Translated, the lines read:

1. The seventh day is a resting day to Merodack and Zarpoint, a holy day, a Sabbath.

2. The shepherd of mighty nations must not eat flesh cooked at the fire, or in the smoke.

3. His clothes he changes not. A washing he must not make.

Within the last few years the ruins of six great Chaldean or Babylonian cities have been excavated, with the result that the history of man has been traced back about 8,000 years. These cities are Nineveh, Babylon, Sippora, Tello, Ur and Nippur. The excavations have proved that even at that remote period the world around Chaldea was in a very advanced state of civilization. These explorations have brought to light seven distinct accounts of the creation.

These tablets show that Babylon was in a highly civilized state 2,000 years before the world was created, according to the chronological table of Archbishop Ussher in the King James version of the Bible. Eminent scholars, however, say that this interpretation of the Bible is not correct. They claim that it does not state how long, as measured by years, the world was in process of creation, and that the "six days" were periods of indefinite strength, covering, it may have been, millions of years. Nor does the Bible say how long ago the creation of man took place, for the reason that the tenth and eleventh chapters of Genesis do not claim to give all the generations.