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## The Temple-Mount at Jerusalem (Gen. xii. 14).

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SOME years ago I contributed an article to THE EXPOSITORY TIMES on the Temple-Mount at Jerusalem and the deity originally worshipped there, with special reference to the enigmatical passage in Gn 22<sup>14</sup>. Since then the excavations of the Parker Expedition (1909-11), and more especially of Captain Weill (1913-14), have cleared up most of the problems connected with Mount Zion, 'the City of David,' where Captain Weill has found the royal tombs of the earlier Judæan dynasty in the precise spot in which Professor Clermont-Ganneau and myself (*Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund*, October 1883), independently of one another, stated they must be. New light has also come from Babylonia and Assyria, and it is now possible to supplement very materially my previous communication.

Mount Zion was the rocky spur between the valley of the Kidron and the valley of the Son of Hinnom (the later Tyropœon), which lies to the east of the modern Mount Zion with its Tomb of David and Cenaculum, and is now filled up with rubbish. Here was the Jebusite fortress, and here David built his city, the walls of which have now been traced eastward and westward. To the north was the ridge of Ophel, separated from Zion, however, by a depression and a cavern containing Canaanite tombs. Solomon connected it with Zion, as Weill points out, by means of the Millo or fortified 'filling up' of the break between Ophel and Zion.

Ophel was itself a continuation of the Temple-Mount, a sort of lower city having grown up upon it, and in the Temple-Mount I see the original Jerusalem. The name Uru-Salim, 'the city of Salim,' as it is written in the Tel el-Amarna tablets, is Babylonian, and we must therefore regard the town as of Babylonian origin. It commanded the road which led from the naphtha wells of Siddim at the southern end of the Dead Sea, to the military road, the *metig ammati*, written *metheg ha-ammah* in 2 S 8<sup>1</sup>, which ran along the seacoast. These naphtha wells were of primary importance to the Babylonians in the period of the Khammurabi or Amorite dynasty (and probably also of the earlier dynasties of Akkad and Ur) when the Babylonian

empire extended to the frontier of Egypt, naphtha being used by the Babylonians for lighting and heating purposes as well as for making mortar. It was of the city of Salem that Melchizedek was king in the age of Abram and Khammurabi.

But the Temple-Mount was a sacred locality as well as the site of a city. The double cave under the Mosque of Omar goes back to the neolithic period of Canaan, this double cave, as we have learnt from the excavations at Gezer and elsewhere, characterizing the sacred place of the neolithic age. The Hittite sanctuaries at Yasili Kaia and Mahaletch show that in Asia Minor the old neolithic tradition survived into late historical times. By the side of the city of Salem, there must have been in pre-historic days a holy place.

The tenacity with which traditions of religious sanctity cling to certain places in the Nearer East would lead us to believe that when the immigrants of the bronze age entered Palestine the Temple-Mount continued to be the site, if not of a sanctuary, at all events of religious worship. The exact form which this assumed would have been brought by the Babylonian founders or garrison of the city of Salem from Babylonia.

Among the Tel el-Amarna letters is one from Ebed-Khebe, the king of Uru-Salim (Knudtzon, No. 290), in which he says: 'The (or a) city of the mountain of Jerusalem (*al sad Uru-Salim*), the name of which is the city of Bil-NIN-UR, a city of the king (of Egypt), has revolted, and gone over to the men of Keilah.' The natural signification of these words would be that the city in question stood on the mountain which took its name from Jerusalem, that is to say where Jerusalem itself stood; if so, there was a Hierapolis or sanctuary as well as 'the city of Salem' on the Temple-Mount. This was about 1380 B.C. We now know the pronunciation of the divine name NIN-UR, which until lately Assyriologists were obliged to transcribe ideographically. It was Nin-Urta in Sumerian, which became En-Urta, 'the lord of Urta,' in Semitic Babylonian. In Hebrew Urta would appear as ירה, and this must be the origin of the unintelligible יראה of Gn 22<sup>14</sup>. When the meaning of ירה had been

forgotten, a punning etymology connected it with the root *ראה*, 'to see.'

Such was already the case before the age of the Chronicler, who has turned 'one of the mountains of the land of Moriah' (Gn 22<sup>2</sup>) into 'mount Moriah,' and interpreted the name, by an impossible etymology, as signifying a 'vision' (2 Ch 3<sup>1</sup>). 'Moriah' is probably, like Moreh (Gn 12<sup>6</sup>), a form of Amurru, 'Amorite,' Martu and Mûr in Sumerian. Rawlinson long ago suggested that the Phœnician city of Marathus derived its name from Martu. 'The land of Moriah' to which Abraham travelled from Beersheba was exactly that known to the Babylonians as *mat Amurrû*, 'the land of the Amorites.'

In the geographical list of Thothmes III. at Karnak, Har-el, 'the Mount of God,' comes where we should expect to find the name of Salem or Jerusalem. I have long believed, therefore, that it really denotes the latter place. Ezekiel (43<sup>15</sup>) calls the altar which was to be the centre and starting-point of the new Jerusalem by the same name; in the next verse this is changed into Ariel, the name given by Isaiah (29<sup>1</sup>) to the city of David at a time when the Temple-Mount and Zion had become a single city surrounded by the same wall. Ariel is merely another form of Har-el; a cuneiform tablet telling us that *ari* signified 'mountain' in the 'Amorite' language of Palestine.

Reading *ירה*, the old saying quoted in Gn 22<sup>14</sup> will have simply been: 'In the mountain of Yahveh is Urta,' *i.e.* the temple or sacred place of 'the lord of Urta.' Yahveh has been substituted for El, as would naturally be the case after the erection of Solomon's temple.

The name of the place, we are told, was 'Yahveh of Yireh' or 'Urta.' This corresponds exactly with the Babylonian *En-Urta*. *En*, 'lord,' was derived from the Sumerian *nin*, which properly signified 'lady,' but as Sumerian had no genders, in passing to the Semitic Babylonians it acquired the meaning of 'lord.' One result of this was that the feminine deity became masculine, occasionally retaining, however, the feminine form of the name. This explains the feminine form Yahveh, written Ya'ava and Yâva in cuneiform, instead of the masculine Yahu (written Yau by the Babylonians). A bilingual tablet informs us that Yau was an equivalent of *biru*, *ribanu*, *rubû*, 'the god Y'au,' and in the land of 'the Amorites,' *i.e.* Palestine, of *ba'ulu* or *ba'al* (C.T. xviii. 8. 12).

Reminiscences of the fact have been preserved in the expression *Yahveh Zebhâôth*, 'the lord' or 'baal of hosts'; probably also in the *Yahveh Elohim* of Gn 2. 3, and the substitution of *Adonai* and 'the Lord' for 'Yahveh' in pre-Septuagintal days.

The sanctuary, or Bit-Urta, 'the temple of Urta,' must have stood originally outside the walls of Salem, and formed a sort of suburb. At all events the narrative in Gn 22 seems to presuppose that it was not within the walls of the city; so, too, does the fact that Solomon's temple was built on the site of Araunah's threshing-floor. I have recently pointed out in the *Journal of Theological Studies* (April 1921) that the name of Araunah, which the Hebrew writer did not know how to spell, is the Hittite *arauanis*, 'nobleman,' which the bilingual vocabularies of Boghaz-Keui translate by the Assyrian *ellum*, and that this explains the gloss, 'the king,' in 2 S 24<sup>23</sup>. Araunah was the king or chief of the Hittite Jebusites of Salem, then known as Jebusi to the Israelites.

It is probable that Salem and Zion had already come to be included in the common name Uru-Salim, although as late as the period when Ps 76 was composed Salem and Zion were still regarded as separate cities.<sup>1</sup> Up to the date of David's conquest, excavation has shown that the city of Zion was still surrounded by its own wall of defence and was not yet united with Ophel. At the same time the capture of Zion brought with it the surrender of Salem.

To sum up: Salem or Uru-Salim, 'the City of Salem,' stood on the Temple-hill, another fortified city subsequently growing up to the south of it on Mount Zion, but subsequently to the age of the Tel el-Amarna tablets. Outside Salem was the sanctuary known as Beth-Urta as well as an un-walled lower city on the spur of Ophel. Eventually the name of Uru-Salim came to be extended to the citadel of Zion, which served as a defence to Salem; the citadel became the City of David and was connected by walls of fortification with the Temple-Mount. To this latter Solomon transferred the royal residence together with the temple, or chapel royal, which was attached to it. For an account of the recent excavations on Zion, and the archæological facts which they have brought to light, see Weill, *La Cité de David* (Paris, Geuthner, 1920).

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the Massoretic punctuation of *Jerusalem* as a dual.