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Sippar thou wilt not reject. Oh, lord, etc.

Babylon, the city of thy joy, thou wilt not reject. Oh, lord, etc.

Behold thy city, behold thy city. Oh, lord, etc.

Babylon and Esagila behold. Oh, lord, etc.

May the bar of Babylon, the bolt of Esagila, the brick-work of Ezida

Cause him to repent. May the gods of earth and sky say to thee,

“ Oh, lord, let thy heart repose.”¹

(Rubric): Prayer to Marduk, containing 35 lines, for the 11th of Nisan, when Bel returns to Esagila from the house of sacrifices.² The chief psalmist³ . . . (broken). Copied from the original tablet of Belahhimirib.

S. LANGDON.

*THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT AND THE
DECALOGUE.*

II.

IN Deuteronomy it is told that the Decalogue was written upon two tablets of stone (Deut. v. 19 ; ix. 10). This view has been accepted by the traditional interpretation of the history of old Israel. In consequence of this these tablets take a prominent place in the present popular ideas about the oldest laws of Israel and we are all from our youth familiar with the fact that the ten commandments were written on two tablets of stone.

Yet this view is contradictory to what is told in Exodus. The narrative about the events at Mount Sinai, however, is very complicated and confused, and therefore scholars tried to find out the oldest form of the traditions gathered in the narrative. They found that the tradition of Deuteronomy probably agreed with the tradition of the Elohist

¹ The Assyrian copy adds a prayer of two lines to the god Ašur for the king.

² See plan A, letter b.

³ Concerning the important rôle of the psalmists in the temple liturgies see the writer's *Sumerian and Babylonian Psalms*, pp. vii. ff.

work and supposed that the Decalogue was removed from its proper place by an editor.¹

It is certainly to be admitted that Exodus xx. 1-17 is incorporated in the present narrative at a most inappropriate place. The first words of xx. 1 cannot be the continuation of the last words of xix. 25. The sentence of xix. 25 even remains unfinished: "So Moses went down and said to them. . . ."² We do not read what he said. Exodus xx. 18 the people heard thunderings and lightnings and the voice of a trumpet. There is no allusion in Exodus xx. 18-21 that the people heard also the words of the Decalogue.

Notwithstanding this the suggestion that the legislation of the Decalogue must be connected with the story of the tables of stone and originally have appeared at another place of the narrative, cannot be admitted. The only possible explanation of the fact seems to me that the Decalogue did not belong to the narrative or any of the sources of the narrative at all.

The principal text for the solution of the problem is Exodus xxiv. 12: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee the tables of stone and the law (*thora*) and the precepts (*mišwah*), which I have written in order to teach them." The terms *thora* and *mišwah* cannot refer to the Decalogue. *Thora* is the decision of God in cases of religious and social life. The *Thora* of Jahve is communicated to His people by the priests. The people go to the sanctuaries of Jahve to hear what is *Thora*. They tell the priest what is their matter and he makes them know the *Thora* of God (Exod.

¹ Though Driver doubts the suggestion of Kuenen that xx. 15-19 originally stood between xix. 15-19 and xx. 1 he also supposes that in the source of E the Decalogue was written on the tables of stone. *Intr.*, pp. 32, 33.

² The translation "told them" hides the difficulty. The object of the verb is missing.

xviii. 14-22). In this way they teach the people. The words "I will give thee . . . the Thora that thou mayest teach them" show that Moses could know the Thora of God by reading what He had written upon the tables of stone. None of the ten commandments are Thora; they are precepts of general bearing, principles of religious and social life, but no decision in special matters. Most of them cannot be called *miṣwah* either, for *miṣwah* is a positive precept to do something. Only the fourth and fifth commandments could be called a *miṣwah*.¹

Evidently Exodus xxiv. 12 refers to a type of legislation that is different from the character of the Decalogue and of much larger contents. This fully agrees with Exodus xxxii. 15. There it is told that "the tables of stone were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God." The size of the ark, which was made for the preservation of the tables of stone, was 1.25 metre × 0.75 metre × 0.75 metre. According to the tradition, therefore, the tables must have been of the same size as the stone of Mesha (1.13 m. × 0.70 m.). Holzinger has pointed out that the 620 letters of the Decalogue would occupy twenty lines of the stone of Mesha. If the original Decalogue was of a more concise form, the legislation would have occupied even a much smaller space. On every side of the tablets, then, only four or five lines would have been written. It is evident that this is highly improbable. The thirty-four lines of the Mesha-inscription contain about 1,200 letters. Two tablets of this size,

¹ It is needless to say that some scholars divided the text of Exodus xxiv. 12 and assigned parts of this verse to different sources. The text, however, is without any difficulty. It is not allowed to divide a perfectly good context for the sake of proving a theory. There is no reason for separating the words *Miṣwah* and *Thora* from the words "the tables of stone."

of which both sides were engraved, must have contained a legislation of at least about 4,000 letters. Even if we would assume that the tables were only half the size of the Mesha stone the legislation had to be three or four times the content of our full Decalogue. The height of the ark seems to prove that the tables were placed one upon the other in the ark. Otherwise 0.75 m. would be too much. So probably the Israelitic tradition here refers to a legislation of the size of the "Book of the Covenant."

Here the question arises whether the Book of the Covenant can be the "Thora and Mišwah" referred to by Exodus xxiv. 12. This seems to be made impossible by xxiv. 4 seq. "And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord . . . and he took the book of the covenant and read in audience, of the people." If Moses has written all the words in a book, he cannot have received the same legislation from God written on tables of stone. If Exodus xxiv. 4 sqq. refer to the laws of Exodus xxi.-xxiii., the contents of the tables must be different from these laws. Now a careful examination of Exodus xxiv. 1-8 teaches us that Exodus xxiv. 4 cannot refer to all the laws of the Book of the Covenant. It is probable that in xxiv. 3 the words "and all the judgments" do not belong to the original text. They are not found in xxiv. 3b, 4, and no allusion is made to them in verse 8. In these places only the "words" are mentioned and not the words and the judgments. The term has been interpolated into the text in order to connect Exodus xxiv. 3 seq. in a better way with the foregoing chapters xx. 22-xxiii. 19, for xxi 1 begins, "These are the judgments, which thou shalt set before them." From this it follows that Moses originally was not supposed to have written all the laws of Exodus xx. 22-xxiii. 19, but only a part of them, which was designed as "the words of Jahve."

Now it is very remarkable that we find a final sentence

in the middle of the list of precepts of Exodus xxiii. 1-19. Evidently xxiii. 13 closes a series of commandments, "All things that I have said unto you, thou shalt observe, etc." xxiii. 14-19, however, contain further precepts about the feasts of Jahve. On the other hand the connection between the ritual precepts of xx. 22-27 and xxiii. 14-19 seems to be broken by the list of the "judgments" beginning Exodus xxi. 1. This is explained by the suggestion that "the words of Jahve" referred to in Exodus xxiv. 4 originally are Exodus xx. 22-27; xxiii. 14-19.

A possible objection against this suggestion is, that the whole contents of xxi. 1-xxiii. 13 cannot be called "judgments," for xxii. 19, 27-30, xxiii. 4-12 are religious commandments and no legal precepts. The Hebrew word *mishpath*, however, not only means judgment, legal precept, but also "custom" (1 Sam. x. 25), "charge" (1 Kings v. 8, Engl. text iv. 28), "religious duty, manner of worshipping" (2 Kings xvii. 27); so it is quite possible that the said verses belonged to a codex headed "mishpatim."

From Exodus xxxii. 21 it follows that the commandment not to make gods of silver or gods of gold was among the words of the covenant, which Moses read in the audience of the people. Otherwise the Israelites would not have known that they did wrong by making the golden calf.

Hence it is probable that the "words" referred to in Exodus xxiv. 4 were Exodus xx. 22-27, xxiii. 14-19.

The present critical analysis cannot assign these words to the Mosaic period, for it is based on the conviction that the early Israelites were nomads. The feasts of Exodus xxxiii. 14 sqq. are agricultural feasts. It is usually supposed that the Israelites borrowed them from the Canaanites. If this conviction is false and agricultural life was familiar to the Israelites of the times of Moses, there is no objection to the Mosaic origin of these words of the Covenant.

How is it that these words are divided into two parts by the insertion of the Mishpatim? The most probable solution is that the Mishpatim originally took the place of Exodus xxv.-xxxi. In the original form of the tradition this legislation was written upon the tables of stone.

Everybody admits that Exodus xxv.-xxxi. are later. These chapters cannot be the original continuation of Exodus xxiv. Moses goes up to Jahve in order to receive the law and the commandments, that he may teach his people. The precepts about the construction of the tabernacle are neither law (*thora*) nor commandment (*mišwah*). The contents of Exodus xxi.-xxiii., however, perfectly suits this designation.

Evidently this legislation must be assigned to the pre-monarchical period. If we compare it to Deuteronomy, we see a striking difference. In the Book of the Covenant no king is mentioned. The highest authorities are the "rulers" (*nasi*, xxii. 28: "Thou shalt not revile Elohim nor curse a nasi"). No city is mentioned, nor a college of "elders" (i.e. the city authorities). The religious standpoint is also archaic.

Exodus xxi. 6 deals with the slave, who wishes to serve his master for ever: "His master shall bring him unto Elohim, and shall bring him to the door or doorpost, and bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him for ever. The meaning of this action naturally is that the slave is bound for ever; the door therefore must be the door of the house of the master. The Elohim must be the god or gods of the house. Elohim cannot mean a local sanctuary, as there is no sense in nailing the slave to the doorpost of a distant temple. Deuteronomy omits the bringing of the slave to Elohim. This shows that this custom contained some detail that was inconsistent with the monotheistic ideas of Deuteronomy, but it shows too that the

door was the door of the master's house, this being the only possible interpretation of the action in Deuteronomy.

Exodus xxii. 7-8 compared with xxii. 9 give another remarkable instance of the archaic religious conception. "If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man's house; if the thief be found, he shall pay double. If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall *come near unto the Elohim* (and swear) that he has not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods. For every matter of trespass . . . or for any lost thing, whereof one says, This is mine, both parties *shall come before the Elohim*. He whom God shall condemn shall pay double unto his neighbours." Here, too, the Elohim of the house are mentioned. They protect the house, they know all that is there and what happens there. They are able to give a decision about goods that were within the precincts of the house.

But "if a man delivers unto his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast to keep; and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man seeing: *the oath of Jahve* shall be between them both, whether he has not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods." The cattle is not kept in the house, it is pasturing, and kept within hurdles during the night. So here the oath of Jahve is demanded, Jahve being the God of public life. Critics have not been able to explain this "Jahve" in the alleged Elohist legislation. The critical theory about the Jahvist and the Elohist did not offer a probable solution. Kuenen therefore suggested to read Elohim instead of Jahve (*H.c.O.*² p. 150). There is no ground for amending the text.

xxii. 19 shows that these Elohim were of subordinate significance. It was not allowed to slaughter animals in their honour, to sacrifice unto them: "He that sacrifices

unto any god, save unto Jahve only, shall be utterly destroyed." Jahve is the great national God. In His honour the annual feasts are kept. He is entitled to receive fruits and liquors of the harvest and the firstborn of men and animals (xxii. 28, 29).

There seems no reasonable objection to the theory that Moses gave this legislation to the Israelites, if we only remember that the Israelites were farmers before they entered into Egypt and that they left Egypt to settle once more on the fertile soil of Palestine.

If our hypothesis is right, the Israelites sojourned only for about eighty years in Egypt.¹ We perfectly understand how old customs and traditions did not wholly disappear during this period, and it seems very probable that Moses was able to give a legislation to his people that was practically founded on old Hebrew customs. If the Israelites were farmers before entering into Egypt, they must have had their harvest festivals, etc. It is a well-known fact that the memory of people, living in a simple state of life, is able to pass on stories and songs from one generation to another often during centuries. So it would be very strange if the Israelites in Egypt had forgotten all about their old customs.

There is no reason why Moses should not have written these laws. The name of the tables at least is in favour of the tradition that the stones which Moses took down to the camp of the Israelites were engraved with a legislation. They are called "Tables of 'Eduth.'" This term usually is explained as "Tables of Testimony," and it is suggested by the critics that it is a name of one of the latest sources of the Hexateuch, viz., the Priestly code. This, however, is very improbable, for the Tables of 'Eduth are mentioned Exodus xxxi. 18, xxxii. 15 in verses not

¹ Cf. "The Hebrews in Egypt," *EXPOSITOR*, August, 1908.

belonging to the Priestly code. Of course an editor was made responsible for this fact. This, however, was only done in order to save the theory. In the text of the verses and in the context is no ground for removing the term from the text. Moreover, if the term "‘Eduth" is a term peculiar to the Priestly code, it remains unexplained why the Priestly code did not inform its readers what the ‘Eduth was. According to the critical analysis the Priestly code did not mention the Decalogue. It has been suggested that everybody knew what the ‘Eduth was. But how could one know if the term did not appear in the tradition before P ? ¹

Furthermore the term "tables of testimony," as usually is translated, is false. The Hebrew word עֲדוּת means in all other places of the Old Testament "law." Why should it not have this meaning here ? It originally means "custom" (Arabic *‘adath*, a term well known in present oriental life for Latin "mos"). So evidently the translation—tables containing the sacred customs—is the right one. But then this term must be old, and cannot possibly be the particular property of the late Priestly code ; that would certainly have emphasized the fact that the law was originally written by God Himself, if it had introduced this term.

Thus far the result of the present investigation is, that probably the order of events in the original tradition of Exodus was as follows. The Israelites came to the desert Sinai and camped before the mount. Moses sanctified the people, and on the third day Jahve descended, speaking in thunderings (xix. 1-19). The people trembled and stood far off, but Moses came nearer to the thick darkness where God was (xx. 18-21). Jahve spoke to him the "words" (Exod. xx. 22-27 ; xxiii. 14-19). After that

¹ It is generally admitted that the text of 2 Kings xi. 12 is corrupt. One letter was dropped. Instead of ‘Eduth is to be read *g’adoth*, bracelets ; cf. Burney, *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Book of Kings*, p. 311.

Moses came and told the people all the words of Jahve. The people promise to do all the words Jahve has spoken. On the next day the covenant between Jahve and His people is read. Then Jahve commands Moses to go up into the mount in order to receive the law that He Himself has written upon tables of stone. Moses went up, and Jahve read to him the legislation, Exodus xxi.-xxiii. 13, and gave the tables to Moses.

Before concluding this article two questions must yet be answered: "What is the relation between the second Decalogue of Exodus xxxiv. 14-26 and the Book of the Covenant? How is it that the Ten Commandments are not mentioned in the original form of the tradition of Exodus?"

B. D. EERDMANS.

*HISTORICAL COMMENTARY ON THE FIRST
EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.*

VIII. THE FALSE TEACHERS AND THEIR PLACE IN THE
EARLY CHURCH.

IN the preceding Section the attempt has been made to put clearly the question regarding the position in the Church of the false teachers, whom Paul describes in this and in the other Pastoral Epistles. That the same class of teachers is alluded to in all three Epistles is universally admitted; and we have assumed it from the outset.

There is not the slightest ground for classing these false teachers along with the great leaders and teachers of heresies in the second and later centuries. Paul's attitude to them is totally different from that of the Church leaders in that subsequent period to the heretics and the heresiarchs; and his description of the false teachers contains little that suits those heretic leaders, while it contains a good deal that is inconsistent with those later heretic sects and their