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inscriptions hardly suggest it. What ground is there for believing that Nebuchadrezzar ever conquered Egypt? The 'Cambridge Ancient History' can find none. How can Necho's delay of three months over the affairs of Judah in 608 (Mr. Caiger says 607, in tacit contradiction of the authorities he professes to follow) be held responsible for his overthrow at Carchemish three years later. Mr. Caiger has failed to understand the evidence of the Babylonian Chronicle, which shows that Necho's expeditions into Mesopotamia never lasted for more than a few months at a time.

The book is so planned that each chapter may be obtained separately in leaflet form, an arrangement which has its advantages, though it involves a certain amount of overlapping. The chapters on Hosea, Deuteronomy, and the prophets of the restored community may be recommended; for the rest the reader should consult also some standard work of Prophecy or on the Religion of Israel.

Recent Biblical Archaeology.

By the Reverend J. W. Jack, D.D., Glenfarg, Perthshire.

Since 1924 the Oriental Institute of Chicago has been conducting excavations at Megiddo (*Tell es-Mutesellim*), the impregnable fortress city which commands the pass leading through the ridge of mountains running south-east from Carmel. The Institute has been busy stripping off stratum after stratum of the debris, which was deposited by the successive cities built one above another on this ancient site. Thus far the excavation, under Mr. Gordon Loud, the Field Director, has descended to the level of about 1000 B.C., or a little later, the period of perhaps greatest interest in Palestine, as this was the time of the commencement of the Hebrew monarchy. Among numerous interesting finds is that of a long-spouted jug, dating from the Early Iron Age, and decorated in duochrome, with the picture of a man surrounded by land and sea animals, and playing on a harp. The whole setting recalls the myth of Orpheus, but the date and other particulars direct our thoughts rather to David. The picture of the harp, indeed, gives us an almost contemporary illustration of the instrument that David must have used to banish the gloom of Saul (1 S 16^{23}). The frame is somewhat square, contains four strings, has a large sounding-body below, and unlike modern harps seems to have been easily portable (cf. Ps 137^{2}, 'We hanged our harps upon the willows'). Such instruments (the *kinnōr* or 'harp,' and the *nēbel* or 'psaltery') were no doubt the principal favourites employed in the Temple services, and to accompany songs, especially those of a joyous nature. In Solomon's time, they were made of almug (algum) trees, while the strings were generally of gut (and subsequently of silk or metal). Another unusually interesting discovery is that of a clay model of a sheep's liver. This was found immediately outside the Eastern Temple, and is a unique example of an object which played an important rôle in the Babylonian religion, being used to discover the will of the gods. A fine specimen of the same kind is preserved in the British Museum. The prophet Ezekiel represents Nebuchadrezzar as standing at a crossroads and having recourse to three forms of divination: 'he shook the arrows to and fro, he consulted the teraphim, he looked in the liver' (Ezk 21^{21} [R.V.]). This inspection of the liver of sacrificial animals for divination purposes dates from the earliest Babylonian times. The science of reading the signs was believed to be the invention of the god Shamash, and a complete set of rules of interpretation had developed during the ages. Being regarded as the chief seat of life (Pr 7^{23}), the liver was supposed to reveal the future by its convulsive motions, when taken from the sacrificed victim. A similar magical use of it (in this case the liver of a fish) is found in the well-known incident in the story of Tobit ($6^{4ff.}$ 8^{2}). A large number of ancient house-burials have been found within the city. One of these is evidently that of a lady of great wealth, for across her forehead was found a gold band, her hair was adorned with gold rings, her ears had enormous gold pendants, while a mass of silver rings, beads, and other jewellery was fixed at the shoulder with a gold toggle-pin. As the workmanship may be dated from the fifteenth century, the burial was probably one of those made during the great siege by the Egyptians in 1479 B.C.

One of the most important discoveries has been that of an early population, living in caves and huts at the base of the site as far back as the end of the fifth millennium, over two thousand years before Abraham. This prehistoric 'village' is spread through a layer of twelve to fifteen feet, and appears to have existed for about twenty centuries. The inhabitants, who are believed to have come from

the north-east (perhaps the Caucasus), were already in possession of excellent pottery, but knew nothing of metal. Though installed at first in caves and small shelters, they ultimately built good dwelling-houses, and enriched their pottery with geometric designs and animal figures. They were no longer content with the ordinary graving tool (made of stone or bone) to adorn their vases, but used cylindrical seals of Elamite or Mesopotamian origin. This ancient centre of population ceased to exist at the end of the third millennium, about the time when the Middle Bronze Age was dawning in the country. The results of the excavation go to show that civilization in these early ages was well developed, and, when taken along with those at numerous other sites both in Palestine and throughout the Near East, seem to overturn the vague hypothesis that every age must be more civilized than the last.

We mentioned recently that a clay seal had been found at Lachish with the inscription, '*For Gedaliah who is over the house*,' the individual referred to being doubtless the ruler who was appointed by Nebuchadrezzar to govern Judah after the deposition of its last king, Zedekiah, in 587 B.C. (2 K 25^{22}). It is an interesting fact that the reverse side of the seal still contains the marks of the papyrus document to which it had been fixed. It is known that the papyrus leaf, when the writing was finished, was usually folded several times and tied with fibre or string. A little fine clay, specially prepared, was then placed over the knot, and the seal impressed upon it. Naturally, the underside of the clay took on the marks of the 'paper,' which was not always smooth. Documents still folded and sealed in this manner have been discovered at several places in Egypt, such as Elephantine, where there was a Jewish colony. The Gedaliah seal shows not only the marks of the papyrus, but the vertical lines of the string, and thus gives us the first attestation of the use of papyrus as writing material in Palestine. The roll of prophecies by Jeremiah, which King Jehoiakim cut with his penknife and then burned (Jer 36^{23}), may have been of this material (the Septuagint uses the words χαρτίον, χάρτης), like the text of the Law which, according to Josephus, was despatched to Ptolemy II. When Jeremiah had a deed drawn up in double form, one copy being sealed and the other open (Jer 32^{10}), he no doubt made use of papyrus, for specimens of similar double contracts have been unearthed at Elephantine. The papyrus plant grew round Lake Huleh, but it is probable that it was imported from Egypt ready made into 'paper.' We know that, as far back as the twelfth or eleventh century B.C., the Egyptian commissioner Wen-Amon brought five hundred rolls of papyrus to Byblos.

The expression, 'who is over the house' (אֲשֶׁר עַל הַבַּיִת) is the first epigraphic corroboration of a function frequently referred to in the Old Testament. Thus, Ahishar was 'over the house' under Solomon (1 K 4^{6}), Arza under Elah (1 K 16^{9}), Jotham during the leprosy of Azariah (2 K 15^{5}), and Shebna followed by Eliakim under Hezekiah (Is 22^{15} 36^{3}, 2 K 19^{2}). The expression sometimes signifies 'steward' merely (as in Gn 44^{1}), but when applied to the overseer of a palace or royal house, it has a much higher meaning. Jotham, indeed, was regent of the kingdom and 'judged the people of the land' (2 K 15^{5}), while Shebna is referred to as *sōkēn* (סֹכֵן), a term which is equivalent to *zukinu* in the Amarna Letters, where the word is glossed with *rabiṣu*, 'commissioner' of Pharaoh. When Isaiah was informing Shebna of the appointment of his successor Eliakim, he details the high functions that devolved upon the latter (22^{20-22}), and from his description we may conclude that the individual who was 'over the house' was one of the chief officers of the king, superior sometimes to the Secretary of State, and perhaps administrator of the whole crown property.

Some striking discoveries have been made by André Parrot at the ancient site of Mari (*Tell Ḥarīrī*, on the Middle Euphrates), which was a large Semitic centre of commerce and art, with a brilliant civilization, as early as 4000 B.C. The city continued to flourish till the thirty-fifth year of Hammurabi's reign (2032 B.C.), when this ruler completely destroyed it by first sacking it and then burning it to the ground. The walls are still red with the flames, heaps of charcoal are still to be found here and there, and a brazier which has been found is believed to have been the one used to start the fire. The palace, which is remarkably well preserved, is one of the largest excavated in the Near East. Up to the date of the last report, sixty-nine rooms have been unearthed, and there seem to be as many more beneath the soil. Altogether this enormous royal dwelling must have covered nearly four acres of ground, apart from the storehouses, depôts, and other buildings attached to it. More than 2500 tablets, containing historical and other records, have been found, most of them in the archive department. Among these is an inscribed earthenware disk, about fifteen inches in diameter, which, according to Thureau-Dangin, gives us the names of two more kings of Mari.

Some of the interior walls of the private apartments are painted with geometric designs or human representations, while others have beautiful ornamental friezes or bands five or six feet from the floor, in cobalt blue, red ochre, or black. Perhaps the most remarkable discovery of all is that of two large well-constructed schoolrooms within the palace buildings. One of these has four rows of brick seats, and the other three, some of the seats having as many as four places. Together the two rooms must have accommodated nearly a hundred and fifty scholars. Some large flat bowls, which are believed to be 'inkstands,' have been found on the floor of each room, as well as numerous tablets and other educational material. These are the first well-preserved schools which have been discovered in Mesopotamia dating from such an early period (the end of the third millennium). They were probably meant for the education of the officials and others connected with the palace. We know that as far back as this time (that of Abraham) there was excellent instruction in the large cities in reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography, astronomy, and other subjects. There were priests and scribes installed as masters of schools or colleges. The pupils copied lists of objects—countries, cities, rivers, stars, gods, trees, stones, plants, birds, cattle, synonyms of words, verbal forms, and other things from the store of tablets that the teacher kept for this purpose. Among the Hebrews in Canaan, education no doubt was more domestic and private, the home being the school, and the parents as a rule being the teachers. Yet the incident in Gideon's experience (Jg 8^{14} [R.V. margin]) warns us against unduly restricting the number of those able to read and write in the pre-monarchial period.

The complete and detailed report of the excavations at *el-Mishrefeh* (Egyptian Qaṭna, twelve miles north-east of *Ḥoms*), which has now appeared, shows that this ancient city, like Mari, was founded and ruled by Semites, the forerunners of the Hebrews. In the 'High Place' the excavators have discovered six pedestals or bases, built of brick and lime, on which upright stones or pillars (Biblical *massebôth*, wrongly translated 'images' in A.V.) had evidently stood, together with a cedar trunk fixed in the ground which had been part of the wooden pole (Biblical *ashērā*, wrongly translated 'grove' in A.V.), representing the ancient sacred tree. These were the indispensable furnishing of a Semitic High Place; and that they were common in Hebrew sanctuaries is clear from references in Hos 3^4 10^1, and from repeated condemnation of them in the successive law-codes (Ex 34^{13} 23^{24}, Dt 7^5, etc.) and historical books (1 K 14^{23}, 2 K 17^{10} 18^4). Numerous examples of *massēbôth*, of diverse shapes and sizes (generally unhewn blocks five to ten feet high), have been brought to light by excavation. They have been found at Gezer, Megiddo, Taanach, Beth-shemesh, and other places. At Gezer there was a series of ten, of which eight are still standing *in situ*.

A few months ago the Hebrew University of Jerusalem commenced excavations at Napoleon Hill or Jerische, near the coast, two or three miles north of Jaffa. Preliminary investigations were conducted at the spot in 1934 and 1935, but the first discoveries of importance have been made recently. These point to the existence of a Canaanite settlement on this site as long ago as 2000 B.C. or earlier, and the place must have had considerable strategic significance owing to its proximity to the Auja River, boats being able to draw up to the river bank almost opposite the city. The name of the original city is uncertain, but it is believed to be Rakkon (Jarkon) in the portion of Dan (Jos 19^{46}). Soundings have also been made at *Ras el-Kharrûbeh* by Bergman and Blair of the American School. As this site (about three miles from Jerusalem), rather than *Anâtā*, is believed to be the Old Testament Anathoth, some interesting results may be forthcoming. David had heroes from here (1 Ch 11^{28}), and the place is mentioned in connexion with Solomon (1 K 2^{26}), about 950 B.C.

Unfortunately, there is still considerable uncertainty regarding the length of the Hyksos rule in Palestine and Egypt. On the one hand, Professor Albright and others only allow a hundred and fifty years or less for it. They base their argument to a large extent on the famous 'Four Hundred Year Stele.' This granite slab was discovered at Tanis or Zoan (believed now to be Avaris, the Hyksos capital) by Mariette in 1865, and after its engraved inscription had been copied, it was again buried for security, and has only recently been rediscovered by Montet. The inscription states that the monument was set up in the four hundredth year of King Opeḥtiset-Nubti (believed to be a Hyksos ruler). From Sethe's reading of the words, the scholars referred to conclude that the Hyksos rule began four hundred years before a date just preceding the accession of Rameses I. (which they place in 1320 B.C., according to the new astronomical chronology of Borchardt), that is, just before 1720 B.C.; and as the Hyksos are known to have been driven out of Egypt in 1580 B.C., their period

of rule could thus only have covered a century and a half at the most. On the other hand, Sir Flinders Petrie, in his latest discussion of the question (in the Supplement to *Ancient Egypt*), is more than ever confirmed in his view that the fifteenth and sixteenth dynasties were entirely Hyksos (ruling in Lower Egypt and Palestine), and that they extended to 788 years, while the thirteenth, fourteenth, and seventeenth dynasties were native Egyptian, ruling in Upper Egypt, and were contemporary with the Hyksos ones. This would put the Hyksos entry into Egypt back to about 2370 B.C. There are difficulties in this view, for it places the Joseph period during the reign of the Hyksos (to whom the Hebrews were closely related), whereas the facts of the Joseph story seem to point to an epoch when Egypt was under the control of a purely Egyptian king. Almost every touch in the story tends to emphasize the alien character of the Hebrews to the Egyptians. The whole problem no doubt can only be elucidated by further excavation and discovery.

A Redefinition of Jesus' Use of the Parable.

By the Reverend James D. Smart, M.A., Ph.D., Galt, Ontario.

The parables of Jesus are so central for all Christian teaching, and by their very nature form such an attractive subject, that one would expect every aspect of them to have been exhaustively investigated. It is surprising, therefore, to discover that little attention has been given to the relation between Jesus' use of the parable and the most characteristic use of the parable in the Old Testament. Jesus stood in direct line with the prophets in many ways; His work and His message are the consummation of much which is to be found in them. Thus their use of the parable might be expected to stand in some relation to, and to throw some light on, His use of it. Failure to explore this possibility has resulted in a false approach to the whole question of parable and a serious misunderstanding of Jesus' intention in this type of speech.

The orthodox definition of a parable is that it is 'an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.' G. A. Buttrick as recently as 1930 asserted that, in his estimation, this ancient definition can hardly be improved. Jülicher, whose researches in this field were so extensive, defined the narrative parables as 'illustrative instances which establish an abstract religious or ethical truth by the evidence of a concrete case.' In other words, they are interesting little stories intended to inculcate some fine moral or spiritual truth. As a bare minimum definition that may be allowed to stand, for the parable does in every case, at least in the New Testament, convey moral and spiritual truth. But unfortunately it has been accepted as a comprehensive definition, thereby obscuring the unique nature and intention of a whole class of parables which includes some of the most important. Violence has been done to the finest of Jesus' parables; they have been reduced to the dull level of teaching rather platitudinous truths; their real saltiness and spice have been lost by forcing them into this simple pattern of 'an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.' A definition which included in its scope the prophetic use of the parable would have prevented interpretation from falling into this false channel. Had even the one parable in 2 S 12, of Nathan before David, been taken into account and thoroughly considered, the inadequacy of the customary definition would have been apparent.

A suggestion in this direction has been made by A. T. Cadoux in his book *The Parables of Jesus*. He attacks the usual view of the parables which regards them as merely 'inculcating a commonplace of morals or religion.' 'It is characteristic of the parable to deal neither with the general nor with the generally accepted. Its function is to help home a resented, distasteful, or, at least, difficult truth. In its most pointed use, as in Nathan's parable to David, or Jesus' parable to Simon the Pharisee, it brings the hearer to self-condemnation before he sees where he is being led' (p. 50). The parables 'gain in value when we see them, not as pictorial renderings of accepted truths, but as moments in the creative reaction of Jesus upon the life around Him. They take us into the brunt of His warfare' (p. 59). These words, when first read, seemed a complete anticipation of my own results. But closer examination of the book revealed that the full significance of this point of view had not been seen. No attempt was made to work out the Old Testament basis, and in the detailed interpretation of Jesus' parables no appreciable use was made of this new conception of the nature of parable. Therefore, the task of this essay shall be to establish the existence of a peculiar type of parable used mainly by the prophets and