

Paper 95 — The Melchizedek Teachings in the Levant

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This chart is a revision of the 2011, 2012, 2015 and 2020 versions.

Most endnotes and Urantia Book cross-references have been deleted to enhance readability.

Sources for Paper 95, in the order in which they first appear

- (1) Lewis **Browne**, *This Believing World: A Simple Account of the Great Religions of Mankind* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926)
- (2) James Henry **Breasted**, *The Dawn of Conscience* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933)
- (3) Harold **Peake** and Herbert John **Fleure**, *Priests and Kings (The Corridors of Time, Volume IV)* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927)
- (4) Ernest F. **Scott**, *The Kingdom of God in the New Testament* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931)
- (5) Robert Ernest Hume, Ph.D., *The World's Living Religions: An Historical Sketch* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924)

Note: Coded as **Hume1**.

- (6) Robert Ernest Hume, Ph.D., *Treasure-House of the World's Religions: Selections from Their Sacred Scriptures* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932)

Note: Coded as **Hume2**.

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row.

- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the UB writer pointedly differ from each other.
- (e) **Blue** indicates original (or “revealed”) information, or UB-specific terminology and concepts. (What to highlight in this regard is debatable; the highlights are tentative.)
- (f) **Light green** indicates Bible passages or fragments thereof, which are not paralleled in the source text.

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PAPER 95 — THE MELCHIZEDEK TEACHINGS IN THE LEVANT

95:0.1 As India gave rise to many of the religions and philosophies of eastern Asia, so the Levant was the homeland of the faiths of the Occidental world.

The Salem missionaries spread out all over southwestern Asia, through Palestine, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Iran, and Arabia, everywhere proclaiming the good news of the gospel of Machiventa Melchizedek. In some of these lands their teachings bore fruit; in others they met with varying success. Sometimes their failures were due to lack of wisdom, sometimes to circumstances beyond their control.

1. THE SALEM RELIGION IN MESOPOTAMIA

BOOK II: HOW RELIGION DEVELOPED IN THE ANCIENT WORLD, II: THE BABYLONIANS (Browne 65)

1. The Semitic goddesses—how the Babylonian gods arose—trinities. (Browne 65)

95:1.1 By 2000 B.C. the religions of Mesopotamia had just about lost the teachings of the Sethites

and were largely under the influence of the primitive beliefs of two groups of invaders,

Thousands of years ago, when some of [the bedouin Semites] struggled out of the barren desert and obtained a foothold in the lush meadows of Mesopotamia, they brought with them their old desert religion. It was then little more than a crude animism, with Ishtar, “Self Waterer,” the spirit of the oasis, as the chief deity (B 66-67).

[When these barbarian cavalrymen from the northeast overran the whole Euphrates valley, they did not conquer the remnants of the Andites who dwelt upon the mouth of the river on the Persian Gulf. [Etc.] (78:8.5)]

4. The defects of the religion—polydemonism—a ritualized morality—Shabatum and mythology—contrast with Hebrew versions of same—fear. (Browne 72)

Taboos dogged [the Babylonians’] every step in life, and “bad luck” threatened them at every turn. Every seventh day was regarded as somehow “evil,”

and on it special sacrifices were fearfully offered and all manner of special taboos were observed.

For instance, the princes were forbidden to go forth on journeys that day, or to eat meat cooked over a fire (B 73-74).

the Bedouin Semites who had filtered in from the western desert

and the barbarian horsemen who had come down from the north.

95:1.2 But the custom of the early Adamite peoples in honoring the seventh day of the week never completely disappeared in Mesopotamia. Only, during the Melchizedek era,

the seventh day was regarded as the worst of bad luck.

It was taboo-ridden;

it was unlawful to go on a journey, cook food, or make a fire on the evil seventh day.

It is highly probable that the Hebrews actually got their Sabbath from the Babylonian Shabatum, for we know they paid little heed to its observance until after they had lived in exile in Babylonia from 586 B.C. to 536 B.C. But note how differently the Hebrews regarded the day. To them it was holy, not evil. The Hebrews told themselves that the Sabbath was a divinely appointed day of rest, and though they observed on it many of the old Shabatum taboos, they did so not out of fear of the genii but out of respect for their God (B 74).

1. The Semitic goddesses—how the Babylonian gods arose—trinities. (Browne 65)

But the [newly arrived] Babylonians by no means contented themselves with merely remodeling the old [desert] gods. They manufactured new ones, too—hundreds of them. Even to list the chief of them—Ningursu, Bel, Shamash, Nabu, Marduk, Anu, Ea, Sin, and the rest—would be quite tiresome. The idea of one great god with universal sway seems hardly to have occurred to the people (B 68).

The Jews carried back to Palestine many of the Mesopotamian taboos which they had found resting on the Babylonian observance of the seventh day, the Shabattum.

95:1.3 Although the Salem teachers did much to refine and uplift the religions of Mesopotamia,

they did not succeed in bringing the various peoples to the permanent recognition of one God.

Such teaching gained the ascendancy for more than one hundred and fifty years and then gradually gave way to the older belief in a multiplicity of deities.

95:1.4 The Salem teachers greatly reduced the number of the gods of Mesopotamia, at one time bringing the chief deities down to seven: Bel, Shamash, Nabu, Anu, Ea, Marduk, and Sin.

Occasionally not a single god, but a group of three together was worshipped as superior: Anu (sky), Bel (earth), and Ea (sea);

or Shamash (sun), Sin (moon), and Ishtar (the star Venus). . . . Age after age new trinities of that sort arose (B 68).

2. Ishtar and the sex rites—holy prostitution—astrology. (Browne 68)

[contd] But from beginning to end, one deity remained supremely popular at least among the plain people of Mesopotamia. That deity was Ishtar,

the great mother of the gods, the spirit of sex and fertility, the very principle of life itself (B 68).

[See B 70, comparing the cult of Ishtar with the primitive Celtic cult of Bridget.]

In Babylonia and throughout the Levant the people seem to have bowed down to it inordinately, and sex rites in honor of Ishtar—or Astarte, Ashtoreth, Isis, Cybele, Venus, and Aphrodite, as the goddess was known in the various lands—were counted of primary importance.

At the height of the new teaching they exalted three of these gods to supremacy over all others, the Babylonian triad:

Bel, Ea, and Anu, the gods of earth, sea, and sky.

Still other triads grew up in different localities,

all reminiscent of the trinity teachings of the Andites and the Sumerians and based on the belief of the Salemites in Melchizedek's insignia of the three circles.

95:1.5 Never did the Salem teachers fully overcome the popularity of Ishtar,

the mother of gods and the spirit of sex fertility.

They did much to refine the worship of this goddess,

but the Babylonians and their neighbors had never completely outgrown their disguised forms of sex worship.

In Babylonia itself it was required that every woman, rich or poor, should submit at least once in her life to the embraces of a stranger. She had to wait in the courts of a temple of Ishtar until some man bought her for an hour, and then she had to dedicate to the goddess the wages earned by her harlotry.

Without performing that rite a woman was imagined to be incapable of bearing children, and was therefore unfit to marry (B 68-69).

It had become a universal practice throughout Mesopotamia for all women to submit, at least once in early life, to the embrace of strangers;

this was thought to be a devotion required by Ishtar,

and it was believed that fertility was largely dependent on this sex sacrifice.

95:1.6 The early progress of the Melchizedek teaching was highly gratifying until Nabodad, the leader of the school at Kish, decided to make a concerted attack upon the prevalent practices of temple harlotry. But the Salem missionaries failed in their effort to bring about this social reform, and in the wreck of this failure all their more important spiritual and philosophic teachings went down in defeat.

95:1.7 This defeat of the Salem gospel was immediately followed by a great increase in the cult of Ishtar, a ritual which had already invaded Palestine as Ashtoreth, Egypt as Isis, Greece as Aphrodite, and the northern tribes as Astarte.

[See previous page.]

And it was in connection with this revival of the worship of Ishtar that

[The Babylonian priests] had somehow hit on the idea that the constant changes in the heavens bear some subtle relation to the happenings here on earth.... All human souls were believed to be hitched for weal or woe to stars, and the chief concern of the priests was, therefore, **stargazing**.

That sorry deceit called **astrology**, which still lures the feebler-minded among men, had its first development back there in Babylonia almost four thousand years ago! (B 70)

3. The priesthood—its vices—and virtues. (Browne 70)

After all, religion to the Babylonian was not a matter of noble sentiment, but a sort of complicated insurance business; and its priestly solicitors and agents were, as Americans would say, out to get “all there was in it for them.” Their extortions, especially for **fortune-telling**, sometimes grew so flagrant that kings had actually to pass laws to control them (B 71).

the Babylonian priests turned anew to **stargazing**;

astrology experienced its last great Mesopotamian revival,

fortunetelling became the vogue, and for centuries the priesthood increasingly deteriorated.

95:1.8 Melchizedek had warned his followers to teach about the one God, the Father and Maker of all, and to preach only the gospel of divine favor through faith alone. But it has often been the error of the teachers of new truth to attempt too much, to attempt to supplant slow evolution by sudden revolution. The Melchizedek missionaries in Mesopotamia raised a moral standard too high for the people; they attempted too much, and their noble cause went down in defeat. They had been commissioned to preach a definite gospel, to proclaim the truth of the reality of the Universal Father, but they became entangled in the apparently worthy cause of reforming the mores,

and thus was their great mission sidetracked and virtually lost in frustration and oblivion.

95:1.9 In one generation the Salem headquarters at Kish came to an end, and the propaganda of the belief in one God virtually ceased throughout Mesopotamia. But remnants of the Salem schools persisted.

But it must not be imagined for a moment that the great priesthood of Babylonia was unrelievedly lecherous and low. One cannot read their ancient hymns without realizing that at least some among their band were men of what we vaguely call “spirituality” and “religious insight.”

Small bands scattered here and there continued their belief in the one Creator and fought against the idolatry and immorality of the Mesopotamian priests.

Most of those hymns are mere medleys of magic phrases, but others are poems of amazing beauty. Indeed, certain of them ring with tones that are strikingly reminiscent of the Hebrew Psalms. For instance:

The sin which I sinned I knew not;
My God has visited me in wrath.
I sought help, but none took my hand;
I wept, but none gave ear.
To my God, the merciful God, I turn and
pray;
How long, O Lord! . . .
O God, cast not away thy servant,
But turn my sin into a blessing.
May the wind carry away my
transgressions.
Seven times seven are they—
Forgive thou them! . . .

Now this is no ordinary bit of primitive liturgy. It reveals a reverence for the deity, a humility in the worshipper, [*contd next pg.*]

and above all a freedom from magical formula that would lead us to think it all a forgery did we not have the very stone on which the Babylonian priests engraved it.

Such lines may not even be remotely typical, but they are authentic. And because they are authentic, and they and other lines of like quality were ever written in Bel-Marduk's courts, the cult of Babylonia must be seen to mark a distinct advance in the evolution of religion (B 71-72).

[See 96:7.]

95:1.10 It was the Salem missionaries of the period following the rejection of their teaching who wrote many of the Old Testament Psalms, inscribing them on stone,

where later-day Hebrew priests found them during the captivity and subsequently incorporated them among the collection of hymns ascribed to Jewish authorship.

These beautiful psalms from Babylon were not written in the temples of Bel-Marduk;

they were the work of the descendants of the earlier Salem missionaries, and they are a striking contrast to the magical conglomerations of the Babylonian priests.

The Book of Job is a fairly good reflection of the teachings of the Salem school at Kish and throughout Mesopotamia.

95:1.11 Much of the Mesopotamian religious culture found its way into Hebrew literature and liturgy by way of Egypt through the work of Amenemope and Ikhnaton. The Egyptians remarkably preserved the teachings of social obligation derived from the earlier Andite Mesopotamians and so largely lost by the later Babylonians who occupied the Euphrates valley.

2. EARLY EGYPTIAN RELIGION

95:2.1 The original Melchizedek teachings really took their deepest root in Egypt, from where they subsequently spread to Europe. The evolutionary religion of the Nile valley was periodically augmented by the arrival of superior strains of Nodite, Adamite, and later Andite peoples of the Euphrates valley. From time to time, many of the Egyptian civil administrators were Sumerians. As India in these days harbored the highest mixture of the world races, so Egypt fostered the most thoroughly blended type of religious philosophy to be found on Urantia, and from the Nile valley it spread to many parts of the world.

XVII: THE SOURCES OF OUR MORAL HERITAGE (Breasted 336)

Gressmann goes even farther in identifying foreign influences in the Hebrew Psalms. He says: "The oldest mythological *motif* in the [Hebrew] hymns was that of the creation of the world, and it (together with the creation myth) probably originated in Babylonia.

The *motif* of the divine care of the world was a later idea, which made its way into Palestinian Psalmody under the influence of Egypt" (JHB 368).

The Jews received much of their idea of the creation of the world from the Babylonians,

but they derived the concept of divine Providence from the Egyptians.

BOOK II: HOW RELIGION DEVELOPED IN THE ANCIENT WORLD, III: THE EGYPTIANS (Browne 75)

2. The idea of monotheism emerges. (Browne 77)

Centuries before the Hebrews came up out of the night of desert savagery, we find the Egyptians already groping their way toward the idea of a monotheism, a One God. It was political rather than philosophical considerations

that impelled the Egyptians in such a direction.

As soon as some tribal chieftain managed to fight his way to the throne of the land,

so soon did he try to set his tribal god on the throne of the heavens.... Usually he tried to wipe [the defeated gods] out by declaring them to be merely so many vagrant manifestations of his own deity. Or else his priests invented elaborate mythologies to prove that his god had been the very first in the universe, and had actually created all the other deities. Century after century such stratagems were resorted to (B 77-78).

95:2.2 It was political and moral, rather than philosophic or religious, tendencies

that rendered Egypt more favorable to the Salem teaching than Mesopotamia.

Each tribal leader in Egypt, after fighting his way to the throne,

sought to perpetuate his dynasty by

proclaiming his tribal god the original deity and creator of all other gods.

In this way the Egyptians gradually got used to the idea of a supergod, a steppingstone to the later doctrine of a universal creator Deity. The idea of monotheism wavered back and forth in Egypt for many centuries, the belief in one God always gaining ground but never quite dominating the evolving concepts of polytheism.

1. Original animal-worship—the growth of the gods—the priests. (Browne 75)

Of course, in very early times the Egyptians, like the rest of the primitive peoples of the earth, were simple animists (B 75).

Each tribe—there seems to have been forty-two of them in Egypt about seven thousand years ago—worshipped the spirit inhabiting some particular species of living creature, and looked to it for protection.

One worshipped the ram, another the bull, a third the lion; others worshipped the serpent, the cat, the goat, the ass, the falcon, the hippopotamus, the pig, and the vulture.

Evidently the earliest religion of Egypt must have been a totemism rather like that of the American Indians, each tribe being named after the animal which it held sacred, and which it may have looked on as its spiritual ancestor (B 75-76).

IV: THE OLD KINGDOM OF EGYPT (Peake & Fleure 61)

The rich soon lined their tombs with sun-dried brick, to add to the comfort of the departed, while the poor were content with a simple pit, covered with a mat, which soon became silted up with sand.

Now this sand was impregnated with natron or soda, so that the bodies in the graves became pickled while those in the brick vaults gradually decayed. In due course this difference was discovered and its cause determined.

95:2.3 For ages the Egyptian peoples had been given to the worship of nature gods;

more particularly did each of the twoscore separate tribes have a special group god,

one worshipping the bull, another the lion, a third the ram, and so on.

Still earlier they had been totem tribes, very much like the Amerinds.

95:2.4 In time the Egyptians observed that dead bodies placed in brickless graves were preserved—embalmed—by the action of the soda-impregnated sand, while those buried in brick vaults decayed.

Instead, however, of abandoning brick vaults for graves, the rich experimented in methods of pickling the corpses of their relatives in solutions of *natron*. Thus by slow degrees arose the custom of mummification (P&F4 91).

The preservation after death of the body was the great desire of the Egyptians, as it was believed that some kind of life remained as long as the body was intact (P&F4 91).

The first clear evidence that we have of the custom [of mummification], still in its initial stages, is in some of the tombs of the second dynasty. It was not, however, very successful, and the use of portrait-statues was to act as a substitute for the corpse should the latter decay (P&F4 91).

[?]

Later portrait-statues become commoner and reach their zenith during the fourth dynasty, when statues both in diorite and wood, of kings, queens, and nobles, attain a lifelike perfection never subsequently reached (P&F4 89-90).

These observations led to those experiments which resulted in the later practice of embalming the dead.

The Egyptians believed that preservation of the body facilitated one's passage through the future life.

That the individual might properly be identified in the distant future after the decay of the body, they placed a burial statue in the tomb along with the corpse,

carving a likeness on the coffin.

The making of these burial statues led to great improvement in Egyptian art.

95:2.5 For centuries the Egyptians placed their faith in tombs as the safeguard of the body and of consequent pleasurable survival after death.

XIII: POPULAR APPROPRIATION OF THE OLD ROYAL HEREAFTER AND THE GROWTH OF MAGIC (Breasted 223)

It is difficult for the modern mind to understand how completely the belief in magic penetrated the whole substance of life, ... as much a matter of course as sleep or the preparation of food (JHB 247).

XIV: THE JUDGMENT HEREAFTER AND MAGIC (Breasted 250)

Already in the Feudal Age the priests inserted in the Coffin Texts a charm for this purpose entitled:

“Chapter of not Permitting a Man’s Heart to be Taken Away from Him in the Nether World.”

This charm was now included in the Book of the Dead.

Here magic entered a new realm—

that of conscience, personal qualities, and character. The unlimited possibilities of gain made it inevitable that the priests should now take the momentous step of permitting such agencies thus to enter the world of moral values. Magic might become agent for moral ends (JHB 263).

The later evolution of magical practices,

while burdensome to life from the cradle to the grave,

most effectually delivered them from the religion of the tombs.

The priests would inscribe the coffins with charm texts which were believed to be protection against

a “man’s having his heart taken away from him in the nether world.”

Presently a diverse assortment of these magical texts was collected and preserved as The Book of the Dead.

But in the Nile valley magical ritual early became involved with the realms

of conscience and character

to a degree not often attained by the rituals of those days.

[?]

And subsequently these ethical and moral ideals, rather than elaborate tombs, were depended upon for salvation.

VII: THE NATURE GODS AND HUMAN SOCIETY: OSIRIS (Breasted 94)

95:2.6 The superstitions of these times are well illustrated by

The battle of Horus with Set, which, as we recall, was a Solar incident, waged so fiercely that the young god lost his eye at the hands of his father's enemy. When Set was overthrown, and the eye was finally recovered by Thoth, this wise god spat upon the wound and healed it. This method of healing the eye, which is, of course, folk-medicine reflected in the myth, evidently gained wide popularity,

the general belief in the efficacy of spittle as a healing agent,

an idea which had its origin in Egypt

passed into Asia, and seems to reappear in the New Testament narrative, in the incident which depicts Jesus doubtless deferring to recognised folk-custom in employing the same means to heal a blind man (JHB 102).

and spread therefrom to Arabia and Mesopotamia.

In the legendary battle of Horus with Set the young god lost his eye, but after Set was vanquished, this eye was restored by the wise god Thoth, who spat upon the wound and healed it.

V: THE PYRAMID TEXTS AND
PHARAOH'S ASCENT TO THE SKY
(Breasted 65)

Two ancient doctrines of this celestial hereafter have been commingled in the Pyramid Texts: one represents the dead as a star,

and the other depicts him as associated with the Sun-god, or even becoming the Sun-god himself (JHB 73).

[?]

Much discussion has been caused by the fact that the sloping entrance passage of the Great Pyramid points directly towards the Pole Star.

The hitherto unnoticed reason is obviously disclosed in the Pyramid Texts. When the king's soul emerged from this passage

its direction carried it straight towards the circumpolar stars (JHB 73-74).

In the oblique rays of the sun, also, shooting earthward through some opening in the clouds,

they beheld a radiant stairway let down from the sky that the king might ascend.

95:2.7 The Egyptians long believed that the stars twinkling in the night sky represented the survival of the souls of the worthy dead;

other survivors they thought were absorbed into the sun.

During a certain period, solar veneration became a species of ancestor worship.

The sloping entrance passage of the great pyramid pointed directly toward the Pole Star

so that the soul of the king, when emerging from the tomb,

could go straight to the stationary and established constellations of the fixed stars,

the supposed abode of the kings.

95:2.8 When the oblique rays of the sun were observed penetrating earthward through an aperture in the clouds,

it was believed that they betokened the letting down of a celestial stairway whereon the king and other righteous souls might ascend.

“King Pepi has put down this radiance as a stairway under his feet, whereon King Pepi ascended to this his mother, the living Uræus that is on the head of Re” (JHB 78).

“King Pepi has put down his radiance as a stairway under his feet whereon to ascend to his mother.”

BOOK II: HOW RELIGION DEVELOPED IN THE ANCIENT WORLD, III: THE EGYPTIANS (Browne 75)

5. The dead—the Judgment Day—the resort to magic. (Browne 85)

95:2.9 When Melchizedek appeared in the flesh, the Egyptians had a religion far above that of the surrounding peoples.

It was believed that on death the soul of a man set out at once to reach a Judgment Hall on high. Evil spirits tried to waylay it on the journey, but any soul adequately provided with magic formulae could evade them all.

They believed that a disembodied soul, if properly armed with magic formulas, could evade the intervening evil spirits

With these spells the evil spirits could be dodged or fought off until finally the soul attained the Judgment Hall and stood before the celestial throne of Osiris, the Judge.

and make its way to the judgment hall of Osiris,

There it gave an account of itself to Osiris and his forty-two associate gods. Any soul that could truly say: “I come before ye without sin, and have done that wherewith the gods are satisfied. I have not slain, nor robbed, nor stirred up strife, nor lied, nor lost my temper, nor committed adultery, nor stolen temple food. . . . I have given bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked, a ferry to him who had no boat”—if in sincerity it could say all that,

where, if innocent of “murder, robbery, falsehood, adultery, theft, and selfishness,”

then the soul was straightway gathered into the fold of Osiris.

it would be admitted to the realms of bliss.

But if it could not, if it was found wanting when weighed in the heavenly balances, then it was cast into a hell, to be rent to shreds by the “Devouress.” For only the righteous souls, only the guiltless, were thought to be deserving of life everlasting! . . . (B 86-87).

[contd] It was an extraordinary set of beliefs, and reveals a moral insight on the part of the Egyptians that must have been unmatched in the world of four thousand years ago (B 87).

XVII: THE SOURCES OF OUR MORAL HERITAGE (Breasted 336)

In contemplating Amenemope’s pleasing picture of the two trees [*see Exhibit A*], one is inevitably reminded of the first Psalm:

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, ...
 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water,
 That bringeth forth its fruit in its season,
 Whose leaf also doth not wither,
 And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.
 The wicked are not so,
 But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.
 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment.

It is important to notice that “the judgment” appearing here is *the only mention of it in the entire Book of Psalms*. This is a significant hint, for a judgment hereafter, as we have already seen, was the contribution of Egyptian civilisation (JHB 365-66).

If this soul were weighed in the balances and found wanting, it would be consigned to hell, to the Devouress.

And this was, relatively, an advanced concept of a future life in comparison with the beliefs of many surrounding peoples.

95:2.10 The concept of judgment in the hereafter for the sins of one’s life in the flesh on earth was carried over into Hebrew theology from Egypt.

The word judgment appears only once in the entire Book of Hebrew Psalms,¹

We cannot doubt that Jeremiah was acquainted with Amenemope's picture of the two trees, and it must equally well have been known to the author of the first Psalm (JHB 367).

[*Note:* See 95:4.6, below, where the UB identifies Amenemope as the author of the first Psalm.]

and that particular psalm was written by an Egyptian.

3. EVOLUTION OF MORAL CONCEPTS

FOREWORD (Breasted ix)

95:3.1 Although the culture and religion of Egypt were chiefly derived from Andite Mesopotamia

It is now quite evident that the ripe social and moral development of mankind in the Nile Valley, which is three thousand years older than that of the Hebrews, contributed essentially to the formation of the Hebrew literature which we call the Old Testament. Our moral heritage therefore derives from a wider *human* past enormously older than the Hebrews, and it has come to us rather *through the Hebrews* than *from* them.

and largely transmitted to subsequent civilizations *through the Hebrews* and Greeks,

The rise of man to *social idealism* took place long before the traditional theologians' "age of *revelation*" began (JHB xv).

much, very much, of the *social and ethical idealism* of the Egyptians arose in the valley of the Nile as a purely evolutionary development.

Notwithstanding the importation of much truth and culture of Andite origin, there evolved in Egypt more of moral culture as a purely human development than appeared by similar natural techniques in any other circumscribed area prior to the bestowal of Michael.

95:3.2 Moral evolution is not wholly dependent on revelation.

The fact that the moral ideas of early men were the product of their own social experience is one of profoundest meaning for thinking people of today. Out of prehistoric savagery, on the basis of his own experience, man arose to visions of character (JHB xv).

High moral concepts can be derived from man's own experience.

Man can even evolve spiritual values and derive cosmic insight from his personal experiential living because a divine spirit indwells him. Such natural evolutions of conscience and character were also augmented by the periodic arrival of teachers of truth, in ancient times from the second Eden, later on from Melchizedek's headquarters at Salem.

IX: CONDUCT, RESPONSIBILITY, AND THE EMERGENCE OF A MORAL ORDER (Breasted 115)

95:3.3 Thousands of years before the Salem gospel penetrated to Egypt,

The Maxims of Ptahhotep [from the Twenty-seventh Century B.C.] furnish us with the earliest formulation of right conduct to be found in any literature....

A spirit of tolerant kindness pervades all of the aged statesman's [Ptahhotep's] wisdom....

It can hardly be doubted that this kindness is close kin to fair and just treatment, and it is therefore not surprising to find that righteousness and justice are lifted above everything else in this Wisdom of Ptahhotep (JHB 129, 135, 136).

its moral leaders taught justice, fairness,

Perhaps the ethical spirit of the old vizier [Ptahhotep] is best summarised in his warning against avarice,

and the avoidance of avarice.

when without too obvious relevancy he bursts out almost triumphantly with the assurance, *“Established is the man whose standard is righteousness, who walketh according to its way.”* This has decidedly the ring of Hebrew wisdom as preserved to us in the Old Testament, but it is over two thousand years older (JHB 138).

Over half of Ptahhotep’s admonitions deal with personal character and conduct, while the remainder have to do with administration and official conduct. We have seen that in general they inculcate gentleness, moderation, and discretion without lack of self-assertion, displaying indeed the soundest good sense in the poise and balance to which they commend the young man (JHB 138).

Finally the dominant note is a commanding moral earnestness which pervades the whole homely philosophy of the old vizier’s wisdom. The most prominent imperative throughout is *“do right,”* and *“deal justly with all”* (JHB 139).

These great men [of the Old Kingdom] ... must long have groped for a term which would best express their idea of the human order, and focus in its meaning the achievements of which they were the heirs. They eventually found it in a single remarkable word, which summed up for them all that was highest in human life. It was the word *“Mat”* or *“Maat,”*

Three thousand years before the Hebrew scriptures were written, the motto of the Egyptians was: *“Established is the man whose standard is righteousness; who walks according to its way.”*

They taught gentleness, moderation, and discretion.

The message of one of the great teachers of this epoch was: *“Do right and deal justly with all.”*

one of the earliest abstract terms preserved in human speech, the word which we have been translating “righteousness,” “justice,” “truth,” for all of these conceptions were finally represented in Egyptian speech, by this single word, Maat (JHB 142-43).

The Egyptian triad of this age was Truth-Justice-Righteousness.

Of all the purely human religions of Urantia none ever surpassed the social ideals and the moral grandeur of this onetime humanism of the Nile valley.

III: THE SUN-GOD AND THE DAWN OF MORAL IDEAS (Breasted 29)

95:3.4 In the soil of these evolving ethical ideas and moral ideals the surviving doctrines of the Salem religion flourished.

Already at this remote stage of human development [in the middle of the Fourth Millennium B.C.] there is recognition of the fact that some conduct is approved and some disapproved. Each is treated accordingly. “Life is given to the peaceful (literally “to the one bearing peace”), and death is given to the guilty” (literally “the one bearing guilt”). It is very noticeable that these early thinkers do not use here the terms “good and evil.”

The concepts of good and evil found ready response in the hearts of a people who believed that “Life is given to the peaceful and death to the guilty.”

The peaceful is “he who does what is loved” and the guilty is “he who does what is hated.”

“The peaceful is he who does what is loved; the guilty is he who does what is hated.”

These are *social* judgments, designating what is approved (“loved”), and what is disapproved (“hated”). These two terms, “what is loved” and “what is hated,” occurring here for the first time in human history, form the earliest known evidence of man’s ability to draw the distinction between **good and bad** conduct. They had a long subsequent history and continued in use **for many centuries**. It was long before they were displaced by **right and wrong** (JHB 38-39).

BOOK II: HOW RELIGION DEVELOPED IN THE ANCIENT WORLD, III: THE EGYPTIANS (**Browne** 75)

5. The dead—the Judgment Day—the resort to magic. (Browne 85)

Religion advanced in the valley of the Nile to unprecedented heights.... But the pity of it was that, though those heights were attained, they were not held. Perhaps that decline occurred because the Egyptians sank too completely in the thralldom of the priests. (Save for **Ikhnaton**, Egypt **in all her five thousand years of history** produced not a **single prophetic spirit**. And prophetic spirits alone can keep a people on the heights.) (B 88)

For centuries the inhabitants of the Nile valley had lived by these emerging ethical and social standards before they ever entertained the later concepts of **right and wrong—good and bad**.

95:3.5 Egypt was intellectual and moral but not overly spiritual.

In six thousand years only **four** great prophets arose among the Egyptians.

Amenemope they followed for a season; **Okhban** they murdered; **Ikhnaton** they accepted but halfheartedly for one short generation; Moses they rejected.

Again was it political rather than religious circumstances that made it easy for Abraham and, later on, for Joseph to exert great influence throughout Egypt in behalf of the Salem teachings of one God. But when the Salem missionaries first entered Egypt, they encountered this highly ethical culture of evolution blended with the modified moral standards of Mesopotamian immigrants.

XVI: THE FALL OF IKHNATON —
THE AGE OF PERSONAL PIETY —
SACERDOTALISM AND THE END
(Breasted 303)

As the Egyptian people passed into the last thousand years B.C. the development of conscience which we have been following for some two thousand years reached its conclusion in a profoundly important transition which had been in preparation for many centuries. The impelling voice within, which had originally grown up out of social influences and had since been further developed by many centuries of contemplative reflection, was now unreservedly recognised by the believer to be the **mandate of God** himself. We have seen that this idea arose over five hundred years earlier at the beginning of the Empire,

These early Nile valley teachers were the first to proclaim conscience as the **mandate of God**,

but in this new age of personal piety conscience became, as it had never been before, the unmistakable **voice of God** (JHB 320).

the **voice of Deity**.

4. THE TEACHINGS OF AMENEMOPE

95:4.1 In due time there grew up in Egypt

This new attitude is revealed to us in a remarkable treatise which we may call the “Wisdom of Amenemope.” Written by a sage named Amenemope,

it is now preserved to us in a papyrus in the British Museum (JHB 320-21).

[Compare: “ ... Pray to Aton the Sun-god when he riseth / And say ‘Give me safety and health’; / He will give to thee thy need for life, / And thou art saved from fear” (JHB 328).]

Professor Lange of Copenhagen ... says, “The religious views of Amenemope are much deeper and penetrate much more deeply into his entire world of thought [than his predecessors]. To the other teachers of wisdom piety is a virtue, the thought of death and eternity is a motive for virtuous conduct, it is God who gives riches and fortune.

But for Amenemope the consciousness of God is the determining factor in his conception of life and his entire behaviour.”

a teacher called by many the “son of man” and by others Amenemope.

This seer exalted conscience to its highest pinnacle of arbitrament between right and wrong, taught punishment for sin,

and proclaimed salvation through calling upon the solar deity.

95:4.2 Amenemope taught that riches and fortune were the gift of God,

and this concept thoroughly colored the later appearing Hebrew philosophy.

This noble teacher believed that God-consciousness was the determining factor in all conduct;

To his son, therefore, Amenemope constantly holds up this attitude towards life, that it is to be lived both in personal and official relations, in full **realisation** of momentary **responsibility to God**.

This ultimate intensity of conscience and God-consciousness in the teachings of an Egyptian thinker in the Tenth Century B.C., before any of the Old Testament was written, is the more remarkable, because we now know that the Wisdom of Amenemope was **translated into Hebrew**,

it was read by Hebrews, and an important part of it found its way into the Old Testament (JHB 321-22).

[contd] In **preparing his son** for an official career **in the Egyptian government**, our sage takes up one after another the temptations to corrupt use of his official opportunities for gain, and warns the youth against yielding to such temptations (JHB 322).

In the wise conclusion that **riches “make themselves wings and fly away,”**

Amenemope’s graphic picture of the uncertainty and perishability of **earthly** good, we recognise a figure which has come down to us through the editor of the Hebrew Book of Proverbs, and in the life of the Western world has gained proverbial currency after three thousand years.

that every moment should be lived in the **realization** of the presence of, and **responsibility to, God**.

The teachings of this sage were subsequently **translated into Hebrew**

and became the sacred book of that people long before the Old Testament was reduced to writing.

The chief preachment of this good man had to do with

instructing his son in uprightness and honesty **in governmental positions of trust**,

and these noble sentiments of long ago would do honor to any modern statesman.

95:4.3 This wise man of the Nile taught that **“riches take themselves wings and fly away”**—²

that all things **earthly** are evanescent.

Our sage regards dependence upon such fleeting human resources as futile; the only security is in God, pray to him and “thou art saved from fear” (JHB 328).

His great prayer was to be “saved from fear.”

He exhorted all to turn away from

As Sethe has shown, [Amenemope’s] seemingly obscure lines regarding the divergence of the words of men and the acts of God can mean nothing else than the wide difference between the words, that is the plans, of men and the subsequent acts of God.... The contrast is obviously between “the words of men” and “the acts of God,” and when it is stated that they both “diverge” the meaning evidently is “from each other.”

“the words of men” to “the acts of God.”

We thus have here in its oldest form the world-wide proverb, “Man proposes, God disposes” (JHB 329-30).

In substance he taught: Man proposes but God disposes.

XVII: THE SOURCES OF OUR MORAL HERITAGE (Breasted 336)

[F]uller study of the Proverbs will undoubtedly disclose how dependent upon Amenemope were the Hebrew editor’s ideas throughout the Book of Proverbs (JHB 375).

His teachings, translated into Hebrew, determined the philosophy of the Old Testament Book of Proverbs.

[?]

Translated into Greek, they gave color to all subsequent Hellenic religious philosophy. The later Alexandrian philosopher, Philo, possessed a copy of the Book of Wisdom.

95:4.4 Amenemope functioned to conserve the ethics of evolution and the morals of revelation and in his writings passed them on both to the Hebrews and to the Greeks.

He was not the greatest of the religious teachers of this age, but he was the most influential in that he colored the subsequent thought of two vital links in the growth of Occidental civilization—the Hebrews, among whom evolved the acme of Occidental religious faith, and the Greeks, who developed pure philosophic thought to its greatest European heights.

[See *Exhibit B.*]

All Old Testament scholars of any weight or standing now recognise the fact that this whole section of about a chapter and a half of the Book of Proverbs [*Footnote: Chapters 22:17, to 23:11.*]

is largely drawn *verbatim* from the Wisdom of Amenemope; that is, the Hebrew version is practically a literal translation from the Egyptian (JHB 371).

[[T]he Hebrew compiler of the Proverbs, though he did not retain all of the available thirty chapters [of Amenemope's Book of Wisdom], nevertheless employed exactly thirty proverbs in his abridged edition (Prov. 22:17-24:22) (JHB 380).]

[See 95:2.10, above.]

[?]

95:4.5 In the Book of Hebrew Proverbs, chapters fifteen, seventeen, twenty,

and chapter twenty-two, verse seventeen, to chapter twenty-four, verse twenty-two,

are taken almost *verbatim* from Amenemope's Book of Wisdom.

The first psalm of the Hebrew Book of Psalms was written by Amenemope

and is the heart of the teachings of Ikhnaton.

5. THE REMARKABLE IKHNATON

[*Note:* Breasted states that Ikhnaton lived in the 14th century B.C. and Amenemope in the 10th century B.C. Wikipedia articles indicate that Ikhnaton (Akhenaten) belonged to the 18th Dynasty, while Amenemope lived during the 20th Dynasty.]

BOOK II: HOW RELIGION DEVELOPED IN THE ANCIENT WORLD, III: THE EGYPTIANS (Browne 75)

3. The reformation under Ikhnaton—reaction. (Browne 78)

This Ikhnaton, who reigned in Egypt from about 1375 to 1350 B.C., has not unjustly been called the first individual in human history.

[See 123:0.3.]

95:5.1 The teachings of Amenemope were slowly losing their hold on the Egyptian mind when, through the influence of an Egyptian Salemite physician, a woman of the royal family espoused the Melchizedek teachings. This woman prevailed upon her son, Ikhnaton, Pharaoh of Egypt, to accept these doctrines of One God.³

95:5.2 Since the disappearance of Melchizedek in the flesh, no human being up to that time had possessed such an amazingly clear concept of the revealed religion of Salem as Ikhnaton.

In some respects this young Egyptian king is one of the most remarkable persons in human history.

During this time of increasing spiritual depression in Mesopotamia, he kept alive the doctrine of El Elyon, the One God, in Egypt, thus maintaining the philosophic monotheistic channel which was vital to the religious background of the then future bestowal of Michael.

And it was in recognition of this exploit, among other reasons, that the child Jesus was taken to Egypt, where some of the spiritual successors of Ikhnaton saw him and to some extent understood certain phases of his divine mission to Urantia.

95:5.3 Moses, the greatest character between Melchizedek and Jesus, was the joint gift to the world of the Hebrew race and the Egyptian royal family; and had Ikhnaton possessed the versatility and ability of Moses, had he manifested a political genius to match his surprising religious leadership, then would Egypt have become the great monotheistic nation of that age; and if this had happened, it is barely possible that Jesus might have lived the greater portion of his mortal life in Egypt.

95:5.4 Never in all history did any king so methodically proceed to swing a whole nation from polytheism to monotheism as did this extraordinary Ikhnaton.

With amazing clarity of vision and singleness of purpose he set himself the task of making the religion of Egypt an absolute monotheism.

He broke completely with the polytheistic past, denying all the favorite old gods and suppressing their cults. Only Aton, the Sun-God, was recognized, and to Him every human knee was made to bend, and every tongue to give homage.

The king gave up the name, Amonhotep, by which he had been known all his life, simply because it contained the name of the old god, Amon. Instead he called himself Ikhnaton, which meant "Spirit of Aton."

Because his old capital was the center of Amon worship, the king gave that up, too.

He built himself an entirely new city, calling it Akhetaton, meaning "Horizon of Aton."

With the most amazing determination

this young ruler broke with the past,

changed his name,

abandoned his capital,

built an entirely new city,

He tried to revolutionize every phase of Egyptian life, spurning all the old conventions and creating by fiat even a **new art and literature!** . . (B 78-79).

and created a **new art and literature** for a whole people.

But he went too fast; he built too much, more than could stand when he had gone. Again, he failed to provide for the material stability and prosperity of his people, all of which reacted unfavorably against his religious teachings when the subsequent floods of adversity and oppression swept over the Egyptians.

[?]

95:5.5 **Had this man of amazingly clear vision and extraordinary singleness of purpose had the political sagacity of Moses, he would have changed the whole history of the evolution of religion and the revelation of truth in the Occidental world.**

[Compare JHB 306-07.]

During his lifetime he was able to curb the activities of the priests, whom he generally discredited, but they maintained their cults in secret and sprang into action as soon as the young king passed from power; and they were not slow to connect all of Egypt's subsequent troubles with the establishment of monotheism during his reign.

[?]

XV: UNIVERSAL DOMINION AND EARLIEST MONOTHEISM (**Breasted** 272)

It is evident that the young king [Amenhotep IV, or Ikhnaton] favoured the claims of the old **Sun-god** as opposed to those of Amon, whose powerful Theban priesthood had begun calling their once obscure local god by a composite name "Amon-Re", thus indicating his identity with the Sun-god Re. [*contd next pg.*]

Early in his reign we find Amenhotep IV ardently supporting a new form of the old Solar faith, which may have been the result of a compromise between the two (JHB 277-278).

In the Pyramid Age, too, the Sun-god had already begun the process of absorbing the other gods of Egypt, a process resulting even at so remote a date in a form of national pantheism, in which all the gods ultimately coalesced into forms and functions of one (JHB 273).

XVI: THE FALL OF IKHNATON—
THE AGE OF PERSONAL PIETY—
SACERDOTALISM AND THE END
(Breasted 303)

A hymn to Osiris of the same age [*i.e.*, the two centuries after Ikhnaton] says of him: “Thou art the father and the mother of men, they live from thy breath.” ... That God is the father and mother of his creatures was, of course, a doctrine of the Aton faith (JHB 312).

As we look further into ... the two centuries after Ikhnaton, the confidence of the worshipper in the solicitude of the Sun-god for all, even the least of his creatures, has developed into a devotional spirit, and a consciousness of personal relation with the god,

95:5.6 Very wisely Ikhnaton sought to establish monotheism under the guise of the sun-god.

This decision to approach the worship of the Universal Father by

absorbing all gods into the worship of the sun

was due to the counsel of the Salemite physician.

Ikhnaton took the generalized doctrines of

the then existent Aton faith regarding the fatherhood and motherhood of Deity

and created a religion which recognized

which was already discernible in Ikhnaton's declaration to his god: "Yet art thou still in my heart." ... Furthermore, although rooted in the teaching of an exclusive few heretofore, these beliefs in an intimate and personal relation between the worshipper and his god had now ... become widespread among the people (JHB 312-13).

XV: UNIVERSAL DOMINION AND EARLIEST MONOTHEISM (Breasted 272)

It is unthinkable that such a growing and progressing movement as that of Ikhnaton should not have produced treatises in which he set forth his doctrines. There is, moreover, good evidence of the existence of such writings.

In the Amarna tombs where the nobles of Ikhnaton's court love to depict their relations with their sovereign, they constantly refer to the new faith. They have only one word for it, and that is the "teaching." It is attributed solely to the king, and we cannot doubt that this teaching is the general name for the formal statement of his doctrine in a treatise of some kind, written of course on papyrus.

After his fall Ikhnaton's enemies left no stone unturned to obliterate every surviving evidence of his hated rule, and of course they destroyed these papyrus writings of the king (JHB 297).

an intimate worshipful relation between man and God.

95:5.7 Ikhnaton was wise enough to maintain the outward worship of Aton, the sun-god, while he led his associates in the disguised worship of the One God, creator of Aton and supreme Father of all.

This young teacher-king was a prolific writer,

being author of the exposition entitled "The One God," a book of thirty-one chapters,

which the priests, when returned to power, utterly destroyed.

[The tombs of the partisans of the king] contain a series of **hymns** in praise of the Sun-god, or of the Sun-god and the king alternately, which afford us at least a glimpse into the new world of thought, in which we behold this young king and his associates lifting up their eyes and endeavouring to discern God in the illimitable sweep of his power—God no longer of the Nile Valley only, but of all men and of all the world (JHB 281).

We cannot doubt that in some form [Ikhnaton's Royal Hymn] survived the death of Ikhnaton so that centuries later it was known to the Hebrews and was used by the author of the One Hundred and Fourth Psalm (see pp. 282-284) (JHB 308-09).

XVII: THE SOURCES OF OUR MORAL HERITAGE (Breasted 336)

We recall that Ikhnaton's **supreme word** as he endeavoured to introduce Solar monotheism in the Fourteenth Century B.C., was "**righteousness.**"

His movement had been the logical development of the old Solar doctrine, which recognized the supremacy of Maat "righteousness" as the **national** moral order. Ikhnaton's hymn expands this national sovereignty of "righteousness" into an **international** moral order of the world under a sole god (JHB 369).

XVI: THE FALL OF IKHNATON—THE AGE OF PERSONAL PIETY—SACERDOTALISM AND THE END (Breasted 303)

[contd from 95:5.6] The result was that an age of **personal piety**

Ikhnaton also wrote one hundred and **thirty-seven hymns,**

twelve of which are now preserved in the Old Testament Book of Psalms, credited to Hebrew authorship.

95:5.8 The **supreme word** of Ikhnaton's **religion in daily life** was "**righteousness,**"

and he rapidly expanded the concept of right doing to embrace **international** as well as **national** ethics.

This was a generation of amazing **personal piety**

and inner aspiration to God now dawned among the masses [*i.e.*, in the two centuries after the overthrow of Ikhnaton] (JHB 313).

XVII: THE SOURCES OF OUR MORAL HERITAGE (Breasted 336)

Social position or high rank gave no Egyptian any advantage in the eyes of the law (JHB 342).

IX: CONDUCT, RESPONSIBILITY, AND THE EMERGENCE OF A MORAL ORDER (Breasted 115)

In the Wisdom of Ptahhotep ... we find full confirmation of the evidence from the tomb inscriptions and relief pictures that it was family life which first made man conscious of moral responsibilities (JHB 139).

BOOK II: HOW RELIGION DEVELOPED IN THE ANCIENT WORLD, III: THE EGYPTIANS (Browne 75)

3. The reformation under Ikhnaton—reaction. (Browne 78)

“... the whole earth hast Thou created according to Thine own understanding.

When Thou wast alone didst Thou create man and beast, both large and small; all that go upon their feet, all that fly on wings;

and was characterized by a genuine aspiration among the more intelligent men and women to find God and to know him.

In those days social position or wealth gave no Egyptian any advantage in the eyes of the law.

The family life of Egypt did much to preserve and augment moral culture

and was the inspiration of the later superb family life of the Jews in Palestine.

95:5.9 The fatal weakness of Ikhnaton’s gospel was its greatest truth, the teaching that Aton was not only the creator of Egypt but also of

“the whole world,

man and beasts,

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

URANTIA PAPER 95

yea, and all the foreign lands, even Syria and Kush besides this land of Egypt.

and all the foreign lands, even Syria and Kush, besides this land of Egypt.

Thou settest all in their place, and providest all with their needs. . .” (B 79).

He sets all in their place and provides all with their needs.”

These concepts of Deity were high and exalted, but they were not nationalistic. Such sentiments of internationality in religion failed to augment the morale of the Egyptian army on the battlefield, while they provided effective weapons for the priests to use against the young king and his new religion. He had a Deity concept far above that of the later Hebrews, but it was too advanced to serve the purposes of a nation builder.⁴

95:5.10 Though the monotheistic ideal suffered with the passing of Ikhnaton, the idea of one God persisted in the minds of many groups.

When Ikhnaton died, Aton also died. The priests of Amon and Re and the other old gods quickly came into their own again, setting up their old altars, and chanting their old spells. The very son-in-law of the man who so zealously altered his name from Amonhotep to Ikhnaton

The son-in-law of Ikhnaton

went along with the priests, back to the worship of the old gods,

thought it wise to change his own name from Tutenkhaton back to Tutenkhamen.

changing his name to Tutankhamen.

Once more Thebes was made the capital, and its priesthood waxed fat with might.

The capital returned to Thebes, and the priests waxed fat upon the land,

Two per cent of the entire population (one out of every fifty Egyptians!) became actual slaves in the temples; and a seventh of all the arable soil in the realm became temple property.

The high-priests grew more powerful year by year, and in the end one of them actually seized the crown! . . . And thus was all the labor of that royal heretic, Ikhnaton, made to come to naught (B 80-81).

[contd] Yet a vestige of that impetuous reform did endure. The idea of a monotheism, of a single God in all the universe, was never quite blotted out from Ikhnaton's day on (B 81).

More and more the old gods were merged together; even their names were hyphenated. Amon and Re were spoken of as one from then on—Amon-Re.

And what was more important, this composite god was now thought of not as a spirit animating merely a golden disc in the heavens,

but as a spirit flaming in the hearts of men. Not merely in the hearts of kings, but in the hearts of men—all men! . . . (B 81).

eventually gaining possession of one seventh of all Egypt;

and presently one of this same order of priests made bold to seize the crown.

95:5.11 But the priests could not fully overcome the monotheistic wave.

Increasingly they were compelled to combine and hyphenate their gods;

more and more the family of gods contracted.

Ikhnaton had associated the flaming disk of the heavens with the creator God,

and this idea continued to flame up in the hearts of men, even of the priests,

long after the young reformer had passed on.

Never did the concept of monotheism die out of the hearts of men in Egypt and in the world.

It persisted even to the arrival of the Creator Son of that same divine Father, the one God whom Ikhнатon had so zealously proclaimed for the worship of all Egypt.

4. The religion of the masses—Osiris—the future life—why the pyramids were built. (Browne 81)

95:5.12 The weakness of Ikhнатon's doctrine lay in the fact that he proposed such an advanced religion that

[contd] The leaning toward monotheism was not, however, the chief distinction of old Egypt's religion. One must realize that the tendency in that direction was marked only in the upper levels of religious thinking in Egypt (B 81).

only the educated Egyptians could fully comprehend his teachings.

So far as the Egyptian masses were concerned, no tendency toward monotheism was even existent. The masses laboring on the banks of the Nile, like the masses laboring on the banks of the Nile, were not much given to abstract theologizing (B 81-82).

The rank and file of the agricultural laborers never really grasped his gospel

and were, therefore, ready to return with the priests to

From first to last, therefore, the masses of Egypt continued to worship their innumerable half-animal gods, paying heed neither to the fiats of kings nor the disquisitions of priests.... Only one god, Osiris, managed to hold his place in the affections of the people throughout Egypt's long history.

the old-time worship of Isis and her consort Osiris,

Originally this Osiris seems to have been the spirit who made the crops grow, the god of vegetation comparable to Tammuz of the Babylonians.... As time went on ... Osiris assumed a place of more and more importance in the minds of the people, until at last they came to look on him as the Divine Lord of the Nile Lands, the God of Justice and Love and nurturing Light (B 82-83).

The story was told how once on a time Osiris, this god of nurturing Light and Good, was treacherously put to death by Set, the god of withering Darkness and Evil. When Isis, the loving wife of Osiris, learnt of the murder, she went up and down the land to find the body of her lord ... The wicked Set got possession of it, dismembered it thoroughly, and then hid each fragment in a different place. So then Isis had to traverse the land a second time, seeking out the pieces of the body, and burying them more safely this time in a sealed tomb. And thereupon Osiris came to life again! He was miraculously resurrected from death and taken up to heaven; and there in heaven, so the myth declared, he lived on eternally! (B 83)

In the beginning, however, only the kings were believed to stand a chance of resurrection, for they alone were thought to have souls.

who was supposed to have been miraculously resurrected from a cruel death at the hands of Set, the god of darkness and evil.

95:5.13 The teaching of immortality for all men was too advanced for the Egyptians.

Only kings and the rich were promised a resurrection;

That was why in those days the kings alone were embalmed and mummified. Huge pyramids were built to shelter their royal bodies against the day of their resurrection, enormous structures of brick and stone that still stand today, and no doubt will still be standing centuries hence (B 84-85).

[contd] But finally the day of the despotic pyramid builders came to an end, and a spirit of democracy crept into the land.

The bliss of immortality that had formerly been reserved only for kings was then promised to all men (B 85).

Even the bodies of those animals that were deemed sacred to the various gods, the bulls and rams and cats and crocodiles, were preserved in that hope (B 85).

3. The reformation under Ikhнатon—reaction. (Browne 78)

[contd from 95:5.11] So the impatient heretic, the tyrant reformer, Ikhнатon, though he failed,

nevertheless succeeded. A little, perhaps the veriest trifle, of that which he had preached while he was yet alive remained on after his death. But it was an enduring trifle. . . (B 81).

therefore did they so carefully embalm and preserve their bodies in tombs against the day of judgment.

But the democracy of salvation and resurrection as taught by Ikhнатon eventually prevailed,

even to the extent that the Egyptians later believed in the survival of dumb animals.

95:5.14 Although the effort of this Egyptian ruler to impose the worship of one God upon his people appeared to fail,

it should be recorded that the repercussions of his work persisted for centuries both in Palestine and Greece, and that Egypt thus became the agent for transmitting the combined evolutionary culture of the Nile and the revelatory religion of the Euphrates to all of the subsequent peoples of the Occident.

XVI: THE FALL OF IKHNATON —
THE AGE OF PERSONAL PIETY —
SACERDOTALISM AND THE END
(Breasted 303)

It is important to notice that the moral development of Egypt, like her cultural evolution as a whole, after having gone on for some twenty-five hundred years,

was nearly ended before the national life of the Hebrews had begun (JHB 332).

95:5.15 The glory of this great era of moral development and spiritual growth in the Nile valley

was rapidly passing at about the time the national life of the Hebrews was beginning,

and consequent upon their sojourn in Egypt these Bedouins carried away much of these teachings and perpetuated many of Ikhnaton's doctrines in their racial religion.

6. THE SALEM DOCTRINES IN IRAN

BOOK FIVE: WHAT HAPPENED IN
PERSIA: I. ZOROASTRIANISM
(Browne 199)

1. The animism of early Iran—did Zoroaster ever live?—the legends concerning his life. (Browne 199)

[contd] The scene of our story shifts westward, leaving the walled cities and rice-swamps of China and going up to the wild plateau of Iran in western Asia (B 199).

95:6.1 From Palestine some of the Melchizedek missionaries passed on through Mesopotamia

and to the great Iranian plateau.

[*Compare:* Tradition gives 660 B.C. as the date of the prophet's birth; but actually it may even have been as early as 1000 B.C. (B 201).]

[*Compare:* Zoroaster was indeed a wonderful child—according to the legends. At a very early age he engaged the priests of the old religion in a bitter debate, and routed them. And when grown to the age of **youth**, he took staff in hand and went off into the world in a quest for righteousness....

For three years he tramped the desert trails in search of salvation, of a reason for life. And failing to find it, a great gloom came over him. For seven years then he remained silent, morose and silent, while he brooded over the impenetrable blackness which life had become for him. . . . And then of a sudden, light came (B 202).]

2. The gospel of Zoroaster—Good vs. Evil—the fire altars—the future life. (Browne 203)

Ahura Mazda was the **god of justice**, not of mercy, and in his warfare he neither gave nor received quarter. In his service there was no room for sentimentality; one had to be hard and unbending (B 204).

For more than five hundred years the Salem teachers made headway in Iran, and the whole nation was swinging to the Melchizedek religion when a change of rulers precipitated a bitter persecution which practically ended the monotheistic teachings of the Salem cult.

The doctrine of the Abrahamic covenant was virtually extinct in Persia when, in that great century of moral renaissance, the sixth before Christ, Zoroaster appeared to revive the smouldering embers of the Salem gospel.

95:6.2 This founder of a new religion was a virile and adventurous **youth**,

who, on his first pilgrimage to Ur in Mesopotamia, had learned of the traditions of the Caligastia and the Lucifer rebellion—along with many other traditions—all of which had made a strong appeal to his religious nature. Accordingly, as the result of a dream while in Ur, he settled upon a program of returning to his northern home to undertake the remodeling of the religion of his people.

He had imbibed the Hebraic idea of a **God of justice**,

the Mosaic concept of divinity.

Zoroaster had no patience with the old gods, Mithra, Anahita, Haoma, and the rest, and denounced them all as **demons**. The very word *deva*, which had always meant “**gods**,” he made to connote “**devils**” (B 205).

According to [Zoroaster], all the universe was one great battle-ground on which Good and Bad struggled for mastery. On the one side was **Ahura Mazda**, the Wise Spirit, supported by his six vassals:

Good Thought, Right Law, Noble Government, Holy Character, Health, and Immortality (B 203).

It was **not prayer but work** that was demanded of the worshippers of Ahura Mazda (B 204).

Ahura Mazda was in essence the **spirit of civilization**, and the only worship acceptable to him was the spreading of order and stability (B 204).

The idea of a supreme God was clear in his mind,

and he set down all other **gods** as **devils**, consigned them to the ranks of the **demons**

of which he had heard in Mesopotamia.

He had learned of the story of the **Seven Master Spirits** as the tradition lingered in Ur, and, accordingly,

he created a galaxy of seven supreme gods with **Ahura-Mazda** at its head.

These subordinate gods he associated with the idealization of

Right Law, Good Thought, Noble Government, Holy Character, Health, and Immortality.

95:6.3 And this new religion was one of action—

work—not prayers and rituals.

Its God was a being of supreme wisdom and the **patron of civilization**;

it was a militant religious philosophy which dared to

Pitted against [Ahura Mazda] was Angra Mainyu, the Lie Demon, supported by most of the old gods of the popular faith. And midway between the two contending armies stood man. It was absolutely incumbent upon man to choose on which side he would **battle**: on the side of Good, Purity, and Light, or of **Evil, Filth, and Darkness** (B 203-04).

[contd from 95:6.2] Only one heathen rite did Zoroaster take over, and that was the veneration of fire. (Some say he came of a family of ancient fire-priests.) But according to the prophet, **fire was not a god to be worshipped** as it may have been worshipped by the earliest Iranians.

No, it was a mere **symbol** of Ahura Mazda. Fire-altars were to be erected solely as a testimonial to the veneration in which the **“Wise Spirit”** was held (B 205).

3. The ordeal of Zoroaster—his first converts—death. (Browne 207)

And then at last a real prince was converted, a mighty ruler named Vishtasp who became the Constantine of the new faith.

A church militant was formed, and holy wars were waged against the Turanian savages on the north (B 208-09).

Such was the gospel by which Zoroaster lived—and for which he died. For it may be that he did die in his ministry. Legend has it that Zoroaster was struck down while he stood ministering at an altar of fire, brought to book by one of those heathen priests whose worship he had routed. . . (B 210).

battle with evil, inaction, and backwardness.

95:6.4 Zoroaster **did not teach the worship of fire**

but sought to utilize the flame as a **symbol** of the pure and **wise Spirit** of universal and supreme dominance.

(All too true, his later followers did both reverence and worship this symbolic fire.)

Finally, upon the conversion of an Iranian prince,

this new religion was spread by the sword.

And Zoroaster heroically died in battle for that which he believed was the “truth of the Lord of light.”

95:6.5 Zoroastrianism is the only Urantian creed that perpetuates the Dalamatian and Edenic teachings about the Seven Master Spirits. While failing to evolve the Trinity concept, it did in a certain way approach that of God the Sevenfold.

I: THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Scott 11)

(2) *The Persian Influence* (Scott 22)

[Zoroastrianism] has sometimes been described as a metaphysical dualism, in which the conflict of good and evil was accepted as an eternal one, involved in the very nature of all being. This, however, is to forget the ethical interest which determined the whole teaching.

The ethic was indeed combined with a metaphysical mythology, but the ultimate victory of the good was assumed to be certain, or rather the good alone was regarded, from an absolute point of view, as having real existence (S 23-24).

Original Zoroastrianism was not a pure dualism;

though the early teachings did picture evil as a time co-ordinate of goodness, it was definitely eternity-submerged in

the ultimate reality of the good.⁵

Only in later times did the belief gain credence that good and evil contended on equal terms.

BOOK FIVE: WHAT HAPPENED IN PERSIA: I. ZOROASTRIANISM (Browne 199)

5. The influence of Zoroastrianism on Judaism—on Christianity—on Islam—the Parsees. (Browne 216)

[contd from 95:6.7] First, [Zoroastrianism] made contributions to Judaism, for between 538 B.C. (when the Persians under Cyrus captured Babylonia and set free the Jews exiled in that land) and 330 B.C. (when the Persian Empire was destroyed by Alexander) the Jews were directly under the suzerainty of the Zoroastrians. And it was from these suzerains that the Jews first learnt to believe in an Ahriman, a personal devil, whom they called in Hebrew, Satan. Possibly from them, too, the Jews first learnt to believe in a heaven and hell, and in a Judgment Day for each individual (B 216-17).

[contd] Zoroastrianism had developed quite fantastic ideas about the Judgment Day

which the prophet had declared to be the consummation of all things (B 217).

4. The corruption of the gospel—ritual—burial customs—“defilement”—the priesthood—Mithraism. (Browne 210)

[See seven rows down, and 98:5.2 and 98:7.6.]

95:6.6 The Jewish traditions of heaven and hell and the doctrine of devils as recorded in the Hebrew scriptures, while founded on the lingering traditions of Lucifer and Caligastia, were principally derived from the Zoroastrians during the times when the Jews were under the political and cultural dominance of the Persians.

Zoroaster, like the Egyptians, taught the “day of judgment,”

but he connected this event with the end of the world.

95:6.7 Even the religion which succeeded Zoroastrianism in Persia was markedly influenced by it.

When the Iranian priests sought to overthrow the teachings of Zoroaster,

But the haoma rites were not the only relics of the old heathenism that returned after Zoroaster's death. Many of the old fallen gods, too, were dragged back into fashion—Mithra and Anahita and others. The very Gathas of Zoroaster were corrupted by interpolation, or at least misinterpretation, so that they might give the impression that the prophet himself had commanded the worship of these gods. . . . Mithra especially became popular;

and, as we have already seen, his cult later spread beyond the borders of Persia into Babylonia, Greece, and finally into Rome itself.

For at least two centuries that cult struggled with Christianity for the dominance of the Roman Empire (B 216).

5. The influence of Zoroastrianism on Judaism—on Christianity—on Islam—the Parsees. (Browne 216)

[contd] But the importance of Zoroastrianism has always been qualitative rather than quantitative. Its highest significance lies in the influence it has exercised on the development of at least three other great religions (B 216).

Through Judaism, the religion of Persia left its mark also on Christianity; and not merely through Judaism, but also through Mithraism (B 218).

Very directly, also, Zoroastrianism influenced the religion preached by Mohammed. Many ideas set down in the Koran reveal that influence; and even more of the ideas set down in later Moslem writings. . . (B 218).

they resurrected the ancient worship of Mithra.

And Mithraism spread throughout the Levant and Mediterranean regions,

being for some time a contemporary of both Judaism and Christianity.

The teachings of Zoroaster thus came successively to impress three great religions:

Judaism and Christianity

and, through them, Mohammedanism.

4. The corruption of the gospel—ritual—burial customs—“defilement”—the priesthood—Mithraism. (Browne 210)

But this elaboration of Zoroaster’s stark doctrine was not nearly so tragic as the **perversion** that ensued....

For instance, among the things considered “holy” were fire, water, and earth, while a corpse was thought to be dreadfully “unholy.” The disposal of **the dead** therefore became a serious problem. Since the corpse might not be buried or burnt, or drowned, there was nothing left but to expose it on a high “Tower of Silence,” where it could be devoured by the vultures.... To this day the **Parsees**, the descendants of the old Zoroastrians, still dispose of their dead this way. . . (B 212).

[Compare B 212-16, re purification ceremonies, haoma rites, etc.]

95:6.8 But it is a far cry from the exalted teachings and noble psalms of Zoroaster to the modern **perversions** of his gospel

by the **Parsees** with their great fear of **the dead**,

coupled with the entertainment of beliefs in sophistries which Zoroaster never stooped to countenance.

95:6.9 **This great man was one of that unique group that sprang up in the sixth century before Christ to keep the light of Salem from being fully and finally extinguished as it so dimly burned to show man in his darkened world the path of light leading to everlasting life.**

7. THE SALEM TEACHINGS IN ARABIA

BOOK EIGHT: WHAT HAPPENED IN
ARABIA: I. MOHAMMEDANISM
(Browne 305)

95:7.1 The Melchizedek teachings of the one God became established in the Arabian desert at a comparatively recent date. As in Greece, so in Arabia the Salem missionaries failed because of their misunderstanding of Machiventa's instructions regarding overorganization. But they were not thus hindered by their interpretation of his admonition against all efforts to extend the gospel through military force or civil compulsion.

95:7.2 Not even in China or Rome did the Melchizedek teachings fail more completely than in this desert region so very near Salem itself.

1. The idolatrous religion of primitive Arabia—
Mecca and the Kaaba. (Browne 305)

[contd] And now we are come to the founding of the latest—perhaps the last—of the great world religions: Islam. For the third time the Arabian Desert plays a major part in the history of our believing world. In that region's giant womb there had already been conceived the Babylonian worship of Ishtar and the Hebrew worship of Yahveh. Now, more than two thousand years after the birth of that second child, the desert conceived and brought forth yet a third: the Mohammedan worship of Allah (B 305).

[contd] The religion of the Arabian Desert in the sixth century A.D. was much what it had been a thousand or even two thousand years earlier... Therefore, long centuries after the East had gone Buddhist and the West had gone Christian,

Arabia, that vast wasteland pinched between East and West, still remained crudely animist. Each bedouin tribe worshipped its own tribal fetishes, rocks and trees and stars;

Long after the majority of the peoples of the Orient and Occident had become respectively Buddhist and Christian,

the desert of Arabia continued as it had for thousands of years.

Each tribe worshiped its olden fetish,

and many individual families had their own household gods.

Long the struggle continued between Babylonian Ishtar, Hebrew Yahweh, Iranian Ahura, and Christian Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. Never was one concept able fully to displace the others.

95:7.3 Here and there throughout Arabia were families and clans that held on to the hazy idea of the one God. Such groups treasured the traditions of Melchizedek, Abraham, Moses, and Zoroaster. There were numerous centers that might have responded to the Jesusonian gospel, but the Christian missionaries of the desert lands were an austere and unyielding group in contrast with the compromisers and innovators who functioned as missionaries in the Mediterranean countries. Had the followers of Jesus taken more seriously his injunction to “go into all the world and preach the gospel,” and had they been more gracious in that preaching, less stringent in collateral social requirements of their own devising,

then many lands would gladly have received the simple gospel of the carpenter's son, Arabia among them.

95:7.4 Despite the fact that the great Levantine monotheisms failed to take root in Arabia, this desert land was capable of producing a faith which, though less demanding in its social requirements, was nonetheless monotheistic.

and the only approximation to a national cult among them

95:7.5 There was only one factor of a tribal, racial, or national nature about the primitive and unorganized beliefs of the desert,

was a general awe of a particular fetish resting in the city of Mecca. This fetish, a black rock enshrined in a small square temple

and that was the peculiar and general respect which almost all Arabian tribes were willing to pay to a certain black stone fetish in a certain temple at Mecca.

This point of common contact and reverence subsequently led to the establishment of the Islamic religion. What Yahweh, the volcano spirit, was to the Jewish Semites,

called the Kaaba, was thought to be possessed of dreadful potency (B 305-06).

the Kaaba stone became to their Arabic cousins.

XI: ISLAM, OR MOHAMMEDANISM (Hume1 212)

10. Elements of Strength in Islam. (Hume1 232)

95:7.6 The strength of Islam has been its clear-cut and well-defined presentation of Allah as

Its theory of one supreme deity, versus idolatry (H1 232).

the one and only Deity;

11. Elements of Weakness in Islam. (Hume1 232)

its weakness,

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Its reliance upon the method of force (H1 232).

the association of military force with its promulgation,

Its low estimate of woman (H1 232).

together with its degradation of woman.

II: THE DIVINE POWER AND WISDOM (Hume2 7)

But it has steadfastly held to its presentation of the One Universal Deity of all,

He is God, Who knows the unseen and the visible. He is the Merciful, the Compassionate, the King, the Holy, the Peace-Giver, the Faithful, the Protector, the Mighty, the Repairer, the Great. Celebrated be the praises of God! (H2 8)

“who knows the invisible and the visible. He is the merciful and the compassionate.”

III: THE DIVINE GOODNESS AND WONDER (Hume2 12)

Truly, thy Lord is full of goodness towards men (H2 12).

“Truly God is plenteous in goodness to all men.”

The Lord of the worlds hath created me, and guideth me, giveth me food and drink; and when I am sick, He healeth me (H2 12).

“And when I am sick, it is he who heals me.”

IV: THE DIVINE OMNIPRESENCE AND INNER PRESENCE (Hume2 15)

There is no private discourse among three persons, but He is the fourth of them. He is with them, wheresoever they be (H2 16).

“For whenever as many as three speak together, God is present as a fourth,

I: THE ONE SUPREME GOD (Hume2 3)

He is the First and the Last, the Seen and the Hidden (H2 4).

for is he not the first and the last, also the seen and the hidden”?

95:7.7 [Presented by a Melchizedek of Nebadon.]

1. In the King James Version, the word 'judgment' appears 32 times in the Book of Psalms; the words 'the judgment' appear four times. However, as Breasted notes, only in Psalm 1 does 'the judgment' refer to the judgment hereafter.
2. This teaching seems to contradict the claim on 95:4.2 that Amenemope taught that "riches and fortune were the gift of God."
3. *Compare:* A favourite theory has been that the religion of Aton was introduced from Syria. It seemed for a time to be made out that the queen mother, Tiy, who had great influence over her son [Ikhnaton], and Nefertiti, his wife, were Syrian princesses; the name Aton suggested to etymologists by sound the Canaanite Adon. These combinations have proved to be mistaken; the discovery of the tomb of Tiy showed that she was a native Egyptian, a woman of the people. But the fatal objection to the theory, before as after these discoveries, is that there is no trace of such a solar monotheism in Syria (George Foot Moore, *History of Religions*, Vol. 1 [1913], p. 185).
4. Breasted says that the "powerful military group" were "disaffected by the king's peace policy in Asia and his lack of interest in imperial administration and maintenance..." (B 305). At the time of Ikhnaton, according to Breasted, Egypt was a long established nation which dominated the Mediterranean world.
5. Zoroastrian holds that *coeval* with Ahura-Mazda, though not *coeternal* with him, is Angro-Mainyus. Eventually the former, the Good Principle, will triumph over the latter, the Evil Principle. Hence, while temporarily dualistic, Zoroastrianism is essentially monotheistic, anticipating the ultimate reign of Ahura-Mazda alone (Alfred W. Martin, A.M., S.T.B, *Comparative Religion and The Religion of the Future* [1926], pp. 37-38).

man. In a world where might had always made right and power was the supreme word, the Egyptian social dreamers looked beyond actual conditions and dared to believe in an age of ideal justice. When the Hebrew prophet caught the splendour of this vision and rose to a higher level he was standing on the Egyptian's shoulders. It is important that the modern world should realise that the Messianic vision had a history of more than a thousand years before the Hebrew nation was born. This supreme form of social idealism is our inheritance from the *human* past, not exclusively from any *one* people.

v In the realm of *conduct* also the Hebrew prophets likewise drew upon the literature of proverbs and fables, which before 1000 B.C. had already gained international currency. In trying to demonstrate that Assyria was but an instrument in the hand of Yahveh, the prophet Isaiah draws a picture of rebellious implements which is clearly of foreign origin, when he says: "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? Shall the saw magnify itself against him that wieldeth it? As if a rod should wield them that lift it up, or as if a staff should lift up him that is not wood" (Isaiah 10:15). The source of this kind of fable was at first supposed to be India, but Maspero long ago found the earliest known fable of this type on an Egyptian writing tablet in the Turin Museum.

(95.4.5) (The Hebrew prophets were greatly impressed by the contrast between the upright man and the wicked as pictured in the writings of the Egyptian wise men. Amenemope's remarkable picture of the two trees has been adopted by Jeremiah:

AMENEMOPE

JEREMIAH

"The hot-head serving in the temple,

Cursed is the man that trusteth in man,

AMENEMOPE

He is like a tree growing in the forest.
 In a moment he loseth his branches,
 And findeth his end in the 'timber-dock'.
 He is floated far away from his place,
 And the fire is his grave.

The truly prudent man, who putteth himself aside,
 Is like a tree growing in a garden,
 He flourisheth and multiplieth his fruit,
 He abideth in the presence of his lord,
 His fruit is sweet, his shade is pleasant,
 And he findeth his end in the garden.
 (Amenemope, VI, 1-12)

JEREMIAH

And maketh his flesh his arm,
 And whose heart departeth from Yahveh.
 For he shall be like the heath in the desert
 And shall not see when good cometh,
 But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness,
 A salt land and not inhabited.

Blessed is the man that trusteth in Yahveh
 And whose trust Yahveh is.
 For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters
 That spreadeth out its roots by the river,
 And shall not fear when heat cometh,
 But its leaf shall be green;
 And shall not be careful in the year of drought,
 Neither shall cease from yielding fruit. (Jer. 17:5-8)

In contemplating Amenemope's pleasing picture of the two trees, one is inevitably reminded of the first Psalm:

95:405

[where?]
 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, *(11)*
 Nor standeth in the way of sinners,
 Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful,
 But his delight is in the law of Yahveh,
 And on his law doth he meditate day and night.
 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water,
 That bringeth forth its fruit in its season,
 Whose leaf also doth not wither,

And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.
 The wicked are not so,
 But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.
 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment.

93:2.10
 It is important to notice that "the judgment" appearing here is *the only mention of it in the entire Book of Psalms*. This is a significant hint, for a judgment hereafter, as we have already seen, was the contribution of Egyptian civilisation. The emphasis on the streams of water in the Hebrew picture is also significant, for the southern half of Palestine was semi-desert, and scarcity of water was a chronic hardship as it is to this day. On the other hand, in Egyptian writing the hieroglyph for "garden" is the picture of a garden pool; the mere mention of a garden therefore means water, which is regarded as a matter of course, and hence is not specifically mentioned in Amenemope's description. The parallel with the Hebrew form is therefore closer than it seems. Of interest is the Psalmist's alteration, abandoning the tree and employing "chaff" as the figure for the wicked, while Jeremiah preferred the parched "heath in the desert," of which there were plentiful examples in his native Judea.

*
 The age and place of the social and religious reformers whom we call the Hebrew prophets in the history of their developing moral and religious life is now clearly understood and well established by the work of modern scholars. On the other hand the same cannot be said of the *religious songs* of the Hebrews, for there is wide difference of opinion among Hebrew scholars and historians regarding the age of the Psalms. There has been an immoderate tendency to regard them as of very late origin, and even to place them all after the Hebrew exile. Re-

AMENEMOPE

When the morning cometh they
are no longer in thy house.

They have made themselves
wings like geese,
And they have flown to heaven.
(Amenemope IX, 14-X, 5

PROVERBS

Wilt thou set thine eyes upon
that which is not?

For riches certainly make them-
selves wings,
Like an eagle that flieth toward
heaven. (Prov. 23:4-5)

The line which we have omitted in the Proverbs version is again corrupt in the Hebrew, and it is probable that it can be restored by study of the Egyptian, but such critical problems cannot be undertaken in a book of this character.

Before 2000 B.C. the Egyptian social sages had held up riches for comparison with character, and had pronounced decidedly in favor of character (see p. 137). The futility of material possessions, especially in the next world, had been fully recognised, and the social thinkers dwell upon many different aspects of the folly of dependence upon riches. In dealing with this subject as frequently as the Proverbs of the Hebrews do, they are obviously under the influence of the Egyptian sages. The following parallel may serve as a further illustration:

*This directly
contradicts the
vs. - "Amenemope" saying that...*

AMENEMOPE

Better is poverty in the hand of
God,
Than riches in the storehouse.
Better are loaves when the heart
is joyous,
Than riches in unhappiness.
(Amenemope IX, 5-8)

PROVERBS

Better is little with the fear of
Yahveh,
Than great treasure and trouble
therewith.
Better is a portion of herbs,
where love is,
Than a stalled ox and hatred
therewith.
(Prov. 15:16-17)

95:4.5

Another parallel on the same subject is the following:

AMENEMOPE	PROVERBS
Better is praise as one whom men love, Than riches in the storehouse. (Amenemope XVI, 11-12)	Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, Than an house full of feasting with strife. (Prov. 17:1)

95:4.5

(The subsequent history of the Hebrews would not lead us to suspect that they have been indifferent to financial power or business success; nor did the editor of the Old Testament Book of Proverbs ignore Egyptian wisdom along this line, as we shall see. The reader may have noticed that these admonitions in the Book of Proverbs regarding wealth and luxury are not drawn from the Words of the Wise (Prov. 22:17-24:22).] This fact is important and fuller study of the Proverbs will undoubtedly disclose how dependent upon Amenemope were the Hebrew editor's ideas throughout the Book of Proverbs. Another example outside the limits of the Words of the Wise is found below, in the warning against vindictiveness and revenge (Prov. 20:22).

95:4.5

Amenemope is much concerned to warn youth against hotheadedness, or association with men of this type. The Hebrew editor likewise warns:

AMENEMOPE	PROVERBS
Fraternalise not with the hot- tempered man, And press not upon him for conversation. (Amenemope XI, 13-14)	Make no friendship with a man of heat, And with a wrathful man thou shalt not go. (Prov. 22:24)

The common word for the reckless man of hot temper in Amenemope's wisdom is simply the "hot one," and it is interesting to observe that the original Hebrew of this

passage literally rendered means the "man of heat," a phrase which is not found elsewhere in the Old Testament, and is evidently an effort to carry over the Egyptian term. Reckless anger and revenge are condemned both by the Proverbs and Amenemope:

AMENEMOPE

Say not, "I have found a protector,
Now I can attack the hated man."
.

PROVERBS

Say not thou, "I will recompense evil."
Wait for Yahveh, and he will save thee.

(Prov. 29:22)

Set thyself in the arms of God,
Until thy silence overthroweth them (his enemies).
(Amenemope XXII, 1-8)

In the same way Amenemope advises strongly against quarrelling with the "hot-mouthed," for "God will know how to answer him" (V, 10-17), which is again parallel with the Proverbs: "Wait on Yahveh, and he shall save thee."

Much more suited to Egyptian life than to that of the Hebrews are Amenemope's admonitions regarding behaviour in the presence of lordly superiors, for in Egypt appropriate deportment on the part of a young official was absolutely indispensable to a successful career. Just as elegant court manners in Paris under the later Louis' spread to less cultivated capitals of Europe, so refined deportment and palace formalities of official intercourse freshly introduced among a people of rude desert background under the youthful Hebrew monarchy were strongly influenced by the long-established courtesies of the Pharaoh's court, whose officials had ruled Palestine for centuries. The Hebrew editor of Proverbs, therefore,