

CHAPTER IV

THE FALL OF MAN

COMPARISON OF THE ADAPA MYTH WITH GENESIS 3. THE MYTH. A BABYLONIAN STORY OF EXPULSION FROM A GARDEN, WITH COMPARISON OF GENESIS 3.

Four fragments of the Adapa myth have been found. They really represent but three parts of the story, as two of them cover the same ground. These three parts of the story are translated in this chapter. It will be noted that the fragments do not present the entire story. Between fragments I and II, as well as between fragments II and III, some lines have fallen out, and the last fragment is broken away before the end of the account is reached. Nevertheless, from the parts, which we have, it is clear that the Babylonians shared with the Hebrews some of the traditions recorded in the third chapter of Genesis.

1. Comparison with Genesis 3.---In the first place, Adapa, like Adam, had gained knowledge. This knowledge carried with it a power hitherto regarded as an attribute of divinity. It enabled Adapa to break the wing of the south wind; it tempted Adam and Eve "to become like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen 3:5). As in Genesis, knowledge did not carry with it immortality. Ea, the god who had permitted Adapa to become wise, feared that he might gain immortality, as Jehova stated of Adam, "lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever" (Gen 3:22). (For Babylonian and Assyrian conceptions of the tree of life, see Figs. 291, 293.)

Ea accordingly told Adapa a falsehood when he was about to go into the presence of the supreme god, Anu, in order to prevent him from eating the food that would make him immortal; Jehova drove man from the garden where the tree of life grew. The two accounts agree in the thought that immortality could be obtained by eating a certain kind food. The lines at the end of the Adapa story are much broken, but they make it clear that as a punishment for what he had done, Adapa was subjected to sickness, disease, and restlessness. This corresponds to the toil inflicted upon man (Gen. 3:17-19),

and the pangs of childbirth imposed upon woman (Gen 3:16). It appears also that as Adam and Eve were clothed with skins in consequence of their deed (Gen 3:21), so Adapa was clothed by Anu in a special clothing.

These similarities indicate that the Babylonian possessed the same general ideas of the connection of increasing knowledge, with the attributes of divinity on the one hand, and with suffering and clothing on the other, which are presented in Genesis. An increasing number of modern scholars regard the Babylonian story as an earlier form of a narrative, which the Hebrew writer took and purified. Others hold that it is a somewhat degenerate form of the Biblical narrative. In any event, the Babylonian story proves the Biblical conceptions to be very ancient, and, by its contrasts to that of Genesis, it exhibits the dignity and religious value of the Biblical narrative. In the Babylonian myth, the gods, Ea and Anu, are divided and work at cross-purposes; Ea tells a falsehood to accomplish his end. Genesis, while it represents Jehovah as feeling and acting in a much more human way than some parts of the Bible do, still portrays him as a consistently righteous, omnipotent God, who demands obedience, and whose punishments are the

reasonable recompense for transgressions. The superiority of the Old Testament stands out in striking contrast.

2. The Adapa Myth.

1. He possessed intelligence.....
2. His command like the command of Anu.....
3. Wide intelligence he (Ea) made perfect for him, the destiny of the country to reveal.
4. Unto him wisdom he gave; eternal life he did not grant him.
5. In those days, in those years the wise man of Eridu,---
6. Ea was a chief (?) among men had created him,---
7. A wise man whose command no one could restrain,
8. The prudent, the most wise among the Anunnaki was he,
9. Blameless, clean of hands, anointed, the observer of divine commands,
10. With the bakers he made bread,
11. With the bakers of Eridu he made bread,
12. With his clean hands he prepared the table,
13. And without him the table was not cleared.
15. The ship he steered; fishing and hunting for Eridu he did.
16. Then Adapa of Eridu,
17. While Ea lay upon a bed in a chamber (?),

Translated from *Recueil de Travaux*, XX, 127 ff.

Winckler and Abel's *Thoutafelnfund von El-Amarna*, No 240, *Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek*, VI, p. xvii, f., and *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, XVI, 274, f.

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18. Daily the closing of Eridu he made right.
19. At the pure quay, the quay of the new-moon, he embarked upon the ship,
20. The wind blew, his ship sailed,
21. With the rudder he steered the ship
22. Upon the broad sea.

II

1.
2. The south wind [blew and capsized him],
3. To the house [of the fishes] it made him sink,
4. "O south wind [increase] they rage as much as [thou art able],
5. Thy wing I will break." As he spoke with his mouth,
6. The wing of the south wind was broken, seven days
7. The south wind blew not on the land. Anu
8. To his messenger, Ilabrat, said:
9. "Why has the south wind not blown upon the land for seven days?"
10. His messenger Ilabrat answered him, "My lord
11. Adapa, the son of Ea, the wing of the south wind
12. Has broken." Anu, when he heard this,
13. Cried, "Help!" He ascended his throne: "Let some one bring him to me.
14. Likewise Ea, who knows the heavens, summon him,
- 14a. To King Eas to come."
- 14b. To him he caused word to be borne,

- 14c.To him, to King Ea,
 14d. He sent a messenger.
 14e. He is of great understanding, he knows the hearts of the great gods,
 14f.of the heavens, he establishes it.
 15. [A soiled garment he made] him wear; with a mourning garment clad him,
 16. He clothed him and gave him counsel.
 17. Saying: "Adapa, into the presence of Anu, the king, thou art going,
 18. Fail not the order, my word keep,
 19. When thou goest up to heaven and approachest the gate of Anu,
 20. At the gate of Anu, Tammuz and Gishzida
 21. Stand, they will see thee, they will ask: 'Lord
 22. For whose sake art thou thus, Adapa? For whom
 23. Art thou clad in a mourning garment? "In our country two gods have vanished, therefore
 24. Am I thus. "Who are the two gods who in the land
 25. Have vanished? "Tammuz and Gishzida." They will look at one another and
 26. Be astonished. Favorable words.
 27. To Anu they will speak. A joyful countenance of Anu
 28. They will reveal to thee. When thou standest in the presence of Anu,
 29. Food of death they will offer thee to eat;
 30. Thou shalt not eat. Water of death they will offer thee to drink;
 31. Thou shalt not drink. A garment will they show thee;
 32. Put it on. Oil they will set before thee; anoint thyself.
 33. The command which I give thee, forget not. The word
 34. Which I have spoken hold fast." The messenger
 35. Of Anu came: "Adapa of the south wind
 36. The wing has broken. Into my presence bring him."

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37. The road to heaven he made him take and to heaven he ascended.
 38. When to heaven he ascended, when he approached the gate of Anu,
 39. At the gate of Anu, Tammuz and Gishzida were standing.
 40. When they saw him they cried: "Adapa, help!
 41. Lord, for whose sake art thou thus?
 42. For whom art thou clad in a mourning garment?
 43. In the country two gods have vanished; therefore in a mourning garment
 44. Am I clad. Who are the two gods who from the land have vanished?"
 45. "Tammuz and Gishzida." They looked at one another and
 46. Were astonished. When Adapa before Anu the king,
 47. Approached, Anu saw him and cried:
 48. "Come, Adapa why of the south wind the wing
 49. Hast thou broken?" Adapa answered: "Anu my lord,
 50. For the house of my lord in the midst of the sea
 51. I was catching fish. As I was midway of the voyage
 52. The south wind blew and capsized me;
 53. To the house of fishes it made me sink. In the anger of my heart
 54. [The south wind] I cursed. At my side answered Tammuz
 55. And Gishzida: 'The heart should be toward Anu.'
 56. They spoke, he was appeased, his heart was won (?)"

57. "Why has Ea, to impure man, of the heavens
58. And the earth revealed the heart?
59. Strong (?) has he made him (Adapa); a name he has given him.
60. We—what can we do to him? Food of life
61. Bring him, that he may eat." Food of life.
62. They brought him; he ate it not. Water of life.
63. They brought him; he drank not. A garment
64. They brought him; he clothed himself. Oil
65. They brought him; he anointed himself.
66. Anu looked at him; he wondered (?) at him.
67. "Come, Adapa, why dost thou not eat nor drink?"
68. Said: Thou shalt not live; men are mortal (?)," "Ea my lord
69. Said: Thou shalt not eat, thou shalt not drink."
70. Take him and bring him back to earth.
71.looked upon him.

III

1.
2. He commanded hem and he.....
3. The garment, he commanded him and he clothed himself.
4.Anu wondered greatly at the deed of Ea.
5. The gods of heaven and earth, as many as there are: "Who is thus mighty (??)?
6. His command is the command of Anu. Who can surpass [him]?"
7. As now Adapa from the horizon to the zenith of the heavens
8.looked, he saw his terror.....(i.e., the terror he inspired)
9. [Which] Anu concerning Adapa upon him.....had placed.
10. [The service (??)] of Ea he made his satisfaction.
11. Anu fixed as his lot his lordship in brilliance to the distant future.
12.Adapa, the seed of mankind.
13. [Who] victoriously broke the wing of the south wind,
14. And to heaven he ascended, "Thus let it be!"
15.that which he in evil ways imposed on the people,
16.sickness which he placed in the bodies of people.

17.Ninkarrak appeased.
18. Sickness [shall co]me, his disease be violent,
19.destruction shall fall upon him,
20. [In] good sleep he shall not rest,
21.shall overturn (?) the joy of people's hearts.

(The remainder is broken away.)

3. A Babylonian Story of Expulsion from a Garden.---Professor Edward Chiera discovered an interesting tablet which perhaps contains a parallel to the Biblical account of the Fall of Man. It belongs to a long series of texts, which refer to the origin of civilization. It reads as follows:

1. Like vegetable food (?)

2.
3.
- 4a. To do that in rebellion he has
- 4b. he did not obey (/) him.
5. My heart is full, is full of.....
6.is given.
7. Fear, lo lamentation is given
8. Unto me thou dost call;
9. And I at thy call
10. In my weakness was fleeing.
11. And in my person.....
12. Thy humanity, they body has not been taken away.....
13. For humanity the words of understanding are not.....
14. End thy weeping!
15. From my midst go forth to the steppe!
- 16a. To me forever, having taken of the clothing-establishing tree
- 16b. as an outcast thou shalt not return!
17. The death-emancipation reed the enlightened children who are wretched
- 17b. shall not take;

Reverse

1. Thou shalt never take.
2. In no way hereafter shalt thou attain release.
3. To my ox for threshing, as an outcast thou shalt not return!
4. To my field for irrigating as an outcast thou shalt not return!
5. To my field for tilling as an outcast thou shalt not return!
6. To my work to do it as an outcast thou shalt not return!
7. Go; perform the work; raise the food to eat!
8. I! I will never receive thee!
- 9a. Men like thee will perform the work; their mothers and their fathers
- 9b. shall eat of heaven's food.
10. Since the hand of the son of the menial has divided the food, their eyes are opened....

Translated from H.F. Lutz, *Selected Sumerian and Babylonian Texts*, Philadelphia, 1919, No. 103. For another translation, see Edward Chiera, in the *American Journal of Semitic Languages*, XXXIX, pp. 40-51 and Chiera, *Sumerian Religious Texts*, No. 30 (Publications of Crozer Theological Seminary).

11. As for themselves each one has taken 10 measures of barley;
12. The children who are servants of their farmers have each taken 10 measures of barley for himself;
13. For each of their fathers barley has been threshed;
14. Barley, oil, wool, sheep have been brought unto them.
15. O humanity, be abundant!

While my translation differs in some slight details from that of Professor Chiera, it agrees in all substantial points. We have here the story of the expulsion of mankind from some place for

disobedience, and the disobedience seems to be connected with a tree “that establishes clothing” and with the eating of food that tree “that establishes clothing” and with the eating of food that opens the eyes, which strikingly corresponds to Genesis 3:3-8. The men addressed in the tablet had been cultivated a tract from which they were cast out for this disobedience, just as Adam and Eve were expelled from Eden for their disobedience. They are sent forth to raise food by toil just as Adam was. It may be that we have here the Babylonian account of the same tradition. In other details, however, the text here translated differs widely from the Biblical account, and Professor Clay thought it the story of the expulsion of some mutinous slaves from their master’s estate. The present writer is inclined to agree with Professor Chiera’s view, but it is too soon to pronounce a decisive verdict.