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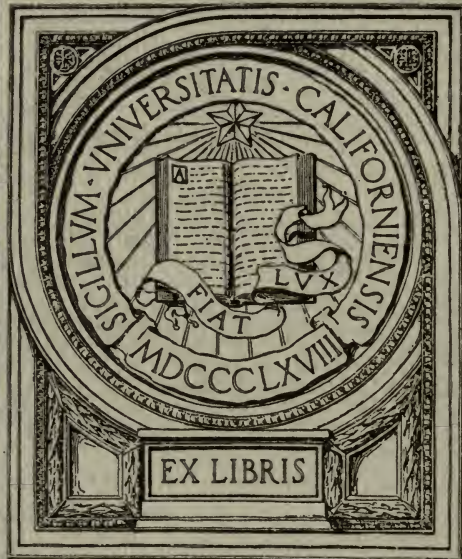
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KERUBIM

IN

SEMITIC RELIGION AND ART

BY

REV. FREDERIC N. LINDSAY, B. D., M. A.

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SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIRE-
MENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY IN THE FACULTY
OF PHILOSOPHY

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



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TO MY WIFE

Whose love and counsel have been
among the choice blessings of my life.

TO MY WIFE
ANDREW J. L. O.

CHAPTER I.

THE OLD TESTAMENT CONCEPTION

What were the *Kerubim*? This is a problem that until recently has been obscure owing to the want of the proper historical and scientific point of view. Hitherto the discussion of the problem has been largely influenced by theological bias, a side of the question which was reserved to itself by the Church, but the deciphering of the cuneiform texts and our resultant increased knowledge from them has changed the entire situation. Furthermore, the results of the science of Comparative Religion, largely deduced in this instance from the cuneiform texts, have altered our views. It is proposed in this treatise to trace by means of the historical documents the development of the *Kerubim* ideas and to endeavor to discover exactly what concrete form the name *Kerub* awakened in the Hebrew mind.

A study of the O. T. sources plainly indicates that the earliest accounts were written at a date long subsequent to the times represented in the sources. The oldest narrative in which is found a reference to the *Kerubim* is Gen. iii:24. After having driven the first human pair from the earthly Paradise, as a punishment for their sin, it is written that "Yahveh Elohim placed to the East of the Garden of Eden the *Kerubim* and the flaming blade of the sword which turns, to keep the way of the tree of life." Gen. iii:24. Probably we have here, as scholars generally believe, two independent symbols—the fiery sword and *Kerubim*—for the sword is one and the *Kerubim* are many; and the symbol of the sword is represented elsewhere,¹ as an independent power, the ultimate source of which is evidently the fiery sword of Gen. iii:24. Budde² finds in the verses iii:22, 24, the story of the 'tree of life,' a secondary ver-

¹ Zeph. ii:12; Jer. xlvi:10; Isa. xxxiv:5.

² Budde, *Biblische Urgeschichte*, p. 55.

sion of man's expulsion, which in origin may be earlier than the longer story of the Garden of Eden; its presence, however, in Chapter iii seems to be due to the work of a later prophet. According to this fragment, God sent forth man from the garden, i. e., commanded him to go forth (drove him forth) as he still lingered or still stood without before the gate. That every possibility of his wilfully returning to the Garden and to the 'tree of life' may be cut off, he stations eastward of the Garden of Eden the *Kerubim*, where as in an earthly sanctuary the entrance was. The *Kerubim* were not stationed to dwell in the Garden, instead of man, but to guard the approach.

No account is given of the appearance of the *Kerubim*. In the height of the mythological period no such account was needed. All we know from this primitive Hebrew tradition describing the *Kerubim* is that they were beings of superhuman power and devoid of human sympathies, whose office was to drive away intruders from the abode of the gods. Originally this abode was conceived of as a mountain, on the slopes of which was a garden or park (Paradise) containing the sacred tree. The *Kerubim* have in the Paradise story the functions of being guards of the divine blessings and treasures. Their number is not mentioned; nor is it stated, as is usually supposed, that each of the *Kerubim* bore in his hand a flaming sword. They were earthly beings and not heavenly beings. While there is much that is obscure about the form of the primitive Israelitish *Kerub*, it may be safely said that in the main it was a land-animal, monstrous and ferocious.⁸ From this point of view the recognition of certain spots as haunts of the gods is the religious expression of the gradual subjugation of nature by man. It points to a time when primitive man regarded the spontaneous life of nature as exhibiting the presence of superhuman powers. We have here evidently the proof of the existence of animism in the early Semitic religion.

⁸ It appears from several poetical passages of the O. T. that the Northern Semites believed in demons called Še'irim ("hairy beings"), and Lilith ("nocturnal monsters"), which haunted waste and desolate places, in fellowship with jackals and ostriches (Isa. xiii:21, Isa. xxxiv:14. cf., Luke xi:24).

The fullest description of the *Kerubim* is given by Ezekiel. In Ezek. xxviii:14-19, we have an allusion to the king of Tyre, who 'walked amid the stones of fire in the holy, divine mountain' and was cast out and destroyed by a Kerub. The Hebrew text is corrupt and an intelligent exegesis of the passage is rarely given. Cheyne corrects the text of verses 13f and 16f and arrives at the following sense of the passage: that we have here a tradition of the Paradise Myth distinct from that of Gen. ii and iii. Certain favoured men, it appeared, could be admitted to Eden, but they were still liable to the sin of pride and such a sin would be their ruin. Following the analogy of Isa. xiv:13-15, where the king of Babylon is hurled from heaven because of his pride, Ezekiel applies the same to the king of Tyre. In the Genesis myth the Kerub is the guardian of the 'tree of life,' but in Ezekiel he becomes the guardian of the 'divine treasures'⁴ which are in the 'holy mount.' The latter is evidently a faithful report of a popular tradition. We have here a tradition distinct from that in Genesis.⁵ Wherever the sacred treasures have to be guarded and hidden, the early Semite conceived these denizens as keeping off all intruders and driving out those who were bold enough to intrude within the 'sacred place.' A Kerub, according to this account, abides in the sacred precincts of the Most High, and is the guardian of Yahveh's treasures. The imagery employed by the same prophet in the vision⁶ of the *Kerubim* (Ezk. 10) is very obscure, and introduces a much more complex idea. The prophet recognizes them as identical with 'the living creatures (*hayyoth*) that he saw under the God of Israel by the river Chebar' (10:20), referring to the vision of the chariot in Ch. i. These were four in number (10:10); they had each four faces, 'the face of a *Kerub*, a man, a lion, and eagle' (10:14) and 'four wings' (10:21). As one of their faces was that of 'a *Kerub*,' and the prophet on seeing them 'knew that they were '*Kerubim*,' the

⁴ "Fiery Stones" evidently must mean the sacred stones, and hence in Ezekiel they represent the sacred treasures of the gods.

⁵ No meaning can be attached to the phrases "Anointed *Kerub*" or "*Kerub* with spreading wings," both of which are wanting in the LXX.

⁶ That this vision is purely apocalyptic is recognized by all.

shape of a '*Kerub*,' as of a fabulous creature, must have been well known through popular representations.⁷ Unfortunately, the prophet's description throws no further light upon their shape. He tells us that the 'glory of the Lord' rested above 'the *Kerubim*' (10:19); that their progress was straight forward (10:22); while they moved not with wings only, but with whirling wheels, and burning fire was between them (10:6-7).

This description, though much more complex and involved than any of our previous sources, presents no sort of contradiction. In all probability it represents an elaboration, in accordance with the general style and characteristics of Ezekiel's literary work, of the older and simpler conceptions. Sometimes he speaks of them in the singular (10:24),⁸ 'the living creature', to indicate that, being animated by one spirit, the four beings formed one complex phenomenon. From the description we recognize that whereas the original abode of the *Kerub* was conceived of as a mountain on the earth, here when the range of the Supreme God's power became wider, when from the earth-god he became also a heaven-god, the *Kerub* too passed into a new phase; he became the supporter of the divine throne.

We have a different conception of the *Kerubim* in Ezekiel's vision of Ch. i. The prophet has not the old unquestioning belief in tradition and has modified the traditional data so as to produce effective symbols of religious ideas. In this description we have four *Kerubim*,⁹ each of which has four faces,¹⁰ one looking each way—man, lion, ox, and eagle. Each has human hands on his four sides. They are not, however, called *Kerubim*, but *hayyoth* ('living creatures'). By this he implies that his own description of them differed so widely from that received by tradition that he would not venture to call them *Kerubim*, and did not until 'he heard them called so by God' (10:20). He speaks of them in the singular *Kerub*, and calls it 'the living

⁷ cf. I K. vii:29.

⁸ If the text is correct.

⁹ cf. Rev. iv:6-8.

¹⁰ In his vision of the temple Ezekiel again modifies his picture of the *Kerubim*, each *Kerub* there having but two faces—man and lion; Ezek. xli:18.

creature.' The fourfold character of the *Kerub* is due to the new function of being bearer of the 'Canopy' (firmament) under the throne (1:22-26). But the whole appearance was for the moment bathed in luminous splendour, so that the prophet needed reflection to realize it. The divine manifestation takes place within a storm-cloud, and a fire, which gives out flashes of lightning, burns brightly between the *Kerubim*; also there are revolving wheels beside the *Kerubim*, animated by the same 'spirit' as the living creatures, and as brilliant as the chrysolith or topaz. When the Chariot of God, in which he rode, descended to earth, moved from place to place, the creature on either side had the appearance of an advancing man. When in motion each creature expanded one pair of wings, and the expanded wings of each touched and thus formed a square.

The vision of the *Kerubim* in Ezek. I. is evidently composite, made up of a number of elements from several sources. There is first the idea that Jahveh moves and descends to earth upon the *Kerubim*. The *Kerubim* are thus regarded as the means and tokens of Yahveh's manifesting himself; wherever they are seen Yahveh was known to be present. The *Kerubim* are the symbols of the storm-clouds on which Yahveh rides and manifests himself.

The age which produced the story of Elijah's ascent to heaven in a fiery chariot¹¹ may be supposed to have known of fiery *Kerubs* on which Yahveh rode. At a later time, the *Kerubim*, though still spoken of by certain writers, were no longer indispensable.¹² The forces of nature were alike Yahveh's guards and ministers. Mythology became a subject of special learning, and its details acquired new meanings, and the *Kerub*-myth passed into an entirely new phase. Ezekiel probably mingled the old Palestinian view of the *Kerub* with some foreign influence. At any rate, we can affirm positively that the composite form of the *Kerubim* as seen in Ezek. I. is not Palestinian in form or spirit.¹³ The Phœnicians, and probably the

¹¹ II Kings ii:11.

¹² Hab. iii:8 speaks of Yahveh as riding, not upon a *Kerub*, but upon horses.

¹³ Whether the sculptured quadruped, with a bearded human head,

Canaanites, and through them the Israelites, evidently attached greater importance to the Palestinian form and idea of the *Kerub*, and it is said that among the discoveries at Zenzirli¹⁴ in N. Syria is a genuine representation of this mythic form of the *Kerub*.

Carved figures of the *Kerubim* were prominent in the decorations of the walls and the doors of the Solomonic temple. There is no record of any myth which directly accounts for these representations, but they probably refer to the ancient *Kerub*-myth of Eden. Two colossal *Kerubim* stood in the 'Adu-tum,' where they 'formed a kind of dais, one wing being stretched towards the lateral wall, whilst the other overshadowed the ark,¹⁵ a felicitous arrangement resulting in charming effect. Obviously they are the guards of the sacred ark and its still more sacred contents. Unfortunately, no minute description is given of their appearance. Two figures were placed on the mercy-seat of the ark.¹⁶ They were composed of 'wrought gold' and quite small.¹⁷ They are represented in a posture facing one another, but looking down upon the ark.¹⁸ Figures were also introduced into the veil or hanging screen which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies.¹⁹ The thought intended by these representations of the *Kerubim* was similar to that described above, viz.: guardians of the way of life. Solomon's temple contained two colossal *Kerubim* in its Holy of Holies, fifteen feet high, made of wood and overlaid with gold. The wings were spread out, and the two *Kerubim* touched with their outer wings the wall on either side. In II. Chron.

discovered by M. Clermont-Ganneau in the subterranean quarries in the north of Jerusalem is rightly called a *Kerub* is extremely doubtful. (See *Revue Critique*, 16 Mai, 1892.)

¹⁴ *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, 1894. Vol. IX, p. 420f.

¹⁵ I Kings vi:23-35.

¹⁶ Ex. xxv:18-21.

¹⁷ As the mercy-seat covered by their wings was only 3 ft., 6 in. long, the figures of the *Kerubim* were quite small.

¹⁸ An attitude to which we may suppose the Apostle makes reference. See I Peter i:12.

¹⁹ Ex. xxvi:36.

iii:1-17, we have the same account with this addition, that 'they stood on their feet, and their faces were toward the house,' by which is probably meant, facing the entrance. From this description we see how Hebrew art had given a wide interpretation of the early *Kerub*-myth. It can only be the work of imagination in which fancy had been given play. This may be seen from the 'palm trees and open flowers' introduced along with the *Kerubim* in the carved woodwork of the walls and doors in the exterior and interior temple.²⁰ In the description of the 'brazen sea' it is recorded that in the ornamentation there were figures of 'lions, oxen, and *Kerubim*.'²¹

Another group of passages²² on the *Kerubim* is poetic and probably comes from a later period. In Psa. xviii:10 we read 'He bowed the heavens and came down, and thick clouds were under his feet, he mounted the *Kerub* and flew; he came swooping down on the wings of the wind.' This description agrees with that of Ezekiel. The *Kerub* is here the divine chariot and has some relation to the storm-wind and storm-cloud. The other Psalm-passages appear to give a new conception of the *Kerubim*, who are neither the guards of the 'mountain of God' nor 'the chariot of the moving deity,' but the throne on which he is seated. In Psa. xxii:3, if the text is correct, Yahveh is addressed as 'enthroned' not upon the *Kerubim*, but 'upon the praises of Israel.' The idea is that the *Kerubim* have now the new function of praising God, a very interesting development. This agrees with later beliefs, and may be illustrated by the²³ priestly direction in Ex. xxv:20 that the faces of the *Kerubim* on the ark shall be 'towards the mercy-seat.' The meaning of the priestly theorist is that the *Kerubim* are a kind of higher angels who surround the throne of Yahveh and contemplate and praise his glory. This is clearly the work of Hebrew spec-

²⁰ I Kings vi:29, 32, 35.

²¹ I Kings vii:29.

²² Psa. xviii, 10f., lxxx:1, xcix:1, xxii:3. See also I Sam. iv:4, II Sam. vi:2, I Chron. xiii:6, II Kings xix:15 (cf. Isa. xxxvii:16).

²³ Ex. xxv:20. That this is from the priestly code is recognized by the critics.

ulation, and in this composite system of angelogy the *Kerubim* form one of the ten highest classes; with the *ophannim* or “wheels” they are specially attached to the throne of the divine glory.

CHAPTER II.

THE RABBINIC CONCEPTION

Rabbinic theology regarded the *Kerubim* placed by God at the entrance of Paradise as angels created on the third day,²⁴ and that therefore they had no definite shape, appearing either as men or women, or as spirits or angelic beings. In Jewish angelogy the *Kerubim* form one of the ten highest classes of angels, and together with the *hayyoth* ('living creatures') are specially attached to the throne of the divine glory. It is also the function of the *Kerubim* to be bearers of the throne on its progress through the world. The Jewish liturgy delights to associate the 'praises of Israel' with those offered to God by the different classes of the angels. Such a view is suggested in the 'Similitudes of Enoch'²⁵ in a passage in which the *Kerubim* and all the angels of power are combined under the phrase, 'the host of God,' while in another the 'four faces on the four sides of the Lord of Spirits' (Ezek. i:6) are identified with the arch-angels.²⁶ Elsewhere they are the ever sleepless guardians of the 'throne of His glory.' Again, they are the 'fiery *Kerubim*,' and together with the seraphim are closely connected with Paradise, under the Archangel Gabriel.

In the passages of the Talmud that describe the inhabitants of heaven, the *Kerubim* are not mentioned. The following sentence of the Midrash is characteristic:²⁷ 'When a man sleeps, the body tells to the Neshamah (soul) what it has done during the day; the Neshamah then reports it to the Nephesh (the spirit), the Nephesh to the Angel, the Angel to the *Kerub*, and the *Kerub* to the Seraph, who then brings it before God.' When Pharaoh pursued Israel at the Red Sea, God took a *Kerub* from

²⁴ Quoted from article *Kerubim* in *Jewish Encyclopedia*.

²⁵ Chapter xl.

²⁶ Chapter lxxi:7.

²⁷ Quoted from article *Kerubim* in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*.

the wheels of his throne and flew to the spot, for he inspects the heavenly worlds while sitting on the *Kerub*.

Josephus,²⁸ referring to the *Kerubim* of the temple, says that none can tell or ever guess what they were like. Philo²⁹ mentions that in the opinion of some, the *Kerubim* over the ark represented two hemispheres; but his own preference was to identify them with the two most ancient and supreme attributes of the Almighty—the power of creating and the power of ruling.

³⁰An authority at the end of the third century A. D. says that the *Kerubim* which Ezekiel saw in his vision were originally man, lion, bull, and eagle, but that Ezekiel implored God to take a *Kerub* instead of a bull, which would continually remind Him of Israel's worship of that animal. Thus it seems that the Talmud noticed that Ezekiel's conception of the heavenly creatures differed from the traditional one.

Maimonides holds that the figures of the *Kerubim* were placed in the sanctuary only to preserve among the people the belief in the angels, there being always two, in order that the people might not be led to believe that they were the image of God.

From these passages of later Jewish writings it will be seen that there was no uniform tradition as to the form and function of the *Kerubim*. It is even quite uncertain whether they regarded them as angels. The rabbinical sources evince an archeological rather than a theological interest in the *Kerubim*. The symbolical interpretation of the Alexandrians is also found in rabbinical sources.

²⁸ Ant. viii:3. Thus if there had been a traditional view of the form of the *Kerub* doubtless Josephus would have preserved it.

²⁹ Philo, De Kerub, vii.

³⁰ From article "*Kerubim*" in *Jewish Encyclopedia*.

CHAPTER III.

THE ASSYRO-BABYLONIAN CONCEPTION

It has always been asserted that the *Kerubs*, the guardians of the entrance to Paradise, the bearers of the divine chariot, are identical with the Assyrian bull and lion *colossi*.³¹ The corresponding Assyrian word has, however, never been satisfactorily established. Zimmern correctly observes that we are to read in VR. 29, 74: *ku-ru-(u)*=a bodily defect, and not with Delitzsch *ku-ru-(bu)*; this stands in connection with (BA)-AN-ZA=*pissû* 'limping.' The newly discovered duplicate (AO. 4489, 19b) by Thureau-Dangin³² leaves no doubt that we are to read *lu-gu-ud*=*ku-ru-u*.

In the new text of Esarhaddon, however, which Messerschmidt³³ has published, the word *ku-ru-bu* does occur. This at all events seems to be the prototype of the *Kerub*. In this passage the king relates that he undertook an extensive rebuilding of the old temple of Ashur. In the ceiling Esarhaddon put in cedar-beams, which he had brought from his campaigns; there were also ornamented doors of fragrant cypress with gold knobs, and the Adytum was veneered with gold. Then the king continues: (*il*) *Lah-me (il) ki-ru-bi ša za-ri-ri ru-uš-šu-u idi anu idi ulziz*. 'A *Lahmu* divinity and a *Ku-ri-bu* divinity I have erected of burnished brass on both sides.' The *Lahmu*-divinity whose statue *Agumkakrime* had erected in the temple, was one of the predecessors of the divine triad Anu, Enlil and Ea. For this reason we are to assume that the divine *Kirubu* hitherto unknown had occupied a similar place in the Babylonian Theogony.

The discovery of the Assyrian bull and lion *colossi* was

³¹ Zimmern, KAT³, 529f, 631f, quoted from *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*, October, 1911, column 476.

³² RT.XXX 11, page 2 (Supplement).

³³ *Cuneiform Texts of Assyrian History*, I, page 69f.

first made by Botta, the French Consul at Mosul, in 1842, when he employed his spare time in making excavations at Khorsabad, the results of which were published in the *Journal Asiatique* during the years 1843-45. Botta laid bare the foundations of an immense edifice and brought to light the first Assyrian palace disclosed to European eyes: this was the residence of the powerful monarch Sargon, whose name is mentioned in the Book of Isaiah, and who was the father of Sennacherib. The most important point for our present purpose is that a large number of winged lions or bulls in bas-reliefs were found before the gates, and within the walls of the palace. These figures are of colossal proportions, as seemed fitting for gods and heroes. Thus the winged bulls at the Louvre, which came from Khorsabad, are from thirteen to sixteen feet high. The Assyrians multiplied their winged bulls at the entrance of the doors. Some of these have a relief of about eight inches and placed at the corners of the doors to support the archivolt, they seemed, like Atlas upholding the world, to bear upon their heads the whole mass of the building. They were arranged in fours, two being on the plane of the wall, facing each other on either side of the door, and the other two facing the visitor, as he entered, who thus saw at once the bodies of the first two in profile and the full face of the two others. By an illusion, he seemed to see at the same time the whole of a bearded monster with his thick mane on his chest, his neck furnished with tufts of hair, his legs, in which the muscles are powerfully marked, his wings formed of rows of plumes, and reaching fan-like, as high as the archivolt.

Layard³⁴ in his excavations at Nineveh in 1845 describes the discovery of winged human-headed lions, differing from those previously found, the human shape being continued to the waist and furnished with arms. They were about twelve feet in height and the same number of feet in length. The body and limbs were admirably portrayed; the muscles and bones, although strongly developed to show the strength of the animal, showed at the same time a correct knowledge of its anatomy

³⁴ Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. I., p. 75.

and form. Expanded wings sprung from the shoulders and spread over the back; a knotted girdle, ending in tassels, encircled the loins. These sculptures, forming an entrance, were partly in full and partly in relief.

The Assyrian texts speak of these half-human and half-beast images as *šede* and *lamasse*. In an inscription³⁵ preserved at Cambridge, Nergalšarusur, one of the Babylonian successors of Nebuchadnezzar, speaking of his restoration of the doors of the sacred pyramid of Babylon, says that he had caused to be placed there "light talismanic figures in solid bronze, which were to keep all wicked and antagonistic people at a distance." In the famous inscription of Esarhaddon we find the following prayer offered to these human-headed bulls:

Še-du dum-ku la-mas si dum-ki
Na-sir kib-si šar-ru-ti-ia
Mu-ya-du-u ka-bat-ti-ia
da-riš liš-taḫ-ru-u ai
iḫ-par-ku-u i-da-a-ša.

"May the gracious *šedu*, the gracious *lamassi*, who protect the footsteps of my royalty, who make my liver rejoice, always rule (me); may their powers never depart from me."

What were these *šede* and *lamasse*? They were undoubtedly originally demons who were supposed to be, in some way, the embodiment of the life that manifested itself in such diverse manners. Starting from that form of religious faith known as Animism, which has been ascertained to be practically universal in primitive society, the Babylonians, from ascribing life to the phenomena of nature, i. e., to trees, stones, and plants as well as to such natural phenomena as storms, rain and wind, could be led to invoke an infinite number of spirits who were supposed to embody these phenomena. But, on the other hand, there were certain phenomena which would point to well-defined spirits as exercising a more decisive influence upon man than others. The result would be that a preponderance of worship would be given to the sun, moon, and to such natural

³⁵ See Records of the Past, vol. V., p. 138.

phenomena as rain, wind and storms, with their accompaniment of thunder and lightning, as against the countless spirits believed to be lurking everywhere.³⁶ The evil spirits were called demons and the names of many of them, as *utukku*, *šedu*, *alû*, *gallu*, point to 'strength and greatness' as their main attribute; other names, as *lilû* ('night-spirit',) and the feminine form, *lilitu*, indicate the time chosen by them for their work. Again, the names of others, as *ekimmu* ('the seizer',) *aḥhazi* ('the capturer,') *rabišu* ('the one that lies in wait,') *labartu* ('the oppressor,') and *labasu* ('the overthrower') show the purpose of their work. To these demons all manner of evil is ascribed. Their presence was felt in the destructive winds that swept the lands, while diseases bred by the summer heat were traced to demons of the soil.³⁷ Men and women were in constant danger of them, and even animals were not safe from their attacks. Thus, they could drive the birds out of their nests and strike down lambs, bulls, etc.

The demons were always given some shape, animal or human,³⁸ for it was a necessary corollary to a belief in demons that the demon must exist somewhere, although he might be invisible to mankind. Among animals, those calculated to inspire terror by mysterious movements were chosen, such as serpents or scorpions, against whom it was difficult to protect oneself, or again, the fabulous monsters with which graves and pestiferous spots were peopled.

For protection against the demons, small images were placed at the entrance to houses, and amulets of various kinds were carried about the person. Tablets, too, were hung up in the house, probably at the entrance, on which extracts from religious texts were inscribed, which by virtue of their sacred character were intended to protect it against the entrance of demons.³⁹ When, however, a person had once come under the

³⁶ De La Saussaye, *Science of Religion*, p. 130.

³⁷ M. Jastrow, Jr., *Die Religion Babyloniens u. Assyriens*, p. 278.

³⁸ Figures of such may be seen in *The Seal Cylinders of Western Asia*, by William Hayes Ward, 1910, p. 179f.

³⁹ A collection of Sumerian liturgical hymns is published in Haupt's *Akkadische und Sumerische Keilschrifttexte*. See numbers 10, 12, 21.

baneful influence of the demons, recourse was had to a professional class of exorcists, who acted as mediators between the victims and the gods to whom the ultimate appeal for help was made.

Thus we see how far this belief in such animistic spirits early influenced the ideas of the ancient Babylonians. Since everything was endowed with life, there was not only a spirit of the tree⁴⁰ which produced the fruit, but there were spirits in every field. To them the ground belonged, and upon their mercy depended the success or failure of the produce. To secure the favor of the rain and the sun was not sufficient to the agriculturist; he was obliged to obtain the protection of the guardian spirits of the soil in order to make certain the reaping of his labors. And again, when through association the group of arable lands grew into a hamlet and then into a town, the latter, regarded as a political unit by virtue of its organization under a chief ruler, would have some special *daimon*,⁴¹ presiding over the destinies and rights of those who stood under its jurisdiction. Each Babylonian city, large or small, would in this way obtain a deity devoted to its welfare. The uniformity of the spirit-world thus gave way to a differentiation by which the natural forces became gods and the inferior ones were, as a general thing, relegated to a position of mere inferior influences. Taking up the gods named in the inscriptions of the old Babylonian rulers, we find the name⁴² *En-lil*, 'the lord of the storm demons.' Primarily the ideogram LIL is used to designate a demon in general, and En-lil is therefore the chief demon. As the lord of the lower world, En-lil is contrasted with the god Anu, who presides over the heavenly bodies; Bau⁴³ is the 'mother' who fixes the destinies of men and provides 'abundance' for the tillers of

⁴⁰ See Frazer, *The Golden Bough*; vol. I, pp. 185-191.

⁴¹ McCurdy, *History, Prophecy, and the Monuments*, vol. I, p. 117f.

⁴² Brünnow 5939 C. L. C. I. En-lil-Bel and is the same as Illinoi of the Greek authors.

⁴³ The giver of grain. A picture of Bau may be seen in *The Seal Cylinders of Western Asia*, p. 142. She is seen in a boat with her characteristic bird.

the soil; En-ki or Ea, the god of that 'which is below,' meaning the 'waters of the deep'; Nergal, 'the god of pestilence or war'; Shamash, 'the god of the day'; Ishtar, 'the mistress of countries,' who was appropriately denominated the brilliant goddess, as her symbol was the planet Venus; and Sin, 'the moon-god.'

In this list great gods and goddesses, and all kinds of minor deities are gathered together, and the list seems hopeless. But these are local deities, and some are mere duplications. Nearly every place would have a sun-god or a moon-god, or both, and in the political development of the country the moon-god of the conquering city displaced or absorbed the moon-god of the conquered.⁴⁴ In the case of Ea, as in that of En-lil, when Babylon became the world-city the powers and prerogatives of Ea were transferred to Marduk, since the latter is made the son of Ea, who rejoiced in Marduk's honor.

Babylonia early revered the triad of gods—Anu, Bel and Ea. Anu is associated with Erech in the south, and with Durilu in the north. Bel is the god of Nippur and Ea the god of Eridu. Through the centuries these gods are continually invoked together. Behind these in very early times, as the later creation story shows us, there was a duad, Anshar, the god of the upper all, and Kishar, the goddess of the lower all, and beside these another duad, Laḥmu and Laḥamu. But these disappeared out of later religious ideas, save that from Anshar came the name of Ashur, the god of the Assyrians.

Another triad of gods was built up by the side of the first—Sin, Shamash and Ishtar. In this triad, Ishtar is often replaced by the god Adad, called also by the Assyrians Rammân. Adad was the god of rain and of storms, and hence also of the mountains. Thus we see how the gods arose higher as their worshippers increased in power, and how they sank into weakness as their worshippers sank down in rank in other cities. We can see how great gods absorbed gods of minor places within themselves, and how strong a tendency there was to diminish the number of the gods.

⁴⁴ Rogers, *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 79.

With the process of systematization of cults and beliefs, which was characteristic of Hammurabi, a marked tendency toward a reduction of the pantheon is apparent, a weeding out of the numerous local cults, their absorption by the larger ones, and the relegation of the minor gods of only local significance to a place among the spirits and demons of the Babylonian religion. The names of some of these minor gods will suffice to indicate their general character. For example, 'Zakar,' signifying probably 'heroic,' appears to have been worshipped at Nippur, where he stood in close relation to Bel and Belit of Nippur. Other gods, such as Lugal-Gira, 'raging king,' a title of Nergal in his character as the god of pestilence, also appear.⁴⁵ That some of these minor gods are Cassite deities imported into Babylonia, whose position in the pantheon was therefore of a temporary character, there can be no doubt.⁴⁶ Jensen has shown that Eshara is a poetical name for earth, and the god Ninib in his capacity as the god of agriculture, is called the 'product of Eshara.' Hence it is quite probable from the description given of him as the protector of the boundaries that Pap-u⁴⁷ was a god somewhat of the same nature, i. e., that he regulated the boundaries of arable land. He is one of the numerous forms of boundary gods that are met with among all nations. That we do not meet with more in Babylonia is due to the tendency, above described, of the centralization of power in a limited number of deities. Instead of the gods of boundaries we have numerous demons and spirits, in the case of the developed Babylonian religion, into whose hands the care of preserving the rights of owners to their lands is entrusted. Symbols of these spirits—serpents, unicorns, scorpions, and the like—are added on the monuments which were placed at the boundaries, and on which the terms were specified that justified land tenure. It would seem, therefore, that we have in Pap-u a special boundary god who has survived in that role from a more primitive period of Babylonian culture. He occupies a place

⁴⁵ Delitzsch, *Kossäer*, pp. 25-27.

⁴⁶ Jensen, *Kosmologie*, pp. 481ff.

⁴⁷ "Friend of vegetation."

usually assigned to the powerful demons who are regarded as the real owners of the soil.⁴⁸

The development of a pantheon, graded and regulated by the Babylonian schoolmen, did not drive out old animistic views. In the religious literature of all classes the unorganized mass of spirits maintains an undisputed sway. In the incantation texts, as well as in other sections of Babylonian literature embodying both the primitive and the advanced views of the Babylonians regarding the origin of the universe, its subdivisions, and its order of development, and again, its legends and epics, hundreds of spirits are introduced, to each of which some definite function is assigned.

It is very important to remember that the numerous spirits, when introduced into the religious texts, are invariably preceded by a sign—technically known as a determinative—which stamps them as divine beings. This sign being the same as the one placed before the names of the gods, it is impossible always to distinguish between deities and spirits. The use of a common sign is significant as pointing to the common origin of the two classes of superior beings that continue to exist side by side. A god was originally a spirit or demon that inhabited the land.⁴⁹ In the historical texts the gods alone, with certain exceptions, find official recognition, and it is largely through these texts that we are able to distinguish between the two classes of powers—gods and spirits. But as a survival of a primitive animism, the spirits, good, bad and indifferent, retain their place in the popular form of religion.

In the history of Babylonian and Assyrian art sculptures and façades have been discovered upon whose peculiar characteristics stress must be laid. They represent especially divine heroes, winged genii with human bodies and eagles' claws and beaks, etc.⁵⁰ Tylor mentions the winged genii often depicted

⁴⁸ This notion that the ground belonged to the gods, and that man is only a tenant, survived to a late period of Semitic religion. See W. R. Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, pp. 91ff.

⁴⁹ M. Jastrow, Jr., *Die Religion Babyloniens u. Assyriens*, ch. 17.

⁵⁰ Tylor in *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, xii. 383ff.

by the side of the tree of life in Babylonian art. These figures are usually human in form with human heads, but sometimes combine the human form with an eagle's head, and occasionally the human head with an animal body. They are shown in the act of fecundating the date-palm by transferring the pollen of the male tree to the flower of the female; and hence it has been conjectured that they are personifications of the winds, by whose agency the fertilization of the date-palm is effected by nature.

Among birds we find the eagle, the vulture and the gerfalcon, the anatomical details of which are executed with skill.⁵¹ In the field, on the mountains, or on the river banks we find palms and trees of every species.

A statuette in M. de Vogüé's collection found at Van, represents a sort of siren which seems to have an Oriental appearance as to the head, the hair being in ringlets; the eyes are large, bracelets are upon the outstretched arms behind wings and artistically marked feathers.⁵² The Louvre possesses the figure of a monster with four wings which represents the demon of the south-west wind, as the cuneiform inscription upon it teaches us. Nothing can be imagined more hideous than the head with its glaring eyes, roaring throat, horned brows, crooked fingers and fleshless claws. A bronze plaque from the collection of M. de Clercq, in which M. Clermont-Ganneau has recognized a representation of the Assyrian hell, is occupied by a monster with four wings and eagle's claws, looking over the top of the plaque; on the other side the monster's head is seen, and under it are scenes representing: first, the symbolical figures of the stars, then a procession of seven creatures dressed in long robes and having the heads of various animals: these are the heavenly genii called Igigi. Below this we witness a funeral scene: two creatures with human bodies combined with the head and body of a fish, like the god Oannes, stand by a bier on which a corpse is laid out; near them stand two monsters like demons, which appear in a bat-

⁵¹ Layard, *Monuments of Nineveh*, vol. I, plate 26 and passim.

⁵² See Figs. 101 and 102 in Babelon's *Manual of Oriental Antiquities*, pp. 129 and 130.

tle-scene belonging to the campaigns of Aššur-Nasir-pal, and, of larger size, on the walls of Aššur-bani-pal's palace; they face one another and seem to be quarreling. The monster on the other side is boldly designed, and his form is vigorous and subtle.

In glyptic art⁵³ have been discovered the same images which monumental sculpture drew upon the walls of temples and palaces. These stones carved in intaglio were worn around the neck, on the finger, on the wrist, or fastened to a garment. They were at the same time prophylactic amulets against sickness or witchcraft. The artist, also, sought to reproduce on cylinders human figures, then divine beings, or the heroes begotten of the popular fancy, whose image was intended to increase the talismanic virtue of the stone. There are monsters standing on their hind legs, struggling with one another, and giants killing lions or human-headed quadrupeds. M. Menant has remarked that the figures of animals are always represented in profile, while the human figures with long beards, are in full face even when the body is in profile. There are also double-faced genii, quadrupeds with a single head and two bodies. One of the most remarkable cylinders of the primitive epoch is one in the rich de Clercq collection. Men and various animals are here seen: a goat with many horns browsing on the leaf of a tree; a rhinoceros, antelopes, bulls, fish, an eagle, and some trees; two demons subduing fantastic animals, scorpions and palm trees. ⁵⁴The London Times of October 9, 1911, gives an account of excavations at Carchemish by R. Campbell-Thompson, who discovered two slabs, the first depicting a kind of amulet-scene, such as were placed at the entrance of Assyrian palaces. Four mythological figures stand on guard, the two outer being demons with lions' heads, while the two inner

⁵³ J. Menant, *La Glyptique Orientale*, vol. I, and L. de Clercq, *Catalogue de sa Collection* fasc. 1-3.

⁵⁴ The discoveries reveal an early civilization. The settlers used flint knives and hand-made pottery. The Hittites absorbed this savage race, which took even its ornaments from them. This discovery points to an earlier date for the ideas of the *Kerûb* than even the Hittites, a claim which Cheyne has advocated.

ones are divinities with bulls' legs. The other figure was probably made with similar intent; a winged lion with the head of a divinity superimposed upon its head. The representation of whole figures of Hittite divinities on the backs of lions is not uncommon, but the head alone is strange and curious. A little amulet was found in the diggings similar to these divinities, rudely engraved on a small stone plaque with the linear figure of a lion surmounted by a god, and evidently intended to be hung against the wall. These finds reported from Carchemish are very important, as they point to the fact that the ideas conveyed in the *Kerub* were very primitive, and that the Babylonians and Assyrians probably adopted some portion of their talismanic image, which they called *Kerubim*, from these early, uncivilized people.

From the foregoing description of the Babylonian religious ideas of demons, minor gods and legends about the origin of things, it is now possible to conceive of the source whence the Hebrews derived their mythological ideas regarding the *Kerubim*. They were clearly survivals of a primitive stage of civilization. The greater part of the O.T. symbolism regarding these beings can be explained from the hypothesis that the *Kerubim* were originally wind-demons. The most suggestive analogy of this is seen in the winged genii, found in early Babylonian art, often depicted by the tree of life. The sacred tree among the Babylonians was the date-palm, because the date was of great importance in Babylonia as an article of food. We observe the *Kerubim* by the side of *palm-trees* in many passages in the O.T. (1 Kings vi:29, 32, 35, etc. and especially Ezek. xli:18,19). We have seen that figures of *Kerubim* were also carved as ornaments, together with palm-trees and open flowers, and also upon walls and the doors of the Temple (1 Kings vi:29; cf. also Ex. xxvi:31.) The idea of a garden as a symbol of luxuriant fertility appears in several passages of Scripture (Gen. xiii:10; Ezek. xxxi:8; Ezek. xxxi:16, 18). Most of the allusions are based on Gen. ii. If the idea be primitive Semitic (and the word 'gan' is common to all leading dialects), it may have originated "in the sacred grove where water and verdure are united, where the fruits of the sacred

trees are taboo, and the wild animals are on good terms with man, because they are not frightened away.⁵⁵ Such sacred groves were common in Babylonia, and idealization of them enters largely into religious literature. According to Sayce,⁵⁶ the Garden of Eden is the sacred garden of Ea at Eridu. Fried. Delitzsch⁵⁷ has based the source of the whole Hebrew account of Eden on the Babylonian stories that the country to the north of Babylon was the original home of the gods. Aralû (the lower world) was originally 'the mountain of all lands,' on which the gods were supposed to dwell, the entrance to which was strongly guarded. After Aralû came to be regarded as the abode of the dead, it came to have a distinct pantheon of its own. Nergal, who symbolized the mid-day sun and became the god of violent destruction in general, presided over this region of horror. The attendants of Nergal are suggested by the monsters accompanying Tiamat. The consort of Nergal was Allatu, who is warlike and ferocious. Her chief attendants are the terrible Namtar (fate) and a scribe known as Belit-şeri. Tammuz, who is a god of vegetation, and who was a guardian of heaven, is made a part of the pantheon of the 'abode of the dead;' likewise Ningishzida, a guardian of heaven originally, is now placed as an attendant of the court of Nergal and Allatu. Besides these gods there were the demons who were responsible for death in the world. A text⁵⁸ calls the entire group of demons 'the offspring of Aralû—the sons and messengers of Namtar, the bearers of destruction for Allatu.' These demons are sent out from Aralû to plague the living. They do not trouble the dead, for the latter stand under the direct control of the gods,

The legend of Aralû points back to a time when the land was filled with spirits, good and evil, whom men were obliged to propitiate in order that the land might be fertile.⁵⁹ The

⁵⁵ Delitzsch, *Wo lag das Paradies*, 303; Barton, *Semitic Origins*, page 96.

⁵⁶ Sayce, *Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, 95ff.

⁵⁷ Delitzsch, *Wo lag das Paradies*, p. 378.

⁵⁸ IV R 1 col. 1, 12; col. iii. 8-10.

⁵⁹ W. R. Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*, p. 122.

spirits of evil whom men called 'demons,' were gradually driven by the benevolent gods to the waste places and deserts. During the agricultural stage when the land was settled we have discovered that the Babylonian thought of portions of land as protected by the 'boundary gods.' Hence doubtless arose the idea of the '*Kerubim* guarding the way of life,' or the gates of Paradise.

⁶⁰The legend of the Babylonian storm god, Zu, who was figured as a bird-deity, largely influenced the Hebrew conception of Yahveh 'riding on the storm-cloud.' Starting from this clue, we can understand the function of the *Kerub* as a living chariot of Yahveh, or bearer of the Theophany (Psa. xviii:11). Zu at first rebels against the authority of En-lil and endeavors to seize 'the tablets of the gods' in his hand, establish his throne, proclaim laws and command all the Igigi. Anu promises that if Ramman, the storm-god, conquers Zu, lofty shrines will be erected in his honor in many cities. Ramman, however, is afraid of the contest. He furthermore pleads that Zu, who has the tablets of fate in his hands, is invincible. In view of this, Marduk undertakes the task and successfully carries out the deed from which the other gods shrink in fear. The myth appears as a pendant to the Marduk-Tiamat episode. The Zu myth accounts for the position of Marduk as the head of the pantheon, and represents the subjection of all natural forces to the supreme will of Marduk. So in the *Kerubim* myth, Yahveh's will is supreme, and the storms and clouds are his attendants. The supremacy of Yahveh came about through centralization just as in the case of Marduk.

The conception of the *Kerubim* in the Book of Ezekiel was largely influenced by the human bulls or *šede*, which we have seen were placed as attendants or guards at the entrance of Assyrian temples and palaces to prevent the approach of evil spirits. These *šede* were composite in character, the man, the bull, the lion and the eagle, which made up the proportions of this fantastic beast, combining the various elements which the

⁶⁰ Schrader's *Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek*, vol. 6, p. 46.

artist borrowed from nature. The artist did this so as to create a figure of harmonious forms, in which nothing shocks the taste, and the expression of which is noble, majestic and natural. The idea expressed in these bulls and lions, these impassive and majestic sentinels, is that of calm physical strength. The figures are of colossal proportions, as is fitting for gods and heroes. The man represents the highest intellectual power in divine creation, the bull and lion the greatest physical strength, and the eagle the greatest swiftness.⁶¹ To us, who are of another civilization, these forms are neither grotesque nor unnatural in their fine and vigorous creation of Assyrian genius, which could as skilfully as the Egyptian associate the human with the animal form in the symbolic representation of deity and of supernatural beings. The term *šedu*, Heb. *šêd*, was applied to them by the Assyrians because these creatures were the symbols of divine power and majesty. Ezekiel used this symbol to picture the attendants of Yahveh's throne. He called them *Kerubim* only when Yahveh told him to do so.⁶² To the prophet they were *Hayyoth* 'living creatures,' who were Yahveh's attendants. The conception was a fanciful one, but we do not know how much was traditional and how much was original in the mind of Ezekiel. The prophet doubtless used his imagination very largely in picturing these beings called *Kerubim*, but his conception is truly sublime and glorious. It may be assumed that in the prophet's mind each detail of the symbolism expressed some idea, though it may not be possible now to interpret the details with certainty. There can be no doubt that the firmament and throne represent Yahveh as God of heaven, God alone over all, the omnipotent.

⁶¹ Smend, *Alttestamentliche Religionsgeschichte*, p. 447f.

⁶² Schultz, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. ii, p. 233.

CHAPTER IV.

IN HITTITE, PERSIAN, EGYPTIAN AND ARAB ARTS

The bulls and other winged monsters, placed at the entrance of Assyrian palaces also find their parallel among the Hittites.⁶³ There is in the Imperial Museum at Constantinople a basalt lion, found at Marash, the head and neck of which are completely disengaged from the stone block. The forepaws are even with the front surface of the wall, and the body of the beast is hidden from view. It is sculptured on two sides of the gate in imitation of the Ninevite bulls. At the village of Boghaz-Keui there has been discovered a royal palace, the principal door of which forms an independent structure, which is similar to that of the palace at Khorsabad. Two lion's heads, original in style, project on each side of the aperture, above monolithic doorposts. The palace of Euyuk presents features that remind one also of the palaces of Nineveh. The principal doorway is eleven feet broad, and on each side stand two sphinxes, in place of the human-headed bulls. At Zenjirli there was found a complete set of bas-reliefs representing a man struggling with a fantastic genius.⁶⁴ At Rum-Galah, a bas-relief represents a bearded personage, wearing a cap and dressed in a long tunic, drawn apart as in imitation of the drooping wings of Assyrian genii. ⁶⁵A cylinder at the Louvre, found at Aidin in Lydia, shows a scene of presentation to a deity in which is seen an Assyrian genius with two faces, a deity sitting upon a throne. The idea represented here has no doubt largely influenced the Hebrew conception of the *Kerubim*. In Iasili-Kaia a rectangular chamber has

⁶³ Babelon, *Manual of Oriental Antiquities*, p. 191.

⁶⁴ Perrot and Chipiez, *Histoire de l'art dans l'antiquité*, iv., p. 534.

⁶⁵ See Hittite cylinder Fig. 167 in Babelon, *Manual of Oriental Antiquities*, p. 203.

been found in a rock, the walls of which are covered with bas-reliefs among which are dog-headed monsters, standing upon quadrupeds. One such stands upon the shoulders of two porters. A separate relief⁶⁶ represents a giant standing on two mountains, who holds in his right hand a shrine, and in his left hand has a sort of long staff, the lower end of which is curved like a crosier. The shrine which this deity holds is provided with two columns supporting the winged disk, between which is a deity, on either side of which is the figure of a bull. At some distance a group of two figures is observed. One of them, of colossal proportions, is found standing upon a quadruped. The calm dignity of the figure is impressive. Perhaps here we have the original form of the *Kerubim*. At any rate it is very suggestive of the original form in which the older Hebrews conceived them.

IN PERSIAN ART

The simplest type of Persian art is to be seen in the interior halls of the palace of Xerxes at Persepolis.⁶⁷ The columns are eighteen feet in diameter and the base is formed of two *tauri* placed one above the other on a square pedestal. It is developed in a succession of bells and inverted volutes, above which are two bulls' heads. In the palaces the figure of Cyrus is shown furnished with wings like the genii of Assyria, and these wings, with rows of well-marked feathers, are like those of the Ninevite monsters.

Like the porticoes of Ninevite palaces, those of Persepolis are garnished with human-headed bulls, only, while the Assyrian bulls are placed even with the surface of the facade and facing one another in the doorway, the Persepolitan bulls are always placed at right angles to the opening and facing the terrace. But the Persian artist shows himself superior to the Assyrian, because, while preserving the animals in some fanciful posture, he has had the skill to soften the modeling of the limbs, and to give to the wings a more graceful curve. The

⁶⁶ See Figs. 155 and 157 in Babelon, *Manual of Oriental Antiquities*.

⁶⁷ Dieulafoy op. cit 11, p. 80.

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glyphic art and jewelry of the Persians was developed along conventional lines. As among the Assyrians, it was in the representation of animals that the Persian artist revealed his genius. A winged and horned griffin found on an engraved gem shows in what fashion Persian art interpreted the Assyrian *Kerubim*. The monster has the body and forepaws of a lion; his hind legs, armed with powerful claws, are those of an eagle; he has the ears of an ox, and the horns of a wild goat; his eye, face and half-open beak belong to the falcon; a bristling mane adorns a neck arched like that of a horse; he has a lion's tail; his great wings with well-marked feathers resemble in their development those of the Persepolitan bulls. We know nothing in Persian art superior to this figure,⁶⁸ the symbol of strength and power, in which so many discordant elements are combined with so fortunate a harmony.

IN EGYPTIAN ART

The history of the religious art of Egypt furnishes examples of how primitive people guarded the approaches of their temples by fantastic figures of animals.⁶⁹ Thus at Karnak, avenues of sphinxes and series of pylons led up to the various gates, and formed triumphal approaches. There were Androsphinxes, combining the head of a man and the body of a lion, but other sphinxes,⁷⁰ which united a ram's head with a lion's body, have also been discovered. Elsewhere, in places where the local worship admitted of such substitution, a couchant ram, holding a statuette of the royal founder between his bent forelegs, takes the place of the conventional sphinx.

When we turn to the black granite sphinxes discovered by Mariette at Tanis in 1861,⁷¹ and by him ascribed to the Hyksos period, we see at once a great contrast to the traditional pattern of art. Here the idea of energy is prominent. Wiry and compact, the lion body is shorter than in sphinxes of the usual type. The head, instead of wearing the conventional head-

⁶⁸ See *De Luynes bas-relief*, Fig. 148.

⁶⁹ Maspero, *Egyptian Archaeology*, p. 84.

⁷⁰ Maspero, Figs. 91 and 92.

⁷¹ Maspero, *Egyptian Archaeology*, fig. 191, p. 221.

gear of folden linen, is clothed with an ample mane, which also surrounds the face. The eyes are small, the nose is aquiline and depressed at the tip, and the lower lip slightly protrudes. The general type of the face is, in short, so unlike those we are accustomed to find in Egypt, that it has been accepted in proof of an Asiatic origin.

During the first three dynasties of the New Empire,⁷² sphinxes, *colossi* and statues are counted in large number, in which the modeling is finer, the figures are better grouped, and the relief is higher. Awakening to a sense of the picturesque, artists introduced into their figures all the details of architecture, which formerly they had neglected. The taste for the *colossi*, which had fallen somewhat into abeyance since the early time of the Great Sphinx, was developed anew. In western Thebes before the temples of Luxor and Karnak, avenues of sphinxes have been found, which reach to the gateway of the sacred enclosure. In one avenue they have a human head upon a lion's body, and in another, they are fashioned in the semblance of kneeling rams.

IN ARAB ART

Among cylinders with Sabean inscriptions is one which has long been known, made of bluish chalcedony, the design of which shows in the center a god, corresponding to the Syrian and Assyrian Adad,⁷³ with a square hat, with a long garment, and with bows and quivers rising from his shoulders. One hand is raised to receive his worshipper, and the other carries a thunderbolt. At his foot is the bull of Adad. Behind him is the figure presumably of a corresponding goddess. Müller⁷⁴ thinks that the characters are rather Lihyanian than Sabean. The style of the figures is much like that of the age of Aššurbanipal, c. 625 B. C. The figure of the god shows the strong muscles of the leg and knee. As it was found at Anah, north of Babylon, the desert tribes may at this early period have received the Sabean writing.

⁷² The Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth.

⁷³ Wm. Hayes Ward, *The Seal Cylinders of Western Asia*, p. 351.

⁷⁴ Quoted by Ward.

Another cylinder is broken, but fortunately the important part is preserved.⁷⁵ The design shows a god seizing a lion with each hand, upon whose back is a magnificent bird, with the neck of a swan, or peacock and with an exaggerated crest.

Hommel⁷⁶ has recognized a Sabean inscription on a cylinder, the central figure of which is, as he correctly explains it, a goddess with quivers on her shoulders, corresponding to the Assyrian representations of Ishtar, and each side of her, as if supporting her, is a winged male figure of a subsidiary deity, such as we find in Assyrian art about a sacred tree. Hommel has recognized the inscription of three letters, which he reads as Shahr, the moon-god of South Arabia.

Still another cylinder⁷⁷ has three long-skirted, bearded personages, of whom two appear to be in adoration before some deity. Before the deity is an inscription of five Sabean letters above which is a rude winged disk.

Very peculiar is a cylinder⁷⁸ which shows a beardless figure, with two profile heads facing in the same direction, with wings rising from the shoulders. Next is a similar figure, except that instead of human heads it has two antelope or goat heads. It seizes a lion by the tail with one hand, and with the other hand grasps the hand of a composite figure, the lower part of which is a lion and the upper part a beardless human figure. Next is a third figure with the same garments as the other two, but having two birds' heads and carrying in the arms two lions. They are not, as might at first be supposed from the way they are carried, goats for sacrifice.

Some scholars believe that to the Arabs was due the origin of the prevalent winged figures that came into use later in Assyria and Syro-Hittite regions. But we are inclined to the belief that these early ideas were held in common by the Babylonians and Sabeans. The number of Sabean cylinders is so small that it is difficult to trace any marked development in the art of representing these fantastic beings.

⁷⁵ Fig. 1208 in *Cylinders of Western Asia*.

⁷⁶ Hommel, *Die Südarabischen Altertümer*, p. 32.

⁷⁷ Fig. 1211 in *Seal Cylinders of Western Asia*.

⁷⁸ Fig. 1212 in *Seal Cylinders of Western Asia*.

CHAPTER V.
IN GREEK ART

That the idea of the *gryps* or griffin, partly a lion and partly an eagle, had some connection with the Hebrew *Kerub* has been mentioned by Fried. Delitzsch,⁷⁹ who also traces the word from the Assyrian *kirubu*. It is better, however, to derive the Greek word *gryps* from the Indo-Germanic root *grabh*, meaning to 'claw' (Ger. *greifen*). The idea of the *gryps* was evidently derived from the Persian. The essential idea of the griffin is the union of the two most powerful animals of the air and land—the eagle and lion. On vases from ancient Rhodes figures of the griffin appear. Copies of the original specimens at Berlin may be seen in Röscher's 'Lexikon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie.' The griffin is depicted standing between two deer, which are quietly grazing. The wings are not quite lifted up as in other specimens. In one figure we see two griffins facing each other, and sitting on their hind legs with their wings entirely raised. This is the archaic form. Of special importance are the figures on coins, which repeatedly show that the primitive Greek form of the griffin had its origin in Asia Minor. In its complete form⁸⁰ of both body and head, we only possess representations discovered on coins from Asia Minor. What is especially to be noted are the gold coins, on which the head of the griffin with a human breast appears. On coins of the fourth century the griffin is represented as running. On the coins struck by the municipal authorities of Abdera we find the form of a griffin. The wings which are not raised have a natural appearance, but on the whole the representation is not that of the

⁷⁹ *Paradies*, p. 150f.

⁸⁰ Röscher, *Lexikon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie*, vol. ii, p. 1742.

archaic type. For instance, we have the griffin in the act of leaping with his fore-paws raised.

Heads of griffin were found in a grave at Samos, but unfortunately no inscriptions are attached. In a grave at Praeneste there were discovered small ivory bust figures, similar to those found in Assyria. The workmanship we can recognize with assurance as either Assyrian or Phoenician.

It is quite probable that in Attica the Persian winged lions were not unknown, for specimens of vases have come down to us on which a wild animal is represented accompanied by a real griffin. In another specimen, a man dressed in Persian style holds two such animals, which are standing on their hind legs.

Thus we see that the Greek form of these animals or *Kerubim* were nothing more than representations of Oriental originals.

CHAPTER VI.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

We have thus far explained the historical development of the *Kerubim* among the Semitic and Greek people.⁸¹ We have traced the ideas of the *Kerub* through all the periods of Israeli-tish religion.⁸² It is now important that we definitely realize the primitive view of the universe out of which grew the conception of the *Kerubim*.⁸³ It dates from a time when men had not learned to draw sharp distinctions between cause and effect. Thus we know that to-day savages are quite incapable of distinguishing between phenomenal and noumenal existence. For example, arguing altogether from analogy they almost invariably ascribe to all animals and even to material objects a life analogous to their own.⁸⁴ This same lack of sharp distinction between the nature of different kinds of visible beings appears in the oldest myths. The kinship between gods and men is only a part of a larger kinship which embraces the lower creation. Myths connecting both men and gods with animals, plants and rocks are found all over the world and were not lacking among the Semites.⁸⁵

To the same stage of thought belong the stories of transformations of men into animals, which are not infrequent in Arabian legend. Thus Mohammed would not eat lizards because he fancied them to be the offspring of a metamorphosed clan of Israelites.⁸⁶ Maqrizi⁸⁷ relates of the Seicar in Hadramaut that in the time of a drought, part of the tribe changed them-

⁸¹ See chapters iii, iv, v.

⁸² See chapter i.

⁸³ Leuba, *The Psychological Origin and Nature of Religion*, p. 21.

⁸⁴ Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, vol. I, p. 94f.

⁸⁵ W. R. Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*, p. 42ff.

⁸⁶ Damiri, ii:87 (cf. Doughty, i:326).

⁸⁷ *De Valle Hadramaut* (Bonn 1866) p. 19f.

selves into wolves; that they had a magical means of assuming and casting off the wolf shape. In the same anthropomorphic spirit is conceived the Assyrian myth which includes the lion, eagle and war-horse among the lovers of Ishtar.

In the region of plastic art the absence of any sharp line of distinction between gods and men and lower creation is displayed in the marked predilection for fantastic monsters, half human, half bestial.⁸⁸ In the late discovery at Carchemish⁸⁹ a form appears of a fierce beast of prey seated in calm dignity like an irresistible guardian of holy things. This is the same form which was adopted by various nations, such as the Hittites, the Egyptians, and the Greeks. The earliest Hebrew *Kerub* came nearest to this idea of the griffin.

The association of the winged figures with the Tree of life in Babylonian art would naturally lead to the belief that the *Kerubim* were denizens of Paradise. These winged genii are usually human in form with human heads.⁹⁰ They are doubtless the personification of the winds, by whose agency the fertilization of the palm-tree, the most important Oriental product, is effected by nature. Thence they came to be regarded as guardians of sacred things and places generally.

The function of the *Kerub* as the living chariot of Yahveh or bearer of the Theophany was largely influenced by the Babylonian myth of the storm-god Zu, who is figured as a bird deity. From the analogy of all Semitic religious symbols the *Kerub* was primarily the black thunder cloud, which served both as a vehicle and a weapon of the tempest-god. When the Hebrews wished to represent the presence of Yahveh as resting at Jerusalem, they had no hesitation in frankly adopting this well-known Semitic symbol, and making for their god a throne over which these *Kerubim* spread their covering wings. Ezekiel based his description on actually existing works of art. His figure is complicated, prompted undoubtedly by the consideration that beings which must ever go forward needed

⁸⁸ King, *The Development of Religion*, p. 247.

⁸⁹ See chapter iii above.

⁹⁰ Chapter iii, p. 20.

to have a face on every side. It seems quite clear that Ezekiel borrowed his ideas from the winged bulls familiar to us from Assyrian art.

We come across many representations of winged monsters and chimaeras in the countries adjoining Palestine. ⁹¹The famous monster represented on the tomb of the Egyptian king, Chuecu-hotep (c. 2100 B. C.) shows a leopard from whose back issues a human head, with wings on either side of the neck. This is an attempt to combine the attributes of strength and swiftness in animals with the intellect of man, in representation of the daimon spirits. Ezekiel's description of the *Kerub* is more detailed than anything that we possess. The question is whether the development seen in Ezekiel was a radical departure from the original *Kerub*-concept of the purely animal griffin. Riehm⁹² thinks that Ezekiel's conception of these composite beings was in the shape of winged *human* forms and in favor of this view much can be said. *Kerubim* are found in the temple alternating with lions and oxen; hence it would seem that they were conceived in a form other than animal. In the temple and in the tabernacle they are standing upright, with two wings and one face. It might seem then that they were meant to be winged men. Moreover, even in Ezekiel the principal face is that of a man. But Riehm's view, while in many particulars reasonable, seems to be somewhat overdrawn. The *Kerub* of Ezekiel was, of course, largely a product of the Prophet's imagination combined with the characteristics of the ancient Semitic *Kerub*, and it is quite possible for Ezekiel to have made his description more composite than the accepted ideal, so as to suit the purpose of his apocalyptic description. Thus he could have thought out a figure, the body of which had the feet of an ox, the wings of an eagle, the mane of a lion, and then have anthropomorphized it sufficiently to give it four human faces. But it is not natural to suppose that he made out a *purely* human figure, with wings, to which he would apply the term *Hayyoth*. In the O.T. the *Kerub*

⁹¹ See Pietschmann, *Gesch. der Phönizier*, pp. 176, 177.

⁹² See *Handwörterbuch des Biblischen Altertums*, vol. I, p. 271.

is, from the first, represented as something well known—as something that had lived on in the popular belief since the earliest days. Absolutely nothing is said as to how the representations are to be executed. That is simply left to the artist. This fact explains the extraordinary figures such as sphinxes, winged bulls, etc., which could be readily made by any one in the usual traditional form. Besides, as ornaments for the sanctuary, and its lavers, animal figures were more in keeping with the oxen, lions, palms and flower wreaths, than winged men. In addition, the passage⁹³ Ezek. x:14 can only mean that ox and *Kerub* were practically identical.

At a still later time the *Kerubim* were spoken of by poets and others, as symbols of natural forces. The forces of nature were alike Yahveh's guards and ministers. Mythology became a special study and its details acquired new meanings, and the *Kerub*-myth thus passed into an entirely new phase. The general character of the Maccabean psalms agrees also with Ezekiel's conception. Here the *Kerub* is the divine chariot and has some relation to the storm-wind and storm-cloud. In two passages,⁹⁴ as we have seen, there appears to be a new conception where the *Kerubim* are Yahveh's throne. It may be, however, that the expression 'enthroned upon the *Kerubim*' is merely a condensed phrase for 'seated on the throne guarded by *Kerubim*.'

In the passage Ps. xxii:3 where Yahveh is described as being 'enthroned upon the praises of Israel' the idea agrees with later Jewish belief regarding angels and is evidently the work of a priestly theorist.

The Israelites in the early period never doubted the actual existence of such beings. *Kerubim* are imaginary beings of a religious nature, represented, as was the custom among all ancient peoples, in a very real way. They are not angels, but symbolical figures of another order. They are products of religious imagination, which belong to that large class of beings with which, from of old, the religious imagination of the

⁹³ Unless we assume that there is a textual error.

⁹⁴ Psalms lxxx.i, xcix.1.

Semites had peopled the spiritual world. When foreign lands were brought into connection with Israel or became politically subject to Israel's God, these foreign deities came to be popularly regarded as subordinate demons, who carried out the will of Yahveh. To Israel's prophets, however, there was only one God—Yahveh—but when the popular religion was slow in surrendering the early beliefs in 'demons' and local gods, even the prophets were apt to regard these beings as subordinate deities.⁹⁵ We have seen as regards ancient South Arabia that the idea of human and divine kinship was so deeply rooted that it completely dominated the practical side of religion and that this conception was a ruling one even after men ceased to worship deities that were not originally their own. Among the Semites as among other people, if the tribal deity was thought of as the parent of the stock, a goddess, not a god, would have been the object of worship.⁹⁶ So long as kinship was traced through the mother alone, a male deity could only be the cousin of the tribe. In the Old Testament the kingship of Yahveh is never set forth in a way to suggest the idea that divine kingship was peculiar to the Hebrews. On the contrary, other nations are the kingdoms of the false gods.⁹⁷ Hence at a later date, it is possible to suppose that the kingship of the supreme deity means his sovereignty over other gods, because all social fusion between two communities tended to bring about a religious fusion also. Sometimes two gods were themselves fused into one, as when the Israelites in their local Yahveh-cult identified him with the *Baalim* of the Canaanite high places.⁹⁸ This process was greatly facilitated by the extreme similarity in the attributes ascribed to different local gods. The old Semites believed in the existence of many gods, for they accepted as real the gods of their enemies as well as their own. As the small groups coalesced into larger unities, a society and kinship of many gods began

⁹⁵ See Prof. C. H. Toy's article, "Polytheism in Genesis as a mark of Date," *Essays in Modern Theology and Related Subjects*, pp. 1-12, *Briggs Memorial Volume*.

⁹⁶ See W. R. Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, p. 52.

⁹⁷ Isa. x:10.

⁹⁸ See Judges, ch. i.

to be formed. A systematic hierarchy of local deities is due to the Babylonian and Assyrian influences,⁹⁹ the labours of statesmen to build up a consolidated empire out of a multitude of local communities were always seconded by the priests, whose tendency was to give a certain unity of scheme to the multiplicity of local worships.¹⁰⁰ The same tendency is also found in S. Arabia among the early Yemenites. In other words the tendency was plainly towards a unification of a number of henotheistic systems, a unification which if left untrammelled, would have probably produced more than one monotheism.

From the earliest days the holy God—Yahveh—was pictured by the Hebrews as descending to earth and resting in the temple and they did not hesitate to use the figures of these ‘monstrous beings’ or ‘demi-gods’ and represent them as the servants and attendants of Yahveh. Hence when Ezekiel thinks of Yahveh as coming in judgment, or as bestowing upon Israel a new proof of his gracious presence, he again sees this god seated upon his throne and borne to earth by the *Kerubim*. And thus whenever Yahveh’s sacred treasures had to be guarded and hidden, the Hebrews naturally thought of these beings as symbols of Yahveh’s presence and of his unapproachable majesty.

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⁹⁹ In the West, where kingship succumbed, the tendency was toward a large pantheon.

¹⁰⁰ See chapter iii.

LIFE.

Born in Troy, N. Y., March 14, 1866, and prepared for college at the High School of that city. Graduated from Yale in 1889 receiving the degree of B.A. Was Teacher of Classics for three years after graduation, at the High School, Troy, N. Y., and entered Yale Divinity School in 1892; graduated in 1894. Received M. A. from Yale University June, 1903. Was pastor of the Presbyterian church at Charlotte, N. Y., for ten years, of the Grace Presbyterian church, Rochester, N. Y., for two years, and assistant pastor of the Central Presbyterian church, Rochester, N. Y. Entered as a graduate student of Columbia in Oct., 1909.

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