

HAMMURABI AND ABRAHAM.¹

To the Editor of The Open Court:

Why should Hamu-Rabi be confused with the Biblical Amraphel? Each name has four consonants, yet only two in common. It seems to me that it would be easier to identify Hamu-Rabi with Abraham, since their four consonants are the same. Ibra-Hamu is a paranomasism that is not difficult.

Indeed, Khamor-Abi is Arabic for "Moon-father," and Abraham's father is said to have come out of Hur or Ur, which was the best known name of the Moon or Moon-god in Babylonia: as in Egypt the Moon-god Tachut or Decade was like Khamor-Abi, the law-giver, and Bath-Tachuti appears with Jehoah at Sinai and proclaims him, for she is Azab-ea or Sibyl, not "finger," that wrote the ten commandments, since A-Zab and Sebel both mean laborer in the sense of contortion as was the case with the classic Sibyls. But it is a long story.

Our Hebrew writings often show such examples. Thus, Noach or "Noah" is said to have found cHen or "grace"; but the two consonants which we make into Noach are N—ch, and when reversed we have cH—N, which in Egyptian is "prophet," as Khn is prophet in Ethiopic; hence the Hebrew word Cohen or "priest." So Jakob or A-Keb means in Hebrew a "wine-vat," and when read backwards we have Bak-ai, which we have in Greek as Bacch-us; hence in the wrestling at Ja-Bock (Bak-ai) he acquires the name I-Sara-El, for he is coming toward Egypt where O-Sar-is first planted the vine; and so the first thing Jacob does when he has supplanted Esau is to build Succ-oth, and Succ-oth was "Tabernacles" or the grape harvest; the Athenian O-Socha-phoria, when there were songs to Bacchus and Ari-Adan-e.

There is more important play on the name of Mosheh, our Grecised "Moses." His name is composed of the three consonants M—Sh—H, which, when reversed, may be rendered into ha—Sh—m or "the Shem," which means "the Name." On pain of death Jews were not to blaspheme "the Name," but it seems that only Mosheh may be meant, for the ancients appear to have concealed their name of Deity from their own populace, and hence these could not blaspheme it by the use of the sacred name.

HAYNEVILLE, ALA., May 16, 1903.

CONSTANTINE GRETHENBACH.

MR. AND MRS. H. L. GREEN, OBITUARY.

With deep regret even in pain and sorrow, we notice in the daily papers the news of Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Green's sudden death.

The old Mr. Green was a Freethinker of the old, honest, and robust type, perhaps a little narrow but always straightforward and truth-loving, fighting the good fight, as he conceived it, always standing up for honesty and truth in religion.

For many years he was editor of *Freethought*, and he had acquired in Free-thought circles the reputation of being the most decent and the ablest freethought editor in the United States. He was respected by his adversaries, and so far as we know had no personal enemies. But the cause of Freethought is not popular. Men who have positive religious convictions are willing to make sacrifices for the cause, but those whose conviction consists mainly in the negation of the religion of others

¹ For an answer to this letter see the article "Hammurabi and Amraphel" on p. 705 of the present number.

are loth to support the champions of their views, and so Freethought in spite of its loud clamors for recognition makes a poor show in the world, for its devotees lack the earnestness usually found in religious circles. Certainly, Mr. Green had a hard time to make both ends meet, and his only son, a young man of business ability and full of enthusiasm for the cause, the business agent for the *Freethought Magazine* of his father who had made it a financial success, had died a premature death about a year ago. When Mr. and Mrs. Green found themselves confronted with a deficit and the prospect of a failure in their publishing business, they felt that at their advanced age they were unable to carry the burden any longer and decided in a gloomy hour to give up the fight and quit a life which for them, after the loss of their son, had no longer any attraction. Their bodies were found in a room in which they had turned on the gas.

Their fate is sad and we have no doubt that even those who did not agree with their aims and ideals will honor their good intention, the honesty of their conviction and the love of truth which they manifested in their life-time.

Peace be with them and an honorable memory to their endeavor.

ZODIACAL MITHRAIC TABLETS.

To the Editor of The Open Court:

Are not the well-known Mithraic tablets entirely zodiacal? At least I have come to that conclusion after examining and comparing the several specimens of the British Museum, the Louvre, the Vatican, the Naples Museum, and the large Mithraic Monument of the Municipal Museum at Metz. The same conclusion follows when we examine the engravings of Mithraic tablets in such works as Monfaucon, Drummond, Maurice, Calmet, etc. The specimen in the British Museum practically ranks with the tablets, being identical with the more usual *alto-rilievo* bas-reliefs, in design and meaning. The same remark applies to the Mithraic sculpture in the Kircher Museum, Rome. Some writers have recognised one or more zodiacal signs on these tablets, as the Scorpion, Crab, etc. But I refer to their being entirely zodiacal, and thus affording a clue (though perhaps a slight one) to their origin and meaning.

It appears to me that writers on the tablets have missed or passed over this conclusion, because they omitted to examine the tablets in connection with the 36 Decans, as well as with the 12 great familiar signs.

But the evidence available all tends to show that the 36 inferior signs are of similar antiquity and equal authority to the 12 great signs. This being so, it is as reasonable to conceive that the former as well as the latter were made use of in the mystic Mithraic symbolism.

I of course refer not to any modern post-Christian constellations, but to the original ancient 25 signs, as handed down by Hipparchus, Ptolemy, *et al.*, and as are to be found on the great Denderah, Isaic planisphere in the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris. Taking these as our guide, we find each figure accounted for in the tablets as being one of the ancient original 48 zodiacal constellations.

Undoubtedly additions to the tablets have been made by local priests to local Mithraic temples or worship. Thus the Metz tablet has a series of small tablets as a border, depicting mythologic scenes of initiation, etc. But it seems possible to eliminate these later and local accretions from the original zodiacal tauroctonus Mithra.

The zodiacal origin of the Mithraic figures will be seen by comparing those