

The claim is often made that the religion of the Old Testament is derived from that of the Babylonians. This theory received its first wide acceptance when Professor Delitzsch of the University of Berlin gave his famous "Babylon in the Bible" lectures. These lectures aroused great interest in Germany and in the entire world. Many leading Assyriologists supported Delitzsch in his theories, but also many attacked. For a time the so-called Pan-Babylonian viewpoint was very widely accepted. More careful investigation has overthrown most of its conclusions, so that today there is hardly a first class scholar who accepts it. The leading scholars have practically all given it up, except in some few details, and are looking elsewhere for the origin of the religious ideas of the Old Testament.

One of the first to attack the theories of Professor Delitzsch was Dr. Wilson, who made a careful study of the religious vocabularies of Babylon and of Israel. If the religious ideas of Israel were derived from the Babylonians, it would be very strange if many of the words used by the Babylonians had not been actually taken over into the religious vocabulary of Israel. As a matter of fact, although the languages of the Hebrews and of the Babylonians are closely related, and many hundreds of words in the two languages are similar, the words used for the religious conceptions of the two nations have little in common. This consideration has had great weight in leading scholars to reject the extravagant claims of the Pan-Babylonian School.

Professor Delitzsch alleged that the Hebrew Sabbath was taken over from the Babylonians. He said that it was simply an old