

The Legends of Genesis, Hermann Gunkle, 1901 (Intro. by Wm. F. Albright, 1964)

- p. 99 Two stories of Ishamel(16; 21.8ff)
 The legend of the danger to the Patriarch's wife, which is handed down to us in three versions (12.13ff; 26.7ff)
 The associated legend of the treaty at Beersheba, likewise in three versions.

In the case of these stories the variants are told with almost entire interdependence of one another.

- p. 100 Let the investigator make his first observations on these twice-told tales; when he has thus acquired the keen eye and found certain lines of development, then let him compare also the legends which are told but once. Then he will ~~gx~~ begin to see how extraordinarily varied these legends are; among them are the coarsest and the most delicate, the most offensive and the most noble, those showing a naive, polytheistic religion, and others in which is expressed the most ideal form of faith.

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- p. 7 The clearest criterion of legend is that/frequently reports things which are quite incredible. . . . Thus many things are reported in Genesis which go directly against our better knowledge: we know that there are too many species of animals for all to have been assembled in any ark; that Ararat is not the highest mountain on earth; that the "firmament of heaven," of which Genesis 1.6ff. speaks, is not a reality, but an optical illusion; that the stars cannot have come into existence after plants, as Genesis ii.10-14 reports; that the rivers of the earth do not come chiefly from four principal streams, as Genesis ii. thinks, that the Tigris and the Euphrates have not a common source, that the Dead Sea had been in existence long before human beings came to live in Palestine, instead of originating in historical times, and so on.
- p. 8 Of the many etymologies in Genesis the majority are to be rejected according to the investigations of modern philology. The theory on which the legends of the patriarchs are based, that the nations of the earth originated from the expansion of a single family, in each case from a single ancestor, is quite infantile.¹(1 Compare my Commentary on Genesis, pp. 78 ff.) Any other conclusion is impossible from the point of view of our modern historical science, which is not a figment of imagination but is based upon the observation of facts. And however cautious the modern historian may be in declaring anything impossible, he may declare with all confidence that animals - serpents and she-asses, for instance - do not speak and never have spoken, that there is no tree whose fruit confers immortality or knowledge, that angels and men do not have carnal connexion, and that a world-conquering army cannot be defeated - as Genesis xiv. declares - with three hundred and eighteen men.
- p.23 Even the most superficial reader can distinguish for himself the chief original sources in Genesis from which the present redaction was constructed, now commonly called the writings of the Elohist, of the Jahvist, and of the Priestly Code.
- p.25 Etiological Legends *See References on Etologies elsewhere on file*