

THE
LEGEND OF THE TOWER OF BABEL.

TRANSLATED BY
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THIS legend is found on a tablet marked K 3657, in the British Museum. The story which the tablet contains appears to be the building of some great temple tower, apparently by command of a king. The gods are angry at the work, and so to put an end to it they confuse the speech of the builders. The tablet is in a very broken condition, only a few lines being in any way complete.

The late Mr. George Smith has given a translation of the legend in his work on *Chaldean Genesis*, and I have published the text and translation in the fifth volume of *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archæology*.



LEGEND OF THE TOWER OF BABEL.

COLUMN I.

- 1¹ them the father.
 2 (The thoughts) of his heart were evil
 3¹ the father of all the gods² he turned from.
 4 (The thoughts) of his heart were evil³
 5¹ Babylon corruptly to sin went and
 6 small and great mingled on the mound.⁴
 7¹ Babylon corruptly to sin went and
 8 small and great mingled on the mound.

COLUMN II.

- 1 The King of the holy mound⁵¹
 2 In front and ANU lifted up¹
 3 to the good god his father¹
 4 Then his heart also¹
 5 which carried a command¹
 6 At that time also¹
 7 he lifted it up⁶
 8 Davkina.
 9 Their (work) all day they founded

¹ Lacunæ.² A title of Anu.³ Refers to the king who caused the people to sin.⁴ The verb used here is the same as in Gen. xi. 7, בָּבֶל.⁵ A title of Anu.⁶ All these broken lines relate to council of gods?

- 10 to their stronghold¹ in the night
 11 entirely an end he made.
 12 In his anger also the secret counsel he poured out
 13 to scatter (abroad) his face he set
 14 he gave a command to make strange their speech²
 15³ their progress he impeded
 16³ the altar

[Column III is so broken, only a few words remain, so I have omitted it.]

COLUMN IV.⁴

- 1 In (that day)
 2 he blew and³
 3 For future time the mountain³
 4 NU-NAM-NIR⁵ went³
 5 Like heaven and earth he spake³
 6 His ways they went³
 7 Violently they fronted against him⁶
 8 He saw them and to the earth (descended)
 9 When a stop he did not make
 10 of the gods³
 11 Against the gods they revolted
 12³ violence³
 13 Violently they wept for Babylon⁷
 14 very much they wept.
 15 And in the midst

[The rest is wanting.]

¹ The tower.

² *Uttaccira-melic-su-nu*, "make hostile their council."

³ Lacunæ. ⁴ Relates to the destruction of the tower by a storm.

⁵ The god of "no rule" or lawlessness.

⁶ The builders continued to build.

⁷ Lamentations of the gods for the Babylonians.

END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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