

~~In connection with this matter of derivation a word of clarification is necessary~~

derived from the heathen religions of ancient times. An outstanding instance of this attitude is the so-called pan-Babylonian movement which gained great prominence from the celebrated lectures of Professor Friedrich Delitzsch on "Babylon and the Bible" near the beginning of this century. This movement went to great extremes, and many of its claims came to be widely accepted. In order to examine this viewpoint, and to see what is the exact state of the evidence regarding it, it is necessary to be familiar with the facts of archaeology.

Here a word of clarification is in order. Christians do not hold that the Israelites received their entire culture, including the system of writing that they used, the language that they spoke, and all the customs of their daily lives as a direct revelation from God. It is a caricature of the historic Christian belief in plenary inspiration of the Scriptures to say that it means that the Bible as a whole was dictated to the writers. The belief of the church ~~regarding inspiration~~ is that the religious ideas, teachings, and predictions were received by revelation from God, and that the Spirit of God superintended the writing, keeping the writers from error as they wrote facts which they had observed or had received by revelation. The culture, mode of living, and spoken language was either ~~derived~~ developed by the people or derived from some other nation. They were living under the shadow of the great cultures of the mighty empires of Egypt and of Mesopotamia. Inevitably the ~~of Mesopotamia~~ ^{their} influence upon the life, ~~and~~ thought, and literature of the Israelites was enormous. As we study these relationships we ^{gain a} better understanding of the Bible. Yet the religious beliefs and practices of the Hebrews