

Simpson, C. A., The Early Traditions of Israel

B Simpson places the stories of the Creation, Fall, and Flood in J2; the story of the Tower of Babel is mostly J1.

A p. 491 The J creation story was a version of the Babylonian creation myth telling of God's destruction of the monster, Rahab. Some form of the myth was current in Palestine before the conquest. It then became part of Israel's cultural heritage. J2 was thus compelled to reckon with it; he therefore incorporated it into his narrative, and used it to express his conviction that creation was an act of Jahveh.

p. 493f The story of the garden and of man's expulsion therefrom is similarly dependent upon an earlier myth. . . . ~~The~~ Underlying the present garden story is a more crassly mythological narrative of which it is a revision. The extent to which this revision could be carried out was, however, limited by the necessity of preserving the main features of the original, of which the magic tree was one. . . . The garden story is a re-writing, in the light of a more advanced idea of God, of an older myth, related to if not identical with the ~~the~~ Eden myth, fragments of which have been preserved in Gen. 3.22, 24.

p. 494 The garden story thus appears to be a revision of a myth which had become part of Israel's cultural heritage, and which therefore could not be ignored by Jahvism without peril to the ultimate realization of its implicit monotheism. The revision was a Jahvist revision, possibly by J2 himself.

B 2. The fact that J1 appears to have been ignorant not only of this myth but also of the Rahab creation myth and the legend of the flood, both of which must have been imported into Palestine from Babylonia, would seem to indicate that Babylonian civilization had hardly affected the pastoral cultural of southern Palestine.

p. 59 Simpson says that there is a complete absence of any trace of Babylonian influence in the traditions J1 preserved. J2 substituted, conjecturally, the Rahab myth for the simpler story of his predecessor

A p. 452f Simpson thinks it may be inferred that the Tower of Babel myth was taken over from a Canaanite source, and that Jahveh has been substituted for the deity originally appearing therein.

D p. 497f The story of the flood, Gen. 6.5-8.22, is, like the creation story, based upon a legend of Babylonian origin current in Palestine. A comparison of J2's version with that contained in the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh reveals the fact that he subjected the material upon which he drew to drastic revision, eliminating its polytheism and heightening the ethical motive (cf. Gen. 6.5-8) which had found but feeble expressions in the earlier recension of the story.