

Myth and Religion: Ancient Mesopotamian Myth and the Imitation of the Lost “Scrolls of Abraham”

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Myth is an important element of human culture. Every nation, from ancient Sumer to the present has had myths that served as distinguishing marks in their history.¹ These myths, whatever form they took, had a cultural, social, political and intellectual presence and influence.² The study of myth has engendered various theories since the birth of the science of mythology in the nineteenth century.³ These theories can be classified according to a number of approaches:

THE HISTORICAL APPROACH

According to this approach⁴ myth is a sacred tale of events in the nation's ancient past, linked to a specific religious system, that has been transmitted among different cultures and detached from the original chronological context in which it was created.⁵ This approach treats myths as records of actual happenings that take place in the real world, such as the changing seasons, rainfall, fertility and sterility in nature, comprehensive topics that affect the fate of the collective and of the cosmos as a whole. The pivot of a myth is usually a goddess, as in the case of the Babylonian myth of Ishtar, the Sumerian Inana and the Canaanite Anat. Myth as a historical concept has no author; it is the product of a collective imagination that accumulated over generations.⁶

According to the historical approach myths have their origins in the stories of great kings, whose deeds left an impression on the people.⁷ Succeeding generations added to their deeds and gave them imaginary powers and elements of divinity.⁸ As time went on the real nature of

¹ Sha'rawī, 1982, 171-173.

² Hilāl, no date, 215-216.

³ The study of myth, known as mythology, provides us with an image of life in antiquity in a form that aims at demonstrating the superiority of the culture in question. See: Sulayṭīn, 1992, 166-176.

⁴ One of the newest and most comprehensive studies of this kind is *al-Uṣṭūra wal-ma'nā* (2001) by the Syrian scholar Firās al-Sawwāḥ, who also provides references to the works of the pioneers of mythological studies. Al-Sawwāḥ studies myths and the history of religion in order to understand the spiritual dimension of humanity. Born in Homs, Syria (1941), he has published several studies on ancient myths and the history of the ancient Middle East. See: al-Sawwāḥ, 2001, 304. Another very important study on the same subject is the myth collection *Dīwān al-asāṭīr: Sūmir wa-Ākād wa-Āshūr wa-Bābil* (Beirut, Dār al-sāqī, 1996-1999), translated into Arabic and annotated by Qāsim al-Shawwāf, with an introduction by Adonis (‘Alī Aḥmad Sa‘īd).

⁵ Abū Sayf, 2005, 211-212.

⁶ Al-Mājidī, 1998, 60.

⁷ The element that gives myths their importance is the story of the superhuman hero, such as Gilgamesh; see: Coupe, 1997, 5. The protagonists of myths were flesh-and-blood kings and heroes who later took on mythological proportions; see: Jean, 1994, 1.

⁸ Many adherents of the historical and the anthropological approaches to myth reject the view that these are fictional in origin. They argue that such views in among modern scholars have caused myths to be misunderstood. All myths, according to these two approaches, are based on reality; see: Golsan, 1993, 61-63.

these kings was forgotten. The study of myths according to the historical approach can thus enlighten us about the thought processes of ancient man.⁹

According to the historical approach myth can help us become acquainted with how ancient man lived and operated in his natural environment, his rituals, including sacrifices, and the deeds of kings and heroes. Myth thus enables us to draw an almost realistic picture of antiquity.¹⁰ It may therefore be said that the historical approach views myths as reflecting historical events, with accumulated additions over time. In other words, they have a basis in fact but to these facts imaginary elements were added later.¹¹

THE LINGUISTIC-LITERARY APPROACH

Linguistically the Arabic word for myth, *uṣṭūra*, means "wondrous tales".¹² The word is derived from the root *ṣṭr*, whose basic meaning is "write".¹³ In the plural, *asāṭīr*, it means "vanities, idle talk".¹⁴ The English word "myth" also has this meaning.¹⁵

In pre-Islamic Arabia the word *asāṭīr* was used to denote stories of doubtful veracity,¹⁶ a meaning confirmed also by the Qur'ānic usage of this word. In addition to the study of the word's meaning the linguistic-literary approach focuses on the use which was made of myth in antiquity as a weak allusion to what it intends to convey. A myth could, for example, intimate a natural phenomenon such as fertility or drought, by providing a personification of such a phenomenon, derived from the human ability to create personifications.¹⁷ According to this approach myth represents an early attempt by mankind to interpret the world verbally. Myth is also one of the earliest forms of religion; words have always accompanied religious rites and rituals,¹⁸ by means of which early man expressed his ideas and feelings.¹⁹

The linguistic-literary approach views myth as a literary genre controlled by rules of narrative prose and by an element of fantasy. Myth as an attempt to explain complex transcendental phenomena in the cosmos and the world of men required the broad use of imaginary elements.²⁰ According to some adherents of the linguistic-literary approach myth as a literary genre has similarities with the folktale. The two genres share many elements, including chronological escalation, topical gradation, a unidirectional narrative plot that is basically simple,²¹ although the events may at times be complex, and a resolution²² that satisfies the reader.²³

⁹ Al-Jazā'irī, 2000, 30-31.

¹⁰ Al-Nūrī, 1989, 174.

¹¹ For the difference between "myth" and "history" see: al-Miṣrī, 1991, 8-9.

¹² Zakī, 2002, 15.

¹³ Al-Miṣrī, 1991, 8-9.

¹⁴ Al-Jawharī, 1979, 684; cf. al-Azdī, 1345 AH, 38.

¹⁵ On the meaning of "myth" in English see: Leeming, 1981, 1-8.

¹⁶ For more on the many attempts to define myth and the differences between the various approaches to this issue, see: 'Abd al-Ḥakīm, 1987, 11; Jean, 1994, 2.

¹⁷ Al-Jazā'irī, 2000, 30-32.

¹⁸ Khūrshīd, 2004, 4.

¹⁹ Ḥaddād, 1986, 6-7.

²⁰ Farḥān, 2005, 20-21.

²¹ The plot is traditional, in the sense of E.M. Forster's *Aspects of the Novel*, of the kind still found in many modernist prose works to this day, although it has become somewhat weakened and fragmented in post-modernist writings. A traditional plot requires three elements in a work of prose: logical actions and events (causality), inner tension among the events, beginning and ending. For more on these concepts see: Forster ; al-Bārīdī, 1993, 131; Abū Sharīfa, 1993, 132; Faṭḥī, 2001, 105.

This approach also views myth as a type of story based on continuous narrative, stirring plot and events of human significance. Myths speak of the transcendental, the supernatural, and its characters possess superhuman powers.²⁴

From the literary approach to myth arose a specific type of “mythological criticism”, which provides a literary interpretation of modern literary texts that use ancient myths. This kind of criticism focuses on the narrative and symbolic structure that connect the text to the ancient myths. An important source for this kind of criticism is James Frazer’s *The Golden Bough*.²⁵

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

This approach views myth as a genre of poetry, of mental diversion, or of rites²⁶ derived from ancient mankind’s curiosity about such baffling questions as: “When and where were men at the beginning? What is death? What is the meaning of the cycles of nature and the seasons?”²⁷

According to the psychological approach myths create a world with its own logic, the inner logic of the mind formed as a reflection of the external world. In the words of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), myth is a sexual interpretation, similarly to the world of dreams; in both dream and myth man is free of the bonds of space and time and can create a model world in which all the hidden desires in the depths of one’s soul can be realized.²⁸

Psychologists who have studied myths argue that myth has animistic origins, that the mythical mindset is derived from the human mental proclivity to seek interpretation. Men everywhere and at all times, according to psychological experts, strive to express the things that confuse them. In other words, mankind possesses a constant curiosity to discover the unknown, to understand in particular the things it fears and does not understand. The purpose of myth is to satisfy this curiosity and to assuage this fear.²⁹

Proponents of this approach claim that myths are a basic cornerstone of civilization, because they introduce order into beliefs, sustain principles of morality and grant peace of mind to mortals in the face of the unavailability of death. Myths thus became indispensable to early man, providing him with vital dreams and fantasies.³⁰

THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH

For anthropologists myths are a human phenomenon with a symbolic function. They are one form of symbolism found in a cultural system. What is important about them is not the partial facts which they report overtly but rather their basic function in society, which is to symbolize certain core facts about their society and thus to help reform and rectify society.³¹

²² In myths the voice of redemption appears when the protagonist is in the depths of despair. The most complex moment is when the message of transformation arrives, bringing with it a resolution in the wake of the blackest of moments. See: Campbell, 1991 ; Lak, 1987, 153-158; Ya‘qūb, 1987, 40-41.

²³ Lak, 1978, 153-158.

²⁴ Ya‘qūb, 1987, 98-99; al-Nūrī, 1989, 175.

²⁵ See: Fathī, 2000, 33; cf. Barthes, 1986.

²⁶ See: al-Sawwāh, 2001, 21.

²⁷ Al-Yūsufī, 2005, 143-144.

²⁸ Al-Jazā‘irī, 2000, 30-32.

²⁹ Al-Nūrī, 1989, 175-176.

³⁰ Ibid., 25-26.

³¹ Cassirer, 1946.

Adherents of this approach argue that myths are symbols that appeared in the festivals and rituals of antiquity. The myths were performed annually, accompanied by movement and dance. The Sumerians, for example, produced performances in which that goddess Inana fell into the underworld. The performance of this myth was repeated at the beginning of every spring during the Akitu festival; its purpose was to explain why winter ended and summer arrived, when nature dried up.³² Ishtar's fall into the underworld and her rise from it also symbolized the return of spring.

According to Frazer and those who share his approach myths are derived from rites. After a rite has been performed for a long time it loses the meaning that it had for its founders and becomes meaningless. In order to preserve and retain a venerable rite an interpretation of it is needed, and this is done by means of a myth.³³

Within the anthropological approach there are two distinct interpretations of myth. One of these is "animism theory", according to which the ancients, having come to the conclusion that all bodies consist of matter and spirit, searched for their origins. Myth, in this view, was the earliest explanation for the origins of primordial matter and spirit. The second is "totemism theory" or taboo,³⁴ which views myth as a collection of ancient sacred and forbidden things, whose sanctity and inviolability were derived from the tribe,³⁵ giving rise to special obligatory rites³⁶ that symbolically represented the sacred and taboo things³⁷ which tribesmen were forced to obey due to their symbolic power.

Anthropologists attach great importance to myth, because it constitutes the material for rites. Myths express the ideologies of simple traditional human collectives in a profound and dramatic manner. The collective spirit depends on them, because they cause society to adhere to its values and to aspire towards its supreme models in every age. Primitive myths thus served as regulators and indicators that confirmed the traditional rites and rules which preserved society from disintegration and collapse.³⁸

THE RELIGIOUS HYPOTHESIS

A. Myth in Islamic religious thought

The term *asāṭīr* ("myths, legends", sg. *uṣṭūra*) appears in the Qur'ān nine times in various chapters. The meaning the word has in the Qur'ān is consistent with that of Arabic lexicons. The occurrences of the word in the Qur'ān are as follows:

1. ... those who disbelieve say, "This is not but legends of the former peoples" (Q 6:25).
2. "We have heard. If we willed, we could say [something] like this. This is not but legends of the former peoples" (Q 8:31).
3. And when it is said to them, "What has your Lord sent down?" They say, "Legends of the former peoples" (Q 16:24).

³² Al-Mājidī, 2000, 31-32.

³³ See: al-Sawwāḥ, 2007, 15.

³⁴ Salāma Mūsā defines taboo as the basis of ethics, in the sense that it restricts freedom of thought. As primitive nations advanced a class of priests and magicians arose which imposed taboos on the people, turning them into a unique force. See: Mūsā, 1959, 21-11. For more on taboo and its psychological effects in the psychological approach to myth see: Freud, 1913; Frazer, 1968.

³⁵ On myths of the holy and the taboo among primitive human tribes see: al-Udhari, 1997; Bailey, 1977.

³⁶ Myths are accepted only if they are agreed upon by the collective or tribe as a whole, and thus constitute a restriction on the freedom of thought. See: Kolkovsky, 1971, 29.

³⁷ Khān, 2005, 52-53.

³⁸ Al-Nūrī, 1989, 175; cf. al-Qumnī, 1999, 25.

4. We have been promised this, we and our forefathers, before. This is not but legends of the former peoples (Q 27:68).
5. And they say, "Legends of the former peoples which he has written down, and they are dictated to him morning and afternoon" (Q 25:5).
6. When Our verses are recited to him, he says, "Legends of the former peoples" (Q 68:15).
7. But he says, "This is not but legends of the former people" (Q 46:17).
8. When Our verses are recited to him, he says, "Legends of the former peoples" (Q 83:13).
9. This is not but legends of the former peoples (Q 23:83).³⁹

In addition to these occurrences of the word, the Qur'ān also contains numerous other expressions in which there appear words derived from the same root, *ṣṭr*. However, semantically the latter have very little to do with the subject at hand. An examination of the verses quoted above shows that the Qur'ān considers myths or legends as generally baseless tales or mere idle talk of the ancients. Thus in a tradition that explains the circumstances under which the first of the above-quoted verses was revealed to Muḥammad, it is related that at the dawn of Islam a group of men, among them al-Walīd b. al-Maghīra, Abū Jahl, Abū Sufyān and al-Naṣr b. 'Utba, gathered and listened to the Prophet's recitation of the Qur'ān and asked: "What is Muḥammad saying?". One of them replied: "Legends (*asāṭīr*) of the former peoples", that is, baseless tales of the ancients.⁴⁰

The same meaning appears in Q 8:31, which according to tradition quotes al-Naḍr b. al-Ḥārith b. Kalda, a non-believer who was taken prisoner in the Battle of Badr, to the effect that the Qur'ān is nothing but tales of the ancients, "like the stories about Rustum and Isfindiyār from Persia", that is, folktales that were current in pre-Islamic times and later.⁴¹

In Q 16:24, too, the non-believers maintain that the Qur'ān is nothing but old legends, invented by the ancients and passed on from one generation to the next in the form of "errors" (*al-aḍālīl*)⁴² and "lies" (*al-akādhīb*).⁴³

As for the word's occurrence in Q 23:83, the meaning of the word is explained as follows by al-Ṭabarsī in his *Jawāmi' al-jāmi'*:

*They said: That is, the people of Mecca said this, like the ancients who deny the Resurrection. Myths (asāṭīr, the plural of usṭūra) are unfounded things written down by the ancients. They were given the following answer that proved their ignorance: Know that He who created the earth and those on it is capable of bringing about resurrection. It is not too great a task for Him, and therefore one must not make Him share His divinity with one of His own creatures.*⁴⁴

In Q 25:5 the non-believers again claim that Muḥammad's utterances were mere legends of the ancients, which they wrote down and then memorized them morning to evening.⁴⁵ The same meaning, of fictional stories, appears also in Q 27:68.⁴⁶ In Q 46:17 we have a young man whose parents ask for God's help and call on him to repent, to no avail: "But one who says to his

³⁹ Al-Bāqī, 1996, 350-351; see also the Qur'ān, the above-quoted chapters and verses.

⁴⁰ Al-Ṭabarsī, 1992, 38.

⁴¹ Ibid., 405.

⁴² These interpretations are similar to those of the modern linguistic and anthropological approaches, both of which consider myths as the product of the collective imagination.

⁴³ Al-Ṭabarsī, 1992, 716.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 108-109.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 138-139; al-Tha'ālibī, 1987, 130-131; al-Sharbīnī, 2004, 18.

⁴⁶ Al-Ṭabarsī, 1992, 192-193.

parents, 'Uff to you; do you promise me that I will be brought forth [from the earth] when generations before me have already passed on [into oblivion]?' while they call to Allah for help [and to their son], 'Woe to you! Believe! Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth.' But he says, 'This is not but legends of the former people'".⁴⁷

In short, every occurrence of the word *asāṭīr* in the Qur'ān⁴⁸ is always associated with "the former peoples" and denotes fictional tales that have no basis in reality.

The Qur'ān contains in addition also various stories of mythical origin, some of whose details can be traced back to Sumerian and Babylonian mythology. Thus, for example, the giant with the two horns (*dhū al-qarnayn*) in Q 18 who wandered the four corners of the earth is very reminiscent of Gilgamesh, while the story of Noah's flood in a number of chapters of the Qur'ān reminds us of the Babylonian flood myth. This similarity naturally gives rise to the question of whether it is due to the former existence of now-lost texts in ancient Ur, for example the "Scrolls of Abraham" mentioned in Q 87:18-19: "Indeed, this is in the former scriptures, The scriptures of Abraham and Moses".⁴⁹ From the Old Testament we know that Abraham came from Ur of the Chaldeans,⁵⁰ the same city in which the myths of antiquity were discovered. Is it possible that the myths of ancient Iraq are the lost Scrolls of Abraham, which were distorted over time so that they lost their monotheistic nature and became pagan texts?

In Arabic translations of the Pentateuch and the Old Testament in general the word *asāṭīr* is very rare. However, this brings us to a complex issue, a venerable debate⁵¹ concerning the relationship between Sumerian-Babylonian myth and the Old Testament texts, which occasionally demonstrate an amazing similarity or even near-identity.⁵²

B. Myth in the Old Testament

Below we shall examine two Old Testament texts and compare them with similar Sumerian-Babylonian texts. We shall conclude that the biblical narrative is a later version of a more ancient mythological text,⁵³ providing possible additional support for the lost "Scrolls of Abraham" hypothesis.

Text 1: The story of the flood in the Pentateuch

The story of the flood in the Book of Genesis is as follows:⁵⁴

The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the

⁴⁷ Ibid., 474-475; al-Nisābūrī, 1994, 108-109; idem, 1990, 121.

⁴⁸ The Ṣūfī commentaries on the Qur'ān interpret the word no differently than other exegetes. See, for example, Ibn al-'Arabī (1165-1240) who explains its meaning as "frivolous stories of the ancients"; see: Ibn al-'Arabī, 1987, 208-211.

⁴⁹ See Q 87.

⁵⁰ Genesis 11:31.

⁵¹ This issue, namely the relationship between the myths and the Old Testament, has engendered a heated debate among modern scholars, prominent among whom was Kamāl al-Ṣalībī (1929-1986). Numerous studies have addressed this issue, among them: al-Sawwāḥ, 1999 as well as al-Ṣalībī, 1986, 1988, 2001.

⁵² Al-Sawwāḥ, 2007. The similarities between ancient Iraqi myths and the text of the Pentateuch are often striking. However, al-Sawwāḥ did not compare them; he merely presented both (for example, the Sumerian and biblical myths of creation [31-141], the myths of the flood [157-210], the sea monster [215-234] and Paradise [237-258]).

⁵³ These texts are provided merely as examples. There exist numerous texts in these two sources which are very similar to each other, for example the Babylonian stories about "Sargon the Akkadian", which show great similarity to the story of Moses in the Pentateuch.

⁵⁴ Genesis 6:5 – 8:12,

time. The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. So the LORD said, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them." But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. This is the account of Noah and his family.

Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God. Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high. Make a roof for it, leaving below the roof an opening one cubit high all around. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you. You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female ...

... on the seventeenth day of the second month—on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.

On that very day Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, together with his wife and the wives of his three sons, entered the ark. They had with them every wild animal according to its kind, all livestock according to their kinds, every creature that moves along the ground ... But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and the livestock that were with him in the ark, and he sent a wind over the earth, and the waters receded. Now the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens had been closed ... The water receded steadily from the earth ...

After forty days Noah opened a window he had made in the ark and sent out a raven, and it kept flying back and forth until the water had dried up from the earth. Then he sent out a dove to see if the water had receded from the surface of the ground. But the dove could find nowhere to perch ... He waited seven more days and sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him.

The Sumerian flood text

In Tablet 11 of the Epic of Gilgamesh we read as follows:⁵⁵

Šuruppak, a city that you surely know,
 ... that city was very old, and there were gods inside it.
 ... The hearts of the Great Gods moved them to inflict the Flood
 O man of Šuruppak, son of Ubar-Tutu
 Tear down the house and build a boat!
 Abandon wealth and seek living beings!
 Spurn possessions and keep alive living beings!
 Make [the seed of] all living beings go up into the boat.
 The boat which you are to build,
 its dimensions must measure equal to each other:

⁵⁵ <http://www.historywiz.com/primarysources/sumerianflood.html>, accessed on April 30 2017.

its length must correspond to its width.
Roof it over like the Apsu ...
Just as dawn began to glow
the people assembled around me.
... The child carried the pitch,
the weak brought whatever else was needed.
On the fifth day I had laid out her exterior.
It was a field in area,
its walls were each 10 times 12 cubits in height,
the sides of its top were of equal length, 10 times 12 cubits each
... All the living beings that I had I loaded on it,
I had all my kith and kin go up into the boat,
all the beasts and animals of the field and the craftsmen I had go up
... Ninurta and made the dikes overflow
... All day long the South Wind blew,
blowing fast - and then the Flood came,
overwhelming the people like an attack.
... Six days and seven nights
came the wind and flood,
the storm flattening the land.
When the seventh day arrived ...
the sea, calmed; the whirlwind fell still; the flood stopped ...
I opened a vent and daylight fell upon my cheek ...
When a seventh day arrived
I sent forth a dove and released it.
The dove went off, but came back to me;
no perch was visible so it circled back to me.
I sent forth a swallow and released it.
The swallow went off, but came back to me;
no perch was visible so it circled back to me.
I sent forth a raven and released it.
The raven went off, and saw the waters slither back.
It eats, it scratches, it bobs, but does not circle back to me.

Clearly the two texts are very closely related, and share many details, among them the following:

- 1. The land is filled with iniquity due to man's misdeeds; this iniquity must be removed.**
- 2. The biblical Noah and the Sumerian-Babylonian Ut-napištim\Ziusudra are righteous men, entrusted with the task of saving humankind and the germ of life.**
- 3. The deity commands them to build a large boat covered with pitch, on which the germ of life will be carried.**
- 4. The world dies and Noah/Ut-napištim-Ziusudra, together with all the living creatures with them are the germ of future life on earth.**
- 5. The raven and the dove are sent outside the ark to test the water level.**

All of these similarities prove that the biblical text was influenced by more ancient myths, whose contents it used and with which it held a dialogue.

Text 2: The great king in the Old Testament

In the Book of Ecclesiastes we find a depiction of a powerful and wise king, who searches for the secret of immortality but comes to realize that death is the fate of all mankind. We read as follows:

Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for God has already approved what you do. Always be clothed in white, and always anoint your head with oil. Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun—all your meaningless days. For this is your lot in life.⁵⁶

The great king (Gilgamesh), the Sumerian-Babylonian text

... fill thy belly,
Day and night do thou rejoice,
Daily make a rejoicing!
Day and night a renewal of jollification!
Let thy clothes be clean,
Wash thy head and pour water over thee!
Care for the little one who takes hold of thy hand!
Let the wife rejoice in thy bosom.⁵⁷

Here, too, the similarities between the two texts are very obvious. Both urge one to enjoy life and not to allow oneself to be bothered by other things.

To conclude, we saw in this study that myths have been approached from a number of different perspectives, according to the theories of the various scholars. The present study argues that in extant monotheistic books, especially the Old Testament and the Qur'ān, myths are found in a modified form, giving rise to the hypothesis that they have a common origin. The only apparent logical explanation is that the myths of ancient Iraq are later versions of monotheistic texts such as the ancient Scrolls of Abraham.

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⁵⁶ Ecclesiastes 9:7-9.

⁵⁷ <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/11000/11000-h/11000-h.htm>, accessed April 30, 2017.

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