

### HISTORY OF THE ALPHABET

The question of the alphabet deserves some reading on your part at some later time in works that are in the library. To say, however, that we can draw conclusions for all questions on this subject would be premature.

#### Books on the Alphabet

There are a number of books that I would like to draw to your attention. Certainly the most important author is David Diringer. He has two books that I have brought here from the library. (There is also a new volume—a new set—from him.) The first volume that I have is The Alphabet: A Key to the History of Man-kind; and the second is The Story of Aleph Beth, both by David Diringer.

Now I want to point out that his two books are slightly different in their approach: The first is a contribution published by the Scientific and Technical Publications; the second is copyrighted by the World Jewish Congress. The name David Diringer should tell you he is Jewish. Now, the difference between the two books by the same author is not a difference in time; it's a difference in Jewishness! Thus the implication of the one is much more obvious than that of the other; that is, he would draw conclusions in the book for the World Jewish Congress that he would not put in his other publication. His original book came out in 1948 and reprinted with amendments in 1953. This year his single volume has come out enlarged into a two-volume work. I turned it over to the library and as of now it is not yet on the shelf.

There are other books on this subject by various authors. I picked up another one by Moorehouse of the University of Wales. I draw it to your attention only due to the fact that it dwells much more on the relationship of the scripts of Northwestern Europe because it's done by a scholar from this part of the world. In other words, this work would be different from one who is interested in the Middle East who would spend more of his time on Egyptian, Mesopotamian and Arabic material. This book is entitled The Triumph of the Alphabet: A History of Writing by A. C. Moorehouse.

#### Important Questions

None of these books, however, gives any final answer to some significant questions we would raise. Let's ask some questions, now, about this subject.

First, since the Bible is written with an alphabet in Hebrew and Greek, the question arises: What is the relationship of the Bible to the alphabet? That is, should the alphabet be conceived of as an invention that was necessary in order to have the Bible as we know it? Could, in other words, the Scripture have been successfully conveyed without an alphabet? Could it have been conveyed with some other kind of script such as a syllabary (which is what the Mesopotamian cuneiform script is)? Could a pictographic form have been used, such as the Egyptian hieroglyphs? All of these might have been used—but the alphabet was used for Scripture! Was there a reason?

## The Bible and the Alphabet

Why do we have in many places in the Bible what is called acrostic literature? We have certain Psalms which are acrostics, certain portions of Jeremiah, the last chapter of Proverbs; and these in whole, or almost in whole, begin verses with the 22 successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. For instance, Psalm 119 is an acrostic Psalm: each set of eight verses begins with a single letter of the Hebrew alphabet—aleph, beth, gimel, dalet, and so on—so that you proceed for 8 times 22 or a total of 176 verses. This is what is meant by an acrostic psalm, something we take up in third year theology and O. T. Survey.

It is interesting, then, that in the Bible we have the preservation of the alphabet! This shows that there is a definite connection between the Bible and the alphabet. The fact that there are 22 books in the Old Testament and 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet is significant. There may be subdivisions within, but there are 22 valid books as the Old Testament was finally compiled. Such a relationship clearly indicates that there is a vital connection between the Bible and the alphabet.

### More Questions

Now, was there writing before the Flood? Was there writing after the Flood? Who invented the alphabet?

And what is the alphabet? Is it merely the form of the letters? Is it an idea? At what point can we say that the Hebrew aleph-beth is an alphabet?

Now there are concepts that I would like to present, and there are different schools of thought. I don't necessarily subscribe to one more than the other but I will at least present the following for you.

### Syllabary versus Alphabet

A syllabary differs from an alphabet as follows: It will have as many signs or characters as there are sounds in the language. For instance, if you have a language with 20 consonants and 5 vowels, a syllabary would total 100 symbols! Thus the letter b would have five symbols pronounced bah, bay, bee, by, bo, boc. So there is no such thing, you see, as a separate b; every sound is represented by a separate syllable.

### Hebrew Called a Proto-Alphabet

Now it is said by some (normally not Jewish scholars) that the Hebrew is not a true alphabet but a proto-alphabet. Though I do not subscribe to this definition, it is nevertheless true that not all the sounds in Hebrew are recorded, i.e. symbolized in writing. Hebrew, however, is by no means a syllabary! To be a syllabary it would have to have the consonants and the vowels joined together. Hebrew has no separate vowels. There are certain letters that could be called semi-vowels such as aleph or 'ayin or vau, but these are unusual.

One would have to draw the conclusion that the Greeks made the final contribution to the alphabet—there is little doubt about that—with the addition of certain vowels, so that all sounds may be symbolized! In Hebrew they are not. The Jews have had to invent symbols for the vowels; but the more you know the language, the less you need the vowel symbols. Thus most literature in Hebrew is printed without these symbols, but it's for those who can read it; but it is not always immediately discernable otherwise.

Thus we have in a sense, in the Hebrew alphabet, a proto-alphabet by comparison to the final Greek alphabet which lays at the foundation of Latin and all modern European languages. But the alphabet as we know it in Hebrew is still an alphabet whether one wants to term it proto or complete. It is not a syllabary by any means!

### The Form of the Letter

Now that we have that explained, so you have a general picture of the difference, we must ask the question, Is the form of the letter important to the idea? We would have to conclude that it doesn't really matter. What is the difference whether you use our English S symbol or the Greek sigma? Or whether you write a capital A as we do or lying on its side? Some of these earlier scripts had it this way. It doesn't really matter when you have the idea behind it. In other words, the form of the letters has been highly variable over the centuries in all the different kinds of alphabets. (On the other hand, when we get back to the Semitic, there was reasonable stability. Most of the Semitic scripts are standard; that is, from beginning to end, they are essentially the same.)

We do not find, in other words, that there is any reason to conclude that the shape of the letters is of Divine origin. There is no reason to conclude that the shape of the letter is of Divine origin! Therefore one can divorce the shape of the letter from the idea of an alphabet; the symbols used may vary widely.

One would have to conclude, from looking at the shape of the letter in the first place, that it was merely devised for the kind of material on which those letters should be written. Thus cuneiform was a form devised for soft clay with the use of a stylus (though this was not an alphabet). The hieroglyphs were devised for writing on stone. Hieratic was devised by the Egyptians for writing on papyrus. Hence the manner in which you write determines the kind of shape in which you will develop your syllables or your alphabetical sounds.

### God, Moses, and the Alphabet

The next step: Is there tradition about these matters? We have the evidence that there is a tradition. Now there is a Jewish tradition that writing or the alphabet (it's not clear whether the tradition absolutely defines which)—but that Moses is the inventor of the alphabet, let's say, as we know it. There certainly is tradition that the Hebrew script goes back to this time.

However, we present the following question: Does this mean that the idea of an alphabet began with Moses, or did it begin earlier?

Most probably what we have in the case of Moses is someone who delivered to the people, let's say, a form of writing that is capable of being down on what must have been vellum (the animal skin, more likely, rather than papyrus). You see, when they were out there in Sinai they were writing in a book or a scroll (the latter, I think, is the implication of the original Hebrew). This would have been made of skin; they wouldn't have found it convenient to carry a lot of papyri with them in order to write. Skin would be the most logical; in fact, all the scrolls of the Old Testament were normally written on skin or vellum.

I would have to draw the conclusion that the form of the letters rose in Moses' day, but not the original concept of the alphabet!

Now, in regard to this, we have a problem to look into because the first material that is written that is properly termed Scripture is the Ten Commandments. Now the Ten Commandments were written by the finger of God.

So at this point we have a good question to ask: What did those letters look like?!!!

The Hebrew tradition that does assign something pertaining to writing and script to Moses, I think, should not be set aside lightly. But on the other hand, it is possible that God the Eternal (who we now know as Jesus Christ) wrote the form of the letters in the old Hebrew script. (This does not mean the square letters that you are familiar with in reading now. Remember, that form was adopted in the time of Ezra. The square letters of the Hebrew, called flame letters, did not exist before the time of Ezra; they arose from Mesopotamian or Babylonian influences—see Dr. Martin's dissertation. We're talking about the script that we would associate with the Samaritans, where they kept the old form, and all the older monumental forms from Palestine.)

So, as I say, here is one of those questions we cannot fully answer. I am not convinced that the form of the letters that God used in writing the Ten Commandments were known only to God and that He had to teach Moses what they meant. I rather suspect that it was not this way. It may well have been that this old form of Hebrew lettering—Moses was taught in all the wisdom of the Egyptians—as we now know it (that is, the old alphabetic script of the Hebrew in this part of the world) had already been in use and Moses may himself have been responsible for developing it. If so, then God would have put His stamp of approval on this particular script by so writing the Ten Commandments.

Now God could have used hieroglyphs, He could have used any other form He wanted to—because, after all, Moses must have known hieroglyphic writing, he must have known hieratic; and, speaking Hebrew, he must have also known—that is, either conceived of it or invented—letters to signify the various sounds. I would thus draw the conclusion that God, in issuing the Ten Commandments, put the stamp of approval on the script rather than that He invents something which Moses now has to learn and deliver to the people. This would be a conclusion that I would have to come to in terms of the shape of the letters. I'm not talking of the original concept of an alphabet, just the shape of the letters. I will take up the beginning origins of the concept of the alphabet a little later.

### The Egyptians and the Alphabet

Actually the Egyptians, from the beginning—the First Dynasty—with their hieratic had what we would call the beginnings of an alphabet so obviously that there are some questions which should be asked.

The Egyptians, in fact, had symbols (we'll call them the hieroglyphs) which stood for a sound and also stood for a name or a thought. Thus if we were to draw a house as an illustration, in English, the symbol would mean "house" and it would also be the h sound. Or we could draw a bat: the symbol could mean "bat" but it could also represent the letter b, the sound b, see?

So the Egyptians had a remarkable system that they never improved upon. It was partly and potentially alphabetic and yet, on the other hand, was pictographic or syllabic. In other words, it was a confused system!

We are told, in fact, that the hieroglyphs were specifically invented to hide the facts that were written on the monuments from the people!

Now, this could go in two ways: Either we would have to say that the concept of an alphabet was previous to the hieroglyphs and the hieroglyphs were an attempt to keep within the scope of the priesthood the indication of what was written so that you couldn't tell whether it was a sound, a syllable, or a picture. [Dr. Hoeh did not complete the thought here by bringing in the alternative concept, the evolutionary approach presented below, which is that the pictographs or hieroglyphs are necessarily a forerunner of a true alphabet.] And this is one of the reasons it is sometimes difficult to determine what is actually going on when you read the Egyptian material; it's not always clear. Hence there are numerous translations that are given from the Egyptian. Mostly it is clear, but you have to learn that that there are alternative possibilities when translating, you have to get used to it. So, you see, the Egyptians did not have a fully developed alphabet. Only when the Greeks came did the hieratic and then the demotic become truly alphabetic. But that was not Egyptian; that was in the Greek.

#### Evolutionary Pattern Untrue

Now the theory of evolution would demand you start with the pictograph, then the ideograph, then the syllabary, with this progression culminating in the alphabet. This is the theoretical pattern that is normally presented. Such a pattern, of course, is based on the theory of evolution which is suspect by its very nature.

I used to take this theory for granted because all other writers did. But Mrs. Apartian, while a student, wrote a paper for me in my class and made an interesting study of a fact which I will now present: There is no known case in all of history of an alphabet ever having been derived historically from a syllabary. By contrast, we do have an absolute proof of a syllabary having been derived from an alphabet. The Ethiopic syllabary is derived from the South Semitic alphabet. [Dr. Hoeh elaborated further on the Ethiopic here but these remarks are left out in order to shorten this lecture material somewhat.]

I repeat, there is no known proof in history of a syllabary becoming an alphabet. The reverse has taken place—going from an alphabet to a syllabary. All invented alphabets derive from previous alphabets! The cuneiform never advanced to an alphabet. The hieroglyphs, internally, never advanced; they always remained what they were. It always took an outside power, already having an alphabet, to change the structure.

#### Egyptian Language Semitic

So I would suspect that the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic language was the reverse of the traditional evolutionary explanation; that the concept of an alphabet may well have been previous to the Egyptian; and then the ancient Egyptian was an attempt, on the one hand, to hide the meaning, and perhaps, on the other hand, to adopt an alphabet to a language which was heavily syllabic in its structure.

Remember, the Egyptian was once thought to be a Hamitic language. But it is now known that the Egyptian, in fact, is essentially a Semitic language. And that all the languages of North and East Africa are, in reality, Semitic languages that have taken on a slightly different form, but their root is essentially Semitic—as distinct from the Negro languages of Africa which are not.

In other words, we are dealing with ancient Cushitic and Ethiopic, or Ethiopic and Egyptian, as heavily Semitic in original structure and pattern. Our language, on the other hand, is Indo-European—the pattern and structure is different. Over half the world speaks an Indo-European language today: the whole of the Soviet Union, all of India, almost all of Europe and, of course, North and South America because of the European languages that have been brought here. The only major areas that are non-Semitic speaking are the far Orient and Africa.

#### Earliest Writing in Egypt

Now, where do we go from here? One could say that Moses saw in the hieroglyphs and in the hieratic of Egypt an idea, and therefore created the concept of an alphabet; and that to Moses should be attributed not only the concept of an alphabet but also the script. I question the validity of this theory.

Let me explain that the earliest known writing in Egypt goes right back to the beginning—the First Dynasty. Therefore, by definition, the script of the ancient Egyptians must go back to somewhere around 3000 B.C. as they date it today—that is, 2900 to 3100. This is the approximate time that different authors assign the First Dynasty, see? Some may start it in 2900 to 2700, some from 3100 to 2900, others from 3000 to 2800—these are all variable, incidental, doesn't matter. This is based on a fallacious interpretation of history.

#### Earliest Writing in Mesopotamia

In Mesopotamia, the earliest writing is dated something like 3200 or 3100 B.C. This is on the basis that the clay tablets which were found in Mesopotamia appear in the Jemdet Nasr archaeological horizon. These clay tablets are therefore associated with the Jemdet Nasr culture.

However, if we compare archaeology with the history of Mesopotamia (which is done in volume one of the Compendium) we would have to conclude that writing must have begun significantly earlier in the archaeological sequence. Then if you read Wooley's account of the finding of the tablets, which he himself has preserved in his work on the excavation of Ur, you would discover that the tablets were once a part of a temple find and were thrown out at a certain period. Thus there is no way to associate the writing of the tablets with the archaeological horizon. In other words, the writing of the tablets preceded the archaeological horizon in which they were found. At a certain time the tablets were thrown out in a refuse heap, and they were found in a refuse heap of this later period. In other words, the time of the throwing out of the tablets is to be associated with this Jemdet Nasr period. It has nothing to do with the time they were written!

In reading the tablets, we can discover to which earlier period they belong. They were written in the time of the First Dynasty of Ur. This would mean that the writing actually, on the basis of Mesopotamian information, should be dated nearer 3700-3600 B.C. if they were to properly associate it with the king. And the writing was already developed; therefore it must have preceded even the king! I mean it's a developed writing which took time to perfect; and this king was not the inventor of this script.

Does this mean, then, that writing in Mesopotamia is necessarily earlier than in Egypt? The answer is no!

First of all, Mesopotamian history and Egyptian history start essentially at the same time after the Flood (as the Compendium shows). But archaeologists begin the First Dynasty in Egypt around 3000 B.C.—and we would have to start (as they measure time) the earliest dynasty in Mesopotamia in an archaeological horizon that's at least 4000 B.C.! In other words, they have shortened the archaeological history of Egypt a thousand years more than they have shortened the archaeological history of Mesopotamia. So they have actually shortened the history of Egypt more than that of Shinar. Both, however, are still too long since the date of the Flood is 2368 and Babel 2254! This would make it look as if the origin of Egyptian writing was much later when it was not. Egyptian writing, in other words, commenced at essentially the same time as the writing of Mesopotamia would have if the tablets had been properly associated with the archaeological horizon when they were written instead of when they were thrown out of the temple!

### Earliest Writing in Europe

Now let's move on to a discussion of Europe. Europe, you know, was supposedly the land of the "backward people" in ancient times. The modern concept is that the Europeans were backward until a very late period in history. The newest, up-to-date idea is that Africa is supposed to have had great civilizations in antiquity (they have to limit themselves to Egypt, however, in this connection) while Europe was inhabited by backward, naked savage types until the time of the Roman Empire. This is the general, modern thought—that until Rome developed, Europe was backward whereas Africa had its great Egyptian civilizations, the Middle Eastern or Asian people were highly developed, and so on. The whole idea is, you see, that it's merely time and circumstance that different people live at the cultural levels that they do. And the idea is that Europeans essentially, except for some development of industry, and the the impact of Roman civilization, were of no consequence until recent history.

It can be said today, however, that on the basis of archaeological interpretation the earliest form of writing has been found in southeastern Europe in the Balkans! It is not in Mesopotamia; it is not in Egypt!

Now note carefully that this is on the basis of archaeological interpretation. If we were organize the material properly, we would have to say that the Egyptian, the Mesopotamian, and the European all started at the same time. In other words, it's the earliest post-Flood period, but in Europe it tends to be assigned at least a thousand years earlier than Egypt. In Mesopotamia, you see (as I just said), they have associated it with the throwing out of the tablets instead of the time when those tablets were written so that the Mesopotamian and European would tend to be closer together. But even as such, the European, dated wholly on radiocarbon, will appear earlier.

### "The Neolithic Cultures of the Balkan Peninsula"

Friday at UCLA a lecture was given by Maria Gimbutas, who is the head of the archaeology department. This is the latest information. She had spent the last whole year in Europe digging. Her topic was "The Neolithic Cultures of the Balkan Peninsula." I will now quote from her paper.

"In 1961 an archaeologist discovered three inscribed tablets at Tartaria in Romania. This unusual find appeared to be a pictographic script"—that's like the hieroglyphics which we associate with Egypt—"used by the Vinča people. The three tablets were found in a ritual pit in the lowest layer of a tell"—and

bear in mind that the Balkans have tells or mounds—"which contained three strata. Associated with them were 26 ceramic human idols of schematic type . . . .

"In addition to the Tartaria tablets, over 300 signs of the same pictographic script have now been found on pottery sherds and anthropomorphic or zoomorphic figurines. Analogies"—but not perfect similarities—"with the Vinča pictographic script are found in the earliest Sumerian writing of the Late Pre-Dynastic"—that's the Uruk-Jemdet Nasr Period that I mentioned—"and some of the signs are paralleled in the Minoan script of Crete. The ritual pit in the tell of Tartaria belongs not to the earliest Vinča but to the beginning of a second stage labelled 'Vinca B I'. Its date must be close to 4000 B.C. which is almost a millennium earlier than the date of the earliest Sumerian script"—as distinct from the pictographic Sumerian, which might be a few centuries earlier, but essentially this is right. "A remarkable similarity in shape exists between the tablets from Tartaria and some of the earliest clay tablets recovered in Crete, notably those of the so-called hieroglyphic deposit in the palace of Knossos. Two of the Tartaria tablets have strung holes which are a regular feature of the tablets from the hieroglyphic deposit and occur on other early tablets from Crete. The Cretan tablets, however, were manufactured much later than those of Tartaria and of Uruk, but they may be examples of a plastic that could have started millennia earlier."

#### Pre-Flood Writing!

Dropping down: "Some symbols on steles from the Starčevo culture of the 6th millennium in southern Hungary, and on the pottery and figurines of the 5th millennium throughout the Danube Basin between Bohemia and Macedonia, must have served as a primitive script." Now pay attention carefully to what this means! I repeat: "Some symbols on steles from the Starčevo culture of the 6th millennium in southeastern Hungary"—this is 5000 B.C.

This therefore is the pre-Flood world! So far, in the discussion above concerning Vinča and Tartaria, we have been in the early post-Flood world. But now we find ourselves back before the Flood!

"—and on the pottery and figurines of the 5th millennium throughout the Danube Basin between Bohemia and Macedonia"—this means the 4000's, which would be in a sense a continuation down to the time of the Flood—"must have served as a primitive script. It seems that the Vinča script had its roots in the 6th millennium B.C., but in the earliest phases of its use the script could hardly have had the meaning of writing as we understand it now." That is, were people able to form sentences by the script? What was the nature of it, you see? And remember, since you are dealing with pottery the archaeologists are possibly dealing only with a symbol or name on it, nothing more. So there is no indication from these limited finds that sentence writing was necessarily involved.

On the other hand, the fact that you have symbols and a kind of script that goes back into the pre-Flood world, and that in fact you have script beginning in Europe in the advanced Neolithic or Chalcolithic (which is certainly the immediate post-Flood world), one would have to conclude that you definitely have the knowledge of writing in Europe as early as you do in the other places.

"The quantity of signs must have increased through time and they might have served to express formulae or function with hundreds of Vinča figurines." Then it describes them. "They have incised signs which might have belonged to rather elaborate and complicated religious vocabulary."



I saw some of these signs or letters on slides that Maria Gimbutas showed and maybe I should ask for a picture of them. But one symbol looked very much like the Greek sigma, another like our capital M, and another like a T in the form of a cross or tau; and there were one, two and three marks probably for the numerals 1, 2 and 3. (Is this cross or tau the sign of Cain?!!) And there were a number of others, some of which I would recognize and others of which I would not. The problem is that this is all found in an area behind the Iron Curtain and the bulk of this material is not being published except that there are individuals like Maria Gimbutas who go back there to do research in archaeology.

### The Pen of Enos

The fact that you have something like this so extremely early indicates some rare possibilities. The Bible tells us in Isa. 3:1 about "a man's pen." In the original Hebrew the word pen means stylus—it doesn't matter, it's just a means of writing, see? You could apply the meaning pen or pencil or stylus, whatever you want—not a typewriter though! And the word man there is Enosh or Enos. In other words, it is the stylus or the "pen of Enos"! (See numbers 582 and 583 in Strong's Concordance.)

A similar example is what we call India ink, see?—ink from India. But now it doesn't have to be ink from India. It could be an ink manufactured anywhere but associated with India because it originated there.

Now in the same way, the implication of all Jewish commentaries on this verse is that it was Enos who invented the instrument for writing—who invented an instrument for writing! The idea is that writing must have begun as early as the time of Enos. And this would have to be approximately 250 to 300 years after the creation of man. Adam was 130 when he begat Seth, Seth was 105 when he begat Seth: so 130 + 105 is 235 after Adam's creation when Enos was born. So it must of necessity have been some years after 235 when Enos invented his writing instrument, possibly as a young man just to give you an idea.

The idea, then, is that the method of putting down some form of script or inscription or writing goes back to Enos in the days of Adam and Seth—goes back approximately, if you please, to the time of the Hebrew calendar [which is said to have begun in 3761]. The Hebrew calendar goes back to this same time! This implies, in fact, what we could immediately discern: That you could not have conceived of a calendar, and made the calculations for it, if you could not have in some way written down information! Isn't that logical?

### Key Verses

The Biblical record indicates writing before the Flood. We have Genesis 5:1 stating, "This is the book of the generations of Adam." This means the genealogy of man beginning with Adam was kept in a book—or a scroll, that's what it means.

The previous verse—Genesis 4:26—says "then (in the days of Enos) began men to call upon the name of the Lord." The word "call upon" means to publish; it means to write—the same word is used elsewhere in the Old Testament meaning to write, to publish. (See number 7121 in the Hebrew dictionary of Strong's Concordance.) Therefore men began to write "in the name, or about the fame of, the Lord." They began to call themselves "by the name of the Lord" falsely; or "call upon the name of the Lord" properly. This is a unique verse; it has numerous meanings!

A similar passage is Genesis 10:11: "Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh." Did he go forth into Assyria--did Asshur go forth? Or did he--Nimrod--go forth, being strong? "Asshur" means strong, see? (Note page 246 in volume one of the Compendium.) So many Hebrew phrases can have more than one meaning. This is the nature of the language because it is so, what I would call, descriptive--unlike Greek which is philosophic.

Writing, then, must have begun not later than the days of Enos--the early days of Enos--and he is pictured as the one who invented the instrument for conveying the writing either on skin or in clay or whatever it might have been. Probably skin rather than clay; and, of course, on papyrus which was always possible.

### Only in Europe

Writing goes back to the pre-Flood world, but so far we have evidence of it only in Europe! Writing goes back in Europe clearly well into the pre-Flood world. This was the land, if you please, where the Caucasians then were because the skeletal pattern is that of modern man of the European type--not Oriental, not African (Negro). So we know that writing goes back into very early European culture and history. We have the tradition that something in the form, at least, of letters goes back to Moses.

Now if Hebrew is the original language, and there seems to be no reason to doubt this as a probability--that's what Adam's name is, it's Hebrew. So what else would you conclude? And by the way, you might be interested in knowing that a number of the caves in Dobrudja, an area of Bulgaria and Rumania, were named "Adam". Maria Gimbutas points this out, that some of the earliest archaeological finds in Europe were uncovered in caves bearing the name "Adam"--not modern application but just a traditional name. And also bear in mind that the oldest find in all Palestine is a site called "Adam". This place is mentioned in Joshua 3:16 in relation to where the Children of Israel crossed the Jordan River.

### Shem's Wife From Europe?

Now I would almost have to draw the following potential conclusion: The post-Flood world in the Balkans was settled by the children of Shem, and of Heber and Aram in particular. And this is the area where writing is known equally as early as in Africa and in the Middle East--not so much earlier as scholars suppose. But writing also only--listen, writing also only--in Europe is found before the Flood. In fact, it is found long before the Flood--in the middle of the pre-Flood world, because this goes back to the 5th millennium B. C. which would take us back perhaps near to the time of the death of Cain (on the basis of what we have archaeologically in Asia Minor and Palestine).

And since some of these letters look frightfully like the modern alphabet, one would almost wonder if the following would not be the case--now it was not a true alphabet as you know because there were other symbols, not ones just like the modern Greek; and some of the modern Greek came from the Semitic there's no doubt. But it is very possible that different forms of script may have been used in the pre-Flood world. We do not know whether there was one standard form, we just do not know. But what has happened is clear: Somehow the modern Indo-European form of the letter that is essentially a characteristic of the Semitic family--I don't mean the Middle East, but I mean the

family of Shem that settled in Europe after the Flood, see?—that speaks Indo-European has adopted a form of letter that was extant also in the pre-Flood world, a form of the letter extant in the pre-Flood world in a number of occasions.

Now the possibility that the wife of Shem came from this area before the Flood and that, in fact, some of the signs found on pottery—pottery-making is a woman's art—that the kind of script that was used in Europe before the Flood was carried over by the family of Shem through his wife, and came to be used later for languages other than Hebrew, seems here to be clearly demonstrated. The kind of script goes back to a pre-Flood society; it may have been Hebrew in the first place as a language, but the kind of script was Indo-European in its form as we now know it. Remember that the form of the letter has nothing to do with the sound derived from it. (That's why, from an alphabet that looks the same, we pronounce it in Spanish, Italian, German, French, English and it doesn't sound the same at all—but the form of the letters is visually the same.)

On the other hand, when the dispersal from Babel took place (Genesis 11) and the languages were all divided, it is quite clear that each people had to invent a kind of script on the basis of the material that they were writing on that was also suitable for their new language! Thus the Chinese developed a kind of script unique to their language. This is also their limitation. People who spoke a syllabic kind of language that we associate with Turkic or African dialects, tended to invent syllabaries, you see; but in the Semitic world we have the idea of an alphabet.

#### Was the Alphabet as a Concept Divine in Origin?

I would suspect that the idea or concept of an alphabet is also original. It may even have been divine in origin, but I cannot prove that. But I would suspect this is the case.

Now in the Old Testament we have the form of the Hebrew language in an alphabet, but what the form of the letters was, used in the pre-Flood world for Hebrew, I do not know. Neither do we know the form of the letters used in writing Hebrew after the Flood—nothing has come down. Finally in the time of Moses we find the letters that developed, and the form of these letters reminds one more of the hieratic. The form of the old Hebrew that Moses used is more closely related to the hieratic than any other form. That is, it tends to be patterned somewhat after the Egyptian, or vice-versa—or vice-versa! There is a similarity.

We are saying here that it is difficult to know what the early Hebrew script looked like, but there is little doubt that the concept of an alphabet must go back to antiquity; that is, to the very beginning. And that the invention of a means of writing goes back to Enos. I would almost say that maybe the concept of an alphabet, as Mr. Ted Armstrong has mentioned, would have to have been divine in origin while it was left to man to devise the form of the letters. The idea was of God because God wanted the record of man to be written. The form was of man in the pre-Flood world, the method of writing devised by Enos.

And from this beginning, there may have developed more than one script in the pre-Flood world. This might just have happened! But that remains to be seen.

On the other hand, the early script of Europe in the Greek world was much more similar to the Hebrew, and it may mean that there were variations even from this script. But some of these letters that we were shown on the slides by Maria Gimbutas were so remarkably like the later form that one would have to say that some forms here were not traditional in the Hebrew script but were absolutely characteristic of Europe in all known history.

These finds bring up some new questions that we have not thought of before prior to this. You see, when we first went into the story of the alphabet, none of this was known in Europe. All of this archaeological work began in 1961, and all of our original studies were previous to this.

It's time for the next class so we must end with that.