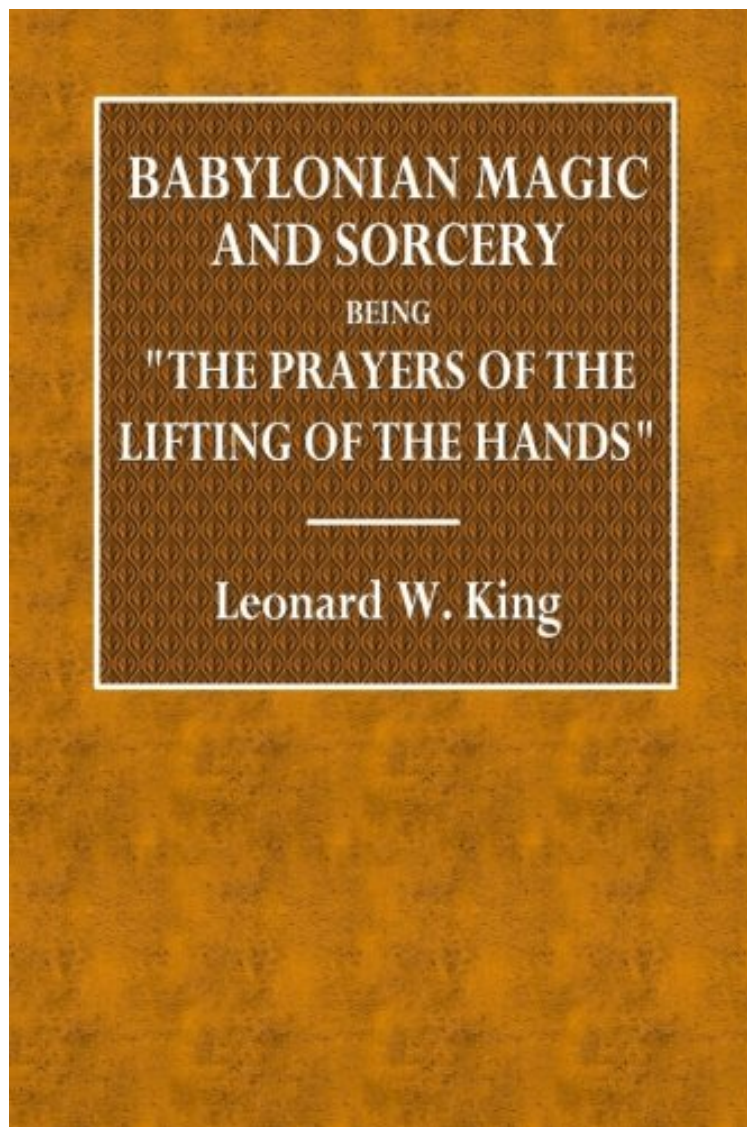


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Babylonian Magic and Sorcery: Being "The Prayers of the Lifting of the Hand", The Cuneiform Texts of a Group of Babylonian and Assyrian Incantations ... from Tablets of the Kuyunjik Collections

Leonard W. King

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Babylonian Magic and Sorcery: Being "The Prayers of the Lifting of the Hand"*, *The Cuneiform Texts of a Group of Babylonian and Assyrian Incantations ... from Tablets of the Kuyunjik Collections*:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good research, not completely convinced about all of it. By Jonathan I'm suspicious of some of the translations, but this is a nice piece of scholarly research. 1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. not what it claims to be. By John Barlow III This work was a great disappointment to me. The first page will tell you what to expect when you find Samuel Weiser x'ed out the name of the person who was going to write the foreword scratched out. The work is far from being complete. It takes too much for granted in the parts that are missing. Reads like a *Masters Theseus* that has gone awry. Not really worth your time or money unless you want it strictly for an anthropological source of a few broken and incomplete fragments. 23 of 25 people found the following review helpful. A Highly technical manual. By Elizabeth This book is definitely not designed for the novice, rather a professional of Babylonian studies. The book covers Babylonian and Assyrian incantations, ceremonies, and prayers from the 76 cuneiform tablets in the excavation of Ninevah. They were found in the site of Kuyunjuik. The prayers of "lifting the hand" are presented in full with as much technical and related material as possible. The book presents each ritual with details on how to perform the rituals, libations to deities, and what is needed to complete the rituals. The book does contain details to help the novice such as the tablets themselves, an extensive vocabulary, notes, and explanations. There is a good forward from R.A. Gilbert and preface from King himself explaining his expectations of the material. All in all the book does stand up to those expectations and some. One of the most complete Babylonian books that I've ever read. a great compliment and companion to *Semitic Magic* by Campbell Thompson (1908).

An encouraging symptom of the advance made in the method of Assyriological publications is to be found in the work done during the past two years by such men as Knudtzon, Tallqvist, King, and Zimmern in gathering together the cuneiform tablets belonging to a single series or class and in presenting the group in such a form as to enable scholars to undertake a systematic study of the remains of Babylonian literature. Now that Bezold's great catalogue of the Kuyunjik collection of the British Museum is complete, there is no longer any excuse for what might be termed promiscuous publications. Such publications are always of doubtful value and particularly so in the domain of Assyriology. Mr. King's book is a model of what a systematic publication ought to be. He has chosen as the basis of his work a group of tablets well defined by the formula, *The Lifting up of the Hand*, found in the colophon. To these he has added, as an appendix, a number of tablets that illustrate the group in question. He begins by an introduction in which he carefully and succinctly sets forth the character of the group, its distinguishing features, the divisions, the method of composition, the traces of editing that they show, and their contents. In five sections, the tablets of the group selected, are furnished to the reader in accurate transliterations and admirable translations, together with explanations and comments, elaborate where needed, brief where possible. The sixth section contains Prayers against the evils attending an eclipse of the moon published in the same complete fashion. A complete vocabulary is added and appendixes containing a list of proper names, a list of numerals, portions of words, and ideographs of uncertain readings. The first part of the whole work is brought to a close by several pages of additions and corrections and two indexes, one to tablets and duplicates and the other to the registration numbers of the tablets published. The second part of the work consists of copies of the cuneiform texts, beautifully transcribed. A glance at these copies is sufficient to inspire confidence, and much handling of the copies only increases and justifies this confidence. In respect to completeness, King's publication compares most favorably with Knudtzon's and Tallqvist's recent works, while it is superior, e. g., to Zimmern's *Surpu Series*, whose commentary is entirely too scanty, and whose book lacks an introduction in which the results of his study of the series published by him are summed up. Special importance is to be attached to this last feature. It is not too much to say that Knudtzon, Tallqvist, and King have doubled the value of their monographs by the elaborate introductions which they have furnished. It stands to reason that if a scholar devotes himself specially to some division of the great religious literature of the Babylonians and Assyrians, he is (or ought to be) in a better position than anyone else to understand the bearings, the import, and the character of the section that he has worked up. *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, Vol. 13

Language Notes Text: English (translation) From the Inside Flap The purpose of *Babylonian Magic and Sorcery* is stated in the first sentence of the Preface: "The object of the present work is to give the cuneiform text of a complete group of tablets inscribed with prayers and religious compositions of a devotional and somewhat magical character". But this is not all that King provides. He transliterated and, where the tablets are complete, translated in full. All of the tablets come from one site: Kuyunjik, the site of the ancient city of Ninevah, where King would later conduct his own excavations, and on whose inscriptions he was the acknowledged authority. The texts and translations are accurately presented and definitive. King's notes are concise, to the point, and easy to follow. But this is a highly technical book, designed for the professional, whether that professional be Assyriologist, paleographer, or magician. What, then, is its value to the non-professional reader? The answer is clear. *Babylonian Magic and Sorcery* offers us the means to gain

an insight into the magico-religious concepts of the Semitic nations. And it is these concepts, and the magic based upon them, that underlie the worldview of the Western esoteric tradition, for that tradition is essentially Judaeo-Christian -- it does not, save indirectly, derive from ancient Egypt.-- From the Foreword by R. A. Gilbert

From the Back Cover

Babylonian Magic and Sorcery is a treasury of esoteric writing concerning the prayers and rituals to ancient deities from the dawn of Western civilization. Leonard W. King, an expert in the field of Babylonian and Assyrian translations, presents a series of texts from tablets uncovered during archaeological excavations at Ninevah. Included are 76 illustrations of cuneiform tablets, King's transliteration and translation of the inscriptions, and appendices with a Hebrew-Babylonian-English glossary, a list of proper names, and a list of numerals. When first published in 1896, recognition of this remarkable work was largely eclipsed by the popularity and profusion of newly discovered Egyptian magical texts. However, as R. A. Gilbert points out in a new Foreword for this edition, the evolution of the Western Mystery Tradition actually owes more to Babylonian and Assyrian magical traditions than to anything assimilated from Egyptian sources. Therefore, this becomes a very significant text for people interested in the origins of Western religious practices and the Western Mystery Tradition.