

ON CERTAIN SOUTH PALESTINIAN PLACE-NAMES.

THE fact has already been noticed that the place-names **אֶשְׁתָּאוֹל** Eshta'ol, **אֶשְׁתֵּמוֹא'** Eshtemoa' appear to present instances of formations belonging to the Ift^oal conjugation,¹ which is common in Babylonian and Arabic, but of which, apart from these names, the only known instance in the Hebrew or Canaanite language is **וְאֵל־תַּחֲחֵם** of the Moabite Stone, ll. 11, 15, 19, 32.² Both Eshta'ol and Eshtemoa' were situated in South Palestine, the former in the Shephelah, the latter in the Judæan hill-country south of Hebron; and this fact makes probable the inference that the names exhibit North Arabian influence, of which many other traces might be cited in connexion with this part of Palestine. A further point, however, which has to be recognized is the influence of Babylonia upon North Arabia and so, through this medium, upon South Palestine. This is a fact which might be abundantly illustrated, and for which new evidence is constantly coming to light; though I do not propose at present to argue as to its importance. My reason for referring to it now is that it suggests the possibility that there may be found Ift^oal place-names in South Palestine exhibiting the change of *š* to *l* before *t* which is so common in Babylonian.³ Granted this possibility, it is at any rate worthy of consideration whether **אֶלְתֵּקֶה** Eltekē, Josh. xix 44, xxi 23, in the territory assigned to Dan, may not stand for **אֶשְׁתֵּקֶה** Eštekekē, and **אֶלְתֵּקֹן** Eltekon, Josh. xv 59, north of Hebron, for **אֶשְׁתֵּקֹן** Eštekon. Whether this be so or not, I see no reason to doubt that this consonantal change is to be seen in **אֶלְתוֹלַד** Eltolad, Josh. xv 30, in the Negeb near to border of Edom, a name which, in view of the existence in Arabic of *istawlada*, Conj. X of *walada*, I explain as equivalent to **אֶשְׁתוֹלַד** Eštōlad, an Ištaph'al form.

In considering the meaning of these place-names it is interesting to observe that three of them appear to have been given to the towns as sites of local sanctuaries. Thus, Eshta'ol, connected with **שָׂאל** 'ask', may well mean 'Place of consulting the oracle'. Eshtemoa', from **שָׁמַע** 'hear', may denote 'Place where prayer is heard'. We may compare the name Tašmitum, properly an abstract noun 'revelation' or 'oracle', applied to the wife of the god Nebo as 'the gracious one' (lit. 'ready to hear').⁴ Since Arabic *istawlada* means 'render pregnant, get with child',

¹ Cf. B. D. B. *Heb. Lex.* s.vv.

² Perhaps to be vocalized **אֶלְתַּחֲחֵם**: certainly not **וְאֵל־תַּחֲחֵם** (Cooke *North Semitic Inscriptions* p. 11) as though the form were a Hithpa'el.

³ So *taltebir* for *taštebir* from *šabāru*, *iltaḥaṭ* for *ištaḥaṭ* from *šaḥātu*, *iltasu* for *ištasu* from *šasū*, &c. Forms preserving the *š* may be quoted side by side with those exhibiting the change to *l*. Thus we meet with *ištebir* from *šabāru*, *ištasi* from *šasū*, &c. For convenience of reference the cases cited are drawn from passages quoted in Muss-Arnolt's *Lexicon*.

⁴ Cf. Jastrow *Die Religion Babylonien und Assyriens* pp. 123 ff.

Eltolad in all probability means 'Place of obtaining children', i. e. the seat of a shrine to which women were accustomed to resort in order to supplicate the mother-goddess (Aštar) for the coveted boon of fruitfulness. We may recall the statement of Herodotus (i 131) that the Assyrians call Aphrodite (i. e. Ištar) Mylitta, i. e. no doubt, *muallidat* 'she who causes to bear'.

As regards Elteḳē, Dr Margoliouth suggests to me a connexion with the Arabic *iltaka*, Conj. VIII of *laḳa*, in the sense 'Place of combat'. It may be doubted, however, whether a Canaanite town would be likely to obtain its name from the accident of one or more battles having occurred at or near it; and, if the name stands for Ešteḳē, the derivation from קש 'give to drink' in the sense 'watering-place' appears not improbable. For the Ifte'al of *ṣaḳa* we may compare *Gilgameš-Epic* vii col. 4 l. 40 *kašditi ištaḳku* 'cool draughts they give to drink'. Here *ištaḳku* might equally well have been *iltaku*.

As to the meaning of Elteḳon nothing can be affirmed, since no root קש or קב is otherwise known in any Semitic language.

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THE STUDY OF COMPOSITE WRITINGS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

WE are so accustomed at the present day to the features of literary analysis and the recognition of glosses, insertions, and the like, that we are sometimes apt, perhaps, to overlook the limitations of literary criticism and equally apt to ignore some of its possibilities. It is frequently possible to produce the clearest proof that this or the other source is of composite origin, and fortunately we possess sufficient evidence for the comparison of varying forms of such compositeness, so that we are in a position to shew that the method of compilation which we infer in the case of a unique source is essentially identical with that which we can perceive elsewhere from a comparison of variant sources or recensions.¹ But it is much to be regretted that there is no extant investigation of the phenomena of literary compositeness, and consequently these notes must necessarily be of a somewhat provisional character. To illustrate my meaning I propose to start with Habakkuk i and ii: the compositeness of which is very generally recognized by modern scholars, although there is little unanimity as to the extent of the compositeness, the

¹ See, for example, A. A. Bevan in *Camb. Bibl. Essays* pp. 13 sqq.