

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *Journal of Biblical Literature* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_jbl-01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jbl-01.php)

## BRIEF COMMUNICATIONS

## Samson and The Ass's Jaw

**A**V renders Jud. 15 16: *With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, have I slain a thousand men.* **הַמְּרָתִים** *a heap, two heaps* (so AV<sup>M</sup>, Siegfried-Stade, Brown) is undoubtedly wrong: we must read, following **Θ** *ἐξάλειψαν ἐξήλειψα αὐτούς, חָפַר חֲמָרָתִים* (not **הַמְּרָתִים**!). This, however, does not mean *I piled them in heaps* (Moore, König; cf. **قده** *مقد*) or *I flayed them clean* (Van Doorninck, GB<sup>15</sup>; cf. **حمر**, to scrape, shave, skin; **حما**, حلق, سلح) or *Ich habe sie gründlich geschunden* (Kautzsch's AT<sup>9</sup>) but *I reddened them* (cf. **حمر**, to paint red) or *I stained them with blood* (**خضبتهم بالدم**; cf. our red-handed — with bloody hands) i. e. *I destroyed* (**ف delevi**) *them by bloody violence* (**الموت الاحمر**, the red death means a violent death) or *I slaughtered them*. Heb. **חבורה**, discoloration, bruise, Gen. 423 (AJSL 20, 164) is connected with **ח-ח**: variegated, **ח-ח**: color, Arab. **حبر**, ink; cf. Germ. *blutrünstig schlagen*, i. e. to beat till the blood runs. Heb. **חמור** ass means the red one, just as Span. *burro* is derived from the Lat. *burrus*; cf. my remarks on **אתנות צלרות**, Jud. 5 10 in the Wellhausen-*Festschrift*, p. 196.

I subsequently learned from EB 2340 that this explanation was suggested more than 25 years ago by Zenner in the *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, 1888, p. 257. This journal is not accessible to me. According to EB, Zenner referred also to some parallels in the Hudhailian poems edited by Wellhausen in the first part of his *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten* (Berlin, 1884) viz. p. 113, No. 144, l. 5 (p. 8 of the Arabic text): **فأخضب صغتيه بالدم**, *I stained his sides (front and back) with*

blood, and p. 139, No. 189, l. 3 (188, 13 in EB 2340 is a misprint) — p. ۳۴ of the Arabic text: *لنخضبهنّ دما*, *we will stain them with blood*. No one but Cheyne seems to have paid any attention to Zenner's explanation; it is not recorded by Moore, Budde, Nowack. Cheyne translated: *With the jawbone of the red one I have reddened them*. I have shown in JBL 26, 42 that *מאדים*, *reddened* and *מתלעים*, *crimsoned* in Nah. 24 mean *bespattered with blood*. I also quoted there the Shakespearian *purpled — dyed in the dying slaughter of their foes* (*King John* ii, 1, 322). Similarly we must read, with Lagarde, in Is. 63 1 (see JHUC, No. 163, pp. 49<sup>a</sup>. 50<sup>b</sup>):

מִיָּזָה הֵבֵא מֵאֲדָם חֲמוֹד בְּגָדִים מִבְּצָר:

Who advances, all spattered with crimson,  
than vintagers' garments more ruddy?

The omission of the article before *בא* (cf. Duhm<sup>s</sup> *ad loc.*) is due to haplography (contrast above, p. 226). In Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* (IV, iii, 65) Timon says: *With man's blood paint the ground Gules, Gules* (i. e. red; cf. French *gueules*, red, sanguine, murrey, in heraldry). The sanguinary battle of Gavre (1453) where the citizens of Ghent (who had revolted against the duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good) left 20,000 dead in the field, is known as *the red sea of Gavre* (EB<sup>11</sup> 19, 415<sup>b</sup>; 21, 387<sup>b</sup>).

We might imitate the pun in the Hebrew original by substituting: *With the jaw of a brayer I thoroughly brayed them*. AV uses *to bray* for *כתש* in Prov. 27 22. I have explained this passage in the Transactions of the Hamburg Oriental Congress (Leyden, 1904) p. 232: *עלי* is the *stamp*, or *pestle*, and *מכתש* the *mortar*, or *chamber*, of a stamp-mill for crushing ores. *Bab. meç.* 38<sup>b</sup>, above (Goldschmidt's BT 6, 600) *כתישא* means *contusion*, *bruise* (*לכתישא דנמלי*). *Brayer* is also the name of a roller which daubs the printer's ink on a platen. *Ἐξήλειψα* may mean, not only *I wiped them out*, i. e. *I destroyed them* (*Ἐξήλειψα ἡμῶν τὸν ἄστυ*) but also *I painted them*; *ἀλείφειν* means *to anoint*, *smear*, *daub*; cf. my *Bibl. Liebestlieder*, p. 128. In German we might say: *Mit dem Kiefer des Roten strich ich rot sie an*, or *Mit des Gräulings Kiefer schlug ich sie gräulich*,

or *Mit dem Kiefer des Braunen schlug ich sie braun und blau*. This is better than the rendering suggested by Fürst<sup>3</sup>: *Mit der Kinnlade des Packträgers, ein Pack, zwei Pack*. The jawbone, which Samson used, was, of course, the lower jaw (*mandible*). He grasped it at the small end (where the lower incisors are) and hit the Philistines with the butt-end, the region of the *angulus mandibulae*, where the masseter muscle is attached.

Johns Hopkins University

Paul Haupt

### The Grain-mowing Month

In my note on the cuneiform names of the months (JBL 32, 274) I pointed out that according to Pinches the Sumerian name of the Adar did not mean *grain-harvest month*, but *grain-mowing month*. In the present year (1914) the Adar began on Feb. 27. Col. Holdick says in his article on the geography of Afghanistan, in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. i, p. 313<sup>a</sup>: It is common to cut down the green wheat and barley before the ear forms, for fodder, and the repetition of this, with barley at least, is said not to injure the crop . . . . Barley is sown in November; in March and April it is twice cut for fodder; in June the grain is reaped. Delitzsch stated in his *Assyr. Wörterbuch* (1886) p. 190, n. 2 that according to Rassam the time of the grain-harvest in Babylonia was May-June, *i. e.* the month of Sivan. In the present year the Sivan began on May 26. Assyr. *simānu* (from *سمن*) *time, season* denotes especially the time of reaping grain, the season of gathering the ripened crops. Our *season* (a doublet of *sation*) on the other hand, means originally *sowing-time*. Similarly *tide* (German *Gezeiten*, Low German *Tiden*) is used especially for *flood-tide* and *ebb-tide*.

Johns Hopkins University

Paul Haupt

### Heb. *argamân* and *tekéleth*.

Heb. *argamân*, red purple, and *tekéleth*, blue purple, are generally supposed to be Assyrian loanwords, but no satisfactory etymologies have ever been suggested. I believe that Assyr.

*takiltu* denotes a *fast* color, whereas *argamānu* is a *loud* color (German *schreiende Farbe*). Assyr. *ragāmu* means *to cry* (JBL 33, 161, n. 3) and *takālu* means *to be fast*. For the meaning *to trust* cf. 𐎲𐎠𐎧, ثَق, and إِيم (from 𐎲𐎠𐎧). In Ethiopic, *takāla* means *to fix, make firm, plant*, just as we use *to plant* for *to place firmly in position* (German *aufpflanzen*). The atroviolaceous hue, which wool immersed in the juice of the purple-shell assumed after having been exposed to the light of the sun for some time, was fast, permanent, unfading, and indelible. The red purple, on the other hand, was highly chromatic, brilliant, luminous, and glaring. For *schreiende Farben* we find in German also *grelle Farben*, and *grell*, which is used also of sounds, is connected with MHG *grelten*, *to cry out in anger*; cf. Assyr. *iççārix* (for *içtārix*) *kabittī, libbī êgug* (Arab. عَجَّ). *Argamānu* was more like crimson (solferino, magenta) whereas *takiltu* was more like dark violet (dahlia purple, plum purple). Cf. my *Biblische Liebeslieder* (Leipzig, 1907) p. 35, also p. 114 (*ad* p. 32, n. 17) and my remarks in the Transactions of the Hamburg Congress of Orientalists (Leyden, 1904) p. 220.

Johns Hopkins University

Paul Haupt