

## Influence of Assyrian in Unexpected Places.

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IT is not my object to discuss previous theories of the passages referred to in this article, but rather to propose some new theories of my own suggested by Assyriology. I shall be extremely glad to be corrected; the Lance-star and the Bow-star (Job 38<sup>36</sup>) are, at any rate, I hope, secure.

### 1. Job xxxviii. 31-38.

Dost thou tighten the bands of the Pleiades,	31
Or loosen the cords of Orion?	
Dost thou bring out the Balance at its season,	32
And leadeſt thou the Lion with its ſons?	
5 Knoweſt thou the pictures of heaven,	33
And obſerveſt thou the writing of the height?	
Dost thou lift up thy voice to the ſtorm-cloud,	34
And does a flood of water answer thee?	
Dost thou deſpatch lightnings, ſo that they go,	35
10 And ſay to thee, Here we are?	
Who has put wiſdom into the Lance-ſtar?	36
Who has given intelligence to the Bow-ſtar?	
Who ſpreads out the clouds in wiſdom,	37
And tilts the water-jugs of heaven,	
15 When the land, diſſolving, becomes a thick maſs,	38
And the clods ſtick together?	

*Line 3.* מִרְיֹת, the name of a conſtellation. The name having no explanation in Hebrew, we naturally turn to Babylonian aſtronomy. Among the ſeven Māſu ſtars, or pairs of ſtars, we find one called Zi-ba-an-na (Jenſen, *Koſmologie*, 68), alſo *Zibanitū*. It muſt have been conſidered important, for Ninib is identified, not only with Tartah (ſee on line 11), but with Kaimānu = Saturn, and Saturn with Zibanitū (p. 150). Jenſen and Hommel (the latter confidently) identify this pair of ſtars with  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  Librae, which Jenſen thinks originally repreſented the 'horns' of the Scorpion

(p. 312). The appearance of these stars must have been noted as a sign of the advent of the autumnal equinox (hence, indeed, the later term 'Balance'). Somewhat as Zarbanit, the name of the consort of Marduk, became in Hebrew סכבנות (whence the 'Succoth-benoth' of 2 Ki. 17<sup>30</sup>, M.T.), so Zibanit became מזרות, under the influence, no doubt, of the perfectly distinct מזלות of 2 Ki. 23<sup>3</sup>. On Zibanit, see further Hommel, *ZDMG.* xlv. 597, 604, 613.

*Line 4.* עֵישׁ = Ar. 'ayūth, 'lion'; the עֵשׁ of Job 9<sup>9</sup> is, of course, due to dittography (עשה). On עֵישׁ see Hommel, *ZDMG.* xlv. 594, who also compares the Lion-god Ya'ūth.

The Lion is the constellation so called, which was recognized at the time when Job was written, even if not in early times. Epping (also Hommel) has obtained from tablets of the years 189 and 201 of the Seleucidæan era (122 and 110 B.C.) an almost complete list of stations for Venus and Mars, and the eighth of these is called *riš art* ("Lion's head"), the ninth *šarru* ("King" = Regulus), the tenth *māru ša ribū arkat šarri* ("the fourth son<sup>1</sup> behind the king"), the eleventh *zibbat art* ("Lion's tail"), and the twelfth *šēpu arku ša art* ("Lion's hinder foot"). The heliacal rising of the principal stars of Leo occurred, Jensen remarks, at the summer solstice when the vernal equinox lay in Taurus.

*Lines 5, 6.* "The pictures of heaven" (חֲקֵי שָׁמַיִם), parallel to "the writing of the height" (מִשְׁטֵר מְרוֹם). The signs of the zodiac are meant. The usual rendering, "the laws of heaven," does not very well suit the context, and the second line, as commonly rendered, does not give a distinct picture. The מִשְׁטֵר מְרוֹם (so I read instead of מִשְׁטֵרֵי בְּאֶרֶץ) is the Babylonian *šitir burumu*, "the writing (*i.e.* the configurations) on the blue-dark ground of the nightly sky"; see Muss-Arnolt. Job is asked if he "knows" or "observes" with the requisite closeness this difficult class of phenomena (cf. the parallel verbs in Job 39<sup>1</sup>). LXX ἴπ' οὐρανόν = מִתְחַתְּ לְמְרוֹם?

*Line 8.* With Bickell and Duhm I follow LXX (ὑπακούσεται σου = תִּעֲנֶךָ). See 22<sup>1b</sup>.

*Lines 11, 12.* Read בתרתח, בקשת. The מְחוֹת and שְׂבָרֵי of M.T. cannot be explained, say Budde and Duhm; they must, however, be the designations of some phenomena of the sky such as meteors or shooting stars. But if we read טוֹחַת, the solution will at

<sup>1</sup> ρ Leonis is meant. Thus the 'sons' of 'Aish are accounted for. Hommel (p. 594) mentions *band* as well as *bandi Na'sh*. The former phrase is new to me.

once suggest itself. In Job 41<sup>21</sup> we have תוֹתח parallel to כִּידוֹן, 'javelin.' This (as Barth and Budde have seen) is Ass. *tartaḥu*, 'javelin' (Delitzsch) or 'lance' (Jensen); to render 'club' (Budde) is inconsistent. Now, can we fail to see that טוֹחַת in Job 38 is a miswritten תוֹתח (cf. 41<sup>21</sup> just cited), or rather תרתח, and that we have here the Lance-star? Though of Assyrian origin, תרתח is a good Hebrew word; it has to be restored (in the plural form) for the troublesome פתחות and פתחיה in M.T. of Ps. 55<sup>22</sup> and Mi. 5<sup>6</sup>; probably, too, we have the Assyrian star-name Tartah miswritten as Tartak (תרתק) in 2 Ki. 17<sup>32</sup>. (*Tartahanu* was a title of the god Ninib). The parallel word שכּוֹי now becomes clear. יִ comes from an indistinct ת; כּ has been miswritten for ק.

The Lance-star, according to Jensen, is Antares, whose heliacal rising heralds the autumnal equinox; but according to Hommel (*ZDMG.* xlv. 598, note 1), it is certainly Procyon, and not Antares. The Bow-star (connected with Istar) is Sirius, the meteorological importance of which was fully recognized by the Babylonians and Egyptians. The combination of the Lance-star and the Bow-star is in accordance with Babylonian usages (Jensen, *Kosmologie*, 52). In Arabic literature too Procyon and Sirius are coupled; they are called the two *širay* (cf. *Ḥamāsa* ii. 12, 7). The Babylonian synonym of the Bow-star (*kakkab kašū*) is *kakkab mišri*, i.e. according to Hommel, "northern star."

Line 13. For יִסְפַּר read יִפְרֵשׁ, with Duhm.

## 2. Job xxxvii. 9, 10.

From the chambers of the south (comes) the storm,  
And from the north-star cold,  
(When) by the breath of God ice is given,  
And the wide waters are straitened.

Lines 1, 2. For מִן־הַחֲדָרִים תִּבּוֹא read מִן־הַחֲדָרִים תִּיָּמֵן with Duhm. The 'chambers of the south' from which storms are supposed to come, are the four constellations between Sagittarius and the Pleiades (Hommel, in Hastings, *BD.* i. 218 a). As a parallel to חֲדָרִים, Voigt and Budde propose מְזוּרִים. But this word occurs again in M.T. only in Ps. 144<sup>13</sup>, and there it is corrupt. M.T. has מְזוּרִים, which Duhm thinks should mean "a constellation which rises at the beginning of winter on the northern horizon." Duhm's idea, I think, is right. Read this passage relative to the *kakkab mišri*, given by Jensen (*Kosmologie*, 50): "In the days of cold, of hail(?), and of snow, in

the days when the *kakkab mišri*, which glows like copper, again becomes visible. . . ." I cannot think of any other identification for מזרים than *mišri*. The term *mezarim* must come from Babylonia, and it is very possible that under the influence of מזרות this word, too, suffered corruption, *i.e.* ש was altered into ז. The rendering, "the scattering (winds)," accepted by Dillmann, has no basis.

### 3. Psalm xxxv. 3. וטַר לְקִרְאָת רִדְמִי.

Schwally (*ZATW.* xi. 258) suggests חָגֵר, 'sword-belt,' for סֶנֶר. But this produces a ἵστειρον πρότερον. We should, I think, certainly read שֶׁכֶר; comp. Ass. *sukūdu*, a synonym of *tartahu*, meaning a light javelin (Delitzsch, *Ass. HWB.* 630 b).

### 4. Nahum ii. 4. מִן נְבוּרָהּוּ מֵאֵרֶם אִנְשֵׁי חַיַל מְתַלְעִים כַּאֲשֶׁר מַלְדֵת הָרֶכֶב.

The general view of this passage taken by previous writers is, I believe, to a large extent wrong. Of Dr. Paul Ruben's restoration in *PSBA.*, May 3, 1898, one might have expected something more satisfactory than this, "Overbearing are his warriors with more than human pride; the valiant ones make sport with man; a terror are the chariots." This scholar sometimes has such brilliant ideas that I was much disappointed at this result, and was stimulated to try for something more plausible. The first thing that struck me was that מֵאֵרֶם in combination with נְבוּרָהּוּ ought to contain מְיָדִים. Since LXX reproduces מֵרֵ, מְיָדִים of M.T. by *μαρδίας*, I concluded that the original way of writing the word (with suffixes) was מְנָרִיךְ, מְנָרִיךְ, מְנָרִי. From 2 S. 20<sup>8</sup> I inferred that the right verb to connect with מְיָדִים would be חָגַר. That נ and ר, ח and מ are easily confounded in the old Hebrew script, I need not say. So I am led to propose חָגַרְוּ נְבוּרָהּוּ מְנָרִים, or better, transposing (partly) the terminations of מ' and נ', חָגַרְוּ נְבוּרָהּוּ מְנָרִים, 'the warriors gird on their tunics.'

Then, remembering Is. 9<sup>4</sup> (כָּל סֹאן סֹאן בְּרִעֵשׁ), I would insert a נ in מְתַלְעִים, and read אִנְשֵׁי חַיַל מְתַנְעֵלִים, 'the fighting men put on their shoes.'

Lastly, calling to mind טַפְסֵרִיךְ in Nah. iii. 17, to which Ruben acutely adds מְנִדִידִיךְ (*Ass. mindidu*), I look out for some Assyrian technical term corresponding to מַלְדֵת, — a word which certainly looks as if in construction with הָרֶכֶב. Such a word I find in *halluptu*, which Muss-Arnolt renders "harness," but of which Delitzsch says that it means the armour or dress of soldiers, and the

trappings or decorations of horses (except harness). Among Delitzsch's examples, however, I find this, — 40 *narkabâtešu halluptum ú-te-ru-ni*, "forty of his war-chariots with *halluptu* they carried away." I conclude, therefore, that **כָּאֵשׁ הִלְפֹת הָרֶכֶב**, "the (metal) plating of the chariots flashes like fire," would be a possible expression. (Compare next verse.) This involves the assumption that vs.<sup>3</sup> as well as vs.<sup>4</sup> refers to the warriors of Nineveh.