Notes on Psalm ii. 11-12 and on נא, Isaiah xliv. 14.

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THE Masoretic Hebrew text of the last strophe, v.10-13 of Ps. 2, is as follows:

1 סומת ומאבת רדה
2 כ ביבש מכם אוס
3 מעל את דברי יראת
4 על של ברשד טסק ברו
5 קמ אראה ואת
6 ביבש מכם אוס
7 מעל את דברי יראת

The above division into lines is necessitated by the trimeter rhythm, which is fairly constant throughout the poem. In the fourth line of the strophe two unusual expressions occur, viz. נא, and ייבש מכם אוס. The first of these is translated slavishly by G δυσαλισθεναι ἀμφρεῖν (V exultate et cum tremore) but there is really no parallel for ייבש מכם אוס which seems impossible, or, at least, very improbable. The stem נא, cognate with Arabic ḡāla, means only ‘go around in a circle, be excited to laughter, rejoice,’ and is certainly very strange in connection with ייבש. The only other passage besides Ps. 211 where נא appears in a sense different from its ordinary meaning is Hos. 106, where it occurs in parallelism with אב ‘mourn.’ Here, however, it may well be a clerical error for ב, as Ewald and Cheyne clearly saw. Grätz and others, following Ps. 48, accordingly substitute ב in Ps. 211, which would be a possible reading, were it not for the following ייבש. The translation of this by ‘kiss the son’ is not impossible from a purely textual point of view. The Aramaic form ב might have been used by our poet instead of the Hebrew ב, to avoid a disagreeable assonance with the following ב, especially as the Aramaic form רמות (root רמות for Hebrew רמות) occurs v.6. The existence of

1 ב occurs also in the Aramaized Hebrew of Prov. 312.
the purely Heb. הָיוֹ in v.7 does not militate against this suggestion, as
there would have been no reason to use a different expression in that
passage. Some expositors, in fact, insist on translating ‘kiss the son,’
owing to the allusion to the sonship of the divinely appointed king in
v., but if the context of Ps. 2 be examined carefully, it will be seen
that neither the subject of הָיוֹ nor the person to whom the posses-
sive suffix in הָיִ ת refers can possibly be the Son-Messiah. “Lest he
be angry and ye wander on your way, for his wrath is easily kindled.
Happy are all who put their trust in him.” This can refer only to
Jahveh Himself, whom the heathen kings are especially adjured to
serve in v.11, and not to the divinely appointed king. The translation
‘son’ then is clearly inadmissible from a critical point of view.

Jerome translates רֹב יִשְּׂרָאֵל adorate purus, a which is followed by
who renders ‘and reverence with trembling, render sincere homage.’
This is not satisfactory because רֹב occurs nowhere else as an adverb,
although רֹב appears Is. 332 in the sense ‘bitterly.’ The stem יִשְּׂרָאֵל,
morover, never appears in classical Hebrew without an object: cf.
Job 3117 K. 1918 Hos. 13. Turning now to G and V, we find
the translation ἀδόρατος πατεῖς apprehendite disciplinam, which, as
Grätz saw, must presuppose a text יַרְעֵב יִשְּׂרָאֵל. In his
*Psalms*, p. 158, he accordingly substitutes this for רֹב יִשְּׂרָאֵל. This seems
much too radical a change for serious consideration. The widely
divergent text of G here would rather imply the existence of a differ-
ent Hebrew original. Baethgen, *Psalms*, p. 7, very ingeniously
conjectures that the original of G depended on some haggadic inter-
pretation of רֹב in the sense of יִשְּׂרָאֵל or יִרְעֵב. He advances
this suggestion on the analogy of the Talmud which understood
יִשְּׂרָאֵל as ‘cleave to the law,’ רֹב = יִרְעֵב. Lagarde reads יִשְּׂרָאֵל
וּסְרוֹב יְרֵעֵב ‘put on again his bonds,’ referring it to the allusion in v.5, but
this is equally unsatisfactory, as יִשְּׂרָאֵל is never found in this sense.

It is evident that the text of this whole passage is extremely cor-
rupt, both from the fact that the versions differ so widely from M
and that it is practically impossible to get any sense from M as it stands.
The verses 11-18 may be altered as indicated in the following
revision of the strophe:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heb</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>יֶעָ֣שׁ הַנַּ֣שְׁשֵׂיָ֔ל</td>
<td>And now, ye kings, take heed!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>יַרְעֵב יִשְּׂרָאֵל</td>
<td>Be warned, ye rulers of earth!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Cf. Sym. προσκουνήσατε καθαρσίς. Aq. καταφιλῆσατε ἑκλεκτῶσ.
Serve ye Jahveh with fear,
And cleave to him with trembling.
Lest he be angry and ye wander on your way!
For easily kindled is his wrath.
Happy are all who put their trust in Him.

The chief points to be noted are: a) The verb קָנָשׁוּנְךָ, meaning 'cleave to, kiss,' is nearly always construed in classical Hebrew with the preposition ב. b) It is possible, therefore, that the last syllable of the otherwise unsatisfactory וֹנַלְנוּ stands for an original ו. Erasing the unnecessary ו, we get וֹנַל... ו. c) The next step is to transpose וֹנַל, so as to read וֹנַל, וֹנַל, ו. The ו of וֹנַל may possibly have arisen from dittography of ו in וֹנַל. d) This leaves יִרְּכֹהוּ, of which יִרְּכֹּה may be cancelled as a dittography. This gives the perfect trimeter line יִרְּכֹּהוּ, וֹנַל וֹנַל, and makes the last strophe seven lines long, as are the first and third. The second has but six. The word יִרְּכֹּה in the fifth line of the strophe may be construed as an accusative of respect dependent on וֹנַל as in Dt. 32:6:

ןַעַל occurs twice in the Old Testament, namely, Is. 44:14, in the evident sense 'fir, cedar,' and in 1 Chr. 28 as the name of one of the descendants of Judah. This word is plainly not a variant of the usual expression יִרְּכֹּה, Ez. 17:22, but is a derivative from a stem יִרְּכֹּה, which, as may be shown from the Assyrian, probably means 'to be high,' or 'strong.' There can be little doubt that יִרְּכֹּה is a cognate of the common Assyr. ḫiru,  Khánu, 'cedar, fir,' which is used individually and collectively. The plant name arantu seems to furnish the key to the exact meaning of the stem, as it is defined in K. 271, 12, by U. SAG. EL 'a high-growing plant.' This meaning appears to be further confirmed by the existence of such forms as ḫirīnū, 'power, victory,' ḫirāntu, 'strength,' ḫirīnu, 'staff, sceptre (?),,' all of which are cognate in meaning with the idea 'high, strong.' It is probable also that the substantive ḫirākku, occurring V. R. 29, 41 c. f. in

6 With the accus. Prov. 24:19. 1 S. 20:1.
6 So also Wellhausen, Psalms, Hebrew Text (SBOT).
9 Cf., however, יִרְּכֹּהPara 3, 8 in connection with יִרְּכֹּה; also יִרְּכֹּה, probably an error for יִרְּכֹּה, Rosh ha-shana, 23a.
7 Cf. ḫirīnū, Tig. viii. 62; ḫirāntu, H. R. 31, nr. 3, 28; ḫirīnu explained by סֵיִהְרִין (= xassu), K. 4378 c. vi. 74.
8 ḫirākku explained by ṢEŠ. NA. and in connection with בּיתו, 'house,' and siguārdōm.
connection with *ziqurratum* 'temple-tower,' is a derivative from the same stem. I suggest, moreover, that *tūrinu,* which appears in several passages with the apparent meaning 'pillar,' may be a *shaphel* formation from :`~~.~` . It is not likely that there is any close connection between  =~ =  ~~ and  ~~, which is cognate with the Arab. 'arz 'cedar,' Eth. 'arz, Syr. ~~, although the consonantal root  ~~, common to both words, may connote the idea 'high, strong.'

It is probably this tree which is represented on the monuments as bearing three cones at the end of the branch, although this is clearly the fancy of the Assyrian artist.

9 Cf. *tūrinni bābi bīt Istar,* 'pillars of the gate of the house of Istar.' K. 891, Obv. 5. See *Hâwib.,* p. 691, and Delitzsch, *Assyr. Gr.,* § 65, nr. 33, for *shaphel* noun-formations.