The Phrase רכבים עמים in 2 Kings ix. 25.

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IN the critical notes on the Hebrew text of Isa. 219, in the Polychrome Bible, I pointed out that the Hebrew term זמר ירropolis did not mean 'horsemen in double rank' but 'a team of horses harnessed together, a pair of horses driven together'; Assyr. śindu, fem. śimittlu, or načmadu always referred to chariots, never to horsemen. Cheyne remarked (op. cit., p. 123, ll. 7 ff.) that most interpreters had preferred the view rejected by me on Assyriological grounds because the scene described by the seer appeared to require it; the interpreters referred to quoted on their side 2 Kings 945: אֲנִי רָאוֹתָה זָעִיבָה לָעֲמִים וְאָחָרִים כְּבִי. Cheyne added that he did not know whether there were any Assyrian contexts parallel to the contexts in 2 Kings 945 and Isa. 219. There are no cuneiform parallels to 2 Kings 945, but the meaning of that passage seems to me clear.

While the young King Ahaziah of Judah visited his wounded uncle, King Joram of Israel, at Jezreel, Jehu, the commander of the Israelitish army, revolted. The two kings went forth in their chariots to meet him. An arrow from Jehu's bow pierced Joram's heart, and when Jehu beheld the fallen son of Ahab, he recalled the words uttered against Joram's father, Ahab, by the prophet Elijah on that ill-omened spot, the land of Naboth of Jezreel: In the place where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall the dogs lick thine own blood (1 Kings 219).

In his article on Jehu in Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, Principal Whitehouse remarks, Jehu and Bidkar rode in a chariot along with others in pairs, adding that there was something exceptional in this: usually three rode in a Hebrew chariot, as we find among the Hittites. This statement is repeated in Whitehouse's article on "Chariots" in Cheyne-Black's Encyclopaedia Biblica. As רכבים עמים, however, refers only to Jehu and Bidkar, it cannot mean 'riding in pairs.' This would require the singular, רכיב. It is true
that the Targum reads as though the text had the singular (ךְּּכָּהָּוּךְּ רַבְּכָּהָּוּךְּ). Gesenius-Buhl\(^3\) s.v.ךְּּכָּהָּוּךְּ proposes to join the final מַעְלֹם to the following מַעְלֹם, thus reading מַעְלֹם רַבְּכָּהָּוּךְּ מַעְלֹם. The Peshitta renders כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ because I remember, I and thou were riding and driving behind his father Ahab.

Everything becomes clear if we read כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ instead of the Masoretic כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ. The preceding כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ is merely a prefixed gloss, explaining the meaning of כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ, while the nota accusativi before כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ is simply a partial dittography of the preceding pronoun כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ. On the other hand, we must insert, with the Ancient Versions, a second כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ before כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ, pointing כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ instead of the Masoretic כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ (cf. Gesenius-Buhl\(^3\), p. 217, and contrast ibid., p. 83\(^*\), below). Consequently we must read: כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ יַדּוֹדָהּ נַעֲלֵי כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ נַעֲלֵי כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ נַעֲלֵי כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ נַעֲלֵי כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ נַעֲלֵי כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ נַעֲלֵי כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ נַעֲלֵי כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ נַעֲלֵי כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ נַעֲלֵי כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ נַעֲלֵי כְּכָּהָּוּךְּ נַעֲלֵי כְּכָּהָּוּ�, i.e., for I remember, I and thou were teaming behind his father Ahab when Yahweh uttered this oracle against him.

Now, what is the meaning of this denominative participle teaming? It means, not 'we rode together behind Ahab's chariot in pairs,' but 'we rode together with Ahab in his chariot as his team,' i.e., I as his driver (ךְּכָּהָּוּךְּ, 1 Kings 22:11\(^2\)) and thou as his shield-bearer (ךְּכָּהָּוּךְּ, 1 S. 31:4, Assyr. hist\(^1\)). Josephus says, in his Jewish Antiquities, IX. 6\(^4\), that Jehu and Bidkar were in Ahab's chariot when Elijah uttered this oracle (cf. the Addenda and Corrigenda prefixed to the second edition of Thenius' commentary on Kings, ad p. 390, l. 9). We see on the Egyptian monuments that the Asiatic chariots carried a driver (צָרוֹכַס) and a shield-bearer (שׁוֹלָמָם) besides the warrior (שׁוֹלָמָם), while on the Egyptian monuments we notice but two men, viz. archer and driver, but no shield-bearer.\(^3\) This third man on the Asiatic chariots is termed, in Hebrew, שָׁלַלְמָם. If we read in Exod. 14\(^1\) that Pharaoh took six hundred select chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt, שׁוֹלָמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְמָם שָׁלַלְm שָׁלַלְm שָׁלַl שָׁלַl שָׁלַl שָׁלַl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl שָׁl Sh
Hexaplar renders ‘ternaries’ is the name of those who stood on the chariots; three were standing on one chariot, two fighters and one driving the chariot. A similar explanation is given in a marginal note to the Syro-Hexaplar Version of 2 Kings 7 where the Septuagintal term τριστάτης is explained as one of the three who stood on the war-chariots, two of them fighting and one driving. The Septuagintal term τριστάτης is generally supposed to be identical with τριστάτης, ‘third in order, third in rank.’ In Liddell and Scott’s Greek Lexicon it is explained to denote one who stands next to the king and queen, i.e., the vizier or first minister; but τριστάτης (or τριστός in Kings 9) means στῶν ἐφ’ ἅμα τοῖς αὐτοῖς τρίτος σὺν δυνιν ἄλλως, δύο ἄλλους εἴην μεθ’ έαυτοῦ, viz. ψύχον καὶ παραβάτην. The warriors stood on the chariots; they did not sit down; the translation of the Vulgate in 2 Kings 9 Memini enim, quando ego et tu sedentes in curru sequebamur Ahab patrem ejus, is therefore inaccurate.

This meaning, third man on the chariot, i.e., shield-bearer or armor-bearer (ὑπερασπιστὴς, ὀπλοφόρος, armiger), is appropriate in all the passages of the Old Testament. We need not suppose that ישלי had the meaning ‘knight,’ like armiger, or officer, or adjutant, or choice soldiers, or life-guards. The drivers and shield-bearers of the royal chariot were no menials, but distinguished warriors just as the Homeric ἴππος. The passage 1 Kings 9 states expressly that the ישלי were no bondservants. In spite of the objections raised by Dillmann and Gesenius-Buhl ישלי means throughout the ‘third man,’ i.e., the shield-bearer on a chariot; it never means ‘one third’; the two passages Isa. 40 and Ps. 80, where ישלי is supposed to mean ‘one third’, (of an ephah) are corrupt. In 1 S. 18, on the other hand, ישלי denotes a triangular musical instrument, i.e., a small portable triangular harp.


7 See the illustrated Appendix on the Music of the Ancient Hebrews in the English translation of the Psalms in the Polychrome Bible (New York, 1898), p. 233, l. 28.
HAUPT: THE PHRASE בָּעַל בְּשֵׁם יְהֹוָה IN 2 KINGS IX. 25.

The term בָּעַל, which is mentioned in several passages in conjunction with בְּשֵׁם יְהֹוָה, means simply ‘footmen, footsoldiers.’ In 2 Kings 10\(^6\) the LXX renders בָּעַל בְּשֵׁם יְהֹוָה by πεζοὶ καὶ ἰππεῖς, and ἰππεῖς includes ἰπποκάτω καὶ παραβάται καὶ ὑπερασπισταῖ. Heb. בָּעַל ‘runners’ corresponds to the Assyrian term אָבְדֶת ‘infantry,’ lit. ‘rush of feet.’ We often find in the cuneiform historical texts נַרְקָבְתָּו וּאֵשֶׁת, i.e., chariots and infantry, or נַרְקָבְתָּו, בִּיטַלְלָא וּאֵשֶׁת, charioteers, horsemen, and footsoldiers. Delitzsch gave the correct explanation of אָבְדֶת in his Assy. Handwörterbuch, p. 235\(^6\), but in the glossary appended to the fourth edition of his Assyrische Lesestücke (Leipzig, 1900), p. 165\(^8\) he translates אָבְדֶת by Sturm/auf (assault, rush); cf. Delitzsch’s notes on Senn. 3\(^6\) on p. xvi of the third edition of the Assyrische Lesestücke (Leipzig, 1885) and my remarks on this passage in our Beiträge zur Assyriologie, vol. i, p. 177, s.v. nlpisu.

The name of Jehu’s shield-bearer Bidkar, who served in the same capacity on Ahab’s chariot while Jehu was Ahab’s driver, appears in the Peshita as בָּעַל בְּשֵׁם יְהֹוָה. This shows that בָּעַל is merely a contraction of בָּעַל בְּשֵׁם יְהֹוָה which appears as the name of one of Solomon’s governors in 1 Kings 4\(^7\). Jehu must have been famous as a driver; we still call a coachman, especially a reckless one, Jehu. In 2 Kings 9\(^8\) the watchman on the tower in Jezreel reports, The driving is like the driving of Jehu ben-Nimshi; he drives recklessly.

In v.\(^{18}\) we read that the horseman, whom Joram had sent out to meet Jehu, asked him in the name of the king, בְּשֵׁם יְהֹוָה, i.e., Is all well? or, Is there aught amiss? whereupon Jehu answered בְּשֵׁם יְהֹוָה. This must not be translated, What hast thou to do with peace? It means, How can you ask such a stupid question, whether all is well, or whether there is aught amiss? Hold your tongue and join my followers! In Arabic you would say ما لاكًا وَايِهِدَاتِ ́سُوُدْ ْسُوُدْ ́لِهِدَاتِ ́لِهِدَاتِ، lit., ‘What to thee and to this question in this condition?’

I should therefore translate 2 Kings 9\(^8\): When Joram fell down in his chariot, mortally wounded by the arrow from Jehu’s bow, Jehu said to his shield-bearer Bidkar, Take him away and cast him on the land of Naboth of Jezreel, for I remember how Yahweh uttered this oracle against his father Ahab, while I and thou stood together behind him on his chariot (I as driver and thou as shield-bearer): Just as I have seen the blood of Naboth and of his sons I will requite thee on this spot, said Yahweh.