

Notes on the Old Testament

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1. יִנְר, Gen. 31 47.

The Jewish temple at Elephantine is called in Papyrus E, l. 14, and J, l. 16 (Sayce and Cowley's publication), אַנְרָא. The word has given rise to various explanations. Nöldeke has noted the possible derivation from Assyrian *ekurru*; Syriac *eggārā*, "roof," has been suggested; and most recently Sachau argues for the active formation *agōrā*, as in Syriac, the "assembler," hence "assembly," comparing Arabic *iāmi*, "mosque."¹ Preferring to remain in the field of the elder Aramaic I suggest identification with Rabbinic אֵינֹר, "heap, hill," which is used in the Targums for a heathen altar; so the Targum to 2 Ki. 21 3 renders בַּמֹּת. The word is then to be associated with יִנְר, Gen. 31 47, in יִנְר שְׂדֵה־וִיטָא, "heap of witness," there rendered into Hebrew by גִּל. If יִנְר is of *ḵatl*-formation, as the Massora points it, it is related to אַנְרָא as Syriac *ḵabrā* to *ḵebbrā*, with the softening of ' to א; if it should be pointed יִנְרִ, it is the same word, א having become δ. With the root-meaning of a heap, יִנְר-אַנְרָא corresponds in meaning to Hebrew בַּמָּה, primarily a "height" (e.g. Dt. 32 13). Both words experienced the same development in meaning, coming to be used of the sacred mound or elevation, then of the precinct, and finally of the temple reared there. בַּמָּה appears to be used in the latter sense in 1 Ki. 11 7; more accurately the structure is a בֵּית בַּמָּה, e.g. 12 31. We may compare the like development of denotation in Arabic *masjid* and Latin *templum*. The Aramaic-speaking Jews of Elephantine were thus using the Aramaic equivalent

¹ *Aramäische Papyrus*, 1911, pp. xxiii f.

of the Hebrew בַּמָּה for their Yahwe-temple. What relation this native Aramaic word יַר-אַנְרָא has to Assyrian *ékurru*, I leave to Assyriologists to determine. There may have occurred in this case one of the numerous artificial assimilations of Semitic and Sumerian words.³

2. שִׁים עַל, 1 Ki. 20 12.

This technical term for attacking a city has its exact parallel in the Syriac; *e.g.* in the Ecclesiastical History of John of Ephesus, in Gottheil and Jastrow's *Semitic Study Series*, xiii, p. 17, l. 2, and p. 34, l. 6. The phrase in the latter passage, סַם עַל מְדִינָא, is identical with the Hebrew. There can be no objection in finding the same meaning for לִ שִׁים in 1 Sam. 15 2. Compare English "set at, make a set at," and Dr. Cobb cites for me a word of Prince Hal to Falstaff: "We two saw you four set on four."

3. Sukkoth-benoth, 2 Ki. 17 30.

It occurred to me several years ago that the original reading for this obscure phrase was best represented by the Greek text B, which has Ποχχωθβαιθει; ποχ is for δοχ, a mutilation of Marduk, and βαιθει is an abbreviation of the name of the Babylonian goddess Zer-p(b)anitim. Stade, I find, has made the same suggestion in the Polychrome Bible, *ad loc.* There remains for explanation the syllable -oth-. This doubtless represents an original וַאֲת, so that the text primarily read: And the Babylonians made (or better, worshiped) אַת מְרַדְדַּךְ וַאֲת (וֹר) בְּנִית.

4. The barbarous syllables in Is. 28 10.

Duhm in his brisk fashion has correctly criticised the current interpretation of these words as "precept upon precept, . . . line upon line, . . ." He would understand them as onomatopoeic sounds taken from some proverbial phraseology. May these syllables be a pedagogic by-word taken from the schoolmaster's instruction in teaching the alphabet? "Şade

³ This note was read at the meeting of the Society in December, 1910. Professor Margolis has briefly made the same suggestion for identity of אַנְרָא and טַ in *JQR*, N.S. ii, 427.

for *Ṣade*, *Ḳof* for *Ḳof*," so we might say, but in this passage may be preserved elder or variant names of the letters *צ* and *ק* (cf. the names of *ל* and *ת*). The sing-song phrase may have attached itself to these letters because of their raucous rhyming. This interpretation would be in agreement with the pedagogic character of the chapter, and would heighten the contrast in the reference to "the strange lips and other tongue" with which Yahwe threatens to teach his people.

5. *חזה*, Is. 28 15.

In his paper entitled *Ro'eh and Hozeh in the Old Testament*, in the *JOURNAL* for 1909, p. 42, Dr. Jastrow argued that both these terms originally connoted divination; he showed that *ראה* is the *barû* of the Babylonian, the practitioner of intentional auspices, and *חזה* is the observer of accidental omens. Jastrow discussed in this paper every important instance of *חזה* but one, the present case.

In this passage the commentators have endeavored to understand *חזה* as though it referred to a "vision" obtained with Hell, *i.e.* some necromantic rite. But it is evident that *חזה* is synonymous with the parallel *ברית*, even as the Greek understood them, — *διαθήκη* . . . *συνθήκη* (*Sym. συνθήκη* in both places). But Jastrow's discussion gives a clue to the understanding of *חזה* in our passage. This word and its parallel *ברית* denote a covenant founded upon, consecrated by, auspices. Our verse then presents the two roots *barû* and *חזה*, of which the latter is to the former as, according to Jastrow's thesis, *חזה* is to *ראה*, which, with Jastrow, equals *barû*. This equation further reflects corroboration upon the derivation suggested by Jensen for the connection of Hebrew *ברית* with Babylonian *barû*, used of auspices.⁸ Our biblical verse not only gives us a hitherto misunderstood word from the vocabulary of divination, but also unconsciously offers the etymology for the much discussed *ברית*.

There remains the discussion of the form of the word,

⁸ See Haupt in the *JOURNAL*, 1900, 59. It may be noted that this derivation for *ברית* is not to be found in Kraetzschmar's monograph, *Die Bundesvorstellung*, 1896, in the articles on "Covenant," in *HDB* and *EB*, nor in the *Oxford Dictionary*.

which is pointed as the *Kal* active ppl. ; cf. רָאָה, v. 7. The pointing is impossible; the word is to be equated with (the aramaizing?) חֲזוּת of v. 18, to which it bears the same relation as גִּלְתָּה to גִּלְתָּה. Accordingly point רָאָה, חֲזוּת (v. 7), and read probably חֲזוּתְכֶם, v. 18.

6. מְבַלֵּי, Am. 5 9.

The usual interpretation of this verb connects it with the three biblical instances of the root בָּלַן, "be cheerful, smile," with which are to be associated the names בַּלְנָה and בַּלְנִי, denoting the deity's complaisant demeanor (cf. יִצְחָק). The corresponding Arabic root *balaja*, *balija*, means "be bright, joyous," the original idea being possibly that of the breaking of the dawn, in which case בָּלַן is a variation of the more common theme פָּלַן. But the usual rendering, "he flashes destruction upon the strong," is too forced an interpretation to commend itself to the present writer. I propose therefore to connect the verb with Arabic *walaja*, "come in," so that our Hifil is exactly parallel with יָבִיא (so to be read for יָבוֹא) in the parallel limb of the verse. *Walaja* is itself also to be connected with the theme פָּלַן, proceeding from the meaning "divide, break open," to that of "entering." *PLG*, *BLG*, *WLG*, are thus variations of the same theme. A parallel is to be found in the Hebrew verbs בָּלַט, פָּלַט (occurring only in the derived stems), with which is to be connected Assyrian *balātu*, "live," for which, so far as I know, no connections have been established by the Assyriologists. The two Hebrew verbs, in the first stem, had the sense of "getting off with one's life."

7. הַכֵּל, Eccles. 11 8, etc.

Some instances outside of the Hebrew sphere may be adduced to Dr. Cobb's interesting paper on הַכֵּל as practically "the universe." in the JOURNAL, 1910, 24. In the Assyrian we have *Ea bān kala*, "Creator of the universe," Hilprecht, *Assyriaca*, 18; *Sala* as goddess *ša kullati*, Delitzsch, *Handwörterbuch*, 331; the proper name *Sin-li'i-kullati*, "Sin is powerful over all," Tallquist, *Neobabylon. Namenbuch*, 319; and the royal title *lugal kalammu*, "king of the whole

(world)," Thureau-Dangin, *Die sumer. u. akkad. Königsinschriften*, 152. In the Syriac the divine title כַּל מַרְא, "lord of all," is frequently found, e.g. in the Life of St. Ephrem, Brockelmann, *Syr. Gramm.*, Chrestomathy, p. 26, and Thomas of Marga, *Book of Governors*, ed. Budge, p. 28, l. 21, *et passim*, here always written as one word. I may compare a similar epithet in one of the emperor Julian's orations, ὁ βασιλεύς τῶν ἄλων Ἥλιος, cited by Cumont, *Oriental Religions*, 258, n. 80, from Hertlein's ed., *Or.* iv, p. 203, 5. Shamash, the Babylonian sun god, is also hailed as god of all, Jastrow, *Rel. Bab. u. Ass.*, i, 254.

8. The interrogative particle מִי or מַה.

In the JOURNAL for 1904, p. 95, the writer suggested that מִי in Am. 7 2, Ruth 3 16, is an interrogative particle, corresponding to Latin *num*, Greek *μή*. The same use is required for מַה in Jer. 2 5: מַה מָצְאוּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם בִּי עוֹל׃, generally translated: "What falseness have your fathers found?"; but this demands מַה עוֹל׃. Translate: "Did your fathers find falseness in me?" In the same way may be understood the unique expression in Dt. 5 23: מִי כָל בָּשָׂר וְגו׃, universally translated, "Who is there of all flesh who has heard," etc. But then we should have מִי מִן, as in Gen. 21 8. The difficulty is avoided by taking מִי as the interrogative: "Has any flesh heard?" It may be observed that the interrogative pronoun, used exclamatorily, has become a negative particle, as already in classical Hebrew, and then an interrogative particle.

9. The correlative use of כִּי and אֲכֵן.

The most natural translation of כִּי in Is. 62 5: כִּי יִבְעַל בְּנִיךָ, בחור בתולה יבעלך בניך, is "as,"—"as a young man marries a virgin," etc. The commentators who translate it "for" have to supply the necessary "as," while Lagarde, recognizing the difficulty, proposed כִּבְעַל (see Duhm, *ad loc.*). Further, כִּי is to be translated as "so," in Job 6 21, כִּי עָתָה לִי הִיָּתָם לִי (לִי for לִי); here כִּי is supposed by some translators to be an error for בִּן, but unnecessarily. These

cases prepare the way for observing the correlative use of כִּי and כֵּן in Is. 55 9: כִּי נִבְדוּן שָׁמַיִם מֵאָרֶץ כֵּן נִבְדוּ דַרְכֵי יְיָ; cf. the immediately following correlation in v. 10f., כֵּן . . . כִּי. Again, כִּי . . . כִּי may possibly be taken as correlatives in Job 31 11f., i.e. "as it is a felony, so it is a fire that burns even to hell." But the usage is more evident in Gen. 18 20, where Yahwe says, וַעֲקַת סָדֵם וְעֵמֶרָה כִּי רַבָּה הַמַּטָּאתָם כִּי כִּבְדָה מֵאֹד. The translation of RV, "because . . . and because," misses the terse rhetoric. Also the preferable rendering of כִּי as an asseverative particle (e.g. Dillmann, Gunkel) evades the logic of the passage, for the Deity is thereby represented as forestalling his inquisition (v. 21) with a verdict. Rather he is depicted as drawing a *prima facie* conclusion from the fame of Sodom and Gomorrah's iniquity: "as the bruit of them is great, so is (must be) their sin grievous." That is, there is enough evidence, as with a grand jury, to call for an indictment and lead to a judicial examination.

This correlative use of כִּי is etymologically the same as that of the preposition כֵּן, e.g. in כֵּעֵם כִּכְוֵן. The basis of both the conjunction and the preposition is a demonstrative element (see Duval, *Grammaire syriaque*, 164), which lends itself to correlation, as in the case of "here and there"; an exact equivalent to this correlative use of a demonstrative element is found in the English "the . . . the" in comparisons.

Correlation is also evidently expressed by אִכְּן . . . כֵּן in Jer. 3 20: "As a woman is false to her lover, so have you been false to me." Just below in v. 23 אִכְּן . . . אִכְּן may possibly be used in the same way: "Just as in vain are the hills, etc., so in Yahwe is Israel's help." אִכְּן in these cases is to be connected with the Syriac *aikan*, "as" (which actually occurs in an Aramaic magical inscription from Nippur as אִכְּן). For *ā-ken* from *ai-ken*, cf. *ān* from *ain*, "where." Etymologically the proper correlative particles would be כֵּן . . . אִכְּן, as in Jer. 3 20, but confusion has probably arisen in the literary tradition.⁴ Further, אִכְּן in 1 Ki. 11 2 may be

⁴ Cf. Haupt's notes on לִכְּן and כֵּן, *JBL*, 1910, 104.

the same word. Stade, *SBOT*, *ad loc.*, would change it to ׀ב on the strength of the Greek μή. But the Greek may be right without faulting the Hebrew. ׀ב, like the Syriac ׀ב and the Latin *ut*, may have come to denote purpose or end.