

from St John seems by no means unlikely. In l. 20 Blass's conjecture ἡ π{τ}όλις seems the best that can be made of the surviving letters; but, as Dr Swete remarks, 'the words are abrupt and strange, and the archaic spelling of πόλις increases our doubt'.

The thought of the second half of the Saying as restored in the text seems fairly coherent. It may be paraphrased as follows: 'the Kingdom is within you, therefore self-knowledge will lead you to find it. Finding is followed by consciousness of sonship and heirship and of communion with God.'

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ZECH. i 8, 10 s.; vi 1 ss. AND THE *DUL-AZAG* OF THE BABYLONIANS.

IN his vision of the couriers returning from their inspection of the earth, Zechariah i 8 describes the angel of Jahve, to whom report is made, as 'a man riding upon a red horse and standing *among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom*'; the 'myrtle trees' appear again in *vv.* 10-11. Thus, according to the Masoretic Text. The 'myrtle trees' and 'the bottom' have always given much trouble to commentators. In the *Hebrew and English Lexicon* of Brown-Driver-Briggs, מַצְלָה, which is translated as (*the*) *bottom* in the English version, is mentioned as a derivate of צוֹל, and explained as 'dub. word . . . , appar. some locality about Jerus., called *the basin, hollow* . . .'

In my commentary on the *Douze Petits Prophètes* I have stated at length (p. 591) why I cannot believe that the original text ever spoke of 'myrtle trees'. Instead of הַהַרְרִים the author most probably wrote הַהַרִים, as the Septuagint version suggests: . . . ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν ὄρεων τῶν κατασκίων. The analogy with the parallel vision of the chariots coming out from between *the two mountains*, which were *mountains of brass* (Zech. vi 1), supports the proposed correction. It may be that הַהַרִים was purposely changed into הַהַרְרִים, on account of the מַצְלָה, wrongly supposed to be connected with צוֹל or צֹלֶל, *be or grow dark*: 'mountains' standing in 'the hollow', or in 'the shadow' are indeed most subject to suspicion. In fact מַצְלָה belongs to צֹלֶל, Assy. *ṣalalu*, Syr. ܥܠܐ, *to decline*, especially as used of the day; so that מַצְלָה = *the region of sunset, the West*. That the two mountains of brass, Zech. vi 1, are the mountains

of the West, between which the sun goes down, may be inferred from the circumstance that the chariot with the *red* horses, relating to the West, is not described as going out as the three others do; and this because it was already in its proper place or region at the meeting-place of the chariots, between the two mountains. The man to whom the couriers bring report (i 8) is also riding upon a *red* horse, as becomes the angel of Jahve standing 'between the mountains of the sunset'; the 'red' horses which come in the first place in the subsequent enumeration, l. c., probably were *black* horses in the original text (read חֲמִיִּים instead of סְדֵמִיִּים ?). For further considerations on that matter I beg to refer to my commentary.

A circumstance of real interest which I wish to point out here is the very fact that Jahve's messengers come back to the place 'between the mountains of sunset' to give an account of their errand (i 8 ff); and that the chariots also, which come out from between the two mountains of brass, in chapter vi, are represented as being 'the four spirits of heaven, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth' (v. 5). The place about the two mountains manifestly is conceived of as the one where Jahve holds His court of deliberation and judgement.

Now this reminds one forcibly of the old Babylonian notion of the great, double-topped mountain, at the meeting-point of heaven and earth, where the gods appear before Šamaš to keep council and render justice. Thus, at the beginning of the hymn to Šamaš, VR. 50 + 51¹:—

'Šamaš, out of the great mountain when thou comest,

Out of the great mountain, the mountain of the hollow² when thou comest,

Out of the mountain, the place of the decision of fate, thou comest,

There where heaven and earth meet, out of the foundation of heaven thou comest,—

The great gods for judgement come forth to thee,

The Anunnaki to decide decisions, come forth to thee . . .'

'The place of the decision', or the '*Dul-azag*' of the Sumerian text, offers a striking parallel to the assembling or meeting-place of Jahve's celestial messengers in Zech. i 8 ff, vi 1 ff.

The only difference, besides the elimination of the polytheistic notion concerning the great gods, is that the Hebrew prophet transfers the scene from sunrise to sunset. One might suspect that he did so to

¹ Cf. Schollmeyer *Sumerisch-babylonische Hymnen und Gebete an Šamaš*, 1912, p. 29.

² (*ištu*) . . . *sa-ad naq-bi* . . . I translate 'the mountain of the hollow', that is: the mountain whose summit is hollowed out, so that it appears double-topped, the sun rising through the hollow between the two tops, just as in the West it goes down between 'the two mountains', which 'were mountains of brass'.

keep Jahve apart from Šamaš; the more so as the seat of Jahve on earth, at Jerusalem, was indeed situated in the West, in relation to that of the Babylonian Šamaš. But more probably the shifting was one of mere accommodation. The political interest of the Jews, at the time of Zechariah, looking from the geographical position of Judaea, had not great concern with the West, but mainly with the other regions: North, East, and South. Therefore Jahve's messengers had to go out, for inspection or eventually to exercise justice, north-, east-, and southward. The region of sunset, remaining as the starting-point, thus replaced the region of sunrise as a meeting-place of the celestial messengers before Jahve, where they assembled coming back from, or whence they started on their departure to, their mission.

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PSALM lviii 10 (9).

בטרם יבינו סִירְתִּיכֶם אִמֵר
כִּמוּ חִי כִּמוּ חֶרֶן יִשְׁעֶרְנִי

πρὸ τοῦ συνεῖναι τὰς ἀκάνθας ὑμῶν

τῆν ῥάμνον ὡσεὶ ζῶντας ὡσεὶ ἐν ὄργῃ καταπίεται ὑμᾶς

LXX

Before your pots can feel the thorns,

He shall take them away with a whirlwind, the green and the burning alike.

R. V.

Even as raw flesh, even so, shall fury sweep them away. R. V. mg.

THIS verse is notorious in the obscure rendering of Coverdale. R. V. gives a tolerable sense, but 'the green and the burning alike' is doubtful as a translation and weak as imagery: חרון which means 'burning wrath', especially the burning wrath of God, could hardly be used for burning sticks.

Emendations are proposed, but (except for the adjustment of the personal suffixes) LXX gives no support to them. It is better to see whether the only attested text will not yield good sense as it stands.

סִירְתִּיכֶם introduces the picture, a gipsy's fire by the wayside. The word may mean thorns, as LXX. But the second 'thorn' is then awkward, and the feminine form of the plural suits the other סִיר, 'pot'.

חִי is the chief difficulty. R. V. mg. takes it of the raw flesh in the