

ORIGIN OF THE HEBREW *PĀRĀSH*.

THE origin of the Hebrew *pārāsh* 'horseman' or 'riding horse' has been hitherto obscure. The corresponding Syriac word has been probably borrowed from Hebrew as the Ethiopic has been from the Arabic *faras*, and etymologists have been divided between deriving the word from the name of Persia and assigning it to an Arabic root. It is not found in Assyrian, which has only *sūsu*; this, we may infer from the borrowed Egyptian *sems* and *semsem* (with the Babylonian *mimmation*?), comes from an earlier *samsu*.

A new light has been thrown upon the question by a cuneiform text from Boghaz Keui which has just been published by the Museum of Berlin (*Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi* ii p. 3, ll. 16-18). Here the ideographic KUR-RA-as-tar 'plenty of horses' is glossed *pa-ra-as-tar*, -tar being a suffix which denotes 'abundance'. Consequently *paras* must have been the word for 'horse' in Hittite. Seeing that horses were imported into Syria from Asia Minor, where Aryan nomads were employed in breeding and training them, it is more probable that the word passed from the Hittites to the Semites than from the Semites to the Hittites. It is possible that the primary source of the word may have been Indo-European, and I am inclined to connect it with the Latin *curro* (*curso*), though it is true that no satisfactory Indo-European etymology has as yet been proposed for the latter word. Moreover, Hrozný quotes a passage from an unpublished Hittite text which reads: GIS *khulugannis parnass-a paizzi* 'the wagon and the *parnas* move', where it is difficult not to see in *parnas* a derivative in -na from *par* 'horse'. In this case the final -as will be the nominative termination and have nothing to do with the root.¹

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THE HEBREW שֶׁבֶט.

THE Hebrew שֶׁבֶט clearly means 'belly' in several passages in the O. T. (2 Sam. ii 23, iii 27, xx 10). But in one passage the meaning 'belly' is not suitable (2 Sam. iv 6). I propose to suggest therefore that in 2 Sam. iv 6 the word has a different meaning, and that it occurs again with the same meaning in another passage which has been misunderstood (Hos. iii 2).

In 2 Sam. iv 6 we read, according to R. V., 'and they came thither

¹ On the other hand there is a word *paras-nūwas*, also written *parsi-nūwas*, which seems to signify 'riding on horseback'; e. g. *paras-nūwas AMEL QA-SU-GAB-A-as uizzi*, 'the wine-bearer comes on horseback'.