

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES ON JEWISH ANTIQUITIES.

By JOSEPH OFFORD.

*(Continued from Q.S., 1916, p. 97.)*XII. *Abel and Cuneiform Ibila.*

MANY years ago Prof. Julius Oppert suggested that Abel (Heb. *Hebel*) was a word closely connected with the Babylonian *Ablu* (or *Ablum*), "son." So many cuneiform legal documents concerning family affairs, dating from the earlier Babylonian dynasties, have recently been edited, that we know considerably more about the uses and meaning of the word *Ablu*; and the new information may perhaps throw an indirect light upon the story of Cain and Abel. The Sumerian equivalent of *Ablu* has been identified as *ibila*, thus carrying back its origin into that language. Two fresh etymologies also have been offered for the ideograms of this word. One by M. Pognon, that it comes from *A-Bal*, "an offerer of libations," literally "water pourer," from *A* "water" and *Bal* "to pour out" (*A-Bal* = *nâq mē*). Another suggestion, by M. Thureau-Dangin, is that its sense is "to burn oil." Both these conceptions would be connected with the filial function of the son as making offerings to his father's spirit, or to the deity upon the parent's behalf. Consequently, the terms for libation, or the lighting of a lamp for family or ancestral worship, may be descendants from the word for son, or *vice versâ*.

Ungnad and Pognon have also shown that the ideograms for *Ibila* = *Ablu* could be separated into two words, "child," and "to follow" (*ridû*)¹ Also into "child," and *nita* "male" (*zikaru*), that is to say, successor, heir, and this is almost certainly the meaning of the compound ideogram. *Ablu* or *Aplu* = *Ibila*, therefore, was principally employed as a term for the offspring who became heir; though at times it was the expression for an inheritor, whether that person was a child or a more distant relative.²

¹ As illustrating the true meaning of *ridû*, P. Koschaker quotes a phrase *ridit warkati*, "he who succeeds" to the heritage. See *Revue d'Assyriologie*, XI, p. 29.

² Thus from *Aplu* comes *aplûtu*, a legal term for sonship and for adoption. See *Cuneiform Texts*, II, 40. where A is said to be Abil, that is, heir of B.

Koschaker adduces numerous instances in contracts for sale wherein a formula is used undertaking not to attempt to rescind the bargain, saying, that for the future neither the vendor nor his *ibila*, whoever he may be, will make any reclamation (*uku-sā V. u, ibila-ni a-na-me-a-bi inini-nu-um mal-mal-a*). He also shows¹ that a female is never definitely stated to be an *ibila*; but only in cases where, apparently, male heirs were wanting, one is said to have taken the position of *ibila* when succeeding to the parent. He cites one instance wherein a man makes his sister his *a-bil-ta*, or heiress (from *abillu* the feminine of *Ablu*).

The suggestive reason for these remarks is that by the name which Eve gave to Abel there may have been some indication that it was hoped he would become the heir. Therefore when his sacrifice was accepted and Cain's rejected, the latter seeing possibly some divine intimation that such was ordained to be the case, maddened with evil jealousy, slew his brother. There certainly are Babylonian concepts contained in the story. For instance, Cain was *Akh*, i.e., brother of Abel; compare the cuneiform *Akhu*, which signified "protector," "sidesman"; a significant title for a brother in primitive times. Yet Cain scornfully answered: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

The "Lier in Wait"—Sin—was connected with such Mesopotamian demons as *Rābizu* and *Gurra*, who in protective magic texts were termed *Rābizu abullisu*, "Liers in wait at the door" of (a man's residence).

So also in Egypt in the tableaux of the "Judgment of Osiris," the "Lier in Wait" is depicted as a fearsome composite animal waiting to attack the unfortunate deceased who failed to pass muster.

XIII. *The Bird Gozāl and Babylonian Guzālū.*

The word *gōzāl* (גוזל) in Gen. xv, 9, and Deut. xxxii, 11, for a bird, is not quite clear to scholars as to its meaning, because it is variously rendered as "young pigeon" and as "eaglet."² A significant, if not complete explanation of the term is derivable by way of the cuneiform writings, but by a rather circuitous course. The solution has been suggested by M. Alfred Boissier, who proceeds by reference to the not very theological author Rabelais.

¹ *Revue d'Assyriologie*, XI, 94.

² Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, renders *pullas aerium*.

He speaks in *Pantagruel* of a messenger-bird, or carrier pigeon, which he specially designates as the *Gozal*, or "celestial messenger," and explains how this bird was utilized to carry dispatches. This is probably a derivative of the old Babylonian word *Guzalû*, but how, or whence, Rabelais obtained knowledge of it we cannot say, unless from some old manuscript of magical or astrological character, now lost; for many mediaeval astrological and mystical treatises, like the *Oneirocritica* of Artemidorus, which is the foundation for the later "Dream Books," contain Babylonian concepts and names. Of course, again, Rabelais may have gained his information from Syrian colonists in the south of France, such as those of which Gregory of Tours writes.

The *Guzalû* of old Mesopotamia was the divine messenger, the dispatch bearer of the gods. Thus Ninip in the "Gilgames Epic" was the herald deity. The Malachbel of Syria and Palmyra is "Bel's Messenger," מַלְאֲכָל: as the Hadad of Baalbek, or Jupiter of Heliopolis, in an inscription is called "I(ovi) o(ptimo) maximo angelo Heliopolitano," see Malachi iii, 1. The eagle of Zeus and the wings of Hermes suggest their rôle as messengers. As such, in representations of him upon the monuments or seals, he has a bird companion, an eaglet or a vulture. By whom, or when, this theophoric title for the Babylonian Hermes¹ was adopted for the carrier pigeon who carries his message across the sky, we do not know, but the idea of connecting *Gozal* = *guzalû* with a young pigeon occurs as noted in the A.V. of Genesis.

XIV. *The Habiri of the Tell el-Amarna Tablets and the Hebrews.*

All interested in the ancient history of Palestine are acquainted with the frequent mention of a people, or of troops, entitled Habiri (or Khabiri) in the Tell el-Amarna tablet dispatches from the Syrian governors and petty princes in Palestine to their Egyptian Pharaoh overlords.

Several writers have argued that these Habiri were identical with the Hebrews, or Israelites, and some, although chronological difficulties render the theory impossible, have thought that the Habiri of the Tell el-Amarna texts were really the tribes under Joshua. Prof. L. B. Paton, in his *Early History of Syria and Palestine*, considers the Khabiri to have been close Aramean relatives of the patriarchs.

¹ See Homer's θεῶν ἄγγελος, κήρυξ.

New evidence clearing up the matter has just been produced by Père Scheil in the *Revue d'Assyriologie*. He proves from a cuneiform tablet which records the providing of uniforms for officers of the Habiri at Larsa, that they were a military force, or militia, employed by the Babylonian king Rim-Sin some six centuries before the era of the Tell el-Amarna tablets.

Père Scheil shows that the Habiri served the Elamite dynasty of Larsa, and later, other Babylonian kings, as a sort of gendarmerie, and that they were probably chiefly of Elamite, or Kassite, extraction. They seem to have been mostly employed in maintaining Mesopotamian influence among the nomad tribes west of the Euphrates and in Syria. In later times they were utilized to support all anti-Egyptian sentiments and forces, and hence they continually appear in the Tell el-Amarna dispatches as assisting chiefs and cities who were endeavouring to separate themselves from every semblance of Egyptian suzerainty. Dr. Winckler and Père Scheil show that a cuneiform title for the Habiri was an ideogram *Sa-Gas*, "The killers or fighters." They were, for Babylonian monarchs, like the auxiliaries of foreign origin so freely enlisted and employed by the Roman emperors to assist their legions. The Babylonians also had men of Gutti and Assyrians whom they utilized in a similar manner.

XV. *Propagation of Plague by Insects and Rodents in the Old Testament and Monumental Records.*

In the *Quarterly Statement* for 1914, pp. 140-146, I published a summary of some "Coincidences between Hebrew and Cuneiform Literature." Several of the instances therein adduced concerned matters connected with the distribution of disease by insects and rodents. Recently, various confirmations of the coincidences there pointed out have come to my knowledge, some of which are worthy of record.

With regard to the fact of contagion being caused by flies having been recognized in antiquity, as evidenced by the deity Baal Zebub and others, the following fact is of much interest. In the *Mémoires de la Delegation en Perse*, Vol. VI, p. 50, Père Scheil gives a translation from a cuneiform text upon an amulet, presumably discovered at Susa, which gives an incantation against mosquitoes. He renders the words thus—"Mosquito, mosquito, fly thou away." Then follow some words, at present difficult to understand clearly, apparently connecting the insect, apostrophized as "little one," with refuse or filth.

The important word of this meaning is *pigali* = Hebrew פִּגְלָה. The Babylonian term which Père Scheil gives as signifying mosquito is *zuzzili*; evidently a "sound"—or "onomatopoeic"—word imitating the noise made by the insect when in flight.¹ Other interesting instances in this matter are provided by the engravings of flies upon two Babylonian cylinder-seals. A photograph of the tableau upon the first of these is to be found numbered 121 in the collection of cylinders and other Oriental seals in the library of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan. Upon it is depicted a fly, which is engraved beside a figure of the god Nergal, who was a well-known Mesopotamian disease deity.

The second specimen of the kind is to be found upon a similar cylinder, which is assigned by Dr. Stephen Langdon to the Hammurabi era. In this instance, a two-winged fly is placed in the field of the scene, in front of a goddess. The fly symbol is to be found upon other cylinder seals as shown by Dr. Theophilus G. Pinches, as well as by Dr. Langdon.²

The foregoing instances prove that the Palestine Baal-Zebub and the insect deity of Ekron were not merely Amorite or Canaanite gods, but had their counterparts in the Babylonian or Elamite pantheons. It was mentioned when speaking of the Ekron Insect-god that Josephus gives for his title *Mvîa*, and it should be pointed out that this reminds us of the Zeus Apomios of Olympia, and of the Hero of Askalon, Muiagros.³

Some time ago Prof. Sayce published an ex-voto found in Egypt, consisting of a bronze rat. It bore a dedication in the Carian script "To the Rat Destroyer: this rat has (been) consecrated."⁴

This Destroyer is clearly Apollo Smytheus, and this renders it doubly interesting that the metal rat bears a duplicate inscription in Egyptian hieroglyphs reading, "To Atum, the great god, giver of life and health." Therefore the writer considered the Egyptian

¹ [Compare *silṣal* in Hebrew, used of the whizzing spear in Job xli, 7, and of the buzzing or whirring of insects' wings in Isaiah xviii, 1. The form *zuzzili* (above) could easily stand for *zulzili*.—Ed.]

² Dr. S. Langdon, "A Cylinder-Seal of the Hammurabi Period," in *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, XXXIV, 1912, p. 152; Dr. T. G. Pinches, *ibid.*, XXXIII, p. 132.

³ Some translators, such as M. Heuzey, read Zebub as the name of a town in the Tell el-Amarna tablets, and associate with this the Old Testament Baal Zebub.

⁴ *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, 1896, p. 176.

health deity, Atum, as the equivalent of the Asiatic-Hellenic Apollo, to whom rats and mice were offered.

XVI. *Sheol and the Babylonian Land of Shades.*

The cruel battle-net of Babylonian conquerors which was mentioned as being depicted upon the ancient monument from Telloh, known as the Vulture Stele,¹ is closely allied to a net in a similar scene upon another stele. This is a relief of the time of a king of Semitic race, named Sharrugi. He was lord of Kish, and his memorial is published by M. Gautier in the *Recueil de Travaux*, XXVII, p. 170. The close connexion of this net of death with an evil fate is interestingly illustrated by a statement by Prof. Barton, who in translating an archaic cuneiform tablet, now at Philadelphia, explains that the seventeenth sign, which is in the form of a net, he renders as meaning "curse," because of the common Babylonian phrase "curse is a net," and this translation of the sign suits the meaning of the sentence very well.

With reference to further found coincidences between cuneiform literature and the old Hebrew conceptions of Sheol and the dreaded Net of Destiny, which gathered in its folds Sheol's coming denizens, and which Net was worshipped at Babylon and elsewhere (see Habakkuk i, 15, 16), the following corroborative evidence is valuable. The famous inscription descriptive of Babylonian edifices, examined and hastily published by George Smith and subsequently lost but recently refound, informs us that at the base of the Ê-temen-an-ki, or Tower of Babel, were situated four smaller temples, and that one of these was the special shrine of the Net, *nani' istu*.²

With regard to the abode of death and its darkness, there are two passages in the "Gilgames Epic" strangely similar to others in the Old Testament; one is that wherein the hero, dreading death, enquires: "What kind of place is the grave?" and receives for answer: "It is the place thou comest to when thou growest old, and the worm enters and thou hast put on corruption." Similarly see Job xvii, 16, and xxi, 26: "If I have said to corruption, thou

¹ An excellent engraving of which may be found in the *History of Sumer and Akkad*, by Dr. Leonard W. King.

² See Dr. T. G. Pinches, *Transactions Victoria Institute*, 1914, p. 182, and Père Scheil's edition of the inscription. Cf. Sophocles, *Electra*, lines 1485 f., "When mortals are in the meshes of fate, how can such respite avail one who is to die?"

art my father, and to the worm, thou art my mother and sister." This parallelism was first noticed by Mr. Boscawen.

The second passage is a part of Gilgames' episode, which has been termed the "Book of Darkness," and is interesting because of a verbal identity. The cuneiform sentence says: "O darkness (*zalmat*), mother of many waters: O darkness, her mighty power as a garment covers thee." This is the Hebraic "death's shadow" (*Zal-maweth*).

The difficulty of ever being delivered again from Sheol, the Underworld, the possible coming forth of the prisoners sitting therein in darkness is, from the Babylonian point of view, aptly illustrated by some remarks of Dr. Hugo Radau, in his work entitled *Letters to Cassite Kings*. He is writing respecting what he terms the Babylonian divine Trinity: the third person in which, he tells us, was the Son, the Saviour God, the deity of mercy (*ilu remenu*), the quickener of the dead (*muballit metuti*). More especially was He the deliverer of the dead from the Netherworld. A sentence concerning this aspect of the matter reads as follows: "Who has been brought down into the Netherworld, his body thou bringest back again" (*sha ana arallé shurudu pagارشu tuterra*).

Finally, the idea of noxious life-destroying vapours ascending out of the ground may have arisen, partly, from some natural phenomenon. Thus, Ammianus Marcellinus tells us of an earth-chasm in Assyria, near to Lake Sosington, from whence a *lalitus letatis* escaped, destroying any animal which came near. He also speaks of a cavern, or pit, giving forth fatal emanations, near to Hierapolis in Syria.

XVII. Jewish Inscriptions from Rome.

In Nos. I and II of the *Nuovo Bulletino di Archeologie Cristiane* for 1915, Signor Georgio Schneider Graziosi gives a catalogue of all the Jewish inscriptions now placed in the new hall at the Christian Museum of the Lateran, devoted solely to Hebrew records. The majority of the texts have come from the recently discovered Jewish Catacombs upon the Via Portuensis and on Monteverde. A large number have engraved beside them certain symbols, such as the seven-branched candlestick from the Temple—connected with the Jewish cult, and the inscriptions themselves are of much interest.

A few of these are given here, copied from the rendering of Signor Graziosi. The first is an epitaph of an Eutropius and a Fortunatus, and has as symbols, among others, the Candelabra as inserted in the text.

ΕΝΘΑ·ΔΕ ΚΕΙΝ·ΤΕ ΦΟΡΤΟΥ		
ΝΑ·ΤΟΣ·ΚΛΙΕΥ·ΤΡΟ·ΠΙΣ·ΝΗΠΙΟ·Ι ΦΙ·		
ΛΟΥΝ·ΤΕΣ·ΑΛ·ΛΗ·ΛΟΥΣ·ΟΣ·Ε·ΖΗ·ΣΕΝ		
ΦΟΡ·ΤΟΥ·ΝΑ·ΤΟΣ·Ε·ΤΗ·ΤΡΕΙΣ·ΚΑΙ·ΜΗ·Ν		
ΑΣ·ΤΕΣ·ΣΑ·ΡΕΣ·ΚΑΙ·ΕΥΤΡΟ·ΠΙΣ·ΟΣ·Ε		
ΖΗ·ΣΕΝ·ΕΤΗ·ΤΡΙ·Α ΚΑΙΜΗΝΑΣ ΕΠ		
ΤΑ·ΕΝ·ΕΙ ΡΗ·ΝΗ·Η·ΚΟΙ·ΜΗ·ΣΙΣ		
ΑΥ·ΤΩΝ	Fig. of	Cerno
ΕΙΣ ΜΙΑΝ	Candelabro	della
	eptalico	unguone
Vase	de forme rettangolare.	Spatulae palmarum.
ΑΠΕΘΑΝ	A. N.	HMC PAN

Inscription No. 15 is of a Julianus who was Gerusiarch, or Chief, of the Sanhedrin :

Ι·ΟΥΑΙΑΝΟΣ (*sic*)
 ΓΕΡΟΥΣΙΑΡΧΗΣ
 ΕΝΘΑΔΕ ΚΕΙΤΑΙ
 ΚΑΛΩΣ ΒΙΩΣΑΣ
 ΜΕΤΑ ΠΑΝΤΩΝ

Inscription No. 18 is of Symmacos, who was Gerusiarch of some Hebrew community in Tripoli. Probably he came from Syme, at the foot of one of the spurs of Lebanon :

ΕΝΘΑΔΕ ΚΕΙΤΑΙ
 ΣΥΜΜΑΧΟΣ
 ΕΙΕΡΟΣ ΑΡΧΗΣ
 ΤΡΙΠΟΛΙΤΗΣ·
 ΕΤΩΝ·Π·ΕΝ·Ε (*sic*)
 ΡΗΝΗ·Η·ΚΟΙΜΗ
 (*sic*) ΣΙ·ΑΥΤΟΥ.

One of the Latin inscriptions may also be selected for publication. It concerns a lady whose husband eulogises her wifely qualities during a long wedded life.

The mention of the resurrection and the beatified life is novel as a Jewish inscription, but its Hebrew character is proved by the phrase *observantia legio*. Perhaps the lady's name had been Milcah :

HIC · REGINA · SITA · EST · TALI · CONTECTA · SEPVLCRO
 QVOD CONIVNX · STATVIT · RESPONDENS · EIVS · AMORI
 HAEC · POST · BIS · DENOS · SECVM · TRANS · SEGERAT · ANNVM. (sic)
 ET · QVARTVM · MENSEM · RESTANTIBVS · OCTO · DIEBV S ·
 RVRSVM · VICTVRA · REDITVRA · AD · LVMINA · RVRSVM
 NAM · SPERARE · POTEST · IDEO · QVOD · SVRGAT · IN AEO M
 PROMISSVM QVAE · VERA · FIDES · DIGNISQVE PIISQ E ·
 QVAE · MERVIT · SEDEM · VENERANDI · RVRSI · HABER E ·
 HOC · TIBI · PRAESTITERIT · PIETAS · HOC · VITA · PVDIC A ·
 HOC · ET · AMOR · GENERIS · HOC · OBSERVANTIA · LEGI S ·
 CONIVGII · MERITVM · CVIS · TIBI · GLORIA · CVRA E
 HORVM · FACTORVM · TIBI · SVNT · SPERANDA · FVTVR A
 DE QVIBVS · ET · CONIVNX · MAESTVS · SOLACIA QVAERIT.

In a later number of the *Bulletino*, a funerary text of a Jew named Delphinus is given. It has the Seven-branched Candlestick, and calls him Archon (? Rabbi) of the Synagogue.

XVIII. *A New Manuscript in Paris concerning Hebrew Astronomy.*

In an article entitled "Astrologica," published in the *Revue Archéologique*, 1916, pp. 1-22, M. Franz Cumont describes a Latin astrological manuscript, Parisinus 17368, which is a copy of a work by some author of the eighth or ninth century. M. Cumont shows from its contents that the writer was undoubtedly a Jew. The treatise is alleged to be by Alexander, who is called Alexandreus. It has been known and translated from later versions into French and English. The author quotes several times from the *Hebraei* or "Hebraeorum Mathematici," but his Latin version evidently depends upon a Syriac recension of the work, and this again seems to have been translated from the Arabic. In this manuscript we have the Hebrew names of the Zodiacal signs, and also those for the planets in Hebrew letters. Venus, the writer styles "Stella Solis Koka Shama" (*i.e.*, Kokab Shamash) in a later part of the work when dealing with pretended planetary influences. In the page devoted to horoscope calculations the text claims that the processes are "justa

Hebraicam supputationem," or says: "Hebraeorum mathematici unum asserunt esse caelestem Draconem."

Mrs. Walter Maunder has proved that both the Slavonic and Ethiopic apocalyptic "Books of Enoch" are astrological treatises¹ for horoscope purposes, and that these and another originally pseudo-Hebrew book, the "Book of Jubilees," were probably produced as late as the eighth century.² The Paris manuscript, when completely edited, may throw much light upon the astronomical knowledge of the authors of Slavonic Enoch and the "Book of Jubilees."

XIX. *Belshazzar and Gobryas the Median.*

Since the publication of the notes upon Belshazzar and Gobryas in the April *Quarterly Statement*, p. 96, two important tablets concerning these personages have been deciphered. One of these formed part of the temple archives at Erech, or Warka, and is now in the collection of Yale University.³ Strange to say, as on the occasion of the mysterious writing at the feast at Babylon, this text contains the interpretation of an inscription, but in this case of dreams, and the augur renders the meaning as favourable, both to Belshazzar and to his father Nabonidus. The tablet reads as follows:—

"In the month Tebet, day 15th, year 7th of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, Shum-ukin says as follows: The great star Dilbat (Venus) Kaksidi, the moon, and the sun, I saw in my dream. It means favour for Nabonidus, king of Babylon, my lord, and favour for Belshazzar, the son of the king, my lord. May my ear attend to them. On the 17th of Tebet, year 7th of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, Shum-ukin says as follows: The great star I saw. It means favour for Nabonidus, king, my lord, and for Belshazzar the son of the king, my lord. May my ear attend."

¹ *Transactions of the Victoria Institute*, 1915, pp. 189, 232, "Astronomical Allusions in Sacred Books of the East."

² The name of a fallen angel, Semyaza, mentioned in Enoch VI, has been found upon one of the many bowls with Hebræo-Aramaic incantation texts discovered at Nippur. These date probably from Sassanian, or later times. The script is said to be identical with that of some of the manuscripts from Khotan in Thibet. Semyaza appears to mean "he sees" (or knows) "the name of God."

³ Prof. A. T. Clay, in *Art and Archaeology*, 1916, p. 180.

It will be noted that the date of this tablet is five years earlier than the contract-tablet of Nabonidus' 12th year, which indicated Belshazzar having a semi-royal position at the latter date. Venus as Dilbat "the Announcer," was the morning star, and the text conveys that the setting moon, Venus and the sun were, in a vision, all visible together.

Mention was also made on p. 96 of a tablet describing Gobryas, who, it is almost certain, was the "Darius the Mede" of Daniel, and who had been governor of Gutium in Media. New information concerning his official career has now been furnished by Père Scheil, which indicates Gobryas as holding high military command as early as the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. The whole of the contents of the officer's dispatch, which incidentally mentions Gobryas, is not here repeated, but only the important sentences referring to him. The document may have been indited during the short nine months' reign of the youth Laborossarchod (Labasi-Merodach), for the writer speaks of having been given his present post, under Nebuchadnezzar, and retaining it under Neriglissar, as if the latter had ceased to be king. The Neriglissar of this text (Nergal-sarra-usur) is probably the Nergal-sharezer of Jeremiah xxxix, 3 and 13.

"Tablet letter of Anu-sar-usur to his brother's Daily Kalbu-Merodach, chief officer for rations, sends my soldiers here, because at this site I have shown him a spring of water. Of the troops that were here, how do they? Of their number you cannot (now) find more than twenty-five. The rest have perished or deserted, or turned back, along the road of Kalbi Merodach. Say thou upon this matter to Gubarru, I wish to send him a message: I tell him that as far as the reports of the civil governors (are concerned) I know nothing upon the matter. Know this that any individual among the soldiers who under the rule of Nebuchadnezzar and of Neriglissar has been assigned to my command As to the fifties who were under your orders, those gone to the rear, or fugitives return them to the ranks. There is no reason why I should inform Gubarru."

In these days it is interesting to note the indication here, that in the Babylonian army a platoon contained fifty men.

(To be continued.)