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GENESIS \*

Our study of Genesis is purely homiletic. Questions of higher and lower criticism, of text and unity and authorship, do not concern us here. It is our purpose simply to inquire how the book as it lies before us may be studied in the closet and treated in the pulpit, and how the truth which it is designed to teach may be most clearly and effectively presented.

Genesis means beginning. The origin of all things is here disclosed—the heavens and the earth, man, sin, salvation, arts, industries, society, government, civilization, the church.

Genesis portrays the beginning as the Revelation portrays the end of all things. One unveils the eternal past, the other the eternal future. Scripture opens and closes with the vision of paradise. Here is the earthly paradise, soon forfeited by sin; here is the heavenly paradise, the home of the children of God, from which they shall go out no more forever. Here is man created, fallen; here is man redeemed, restored. Here is God the Creator, with the world in rebellion against Him; here is God the Redeemer, with the universe prostrate at His feet. Here the divine purpose is declared, the divine promises are given; here purpose and promises are fulfilled.

The account of the creation is not scientific but pictorial. So far as we can see, this is the only way in which the story could be told so as to convey essential truth, and at the same time be understood by men of every age. If it had been written in terms of modern science, it would have

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## THE PAPYRUS OF ELEPHANTINE

Ever since the French savants went to Egypt with Napoleon in the latter part of the eighteenth century, the public has been startled from time to time by the announcement of one important discovery in the field of archaeology after another. The Rosetta stone, discovered in 1799 by a French officer named Boussard, was transferred to the British Museum in 1801. It contains an inscription by Ptolemy V, Epiphanes, and his wife Cleopatra, in hieroglyphic, demotic, and Greek,—the last two being versions of the first. By comparing the manner of writing the proper names in this trilingual inscription, a portion of the unknown Egyptian alphabet was made known by means of the Greek; and so little by little the literature of the ancient Egyptians was revealed, until at present a large part of their documents has been interpreted. In like manner, the vast literature of the Assyrians and Babylonians has been deciphered by means of the trilingual inscription of Behistun,—an account of the founding of the Persian Empire by Darius Hystaspis, made doubtless at his command on the rocks near Hamadan, the ancient Ecbatana, on the highway between Nineveh and the highlands of Iran. The monuments of these great nations, both because of their intrinsic value and because of their bearing upon so many important questions of archaeology, anthropology, philology, history, and religion, have so engrossed the attention of the reading public, that the less numerous and in some respects the less important discoveries among the Phoenicians, Arameans, and others, have been perhaps too much neglected. And yet, it may be said with truth, that probably few if any discoveries either in Egyptian or Assyrio-Babylonian have a greater value in their bearing upon philology and religion at least than the comparatively meagre number of inscriptions that have been found written in the languages of these politically less imposing peoples. The Aramean documents especially are of great value because of the light that they throw upon

the script, grammar, lexicography, literature, history, and religion of the ancient Hebrews. To all students of the Hebrew Scriptures, they take a rank inferior in results at most to that of the Babylonian and Greek.

Now, the greatest discovery ever made in Aramaic has recently been published under the editorship of Professor Eduard Sachau, Professor of Arabic and Aramaic in the University of Berlin, and Principal of the Imperial Institute of Diplomacy and Languages in the same city. It is the purpose of the writer to give in this article a short and popular account of the contents of this publication.<sup>1</sup>

From time to time since 1901 Aramaic papyri and ostraca (an ostrakon is an inscription upon a fragment of pottery) have been found at Assuan, a city on the east bank of the Nile about 550 miles south of Cairo, and on the island opposite this city called by the Egyptian and Aramean, Yeb, and by the Greeks, Elephantine. A number of these papyri were published by Professors Sayce and Cowley of Oxford in 1906, with a bibliography by Ricci of the papyri and ostraca published up to that time. The sensation caused by this publication was followed by the announcement in 1907 to the Berlin Academy that the Germans at Berlin had come into possession of a large number of newly found documents from the same place and time. In 1908 Professor Sachau published three of these papyri and it was announced that the others would shortly appear. Owing to the difficulty of piecing the fragments of some of them together on account of their having been broken into small and partly illegible portions, the publication of the volumes containing all the documents in the possession of the German government was delayed until about October 1 of 1912. The writer of this article was given a presentation copy with the request that he present to the American public the materials contained therein, and with the right

<sup>1</sup>*Aramäische Papyrus und Ostraka aus einer jüdischen militär-Kolonie zu Elephantine des 5. Jahrhunderts vor Chr.* Bearbeitet von EDUARD SACHAU mit Lichtdrucktafeln. Leipzig, J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1911.

to use the plates and translation as he thought best. With this end in view, we shall proceed to show some of the most important revelations of these documents as to the civil and military administration and history of the Persian Empire, and as to the religion, names, literature, and customs of the Jewish colony of Elephantine, closing with a translation of a few of the more important papyri.

#### THE CIVIL ADMINISTRATION

Much light is thrown by the papyri upon the civil administration of the Persians. The chief governors, next to the king, are called *pihats*; and, just as we would have expected from what we know of the Greek, Babylonian, and Hebrew sources, these *pihats* could be rulers of very large provinces, or countries, such as Egypt or Bactria, or of small provinces or even cities, such as Samaria and Jerusalem. That the Babylonian word *Pihat*, which was adopted by the Hebrew and Assyrian writers of the Old Testament, was the official equivalent of the Persian satrap is determined by the fragment of the Aramaic version of the Behistun Inscription of Darius Hystaspis, found among the papyri, where it occurs as the translation of the old Persian word for satrap. Some at least of these governors are designated also by the title *mar*, or lord; though Professor Sachau thinks that this latter title was reserved for governors who were of blood royal, such as Arsames, governor of Egypt. We know from the Behistun Inscription as well as from Herodotus, Xenophon, and others, that the Persian kings were in the habit of appointing members of their families to be rulers of the most important of the satrapies.

The citizens of Yeb were called lords of the city or lords of the regiment, both of whom together probably formed the class which are elsewhere called freemen, sons of freemen, or lords of Yeb. Beneath these in station come the slaves.

Between the dominus, or lord, and the people and acting as intermediaries between them were officers of different nationalities, such as Hananiah a Jew, and Wachpar'amchi

an Egyptian, to whom Arsames sent his edicts or decrees for transmission to the free citizens and soldiers. Occupying a subordinate position to these officers were the scribes, such as Nebu'kab, a man with a Babylonian name, and 'Anani a Jew. The latter of these is called also a lord of command, or chancellor.

To the civil administration belonged, further, the judges of different jurisdictions and names, of whom the duties cannot be clearly defined. For example, there were judges of the city and judges of the king, though it is not clear whether these were the same or different persons. With these judges, the commander of the army of Syene sat on the judgment seat, but probably only in certain cases. In other cases, another officer called sagan (*i.e.*, deputy), sits along with the judges. This sagan is evidently the equivalent of the Assyrian shakin, who, as Canon Johns has shown, had along with his other functions certain ones of a judicial nature. As the Assyrian shakin was an officer corresponding to the Persian satrap, it is fair to assume that in Egypt also the sagan was a sort of satrap, who united with his other governmental duties the right to sit in at least some judicial cases. In addition to his judicial functions, the sagan appears in the papyri as the head of the guild or trades union of the carpenters. It is likely that each of the guilds had a similar head, who probably represented the unions in their dealings with the government and the courts.

Two other classes of judges are mentioned in the papyri, one called perhaps ultores or avengers and the other the *tiftin*. The latter were probably the same as the sheriffs of Daniel iii. 2.

Beside these officials, four or five others are named, including bookkeepers, treasurers, and scribes, of whom the respective duties are not defined. Nevertheless, the very occurrence of the different names of officials shows that the Persian administration was thoroughly organized, and the variety of the contracts and rescripts shows that this admin-



istration covered every department of public and private law and government.

Of the Persian kings after Cambyses and before 400 B.C., all are mentioned in these papyri except the false Smerdis and Xerxes II and Sogdianus. The false Smerdis reigned in the sixth century whereas the earliest of these papyri dates from the twenty-seventh year of Darius Hystaspis, 494 B.C. Xerxes II reigned only forty-five days and his successor Sogdianus only a little more than half a year; so that we could hardly have expected any papyri from their reigns. The years are dated according to the years of the king, which is the usual method of dating employed by the kings of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon, and in fact, by all the ancients outside of Greece and Rome, before the time of the Ptolemys. We have but one inscription from the reign of Darius Hystaspis, that numbered thirty by Professor Sachau. This is one of the best preserved of the papyri and is noteworthy for spelling Darius with exactly the same consonants that are employed in the Old Testament and in the Persian of the Behistun inscription.

#### THE ARMY

It was hitherto supposed that the standing army of the Persians with which they garrisoned the principal cities and fortresses of the subject nations was composed entirely of Persians and of their near kindred the Medes, Hyrcanians, and Bactrians. In Egypt alone there is said to have been an army of occupation numbering 120,000 men, and the wonder has been that so small a country as Persia, containing at most 2,000,000 population, could have furnished so many soldiers, even when these allied races were drawn upon for their contingents. The papyri, however, have shown that the old view is untenable, and that in certain cases at least these garrisons were composed of troops gathered from the subject races who were favorable to the Persian overlords in preference to the other dominant powers. For the army at Yeb is called Judean and its in-

dividual members are described as Jews and Arameans; sometimes the same man being designated in one place as an Aramean, and in another place as a Jew. All Jews were probably regarded as Arameans, even if all Arameans were not Jews; or, they were called Jews because of their race and Arameans because of their language. The army of Yeb was divided into six regiments or corps of unknown size, each of them having its own commander and all under the command of a general-in-chief. The head officers have names that are either Persian or Babylonian. Possibly the regiments are named after the Persian and Babylonian officers who enlisted, or first commanded them; inasmuch as the regiment of Wagerat is mentioned as early as 470 and as late as 411 B.C., and the regiment of Nabukudurri as early as 460 and as late as 400 B.C. The employment of Babylonians in important positions in the army of Egypt is paralleled by the custom of Darius Hystaspis, who according to the Behistun inscription committed the leadership of his armies to men who were not Persians, such as Dadarshu the Armenian and the Medes Takhmaspada and Vinidafra. The subordinate officers of the Judean army at Yeb seem to have been wholly or in part of Judean nationality. This selection by the Persian rulers of Egypt of men of the different subject races to assist in the government of their great empire confirms the historicity of the statements made in the Biblical books of Daniel, Esther, and Ezra-Nehemiah, according to which Daniel and his three companions were advanced to high positions in the civil service by Darius the Mede and Cyrus, Mordecai by Xerxes, and Sanballat, Ezra and Nehemiah by Artaxerxes.

The fact that the Jews in Yeb continued to preserve their own worship in the midst of the heathen, and largely their own names, shows the precariousness of the argument for the influence of ancient Babylon upon the Israelites during the captivity. Eastern conditions cannot be judged by Western standards and traditions. The Copts in Egypt,

and the Mandeans and Fire Worshippers in Persia and India, have preserved their faith intact for centuries in the midst of dominant and hostile creeds and nations. So, also, it seems to have been with the Israelites in the most ancient as well as in more modern times.

#### PROPER NAMES

The vast number of proper names found in the papyri which are not found at all in the Bible (especially when taken in connection with the large number of proper names found on the monuments of Babylon and Syria) will compel a complete revision of the theories of Hebrew proper names as propounded by Gray, Nestle and others. Especially does it compel us to reject the extreme view of Cheyne that the Hebrew proper names of the Old Testament have been corrupted beyond recognition in the process of the transmission of the text. For here are found a multitude of names whose reading is beyond question but yet that are just as impossible when judged by ordinary rules and roots as most of those which are so summarily rejected and revised by some of the critics of the modern schools of textual criticism.

#### PASSAH

One of the most interesting of the papyri is number six, written in the sixth year of Darius Nothus, *i.e.*, 417-418 B.C.; because it contains an evident reference to the Jewish feast of the Passover. It seems to be an edict of Darius the king of Persia directed to the Jews through the satrap of Egypt permitting the Jews of Elephantine to observe their spring festival. It is probable, as Professor Sachau suggests, such a decree was not issued every year and that the issuing of it in this particular year shows that the feast had not been observed before this time by the Jewish colony at Yeb, either because they did not know of it or because they had not been allowed to observe it. The decree was sent to Hananiah, a Jewish officer of Arsames' entourage, to be made known by him to one who is called his brother and



to his companions of the Jewish army. This Hananiah may possibly have been the brother of Nehemiah the governor of Jerusalem who is the hero of the Biblical book bearing this name. The edict directs the people to be clean (ceremonially) and to take heed to themselves from the fifteenth to the twenty-first of the month Nisan, to do no work, to abstain from anything leavened from sundown of the fifteenth to the twenty-first, to enter their closets and seal them between the days. Directions were given also as to what they should drink.

#### ACHIKAR

Those of the papyri that will doubtless attract most attention are the eleven containing portions of the didactic teachings of the wise Achikar. These teachings were embodied in a tale of a wise man named Achikar and the scene is laid at the court of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon, kings of Assyria from 704 to 665 B.C. This story has been found in whole or in part preserved for us in Syriac, Arabic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Greek, and Slavonic. The apocryphal book of Tobit refers to it as the well-known story of the ingratitude of a man to his foster father. In the Greek biography of the fabulist Aesop, the story of Achikar seems to have been changed into an account of Aesop at the court of the Babylonian king called Lykeros. The Greek didactic poet Democritus is said to have combined with his own works a translation of the stele of Achikar. This translation he called "Ethical Babylonian Sayings". From the mention of a "stele", it is supposed by Professor Sachau that the proverbs of Achikar may have been published upon steles, like the columns of victory of the Assyrian, Babylonian, Moabitic, Egyptian and Persian kings; or rather like that containing the code of Hammurabi, or the boundary stones of the Babylonians. Theophrastus and Strabo both knew about Achikar and an image of him, denoted as (Ac)icar(us), is found upon a mosaic discovered in Treves.

The Aramaic fragments of the Achikar story now first known and published by Professor Sachau are palimpsests, the original writing having apparently been some kind of reckonings or accounts.

#### BEHISTUN

One of the most surprising revelations of the papyri is that there was an Aramaic translation of the Behistun inscription of Darius Hystaspis. It is a well known fact that this great king of Persia made an inscription in the Persian, Susian and Babylonian languages upon the rocks a short distance from the city of Ecbatana, the capital of the old Median empire. It was not known, however, until these papyri were discovered that a translation of this inscription had been made into any other language except these three. But, now, we can well believe that the mighty second founder of the Persian Empire not merely inscribed the record of his conquests on the rocks at Behistun, but that he also translated this record into the other tongues of the empire, and certainly at least into Aramaic, which was at that time the *lingua franca* of a large part of his people; and that he probably disseminated this particular record of his fame throughout the whole extent of his dominions. Unfortunately, only a few small fragments of the Aramaic version of the inscription have been preserved. Still, these are sufficient to restore in large measure the lacunae of the Babylonian recension which has been preserved in a very imperfect condition on the rocks of Behistun. It is thought by Professor Sachau that the Aramaic is a translation of the Babylonian; but the present writer is of the opinion that it is more probable that on the contrary the Babylonian is a translation of the Aramaic, inasmuch as there is evidence of an Aramaic idiom in the Babylonian, but none of Babylonian idioms in the Aramaic. Both of these recensions differ from the Persian and Susian texts in that they give after the account of some of the battles the numbers of killed and prisoners. The difficulty of recording and transmitting with accuracy numerical statements in the system of

notation in ancient times is manifest from the fact that the Babylonian and Aramaic versions differ in numerous instances in the statement of these numbers. In one case the Aramaic has 5000 when the Babylonian has only 500. This difficulty of recording and reading the signs employed for numerical notation throws great light upon the many variations in numbers found in the text of the parallel passages of the Old Testament.

#### TRANSLATION OF A LETTER<sup>2</sup>

Unto my lords Yedonyah, Uriyah, and the priests of the god YHW, Mattan bar Yoshiyah and Neriyah bar . . . thy servant Ma'uziyah. Peace to our Lord. . . . May you receive mercy from the God of Heaven. And now: After Waidrang, the chief of the army, had come to Abydos, he made me a prisoner because of a jewel that was found stolen in the hands of merchants upon a setting (or possession) of Tsecha and Chor, the servants of 'Anani. They labored with Waidrang and Chomufi under the protection of the God of Heaven, until I was freed. Now, behold, they came thither to you. As for you, see concerning them what they wish, and whatever Tsecha and Chor may request from you, do you oppose them so that they may not discover something that is bad for you. (The priest) of Chnum has been against us ever since Hananiah has been in Egypt until now.

And what you shall do to Chor . . . do ye. Chor is the servant of Hananiah. . . . What they lose and what they do not lose is the same to you. He said to me: Send a letter before. . . . The loss of a treasure is laid upon him in the house of 'Anani. What you do to him will not be hid from 'Anani.

To my lord Yedonyah, Uriyah and the priests of the Jews of (Yeb) Ma'uzzi bar Tsecha.

#### PETITION TO A LORD

Thy servants, Yedonyah bar Gemaryah by name I, Ma'uzzi bar Nathan by name I, Shema'yah bar Haggai by

<sup>2</sup>P. 57.

name I, Hosea bar Yathom by name I, Hosea bar Nathum by name I, altogether 5 men, Syenites, who in the fortress of Yeb are settled (?), speak thus: If our lord (command?) and the temple of the god YHW which (was?) in the fortress of Yeb be built again (?) as it was before then a nest of doves, (and) a goat as a burnt offering (?) shall not (?) be made there; but incense, meal offerings etc. And our lord Oris (or Odis) shall make (?) a gift (?) to the house of our lord of a thousand (?) Artabes of barley.

#### LIST OF NAMES

As an illustration of the lists of names with which some papyri are filled we may present the list in papyrus 20. It will be seen that most of these names are Jewish, such as are found in the Old Testament.

Achyo bar Nathan, Nathan bar Ma'uziyah, Chur bar Banayah, Machse bar Yahotal, Chanan bar Pachnum, Shalum bar H., Piltai bar Neboittim (?), Kushi (?) bar 'Azzur, Petechnum bar Churi, Re'uyah bar Zekharyah, Menachem bar Mattan, Pechnum bar Zakkur, Chaggai bar Mikhayah, Didi bar Uri bar Machse, Shewa bar Zekharyah.

#### RECORD OF A LOAN<sup>3</sup>

One of the best preserved of the papyri is the record of a loan, given in papyrus 28. Since this record is not merely of general interest as an illustration of the laws of contracts in use at that time but shows also that women could act as agents in such matters, we shall give a complete translation of it.

On the 7th of Kisleu, that is, on the 14th day of the month Thoth in the year 9 of the king Artaxerxes, Yehochan, the daughter of Meshullakh NshN in the fortress of Yeb spake as follows to Meshullam the son of Zakkur a Jew of the fortress of Yeb: You have given me a loan of four pounds of silver, *i.e.*, four according to the standard measure of the king. I will pay you interest at the rate

<sup>3</sup>P. III.

of two challurs a pound per month, *i.e.*, the whole loan at eight challurs per month. If the interest be added to the capital, I will pay you interest on this addition at the same rate as on the original capital.

If the turn of the year come, and I shall not have satisfied your claim upon the capital and its interest according to the conditions of this contract, then shall you have the right, O Meshullam and thy sons, to seize as pledge for thy (debt) whatever thou shalt find in my possession, a house of bricks, silver and gold, bronze and iron, servant and maid, barley and spelt, and every kind of provisions, until I shall have fully paid the capital and interest. And during this time I shall not have the right to say to thee: I have satisfied thy claim upon the money and its interest, so long as this contract is in thy hand.

Also I shall not have the right to accuse thee before the magistrate and the judge, saying: "Thou hast taken a pledge from me", so long as this contract is in thy hand.

And if I die without having satisfied thy claim upon the money and its interest, then shall my sons pay to thee this money and its interest. And if they shall not pay to thee, O Meshullam, this money and its interest, then wilt thou have the right to seize all provisions and other pledges that thou shalt find in their possession, until they shall have paid fully capital and interest; while they shall not have the right to accuse thee before the judge as long as this contract is in thy hand.

The scribe Nathan bar 'Anani has written this according to the dictation of Yahocham. Witnesses of the contract: Hosea bar Delagadol, Hadowyah bar Gedalyah, Achyo bar Pelatyah, Azur bar Achyo.

The heading reads: "This is the silver record which Yehochan daughter of Meshullakh caused to be written for Meshullam bar Zakkur."

#### LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR OF JUDEA

To our lord Bagohi, the governor of Judea, his servants Yedonyah and his companions the priests in the fortress of



Yeb. May the God of heaven greet our lord often at every time and give thee favor in the eyes of king Darius and the sons of the royal house yet a thousand times more than now, and give thee long life. Be happy and strong at all times. Now thy servants Yedonyah and his companions say thus: In the month Tammuz in the year 14 of king Darius, when Arsham went forth and went to the king, the priests of the god Chnub made a conspiracy with Waidrang, who was prince here, to the end that the temple of the god Yaho, that was in the fortress of Yeb, they should take away. Thereupon this accursed Waidrang sent a letter to his son Nepayan, who was general of the army in the fortress of Syene, containing the following: Let the temple in the fortress of Yeb be destroyed. Then Nepayan brought Egyptians and other soldiers. They came to the fortress of Yeb with their implements; they tore it down to the ground, and broke in pieces the stone pillars which were there. Also, it came to pass that they destroyed the five stone gates, built out of cut stone, which were in that temple, the wooden doors of the same, the brazen hinges of the doors, and the roof of cedar beams. All that was there they burnt with fire. And the golden and silver basins and all the things that were in that temple have they taken and appropriated. Already, in the days of the kings of Egypt, our fathers built that temple in the fortress of Yeb. And when Cambyses came to Egypt, he found that temple built. And the temples of the gods of Egypt they tore down, but that temple no one injured. And when they had done thus, we and our wives and our children put on mourning and fasted and prayed to Yaho, the God of heaven, who with regard to that dog Waidrang made known to us as follows: They shall take the chain from his feet (that is, perhaps, execute him and cast his body away), and they shall destroy all the treasures that he has won, and all the men who shall have attempted to do evil to that temple shall be killed and we shall look upon their destruction.

Also, before this, when this evil was done to us, we sent

a letter to our lord, as well as to Yehohanan and his companions, the priests in Jerusalem, and to Ostanes the brother of Anani, and to the nobles of the Jews. (In response), not a single letter have they sent to us.

Thus, since the month of Tammuz of the 14th year of king Darius unto the present day, we have worn mourning and fasted; our wives have been like a widow; we have not anointed ourselves with oil, nor have we drunk wine. Nor have we from that time until the present day, in the 17th year of king Darius, offered meal-offerings, incense-offerings, and burnt-offerings in that temple. Now then, thus say thy servants, Yedonyah and his companions and the Jews, all of us citizens of Yeb, as follows: If it please our lord, mayest thou think on the reconstruction of that temple. Since it has not been permitted to us to build it again, do thou look with favor upon the recipients of thy benefits and favors here in Egypt: let there be sent from thee a letter in regard to the rebuilding of the temple of the god Yaho in the fortress of Yeb, even as it was built before. In thy name will they offer the meal-offering, the incense-offering, and the burnt-offering upon the altar of the god Yaho, and we shall at all times pray for thee, we and our wives and our children and all the Jews here present, if thus it be done, until that temple be built again. And a work of righteousness will it be for thee before Yaho the god of heaven, greater than that of a man who offers him a burnt-offering and sacrifices of the value of a thousand talents of silver. And as respects the gold, we have sent a message and informed thee. Also, all these items of information we have sent in a letter in our own name to Delahyah and Shelemyah, the sons of Sanballat the governor of Samaria. Also, we would inform thee, that Arsham has learned nothing of all this that has been done to us.

On the 29th of Marcheshwan in the year 17 of king Darius.

SELECTION FROM THE ARAMAIC VERSION OF THE BEHISTUN  
INSCRIPTION

Thus speaks Darius the king: A man whose name was Umishu, my servant, a Persian, I sent to Armenia. I said: Go, smite this rebel army. Then, Umishu went to Armenia to meet it. The rebels assembled and went to meet Umishu to make battle. Afterwards, they fought a battle at a place called in Assyrian Atcitu. Ormuzd aided me. With the help of Ormuzd my army slew that rebellious army. On the 15th of Anamaka the battle was fought. They killed among them 2024 (Aramaic 2034). A second time the rebels assembled and went to meet Umishu to make battle. There is a place in Armenia called Antiyara. There they fought a battle. Ormuzd aided me. With the help of Ormuzd my army slew the rebels. On the 30th day of Iyyar, they fought a battle. They slew among them 2045 and took 2559 alive (Aramaic 1575). Afterwards, Umishu did nothing, waiting for me, till I should come from Media.

## SELECTIONS FROM THE STORY OF ACHIKAR

The thorn-bush sent the following message to the pomegranate tree, saying: The thorn-bush says to the pomegranate tree: How very numerous are thy thorns for him who touches thy fruit! The pomegranate tree answered and said to the thorn-bush: Thou are nought but thorns to him who touches thee.

A panther met a goat while it was naked. The panther said to the goat: Come and I will cover thee with my skin. The goat answered and said to the panther: What have I done, that my skin should cover thee? Take it not from me.

Draw not thy bow and shoot not at the righteous, lest God help him greatly and cause it to return against thee.

Thou hast drawn thy bow and hast shot at one who was more righteous than thou. This is a sin against our God.

Watch thy mouth from every place of observation and harden not thy heart; for a word is a bird, etc.

Withhold not thy son from the rod, if thou art not able to deliver him from it.

Conceal(?) not the word of a king. It is healing. Let thy word be soft when the king speaks. He is brighter and stronger than a knife.

*Princeton.*

R. D. WILSON.