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THE TERMINOLOGY OF LOVE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

I

Considered as a monument of the Greek language at a particular stage of its development, the New Testament is a very interesting document; and not least so in the terminology which it employs to express the emotion of love. The end-terms of this development, so far as it is open to our observation, are found—we are speaking in broad categories—in the literature which we know as “classical” on the one side, and in the speech of the modern Greek world on the other. In passing from one of these end-terms to the other, a complete revolution has been wrought in the terminology of love; a revolution so radical that the ordinary verb for “to love” in classical Greek has lost that sense altogether in modern Greek, its place being taken by a verb in comparatively infrequent use in the classics; while the ordinary substantive for “love” in modern Greek, formed from this latter verb, does not occur even once in the whole range of classical Greek literature. Coming in somewhere between these two end-terms, the New Testament, flanked on the one side by the Septuagint version of the Old Testament and its accompanying Apocrypha, and on the other by the Apostolic Fathers, forms a compact body of literature in which alone we can observe the revolution in progress; or, we should better say, in which this revolution suddenly appears to sight already nearly completed. Without any heralding in the secular literature, all at once in this religious literature the change presents itself to our view as in principle already an accomplished fact.

WHAT DOES "THE SUN STOOD STILL" MEAN?

In the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review* for April, 1902, I published an article on "Lost Meanings of Hebrew Roots," in which I attempted to show that the signification of certain roots, which are more or less common in Assyrio-Babylonian, and whose meaning is perfectly clear from the inscriptions, was still known at the time when the Greek translation was made, but that in later times this signification ceased to be recognized by the Hebrews themselves; so that already in the Targums and in the Syriac and Latin primary versions it is no longer to be found. I believe that I can now go a step further and say that I have found in the Babylonian a new meaning for a whole passage;— a meaning whose existence seems to have passed out of the knowledge of the Hebrews even before the time that the Greek version was made.

While reading through the lists of synonyms in a syllabary contained in the Cuneiform Texts, volume XIX, 19,¹ I found one in which the words *atalû*, *adiru*, and *da'amu*, are given. Now, it is well known that *atalû* is the ordinary word in the astronomical tablets for "eclipse" and that the verb *adâru* means "to be dark." Recalling that the radicals *dm* are the root of the verbs occurring in Joshua X. 12, 13, I immediately turned up the passage and at once recognized that it would make good sense to render the form *dôm* in Joshua's prayer by "become dark," or "be eclipsed." This led me to a further study of the works of Epping, Kugler, Thompson, Weidner, and Virolleaud, on the astronomy of the Babylonians, and I was delighted to find not only that the root *dm* is of not infrequent occurrence, but also that two other significant words of the Joshua passage are technical terms in the astronomical science of the Babylonians. The most important of these terms, next to *dm*, is the technical use of *'amad* "to stand." It occurs fre-

¹ Cf. p. 50, I, 1 (4).

quently on the tablets to denote the point, or place, in the heavens at which a star ceases to go in one direction and begins its return journey to its starting-point. To the naked eye, a star seems to "stand still" for a time before starting on its return passage, just as a runner in a race up and down a lane would stand still as he was turning to run back to the starting-point. In a second sense, the verb is used for the "staying" of a star in a constellation, or house, of the zodiac. The other technical word is the *ḥ^aṣī* (Bab. *iṣi*) of verse 13, translated "midst" in the English version. While not denying that this word may and often does mean "midst," in Hebrew, as, for example, in "midnight (*ḥ^aṣī hallaylā*), it seems that in Babylonian in the two places where it is used in the astronomical tablets, it has the sense more usual in Hebrew of "half," being employed in the one case to denote the half of a cloud and in the other the half of the moon. According to this interpretation, it would mean in Joshua the period from midday to sunset, or ninety degrees.

I further found that in many places in Virolleaud's tablets treating especially of the sun and moon, both are said to be darkened together, the word for darkening being *dm*. Proceeding from these data, I translated the passage in Joshua and saw that the whole situation was cleared up, except where it states, according to the common version, that the sun did not go in for "about a whole day." Having long ago come to the conclusion that this phrase does not mean what the English version implies, I made a new investigation of all the places where the preposition *kaf* (here rendered "about") and the word *tāmīm* "whole," as well as its root *tāmam*, are employed in the Old Testament. The result of the investigation² was to confirm my opinion that the phrase should be translated "as on a completed (or ordinary) day." It must be borne in mind by those who read my translation, that the verb *bô'* is used in Hebrew

² Cf. p. 53 V.

for the "going in" of the sun, in the evening, and the verb *yāṣā'* for its "coming out," in the morning. The Babylonian uses the same word for the "coming out" of the sun, but uses *erēbu* (from which the Hebrew derives *'ereb*, its term for evening) to denote the "going in," at sunset. With this in mind, we can understand what Ben Sira means when he says that through Joshua the sun stood, one day becoming like two. He means apparently that the day of the battle had two *comings out* of the sun, one at sunrise and the other at midday, when it came out from behind the moon; and that it had two *goings-in*, one when it went in behind the moon and the other at sunset.

This translation shows us, moreover, how Jehovah fought for Israel. It was not merely with storm and hail that the enemy was discomfited, but his very gods were compelled to hide their faces at noonday. At the prayer of Israel's leader, both of their chief deities, the sun and the moon, were darkened, or eclipsed. So, as we can well imagine would be the case, they were terrified beyond measure, thinking that the end of all things had come; and they were discomfited and smitten and turned and fled.

Herodotus tells of an eclipse of the sun which occurred during a battle between the Lydians and the Medes, that scared both of the combatants so much that they stopped fighting and made an immediate peace.³ Later, after Xerxes had assembled his army for the invasion of Greece, an eclipse took place while he was still at Sardis which terrified him to such an extent, that only after a favorable interpretation of the eclipse by the Magi, who affirmed that it meant the destruction of the Greeks, would he proceed with his undertaking.⁴ So, also, our best modern observers tell us how all nature seems terrified by an eclipse, and how they, in spite of themselves, could not suppress a feeling of dread in the presence of this appalling phenomenon.

It will be perceived that the translation suggested does

³ Bk. I. 74, 103.

⁴ Bk. VII. 37.

away with the miraculous character of the event in so far as it involves the solar system and the law of gravitation. It is true, also, that it runs counter to Jewish exegesis and to all the ancient versions, except perhaps the Greek, which is somewhat ambiguous and difficult of explanation. Notwithstanding this, I confess to a feeling of relief, as far as I myself am concerned, that I shall no longer feel myself forced by a strict exegesis to believe that the Scriptures teach that there actually occurred a miracle involving so tremendous a reversal of all the laws of gravitation. It can readily be understood how the Jewish interpreters of later times, either through ignorance, or because of their overwhelming desire to magnify their own importance in the scheme of the universe, should have embraced the opportunity that the ambiguous terms of this purely scientific account afforded them to enhance the magnitude of the divine interference in their behalf. But for us today there lies in this passage the more useful lesson of faith in God as the answerer of prayer. How stupendous was the faith of Joshua as shown in his prayer! How immediate and complete was God's answer to that prayer! He who knew beforehand what Joshua would ask, had made all preparations to grant his request. For His are hearts and stars, and darkness and light, and faith and love and victory, excelling in their lasting glory all the transient miracles of standing suns. Lastly, mark that the inspired writer says that it was the extraordinary answer to the prayer of a man that made that day at Gibeon to be unlike every other day before or since. In following his interpretation of its significance, let us rest content.

I would suggest the following translation:

"Be eclipsed, O sun, in Gibeon,
And thou moon in the valley of Ajalon!

And the sun was eclipsed and the moon turned back, while the nation was avenged on its enemies. Is it not written upon the book of Jashar?

And the sun stayed in the half of the heavens,
And set not hastily as when a day is done.

And there never was a day like that day before or since, in respect to Jehovah's hearing the voice of a man."

NOTES

I. On the root *dm* "to be dark."

1. The signs employed.

(1). The sign *mud* is equivalent to *da-a-mu* and to *da'-mu* (Brünnow, 1553, 2276, 2277).

(2). The sign *dara* = *da'-mu* and *da'-ma-a-tu* (Br. 10798, 10799).

(3). The signs *mi-mi*, called *kukki* and *gigig*, = *da'-mu*, *du'-u-mu*, and *da-um-ma-tu*. The sign *gig* alone = *mu-šu* "night" and *šal-mu* "shadow, dark" (Br. 8911-8943).

(4). In the Cuneiform Texts, vol. XIX, plate 19, we find the following:

BAR. GIS. NÁ = *at-ta-lu-ú*.

AN. TA. LÚ = *a-da-ru šá Sin*.

Ú. MUD. NUN. NA. KI = *ú-mu da'-mu ša rubî*.

Attalû is the frequently occurring word for eclipse;⁵ the second and third lines give its definitions, or synonyms. The first of these means "the darkening of Sin"; and the second "a day darkened by Sin."

2. Examples of the use of the word *da'-mu* on the astronomical tablets are:

(1). In Virolleaud's *L'Astrologie Chaldéenne*.

a. *uddat Sin du'-u-mat*, the light of Sin is darkened. Fascicule XIII. 7. IX. 39.

b. *uddat Sin eli ša ginna da'-mat*, Sin's light was unbelievably dark. *id.* X. 9.

c. *Sin u Šamaš uddasunu du'-u-mat*, the light of Sin and Shamash was darkened, *id.*, and also XIII. 8. 36, 54, V. 4. 39, X. 9, VIII. 36 (*du'-mat*).

d. *uddat Sin Ma-Gal du'-mat*, the light of Sin was very dark. X. 9.

⁵ E. g., it is found fourteen times in the first inscription given in Virolleaud's Second Supplement to his great work on Chaldean astrology, *L'Astrologie Chaldéenne*, pages 1-5.

- e. *uddat Sin eli ša ginaa du'-mat*, the light of Sin was unbelievably darkened. IX. 40.
- f. *Sin ina aši-šu da-mu*, Sin at its coming out was dark. VIII. 22.
- g. *Sin ina aši-šu šalmu mimma la da'amu*. Sin at its coming out was shadowy, but not altogether dark. VIII. 24.
- h. *Šamaš du'um*. Shamash was darkened. VI. 27.
- i. *Šamšu ippuḥma du'-un-ma*, the sun arose and was dark. VI. 28. 11, 12.
- k. *Šamšu ippuḥma Ši-bar -ma udda-su da'um-meš ibši*, the sun arose and was visible (?) and its light became dark. VI. 28. 13.
- l. *Šamšu ina urri Ši-bar-ma umu u udda-su da'um-meš ibši*, the sun at dawn was visible, day and its light became dark. VI. 28. 4.
- m. *Šamšu ina urri Ši-bar-ma udda-su da'um-meš ibši*, the sun at dawn was visible and its light became dark. VI. 28. 6.
- n. *Šamšu ina mišli umi ušurtu ilmi u nīpīh-šu da'um-meš ibši*, in the middle of the day, the contour of the sun was surrounded and its splendor became dark. VI. 28. 8.
- o. *Šamšu ina umi mišli Ši-bar-ma udda-su da'um-meš ibši*, at mid-day the sun was visible and its light became dark. VI. 28. 7.
- p. *Šamšu Ši-bar-ma udda-su da'um-meš ibši*, the sun was visible and its light became dark. VI. 28. 15.
- q. *Šamšu ina GAL-su i-zu-za-šu da'um-meš ibši*, the sun disappears in GAL-su and becomes dark (?). VI. 29. 3.
- r. *Šamšu . . . da'amtū-ma ina erēbi-šu ina urpati*, the sun became dark when it entered into the cloud. VI. 2. 30.
- s. *Šamšu ina nīpīh-šu da'um-meš ibši atali Sin u Shamši iššakan*, the sun at its zenith became dark. The sun and moon were eclipsed. VIII. 32.
- t. *atalū šitkun-ma atalū šuātu du'um*, an eclipse took place and that eclipse was dark. V. 29. 5.
- u. *agu da'amu ibši LUL ihallik atalu da'amu*, the crown became dark, LUL disappeared, a dark eclipse (occurred). X. 3. 35.

- w. *kakkabu ana libbišu erub-ma atalû da'amat*, a star entered into its heart and there was a dark eclipse. X. 6. II.
- x. For other examples with clouds, stars, crowns (coronas), etc., see V.4.8, VII.28.55, 35.39, 41, VIII.14, 15, 8, 17, 29, 32.39, 40, 42, 43, X.2, 6.11, 34, 57, 59, XIII.45, 47.15, 16, 56, XIV.85, 116.; and *Cuneiform Texts*, pl. i, WEIDNER, *Handbuch der babylonischen Astronomie*, 36, KUGLER, *Sternkunde und Sternendienst in Babel*, I. 12, and *Ergänzung*, I. 52, and THOMPSON, *Reports of the Magicians and Astrologers of Nineveh and Babylon*, 235, 255, 257, 258.
- z. *Ana ili Sin u ili Šamšu ud-da-su-nu du'-u-mat, šarru itti mati-šu u niši-šu zi-ni i-na-kaḫ-ḫar, ili Sin u ili Šamšu atalû išakanu*, as to the moon and the sun their light was darkened. The king with his land and people were destroyed (?). The sun and the moon were eclipsed. THOMPSON, *Reports*, 82, Obv. 7-9.
- II. The word *iši* is found in a Babylonian astronomical tablet published by STRASSMEIER (*Inschriften von Cambyses*, no. 400, 46). It reads: *Sin atalû gamru iššakin i-ši i-ri-ḫi iltanu izziz*, a total eclipse of the moon took place, extending over the northern half of the moon. The half of the heavens would thus be 90 degrees, or from noon to sunset. It is found, also, in THOMPSON, *Reports*, 155, Rev. 2-4, *Urpatu* . . . *ina lib-bi ūmu i-šu it-ta-ša-a*, half of the cloud disappeared at midday.
- III. The word *āmad* occurs scores of times in the tablets to denote the apparent standing still of the stars in their courses from east to west and from west to east. The noun from the root denotes the place where the star seems to turn back on its course. See Kugler's S. und S., Teil I, pages 40, 70, 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 92, 96, 98, 100, 102°, 106. It is used also for the "staying" of a star in a sign, or house, of the zodiac. See KUGLER, *id.* 82, 88. In this sense, it might be rendered in English by "delayed," or "remained for a time," or "continued to shine." Jupiter appears to stand still for two days. (KUGLER, S & S, 82, note.)

- IV. The word *bô'* is the usual one in Hebrew to denote the "going in" of the sun at the close of the day. Thus Deuteronomy XXIV. 13, "in the evening, at the going in of the sun." The verb *erēbu*, from which the Hebrew word *'ereb* "evening" is derived, is the common term in Babylonian to denote the "going in," or setting, of the sun. For the "coming out" in the morning, both Hebrew and Babylonian use the word *yāšā*, (Bab. *âšû*).
- V. The preposition *Kaf* might possibly be translated "about," but the fact is, that it is never found with the word for day in this sense elsewhere in the Old Testament. In two places it means simply "as." Thus in Psalm XC. 4, "as yesterday when it is past," and in Amos VIII. 10, "and the end thereof as a bitter day." In all other places the phrase means "as on a (or the) day." So in I Sam. XVIII. 10, Hosea II. 5, 17, Lam. II. 7, 22, Zech. XIV. 3; and compare especially "as on the day of Midian," Isaiah IX. 3, "as on the day of Egypt," Ezek. XXX. 9, and "as on the day of temptation in the wilderness," Psalm XCV. 8.
- VI. The word *tāmîm* usually means "without blemish." If so used here, it would suggest that an eclipse was looked upon as a blemish to a perfect day, just as mists and blizzards are by us. It is more probable, however, that it means ended, or completed, or "done" in the sense in which Longfellow employs it in the lines
- "The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wing of night."
- This sense is supported by the use of the verb in a number of passages. Thus it is said in Jeremiah I. 3 that the word of the Lord came to him unto the end (or ending, Heb. *tôm*) of the thirteenth year of Zedekiah; in Genesis XLVII. 18, it is said that "that year was ended"; in Deuteronomy XXXIV. 8, we read that "the days of the weeping for Moses were ended." Applied to the passage before us the whole statement would mean that the sun kept on shining in the half of the heavens and hastened not to go in as when a day is done.
- VII. The verb *yāšā'*, is rendered here in the Septuagint by

προπορεύω "to go forward," thus corresponding to the Babylonian *etēku* which Kugler renders by "fort-rücken" (S & S, 22). This *etēku* occurs a number of times in THOMPSON'S *Reports*. Thus 187, Obv. 1. (*Ana mul*) SAG-MI-GAR *a-na erib Šamši i-ti-iḫ*, when Jupiter passes on at sunset. 194, Obv. 1-2, *Ana mul SAG-MI-GAR a-na imitti mul Dil-bat i-ti-iḫ*, when Jupiter goes to the right of Venus. 244A, Rev. 1, 2, (*šarru*) *lu la-ti-iḫ a-di uš-šu-u*, the king shall not hasten to go out. 245, Rev. 3-6, *šarru a-na šu-u-ku la uš-ša-a a-di a-dan-šu ša it-ti it-ti-ku it-ti ša a-di arah ume-meš*, let not the king go out into the street, until the time set by the omen be passed, i.e., the omen of the star for a month of days. 272, Rev. 4, 5, *Ana mul SAG-MI-GAR ik-šad-am-ma mul šarru etiḫ(iḫ)-ma ib-ni-šu arka-nu mul šarru ša mul SAG-MI-GAR etiḫ-šu-ma ib-nu-šu ikaššada-ma mul SAG-MI-GAR etiḫ*, when Jupiter has culminated and has passed and illuminated Regulus, then Regulus, whom Jupiter had passed and illuminated, culminates.

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