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








*AN ASTRONOMICAL OR ASTROLOGICAL TABLET FROM
BABYLON.*













As is well known, the British Museum possesses a large class of tablets which have been, as yet, but little studied. There are many reasons to account for this, and probably the principal are, that they are unattractive, difficult to copy, still more difficult to read, and unpromising even if it were likely that a satisfactory rendering could be obtained. And here I may remark, that I make no pretention whatever myself to be able to translate these difficult texts. Like others, I have "fought shy" of them, and should not venture to bring one forward now, were I not of opinion that it is of greater value than the majority of its class; and did I not hope that it might, perchance, when published, fall into thoroughly competent hands, and that a ray of light might be thrown into a very dark corner of Assyriology.

The text in question is inscribed on an oblong tablet of baked clay, about $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 3 in. The obverse has four columns of writing, mainly consisting of numbers, divided into about seventeen paragraphs or sections, separated from each other by ruled lines. The top right-hand corner and side are considerably damaged, slightly injuring and making imperfect the first section of the second column, destroying the whole of the first section and part of the second section of the third column, and the greater part of the fourth column, of which, as it is a short one, the remains of 6 lines are all that are left. The reverse, however, is almost perfect, and has 22 lines of writing which extend across the whole tablet: and are not divided into columns. The writing on the reverse is divided into six sections, of which the last is the most important.

The subject of the obverse is difficult to determine—all I can do is to give certain of the more evident points, sufficient to indicate the probable nature of the contents, leaving it for others more competent than myself to complete the work.

The text begins with a line which formerly extended right across the tablet, but which is rendered incomplete by the break. What is left reads "The 7th year of Cambyses" The next line—the first line of the first column—begins with the sign

†, equivalent to  † (for  ) = *Nisannu*, "the month Nisan," and is followed by signs and numbers referring, apparently, to astronomical or astrological matters. † (for  †) = *Aaru*, "the month Iyyar," comes next, and is followed by , equivalent to   (for  ) = *Siwannu*, "the month Sivan." The column ends with the sign for Tammuz (, for  , the character for month, which is generally prefixed. being left out throughout the text).

It will be seen from the above that in the first column the months follow on in order, and in the second and third columns this system is continued, and we have   (*Abu*, *Ab*);  (*Ululu*, *Elul*);  (*Tisritu*, *Tisri*); and  (*Arah-samnu*, *Marcheswan*). Leaving out the last section, and going to the third column, we find the section for  (*Kisiliwu*, *Kisleu*) lost, and that for  (*Tebetü*, *Tebet*) mutilated,  (*Sabatu*, *Sebat*), and  (*Adaru*, *Adar*) next follow in order; and at the end of the second and third columns we have the section treating of   (*Adaru mahru* or *makru* = *Ve-adar*) divided and placed thus probably in order not to begin the fourth column with the last of the list of months. The fourth column, which is written on the very edge of the tablet, sometimes extending almost to the reverse, probably contained additional information as to certain months. The last paragraph, as will be seen, begins with the character , which I have transcribed *še*, but which may be intended for *Adaru* (*Adar*) the name of the month in the corresponding section in the foregoing column.

As for the characters and numbers (other than the names of the months) it is difficult to give any certain indications as to their signification. *Dir* means "to fill," "to destroy," "to stretch out," &c., also apparently "grey," "dusky"; *si* (which may also be read *igi*) means "eye," "front or "before," and "to see" or "to appear"; *ina ša harran* possibly means "according to the road;" the meanings of *na* are "he" or "that," "stone," and "to answer;" *mi* means "night" or "dark;" *me* means "libation," &c., "command," "voice," "bright," and is used, in Akkadian, to express a certain pronoun and some interrogatives; *šu* means "to destroy," "to set, of the sun," &c., *ina* means "in;" and *ša* means "of" or "from," also "to make," &c. For all the possible significations of the above-named characters, however, we have not space here.

I append herewith a complete transcription of the obverse, and shall be glad to answer any question as to possible improved transcriptions and readings of the characters, which are not always certain even for the numbers,—usually so clear in Babylonian and Assyrian texts.

TRANSCRIPTION OF THE REVERSE.

Šattu sibittu Kam-bu-zi-ia									
Nsannu 1 dir 30 šī Abu 30 10 (?)									
ina ša harran na 14 3 30									
mi 13 dir ina 9 me mi 15 130(?)									
10 150 šū 15 11									
mi 15 dir 8 20 mi mi 16 7 30									
14 ša 40 na 27 20 140									
27 dir ina 16 Ululu 1 15 40									
Aaru 30 23 13 11 šū 10(?)									
13 8 20 šū 14 4 na mi 15(?)									
mi 14 1 me mi 15 80 me 14 5									
14 100 na mi 16 8 40 mi mi 15 10 20									
mi 14 14 30 mi 28 15 27 20 1									
27 21									
Simannu 30 18 30 13 6 30 šū Sabātu 1 20 2									
mi 14 9 30 me mi 14 7 30 me mi 13 17 21									
14 4 šū 14 12 na mi 14 60 40 mi									
mi 15 5 mi mi 15 3 mi 14 na									
15 5 30 na 26 22 27 17									
27 24									
Arah-samnu 30 12 40 Adaru 20 28 30									
Du'uzu 1 27 13 15 šū 12 10 30 šū									
13 11 šū 14 5 na mi 13 20 me									
mi 14 4 me mi 15 1 me 13 šū u na nu-du									
14 4 na mi 16 14 mi mi 14 10 mi									
mi 15 8 30 mi 26 26 5 23 27 12									
27 15									
Adaru mahru 1 19 mi 13 90 šū									
13 5 20 šū mi 14 3 mi									
14 5 40 na 27 21(?)									

As noted above, the inscription on the reverse is divided into 6 sections. The first four refer to certain months and stars; and as the scribe thought that there might be ambiguity as to the date to which the paragraphs referred, he has written, at the beginning of each, on the edge of the tablet, the characters 𐎠𐎢𐎽 šattu sibittu, "seventh year." The first paragraph refers to the star 𐎠𐎢𐎽 (Sag-me-gar or Sag-we-gar generally read *Sak-me-sa*), and mentions the month Elul (which is followed by the number 22, apparently equivalent to "22nd day"), Tebet (28th day) and Ve-Adar. In the 4th line are the characters "year 8," followed by the signs "Iyyar 25," and after this we have "Elul 4" (5th and 6th characters from the end).

The second paragraph of the reverse refers to the star Dilbat or Dilmu (𐎠𐎢𐎽), "Sivan 10," "Sivan 27," "Adar 7," and apparently Ve-

78-11-7, 4. (OBVERSE).

水 一 房 卒 六 迷 四

十一 期 三 今 月 立 三 三

一 一 一 一 一 一 一 一 一 一

三 三 三 三 三 三 三 三 三 三

三 三 三 三 三 三 三 三 三 三

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三 三 三 三 三 三 三 三 三 三

[Hebrew text, mostly illegible due to heavy noise and fading]

[Hebrew text, mostly illegible due to heavy noise and fading]

78-11-7, 4. (REVERSE).

必 領 必 立 三 十 五 下 中 一 今 無 一 六 口
 風 三 林 無 一 今 立 三 一 今 五 五 必 領
 必 領 必 立 三 十 一 無 無 一 五 五 必 領 三 林 五 六 口

必 領 必 立 三 十 一 今 五 五 五 五 必 領 一 立
 一 無 今 今 必 領 一 立 一 無 五 五 六 口 必 領
 必 領 十 三 一 六 一 無 四 今

必 領 風 三 十 五 一 無 無 一 五 五 必 領 三 林 無 一 今 必 領
 必 領 必 立 三 十 六 口

必 領 必 立 三 十 五 一 五 六 一 今 十 十 六 口
 風 三 一 五 五 五 今 必 領 必 領 必 立 三 十 五 口
 必 領 必 立 三 十 五 一 六 口

必 領 必 立 三 十 五 一 五 六 一 今 十 十 六 口
 風 三 一 五 五 五 今 必 領 必 領 必 立 三 十 五 口
 必 領 必 立 三 十 五 一 六 口
 必 領 必 立 三 十 五 一 五 六 一 今 十 十 六 口
 必 領 必 立 三 十 五 一 五 六 一 今 十 十 六 口
 必 領 必 立 三 十 五 一 五 六 一 今 十 十 六 口
 必 領 必 立 三 十 五 一 五 六 一 今 十 十 六 口
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 必 領 必 立 三 十 五 一 五 六 一 今 十 十 六 口
 必 領 必 立 三 十 五 一 五 六 一 今 十 十 六 口

Adar, in the 7th year of Cambyses, is mentioned in connection with it. "Nisam 13," in the 8th year, is also mentioned in the last line of this paragraph.

The third paragraph refers to a star represented by the characters $\rightarrow\text{†}\text{E}\text{I}\text{C}\text{I}$, the months and days being "Elul 3," "Tisri, 13," "Ve-Adar," apparently, and "Ab 29" of the 8th year,

The fourth paragraph refers to the star $\rightarrow\text{†}\text{I}\text{Y}\text{A}\text{R}\text{I}\text{S}\text{I}\text{S}\text{I}$, *Mustabarrû-mûtanu*, the months and days being "Iyyar 28," "Elul 13," "Ve-Adar," and "Ab 12" in the 8th year. The 9th year is also mentioned in connection with "Iyyar 9," and the word "king."

The fifth paragraph apparently refers wholly to the 7th year, and mostly to the month Tisri, the name of this month occurring at the beginning of five of the seven lines of which the paragraph is composed. The first line of the paragraph contains the number "93," and refers to (the star) $\text{E}\text{I}\text{S}\text{E}\text{I}$ (*Gut-tam*); the second line contains the number 23, and refers to *Sag-me-gar*; the third has the number 29, and mentions *Dilbat* or *Dilmu*, ($\rightarrow\text{†}\text{D}\text{I}\text{L}\text{B}\text{A}\text{T}$); the fourth has the number 12 and refers to $\rightarrow\text{†}\text{E}\text{I}\text{C}\text{I}$ (see the third paragraph) and $\rightarrow\text{†}\text{S}\text{I}\text{G}\text{M}\text{E}\text{G}\text{A}\text{R}$ (*Sig-me-gar*); the fifth line contains the number 11, and mentions *Mustabarrû-mûtanu* (compare paragraph 4 of the reverse), and mentions also *Sig-me-gar*; the sixth line of the fifth paragraph mentions "Marcheswan 2" in conjunction with $\rightarrow\text{†}\text{E}\text{I}\text{C}\text{I}$ and $\rightarrow\text{†}\text{D}\text{I}\text{L}\text{B}\text{A}\text{T}$ (*Dilbat* or *Dilmu*); and the seventh refers to "Tebet 5" in conjunction with $\rightarrow\text{†}\text{E}\text{I}\text{S}\text{E}\text{I}$ and *Dilbat* or *Dilmu*.

With the sixth and last paragraph we have something more interesting and certain, namely, a reference to two eclipses of the moon which took place in the 7th year of Cambyses. I give here a transcription and translation of the whole paragraph:--

19. Šattu sibittu, Du'uzu, mûšû irba-išrit, estin šinipat kaspu šalmu ukî
 20. Sin antalu innadar ša iši irihi karnu ukî
 21. Tebetu, mûšû irba-išrit šanê bar kaspu, šalmu âna nûr irihi
 22. Šin antalu innadar ša manzazu n karnu ina libbi ukî
 19. "7th year, Tammuz, night 14, 1½ hour darkness was caused,
 20. an eclipse darkened Sin, which was partial, to the moon a horn it made
 21. Tebet, night 14, 2½ hours, darkness to the light of the moon,
 22. An eclipse darkened Sin, which a station, and a horn in the midst caused."

The above interesting notice is of great value, not only for the statement as to the eclipses, but also on account of our having here for the first time, the Assyrian word for "moon," *irihi* $\text{E}\text{I}\text{R}\text{I}\text{H}\text{I}$ (*i-ri-hi*, oblique case), the Hebrew יְרִיחַ , as distinguished from the moon-god (Sin, SIN , or $\rightarrow\text{†}\text{S}\text{I}\text{N}$) also mentioned in the above extract.

It is to be noted, that the above paragraph may contain predictions, and not records, of eclipses.