

Aramaic Notes I: Column 36 of 11QtgJb

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In their *editio princeps* of the Job Targum from Qumran (11QtgJb)¹ the editors, J. P. M. van der Ploeg and A. S. van der Woude, have performed a signal service, providing accurate readings, excellent photographs, and a provisionally serviceable translation and commentary. No more is or can be expected of such an edition. Required now is the effort of the community of scholars as a whole, offering corrections, suggestions, and strictures as to the interpretation of the text, leading eventually to a more or less definitive edition. Compare, for example, the equally fine *editio princeps* of the Genesis Apocryphon² with Professor J. Fitzmyer's revised, authoritative presentation.³ In this spirit I present here my suggestions regarding one column of the Job Targum.⁴

Text

COLUMN 36: Job 41:7-17

- | | | | |
|---|--|-------|------------------|
| 1 | ר] | [וחי | חדה ⁸ |
| 2 | לחדה ידבֿקן ורוח ל[את] נעול בינה \\\ ון אנתה | | |
| 3 | לחברתה חענן ולא יתפ[ר] שן ¹⁰ עמישתה תדלֿק | | |
| 4 | נורא בין עינוהי כממח פ? א "מן פמה לפידין | | |
| 5 | יפקן כ! לשני אשה ירמון "מן נחירוה יפק תנן | | |
| 6 | לכוש יקד ומגמר "נפשה ג[מ]רין תגסא וזיקין | | |
| 7 | יפקן מן פמה "בצורה יבית תקפה וקדמוהי | | |

1 J. P. M. van der Ploeg and A. S. van der Woude, with B. Jongeling, *Le Targum de Job de la grotte XI de Qumran* (Leiden, 1971).

2 N. Avigad and Y. Yadin, *A Genesis Apocryphon* (Jerusalem, 1956).

3 J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave I*, 2nd rev. ed. (Rome, 1971).

4 My thanks are due to Professors Fitzmyer, H. L. Ginsberg, and M. Held, who read the manuscript and whose suggestions have been, of course, always weighed carefully if not always accepted.

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8 תרוט עלימו ¹⁵קפלי בשרה דבקין נסיכי]ן עלוהי9 כפרולא ¹⁶ולב [ה]ך כאב[ן]] ו [

10]תק[פה] [

Translation

8. They cleave [one] to the other and the wind cann[ot e]nter between them. 9. Each to its neighbor . . . and they do not sep[ar]ate. 10. His sneeze lights a fire between his eyes like . . . 11. Torch flames come forth from his mouth; they bound like tongues of fire. 12. From his nostrils smoke issues, a burning and glowing brazier. 13. His throat vomits glowing coals, and lightning bolts come forth from his mouth. 14. In his neck strength dwells, and before him mightiness runs. 15. The scales of his flesh are fast, welded on him like iron. 16. His heart is founded like stone. 17. His st[rength] . . .

Commentary

Verses 8-9. The shift from MT's masculine forms to feminine forms is exegetical. It reflects either *šynyw* of the preceding verse or a word denoting 'scales', as traditional exegesis would have it.⁵ The Aramaic words for 'scales'—*qlpy* in Targum Onkelos, *qsqsyyyn* in TJ III M (= Neofiti Margin),⁶ *knpym* in Samaritan, and Syriac *qlpt* (plural *qlp* or *qlpāt*)—all seem to be feminine, except perhaps Onkelos' *qlpy*. Any feminine noun whose plural is formed with the masculine morpheme (as any of the above) could be restored with *why* of line 1.⁷

Verse 9. *h'nn*: While the reading of the text seems certain, some corruption here is not excluded—for both phonological and semantic reasons. Aramaic does not tolerate *h* and ' in contiguous position within a root. The root *maḥaḍa* is already *mḥ* (not *mḥ'*) in Old Aramaic as well as Official Aramaic.⁸ While there is attested in an Elephantine ostrakon⁹ one occurrence of a presumed root *rh'* cognate with Hebrew *rhṣ* and meaning 'to wash', the text there is somewhat suspect because of the absence of energetic *nun* before the suffix; and even Leander,¹⁰ who identifies the form as Kurz-Aorist (jussive), feels constrained to mark it as doubtful. Moreover, even if accepted it is three centuries prior to our form.

5 Cf. Ibn Ezra ad loc.

6 Since Targum Pseudo-Jonathan is designated TJ I and Fragmententargum TJ II, there is no reason that Neofiti should not be TJ III.

7 Brockelmann, *Lexicon Syriacum*, 2nd ed. (reprint: Hildesheim, 1966), 670.

8 See M. Held, *JAOS* 79 (1959), 171, with literature.

9 E. Sachau, *Aramäische Papyrus und Ostraka* (Leipzig, 1911), 233.

10 P. Leander, *Laut und Formen Lehre des Agyptisch-Aramäischen* (rep.: Hildesheim, 1966), 53.

The argument against a root with *ḥ*' in Qumran is strengthened considerably by the following comparison, which Professor Ginsberg suggested to me. In our very text are attested numerous occurrences of a root *ḥ*'*q* meaning 'to laugh'. Since this root is clearly derived from *ḏḥq* by metathesis, we would expect here rather *ḥ*'*q*; but we clearly have the 'already dissimilated to '.¹¹ We find reflexes of the root *ḥ*-*ḏ*-*n* in Aramaic as *ḥn*' 'lap' in Syriac,¹² *HN*' in Mandaic,¹³ and *ḥn*' in Jewish Aramaic (JA).¹⁴

A stronger argument can be adduced from semantic considerations. The scales of a "crocodile" (or whatever Leviathan may mean here) simply do not "embrace" each other. The vocable *ḥ/ḥ-ḏ-n* appears in Akkadian, Arabic, Ethiopic, Hebrew, and Aramaic as a *primary noun* (*qutl* or *qitl*) meaning 'lap' or 'bosom'. In Akkadian *ḥiṣnu* means protection while the verb *ḥaṣānu* denotes 'to shelter, protect' (// *puzzuru* and *ḥatānu*).¹⁵ In other Semitic languages in which the verb is attested it simply means 'to hold in one's lap or bosom'. In Mandaic it appears as *HN*' 'to take on the lap, catch to the bosom, enfold'. Drower and Macuch¹⁶ took our vocable as a by-form of *HNN*, thereby creating certain etymological difficulties which are clarified when we compare *HN*' with *ḥḏn*. Therefore, a semantic extension to two inanimate objects ('scales of a buckler' as the editors would have it) grasping each other seems far-fetched.

Verse 10. nūrā 'fire': The translator read *ūr* not MT's *ōr*; otherwise he would have employed *nbwr*. *kmmḥ p[r]*: Van der Ploeg's solution to this crux—"like the beating of dawn"—is excluded on various grounds: (a) To assume a secondary root *mḥḥ* from *mḥ*' is a self-contradiction. For if the root **mḥ*' had already been dissimilated to *mḥ*' (see above on verse 9), Aramaic would likewise no longer have tolerated the root **mḥḥ*. (b) To assume a word *pr*' meaning 'dawn' on the basis of the Babylonian text of Daniel 6:20,

11 J. C. Greenfield, *JAOS* 82 (1962), 290.

12 Brockelmann, *Lexicon Syriacum*, 242.

13 E. S. Drower and R. Macuch, *A Mandaic Dictionary* (Oxford, 1963), 150, who, however, misunderstood the root; see below.

14 See J. Levy, *Wörterbuch* (Leipzig, 1881), 80, who mistook the root for *ḥnn*.

15 Cf. CAD H, 129-30. I incorporate a very helpful note from Howard Wohl, which in no way invalidates my argument:

The form is *qitl*. Thus, Arabic *ḥiḏn^{um}*, Akkadian *ḥiṣnu*, Ethiopic *ḥēṣēnē*, Hebrew **ḥēṣen* (Ps. 129:7), and Syriac *ḥanā* (Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* [Oxford, 1903], 148b). [Note that the Syriac goes back to **ḥa'nā* from an original **ḥiḏn* (compare Philippi's Law [ZDMG 32 (1978), 41-42]).] The only exception is Hebrew *ḥōṣen* (from **ḥuḏn?*), which is an inner Hebrew phenomenon.

Akkadian *ḥaṣānu* also means 'to hold, cradle (in the arms)'. For example, *ina kirimmiša ṭābi taḥsinkāma taḥtina* (*ḥtn*) *gimir lānika* "She (i.e. Ishtar) held you in the sweet crook of her arm and protected your entire external being (i.e. 'your body' or simply 'you')." [Asb. B v 71-72 = Piepkorn AS 5, 66]. The noun *ḥiṣnu*, of course, occurs only in the phrase *ḥiṣin ili* 'protection of the god(s)'. But considering the metaphoric possibilities of *sānu*, one cannot escape the conclusion that *ḥiṣnu* originally meant 'bosom, lap' and by metonymy came to acquire its attested meaning of 'protection'.

where *šprpr* is written as two words, is highly questionable. *šprpr* is clearly a *qtaltal* of *špr*.¹⁷

Verse 11. The correct reading is undoubtedly *klyšny*. Although the *b* seems clear, the *k* and *b* are so close in the script that an error is not excluded. For *lšwn š*, see Isa. 5:24 (= Akkadian *lišān girri* and Arabic *lisānu nārin*, as Professor Held informs me). *yrtwn*: From *rwṭ* 'run' not *rtṭ*!; the editors present both possibilities. Compare Ezek. 1:13-14. This is exactly the same image of flames "flashing forth." As Kimchi and others have noted, *rš*' is to be equated with *rwš*. It stands to reason that our translator had the passage from Ezekiel in mind, an association prompted by the word *lpydym* that is found in both places.

Verse 12. *lkwš*: In the light of Tg. Zech 12:6,¹⁸ it seems clear that we must take the *l* as part of the root. The phrase would then be an appositional one (see the translation above). This vocable is also attested in Samaritan, where it translates Hebrew *lhṭ* twice.¹⁹ The suggestion of the editors to read here *l + kwš* is therefore excluded. Our word may be related to Mishnaic *lkš*, a plant used for wicks.²⁰ *m^egammar*: certainly a verb meaning 'to burn'. In both Syriac and JA there is a vocable *gmwrt* denoting 'burning coal'.²¹ The clincher is Ben Sira 43:4 where *gimmer* parallels *kwš* and clearly means 'to burn'.²² This interpretation serves in turn as further confirmation of a reading 'gm' in lieu of MT's 'gmn'.²³

Verse 14. *trwt*: Further support for reading *trwš* in lieu of MT's *tdwš*.²⁴

Verse 15. *qply*: *qpl* is well established in JA as a metathesis of *qlp*, for which see the references cited in Levy's *Wörterbuch*, 4:354. Note particularly TB *Bab. Bath.* 4b *dqpyl lyb*, where Rashi reads *mq'pyl lyb*, which he in turn glosses by *mqpl lyb*; see the commentary of Sirkes, ad loc. In the same text we encounter *qlyp lyb qylph*, which is clearly identical with *qpyl lyb*. The *Arukh* reads there *qylp* and Rashi *qwpl*.²⁵ The two readings then are clearly free variants of one and the same vocable denoting 'to peel, scrape off'. There is no reason, therefore, that the well attested *qlpyn* in the meaning 'scales' could not appear as *qplyn*. Thus, the editors' proposed emendation to *qply* is gratuitous.

17 See Koehler-Baumgartner, *Lexicon*, 1134b sub *šprpr*; H. Bauer and P. Leander, *Grammatik des Biblische Aramäischen* (rep.: Hildesheim, 1969), § 51j¹¹. Cf. Isa. 2:20, where *hprprwt* is likewise written as two words.

18 See Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic* (1959-73), 3:494.

19 In Gen. 3:24 *lhṭ hḥrb* is glossed in Samaritan *lkwš dḥrb*; cf. also Deut. 32:22.

20 *Shab.* II, 1; see Löw, *Flora*, 3:45.

21 Cf. Peshitta to Prov. 26:21, where it translates Heb. *ghlym*; cf. the Arabic substantive *ḡamra* 'burning coal' and the verb *ḡammara* 'to burn incense', supplied by Professor Held.

22 See Löw, *WZKM* 10 (1897), 135; and M. H. Segal, *Ben Sira* (Jerusalem, 1953), 294 [in Hebrew].

23 See *BH*³ ad loc. and Tur Sinai, *The Book of Job* (Jerusalem, 1967), 570.

24 See Tur Sinai, loc. cit.

25 See R. N. Rabinowicz, *Variae Lectiones in Mischnam et in Talmud Babylonicum* (Munich, 1867-84), ad loc.

Verse 17. tq[ph: Professor Ginsberg suggests this plausible reading in place of the editors' *]ph[dw*. This would then be the translation of MT's *mstw* in place of the *ygrw* thought of by the editors, for which one would rather expect *ydhlwn* or *yzw'wn*.