

## A BABYLONIAN SAINTS' CALENDAR.

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 TRANSLATED BY

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THE curious hemerology of the intercalary Elul which is translated below is interesting on many accounts. It not only proves the existence of a Chaldean ritual and rubric, but also shows that each day of the year had been assigned to its particular deity or patron-saint, in whose honour special ceremonies and services had to be performed. But the chief interest attaching to it is due to the fact that it bears evidence to the existence of a seventh-day sabbath, on which certain works were forbidden to be done, among the Babylonians and Assyrians. It will be observed that several of the regulations laid down are closely analogous to the sabbatical injunctions of the Levitical law and the practice of the Rabbinical Jews. What I have rendered "sabbath" is expressed by two Accadian words, which literally signify "dies nefastus," and a bilingual syllabary makes them equivalent to the Assyrian *yum sulumi*, or "day of completion (of labours)." The word sabbath itself was not unknown to the Assyrians, and occurs under the form of *sabattu* in *W. A. I.*, II., 32, 16, where it is explained as "a day of rest for the

heart." *Sabatu* is also explained to mean "complete" in *W. A. I.*, II., 25, 14.

The calendar is written in Assyrian. The occurrence, however, of numerous Accadian expressions and technical terms shows that it was of Accadian, and therefore non-Semitic, origin, though borrowed by the Semites along with the rest of the old Turanian theology and science. The original text must accordingly have been inscribed at some period anterior to the seventeenth century B.C., when the Accadian language seems to have become extinct. The intercalary Elul itself belonged to the Accadian period. The only intercalary month known to the later Assyrian calendar was the second Adar or Ve-Adar; but besides this month the Accadians at an early date made use also of a second Elul and a second Nisan. It is a proof of the frequency with which the calendar must have got out of order. Curiously enough, a second Elul is mentioned in the Talmud. Elul corresponded roughly with our August.

I have given a translation of the memorandum attached to the 7th day in the *Academy*, Nov., 1875, p. 554. The rest of the inscription has not been translated before. The original text is lithographed in the *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, Vol. IV., pl. 32, 33. For the reason why the 19th day was a sabbath see my Paper on the "Astronomy and Astrology of the Babylonians" in the *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archæology*, Vol. III. 1, p. 207, as well as my account of the Assyrian calendar in *Records of the Past*, Vol. I., p. 166.

## A BABYLONIAN SAINTS' CALENDAR.

## OBVERSE.—COLUMN I.

- 1 The month of the second Elul. The first day. (The feast) of ANU and BEL. A festival.<sup>1</sup>
- 2 When during the month the moon is seen, the Prince of many nations
- 3 (as) his offering<sup>2</sup> a gazelle without blemish to the MOON
- 4 (shall offer) . . . . His offering
- 5 to the SUN the Lady of the world (and) to the MOON the mighty god he makes.
- 6 Sacrifices he offers. Raising his hand the high place of the god he worships.
- 
- 7 The 2nd day. (The feast) of the goddesses.<sup>3</sup> A festival. The King his altar
- 8 to the SUN, the Lady of the world (and) the MOON the mighty god makes.
- 9 Sacrifices he offers.
- 10 Raising his hand at the high place of the god he makes a present.
- 
- 11 The 3rd day. A feast<sup>4</sup> of MERODACH (and) ZIR-PANITU. A festival.
- 12 In the night in the presence of MERODACH and ISTAR
- <sup>1</sup> This is in Accadian. The words signify, literally, "blessed" or "fortunate day."
- <sup>2</sup> This again is Accadian, and may be read simply "what is due to his goddess," *i.e.*, "an offering."
- <sup>3</sup> That is the two Istars (one presiding over the first fifteen days of the month and the other over the last fifteen days).
- <sup>4</sup> The word probably means "the day proclaimed," like the Roman calends. In *W. A. I.*, II. 32, 13, it is explained as "a day of eating."

- 13 the King his offering makes.  
 14 Sacrifices he offers.  
 15 Raising his hand the high place of the god he worships.
- 
- 16 The 4th day. A day of invocation to NEBO (and TASMIT). A festival.  
 17 In the night in the presence of NEBO and TASMIT<sup>1</sup>  
 18 the King his offering makes.  
 19 Sacrifices he offers. The lifting up of his hand (in) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 20 The 5th day. (Dedicated) to BEL of the temple and BELTIS of the temple. A festival.  
 21 In the night in the presence of ASSUR (and) BELTIS  
 22 the King his offering makes.  
 23 Sacrifices he offers. (With) the lifting up of his hand the high place of the god he worships.
- 
- 24 The 6th day. (Dedicated) to RIMMON (and) BELTIS. A festival.  
 25 The King (his) *business does not perform*.  
 26 In the night before the East wind to RIMMON the King his offering makes.  
 27 Sacrifices he offers. The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 28 The 7th day. A feast of MERODACH (and) ZIR-PANITU. A festival.  
 29 A sabbath.<sup>2</sup> The Prince<sup>3</sup> of many nations  
 30 the flesh of *birds* (and) cooked fruit<sup>4</sup> eats not.

<sup>1</sup> Tasmit, "the hearer," was the wife of Nebo, "the prophet."

<sup>2</sup> The two Accadian words here used literally signify dies nefastus, "a day unlawful (to work upon)."

<sup>3</sup> The word used throughout for "prince" is literally "shepherd."

<sup>4</sup> Literally "the cooking of fruit."

- 31 The garments of his body he changes not. White robes he puts not on.
- 32 Sacrifice he offers not. The King (in) his chariot rides not.
- 33 In royal fashion he legislates not. A place of garrison the General (by word of) mouth appoints not.
- 34 Medicine for his sickness of body he applies not.
- 35 To make a *sacred spot* it is suitable.
- 36 In the night in the presence of MERODACH and ISTAR
- 37 the King his offering makes. Sacrifices he offers.
- 38 Raising his hand the high place of the god he worships.
- 
- 39 The 9th day. Day of invocation to NEBO. A festival.
- 40 In the night the Prince of many nations
- 41 his hand for the sacrifice of a sheep makes propitious.
- 42 To NEBO and TASMIT the King his offering makes.
- 43 Sacrifices he offers. The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 44 The 9th day. (Dedicated) to ADAR (and) GULA. A festival.
- 45 In the night in the presence of ADAR (and) GULA the King his offering makes.
- 46 Sacrifices he offers. The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 47 The 10th day. (Dedicated) to BELTIS of the temple and DAYAN. A festival.
- 48 In the night in the presence of the Milky-way<sup>1</sup> and the star (called) the Son of the Moon
- 49 the King his offering makes.
- 50 Sacrifices he offers.
- 51 (With) the lifting up of his hand the high place of the god he worships.

<sup>1</sup> This is called by its Accadian name of *Mar-gidda* or "Long Road."

## COLUMN II.

- 1 The 11th day. The truce-day of TASMIT and ZIR-PANITU. A festival.
- 2 When the moon shall lift up a halo of pale light
- 3 (and) the moon shall fail, the King in the night his offering to the MOON makes.
- 4 Sacrifices he offers. The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 5 The 12th day. Day of gifts to BEL (and) BELTIS. A festival.
- 6 The King his offering to BEL and BELTIS makes.
- 7 Sacrifices he offers. The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 8 The 13th day. (Dedicated) to the MOON, the mighty god. A festival.
- 9 (When) the moon a crown of pale light towards the country lifts up,
- 10 (on) that day firmly the King his offering
- 11 to the SUN the Lady of the world (and) to the MOON the mighty god, makes.
- 12 Sacrifices he offers. The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 13 The 14th day. (Dedicated) to BELTIS (and) NERGA. A festival.
- 14 A sabbath. The Prince of great nations
- 15 The flesh of *birds* (and) cooked fruit eats not.
- 16 The garments of his body he changes not. White robes he wears not.
- 17 A sacrifice he offers not. The King his chariot drives not.

- 18 In royal fashion he does not legislate. A place of garrison the General (by word of) mouth appoints not.
- 19 Medicine to the sickness of his body he applies not.
- 20 To make a *sacred spot* it is suitable. In the night the King his offering to BELTIS
- 21 (and) NERGAL makes. Sacrifices he offers.
- 22 The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 23 The 15th day. (Dedicated) to the Lady of the temple of ANU. The anniversary of the MOON the mighty god.
- 24 A festival. The King his offering to the SUN the Mistress of the world
- 25 (and) to the MOON the mighty god makes. Sacrifices he offers.
- 26 The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 27 The 16th day. The feast of MERODACH (and) ZIRPANITU. A festival.
- 28 The King *his business does not perform*. In the night in the presence of MERODACH
- 29 (and) ISTAR the King his offering makes.
- 30 Sacrifices he offers. The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 31 The 17th day. A day of invocation to NEBO (and) TASMIT. A festival.
- 32 In the night in the presence of NEBO (and) TASMIT
- 33 the King his offering makes. Sacrifices he offers.
- 34 The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 35 The 18th day. The jubilee<sup>1</sup> of the MOON and the SUN. A festival. The King his offering

<sup>1</sup> Literally "the prescribed" or "proclaimed (day)."

- 36 to the SUN the divine Mistress of the world (and) to the  
MOON the mighty god
- 37 makes. Sacrifices he offers.
- 38 The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god  
he presents.
- 
- 39 The 19th day. The white (day)<sup>1</sup> of GULA.<sup>2</sup> A festival.
- 40 A sabbath. The Prince of many nations
- 41 a mess of flesh-meat eats not.
- 42 The garments of his body he changes not. White robes  
he wears not.
- 43 A sacrifice he does not offer. The King a chariot drives  
not.
- 44 In royal fashion he does not legislate. A place of garri-  
son the General
- 45 (by word of) mouth does not appoint. Medicine for  
the sickness of his body he does not apply.
- 46 To make a *sacred spot* it is suitable. The King his  
offering to ADAR and GULA
- 47 makes. Sacrifices he offers.
- 48 The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god  
he presents.
- 
- 49 The 20th day. A day of light (and) gift-making to the  
MOON and SUN. A festival.
- 50 The King to the SUN, the divine Mistress of the world  
(and) to the MOON
- 51 the mighty god his offering makes. Sacrifices he offers.
- 52 The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god  
he presents.
- 

<sup>1</sup> That is "a holyday," like the Latin *dies candidus*.

<sup>2</sup> Gula, "the great goddess," is also called Bahu or "chaos" (the Bohu of Genesis). She was the wife of Hea, and in her capacity as "Lady of the House of Death," was addressed as Nin-ci-gal, "Lady of the great Country," *i.e.*, Hades.



## REVERSE.—COLUMN III.

- 1 The 21st day. The anniversary<sup>1</sup> of the MOON and SUN.  
A festival.
- 2 A sabbath. The Prince of many nations  
3 the flesh of *birds* (and) cooked fruit eats not.
- 4 The garments of his body he changes not. White robes  
he wears not.
- 5 A sacrifice he offers not. The King a chariot drives  
not.
- 6 In royal fashion he legislates not. A place of garrison  
the General (by word of) mouth appoints not.
- 7 Medicine for the sickness of his body he applies not.
- 8 To make a *sacred spot* it is suitable. At dawn the  
King his offering  
9 to the SUN the divine Mistress of the world (and) to the  
MOON the mighty god  
10 makes. A sacrifice he offers.
- 11 The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god  
he presents.
- 
- 12 The 22nd day. The anniversary of (the MOON and)  
SUN. The jubilee of the Lady of the temple. A festival.
- 13 The King his offering to the SUN the divine Mistress of  
the world (and to the MOON the mighty god) makes.
- 14 Sacrifices he offers. The lifting up of his hand (at) the  
high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 15 The 23rd day. The jubilee of the SUN and of the Air-  
god. A festival.
- 16 The King his offering to the SUN and RIMMON<sup>2</sup> makes.

<sup>1</sup> The Assyrian word is *caccarrit*, "a circling period."

<sup>2</sup> Rimmon was the Assyrian Air-god, whose name has been otherwise read Bin, Vul, Iva and Ao.

- 17 A sacrifice he offers. The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 18 The 24th day. The jubilee of the Lord of the temple and of the Lady of the temple. A festival.
- 19 The King his offering to the Lord of the temple and the Lady of the temple
- 20 makes. A sacrifice he offers.
- 21 The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 22 The 25th day. The holiday of BEL (and) BELTIS of Babylon. A festival.
- 23 In the night to BEL in the presence of the Star of the Foundation (and) to BELTIS of Babylon
- 24 in the presence of the Milky-way the King his offering makes.
- 25 A sacrifice he offers. The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 26 The 26th day. The thanksgiving-day of HEA, the mighty god.
- 27 A festival. The King in the night his offering
- 28 to HEA the mighty god makes. A sacrifice he offers.
- 29 The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 30 The 27th day. The day-of-action of NERGAL. The jubilee of ZICUM.<sup>1</sup> A festival.
- 31 The King his offering to NERGAL (and) ZICUM makes.
- 32 A sacrifice he offers. (With) the lifting up of his hand the high place of the god he worships.
- 

<sup>1</sup> Zicum or Zigu, the Sigê of Greek writers, was the sky regarded as the primæval "deep" out of which the universe proceeded. She is called "the mother of Anu and all the gods."

- 33 The 28th day. (Dedicated) to HEA. The rest-day of NERGAL. A festival.
- 34 A sabbath. The Prince of many nations
- 35 the flesh of *birds* (and) cooked fruit eats not.
- 36 The garments of his body he does not change.
- 37 White robes he does not wear.
- 38 A sacrifice he does not offer. The King a chariot does not drive.
- 39 In royal fashion he does not legislate.
- 40 A place of garrison the General (by word of) mouth does not appoint.
- 41 Medicine to the sickness of his body he does not apply.
- 42 To make a *sacred spot* it is suitable.
- 43 To HEA the mighty god (his offering the King) makes.
- 44 Sacrifices he offers. The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 45 The 29th day. The rest-day of the MOON.
- 46 The day (when) the spirits of heaven (and) the spirits of earth are invoked.
- 47 A festival. The King his offering to the MOON the mighty god makes.
- 48 Sacrifices he offers. The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
-

## COLUMN IV.

- 1 The 30th day. (Dedicated) to ANU (and) BEL. A festival.
- 2 The King his offering to ANU and BEL makes.
- 3 Sacrifices he offers. The lifting up of his hand (at) the high place of the god he presents.
- 
- 4 The month of the second Elul from the 1st day to the 30th day.
- 5 The King, if (for) his god or his goddess
- 6 or his gods the ruined rites he restores, that King has a divine colossus<sup>1</sup> (as) a god
- 7 In the month of the second Elul the King of the country builds the edifice of a god's temple,
- 8 if he makes an altar . . . . .
- 9 his heart is not good.
- 10 In the month of the second Elul the King a fortress restores.
- 
- 11 The month Tisri (is dedicated) to the Sun-god, the warrior of the world . . . . .
- 12 *Sacrifices are burnt* to BEL on the first day (which is dedicated) to ANU and BEL.
- 13 (*Colophon.*) The 8th tablet (beginning) "The MOON, the Lord of the month."
- 14 Country of ASSUR-BANI-PAL, the King of multitudes, King of Assyria.

<sup>1</sup> These divine colossi were the composite figures placed at the entrance of houses to protect them from the attack of evil spirits.

I add here a list of the months and their patron-deities, which has already been given by the late Mr. G. Smith in the Appendix of his *History of Assur-bani-pal*, pp. 325, 326. The cuneiform text will be found *W. A. I.*, IV. 33.

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- 1 The month Nisan (dedicated) to ANU and BEL.
  - 2 The month Iyyar (dedicated) to HEA the Lord of mankind.
  - 3 The month Sivan (dedicated) to the Moon-god, the eldest son of BEL.
  - 4 The month Tammuz (dedicated) to the warrior ADAR.
  - 5 The month Ab (dedicated) to (ALLAT) the Mistress of the wood of the right hand.<sup>1</sup>
  - 6 The month Elul (dedicated) to ISTAR, the Lady (of battle).<sup>2</sup>
  - 7 The month Tisri (dedicated) to the Sun-god, the Warrior of the world.
  - 8 The month Marchesvan (dedicated) to the Lord, the Prince of the gods, MERODACH.
  - 9 The month Chisleu (dedicated) to the Mighty hero NERGAL.

<sup>1</sup> That is, the bow. In Smith's *Assur-bani-pal*, p. 272, we read, "the month Ab, the month of the star of the bow (Sagittarius), the daughter of the Moon-god, the archer; (on) the 3rd day, the feast of the king of the gods Merodach." Allat was the queen of Hades, like the Greek Persephonê, though originally merely another form of Istar or Aphrodîtê.

<sup>2</sup> Elul is elsewhere called "the month of the king of the gods, Assur." The second Elul, however, may be referred to here.

- 10 The month Tebet (dedicated) to PAP-SUCCAL, the Messenger of ANU and ISTAR.
- 11 The month Sebat (dedicated) to RIMMON the Minister of heaven and earth.
- 12 The month Adar (dedicated) to the Seven Great Gods.
- 13 The month Ve-Adar (dedicated) to ASSUR the Father of the gods.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We may conclude from this that the intercalary Ve-Adar had no divine regent in Accadian times.



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