

INSCRIPTION
OF
MERODACH BALADAN III.

TRANSLATED BY
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THE stone upon which the following inscription is traced was found on the Western side of the Tigris opposite the town of Baghdad, by the late lamented George Smith. Its date was considered by him to be about B.C. 1340, and to have been written during, or shortly after, the reign of Merodach Baladan, king of Babylon, and grandson of Kuri-galzu, who ascended the throne about B.C. 1370.

This inscription records a grant of 90 acres of land made by the king to his officer Maraduk-zakir-iskur, in return for certain services rendered by him; and upon the back of the stone is a rudely carved picture

of the deities invoked to protect the property, and to punish any one who should remove the boundary stone or wall.

The strong language of the curses at the end of the third column at once remind us of the curse pronounced against those who *remove their neighbour's landmark*, Deut. xxvii. 17, as well as of those in Psalm cix., of which verses 16 and 17 should be compared with lines 32-34; verse 12 with line 36, where the words are almost the same in each.

It is curious and suggestive, that similar precatory curses for the protection of individuals and property are of common occurrence in the Babylonian and Assyrian inscriptions.



INSCRIPTION OF MERODACH BALADAN III.

COLUMN I.

40 enclosures of land, 90 acres,¹
 on the required surface, in great cubits,
 a plot by the town of Dur-zizi,
 along-side the river Tigris,
 in the territory of Dur-Istar ;
 the upper end towards the West
 of the river Tigris,
 the lower end toward the East,
 adjoining
 the house of NAZI-MARDUK,
 within the town of Dur-Istar ;
 the headland towards the North,
 adjoining the city Ilu-Zaqari,
 and the house of TUNA-ISPATE
 the honourable ;
 the lower end on the South,
 adjoining close upon the site
 of the city Dur-Istar,
 and of the city Dur-Ziki,
 which MERODACH BALADAN,
 Lord of thrones,
 Lord of Sumir and Accad,
 Son of MILI-SIHU
 King of the goodly land of Babylon,

¹ Lit. *sekal*, said to contain about 40,000 square yards, *i.e.* an acre.

grandson of KURI-GALZU,¹
a King to whom is no like,
to MERODACH-ZAKIR-IZKUR,
as the proprietor of the territory,
this temple and land,
of the city of Idbi-mut, the perfection
of heaven and earth,
son of NABU-NADIN-AHI,
whose grandfather
was RIMINI-MERODACH,

¹ Mili-Sihu, and Merodach-Baladan the first, are names of Babylonian kings not elsewhere recorded.

COLUMN II.

the direct descendant
 of UBALLITSU-MERODACH,
 the descendant of ZICARU-SALMAN,
 in accordance with the tablets of the kingdom,
 of a family in the city of Adusu,
 a vassal who praises
 the god NEBO and the god SARU,
 and praises the god of corn,
 the god who begat him,
¹ of heaven and earth,
 (in) the temple of the Sun at Borsippa,
 and the upholder of the temple of Zida
 in the day of dwelling therein,
 and in the day of service,
 in company with his Lord
 MERODACH BALADAN.
 (This land) is appointed
 for settled days,
 and months following months,
 and for years
 unbroken,
 to that man
 without interruption.
 For good have I given it
 like the treasure of heaven ;
 as a land of acquisition have I settled it,

¹ Lacuna.

as the result of his labours ;
causing to come forward as a witness
NINIP-TUR-IDINA,
Governor of the territory of Dur-Istar ;
(also) NABU-NAZIR,
son of NAZI-MARDUK, a man of service,
and NABU-SANISMU,
son of ARDU-HEA,
a man of Dugab.¹

¹ Dugab was a king of Sape who was routed by Tiglath-Pileser the first.
It is possible, however, that the name may be that of some office.

COLUMN III.

If a leader, not of low degree,
if a citizen
shall this plot of land
injure
or destroy,
the boundary stone
so that it shall not be conspicuous,
shall remove
this stone (here) placed ;
whether an injurious person or a brother,
whether as one who would take it all away,
whether as an evil person,
whether as an enemy
or any other person,
or the son of the owner of the land,
shall act falsely,
shall tamper with it,
into water into fire
shall cast it,
with a stone shall break it,
from the hand of MARADUK-ZAKIR-ISKUR
and from his seed
shall remove it,
whether above or below
shall break it in pieces,
may the gods ANU, BEL, HEA,
NINIP and GULA,
the Lords of this land,

and all the gods
whose memorials are made known
on this tablet,
violently make his name desolate ;
with unspeakable curse
may they curse him ;
with utter desolation
may they desolate him ;
may they gather his posterity together
for evil
and not for good ;
until the day of the departure
of his life may he come to ruin,
while the gods SHAMAS and MARDUK
rend him asunder ;
and may his name be trodden down.



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