

CHALDEAN HYMNS TO THE SUN.

TRANSLATED BY
FRANCOIS LENORMANT.

THE Sun-god, called in the Accadian *Utu* and *Parra* (the latter is of less frequent occurrence), and in the Semitic Assyrian *Samas*, held a less important rank in the divine hierarchy of the Chaldaic-Babylonian pantheon, afterwards adopted by the Assyrians, than the Moon-god (in the Accadian *Aku*, *Enizuna*, and *Huru-kî*, in the Assyrian *Sin*), who was even sometimes said to be his father. His principal and most common title was "Judge of Heaven and Earth," in the Accadian *dikud ana kîa*, in the Assyrian *dainu sa same u irtsiti*. The most important sanctuaries of the deity were at Larsam, in southern Chaldæa, and Sippara, in the north of Babylonia.

Some few fragments of liturgical or magical hymns addressed to Shamas have come down to us. These are five in number, and I give a translation of them here. They have all been studied previously by other Assyriologists, but I think the present interpretation of them is superior to any which has as yet been furnished.

The following are the chief bibliographical data concerning them :—

I. The primitive Accadian text, accompanied by an interlinear Assyrian version, published in the *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, Vol. IV., pl. 20, No. 2. I put forth a first attempt at a translation in my *Magie chez les Chaldéens* (p. 165), and since then M. Friedrich Delitzsch has given a much better explanation of it (*G. Smith's Chaldäische Genesis*, p. 284). Of this hymn we possess only the first five lines.

II. The primitive Accadian text, with an interlinear Assyrian version, is published in the *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, Vol. IV., pl. 19, No. 2. M. Delitzsch has given a German translation of it in *G. Smith's Chaldäische Genesis*, p. 284, and a revised

one in English has just appeared in Prof. Sayce's *Lectures upon Babylonian Literature*, p. 43.

III. A similar sacred text, published in the *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, Vol. IV., pl. 28, No. 1, in which the indications as to the obverse and reverse of the tablet are incorrect and ought to be altered. The two fragments left to us, separated by a gap, the extent of which it is at present impossible to estimate, belong to an incantatory hymn destined to effect the cure of the king's disease. Interpretations have been attempted in my *Premières Civilisations* (Vol. II., p. 165 et seq.), and in the appendices added by M. Friedrich Delitzsch, to his German translation of G. Smith's work already cited.

IV. The primitive Accadian text with an inter-linear Assyrian version, published in the *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, Vol. IV., pl. 17, col. 1. This hymn, like the preceding one, is intended to be recited by the priest of magic in order to cure the invalid king. I gave a very imperfect translation of it in my *Magie chez les Chaldéens* (p. 166).

V. We possess only the Semitic Assyrian version of this text; it was published in the *Cuneiform*

Inscriptions of Western Asia, Vol. IV., pl. 17, col. 2. As yet, no one has produced a complete translation of this hymn; but a few passages have been quoted by M. Friedrich Delitzsch (*G. Smith's Chaldäische Genesis*, p. 284) and myself (*La Magie chez les Chaldéens*, p. 164, and pp. 179, 180, of the English Edition, 1877).

I refer the reader to the various publications above mentioned for a convincing proof of the entirely revised character of the translations here submitted to him, and I think he will grant that I have made some progress in this branch of knowledge, since my first attempts many years ago.



CHALDEAN HYMNS TO THE SUN.

FIRST HYMN.

- 1 MAGICAL incantation.
- 2 SUN, from the foundations of heaven thou art risen ;
- 3 thou hast unfastened the bolts of the shining skies ;
- 4 thou hast opened the door of heaven.
- 5 SUN, above the countries thou hast raised thy head.
- 6 SUN, thou hast covered the immensity of the heavens and the terrestrial countries.

[The fragments of the four following lines are too mutilated to furnish any connected sense ; all the rest of the hymn is entirely wanting.]

SECOND HYMN.¹

- 1 Lord, illuminator of the the darkness, who piercest the face of darkness,
- 2 merciful god, who settest up those that are bowed down, who sustainest the weak,
- 3 towards the light the great gods direct their glances,
- 4 the archangels of the abyss,² every one of them, contemplate eagerly thy face.
- 5 The language of praise,³ as one word, thou directest it.
- 6 The host of their heads seeks the light of the SUN in the South.⁴
- 7 Like a bridegroom thou retest joyful and gracious.⁵

¹ See also Lenormant, *Chaldean Magic*, p. 180.

² In the Assyrian version : "The archangels of the earth."

³ In the Assyrian version : "The eager language."

⁴ The Assyrian version has simply : "of the Sun."

⁵ "Like a wife thou submittest thyself, cheerful and kindly." Sayce.

- 8 In thy illumination thou dost reach afar to the boundaries of heaven.¹
 9 Thou art the banner of the vast earth.
 10 O God! the men who dwell afar off contemplate thee and rejoice.
 11 The great gods fix²
 12 Nourisher of the luminous heavens, who favourest . . .³
 13 He who has not turned his hands (towards thee³
 14³

THIRD HYMN.

- 1 Thou who marchest before³
 2 With ANU and BEL³
 3 The support of crowds of men, direct them!
 4 He who rules in heaven, he who arranges, is thyself.
 5 He who establishes truth in the thoughts of the nations, is thyself.
 6 Thou knowest the truth, thou knowest what is false.
 7 SUN, justice has raised its head;
 8 SUN, falsehood, like envy, has spoken calumny.
 9 SUN, the servant of ANU and BEL⁴ is thyself;
 10 SUN, the supreme judge of heaven and earth is thyself.
 11 SUN,³

[In this place occurs the gap between the two fragments on the obverse and on the reverse of the tablet.]

- 12 SUN, the supreme judge of the countries, is thyself.
 13 The Lord of living beings, the one merciful to the countries, is thyself.

¹ In the Assyrian version: "Thou art the illuminator of the limits of the distant heavens."

² Here occurs a word which I cannot yet make out.

³ Lacunæ.

⁴ In the Accadian Ana and Mul-ge.

- 14 SUN, illuminate this day the King, son of his god,¹ make
him shine !
- 15 Everything that is working evil in his body, may that be
driven elsewhere.
- 16 Like a cruse of² purify him !
- 17 Like a cruse of milk, make him flow !
- 18 May it flow like molten bronze !
- 19 Deliver him from his infirmity !
- 20 Then, when he revives, may thy sublimity direct him !
- 21 And me, the magician, thy obedient servant, direct me !

FOURTH HYMN.

- 1 Great Lord, from the midst of the shining heavens at thy
rising,
- 2 valiant hero, SUN, from the midst of the shining heavens,
at thy rising,
- 3 in the bolts of the shining heavens, in the entrance
which opens heaven, at thy rising
- 4 in the bar of the door of the shining heavens, in³
at thy rising,
- 5 in the great door of the shining heavens, when thou
openest it.
- 6 in the highest (summits) of the shining heavens, at the
time of thy rapid course,
- 7 the celestial archangels with respect and joy press
around thee ;
- 8 the servants of the Lady of crowns⁴ lead thee in a
festive manner ;

¹ Meaning the pious king.

² Here follows an incomprehensible word.

³ Lacuna.

⁴ In the Assyrian version : "Of the Lady of the gods."

- 9 the¹ for the repose of thy heart fix thy days ;
 10 the multitudes of the crowds on the earth turn their eyes
 often towards thee ;
 11 the Spirits of heaven and earth lead thee.
 12 The¹ thou crushest them with thy strength,
 13¹ thou discoverest them,
 14¹ thou causest to seize,
 15¹ thou directest.

[I am obliged here to pass over five lines which are too mutilated for me to attempt to translate them with any degree of certainty.]

- 21 The Lord, as to me, has sent me ;
 22 the great god, HEA, as to me, has sent me.²
 23 Settle what has reference to him,³ teach the order which
 concerns him, decide the question relating to him.
 24 Thou, in thy course thou directest the human race ;
 25 cast upon him a ray of peace, and let it cure his suffering.
 26 The man, son of his god,⁴ has laid before thee his
 shortcomings and his transgressions ;
 27 his feet and his hands are in pain, grievously defiled by
 disease.
 28 SUN, to the lifting up of my hands pay attention ;
 29 eat his food, receive the victim, give his god (for a
 support) to his hand !
 30 By his order let his shortcomings be pardoned ! let his
 transgressions be blotted out !
 31 May his trouble leave him ! may he recover from his
 disease !

¹ Lacunæ.

² There is no Assyrian version of this line, we have only the Accadian.

³ The invalid on behalf of whom the invocation is recited.

⁴ The pious man.

- 32 Give back life to the King !¹
 33 Then, on the day that he revives, may thy sublimity
 envelop him !
 34 Direct the King who is in subjection to thee !
 35 And me, the magician, thy humble servant, direct me !

FIFTH HYMN.²

- 1 Magical incantation.
 2 I have invoked thee, O SUN, in the midst of the high
 heavens.
 3 Thou art in the shadow of the cedar, and
 4 thy feet rest on the summits.
 5 The countries have called thee eagerly, they have
 directed their looks towards thee, O Friend ;
 6 thy brilliant light illuminates every land,
 7 overthrowing all that impedes thee, assemble the
 countries,
 8 for thou, O SUN, knowest their boundaries.
 9 Thou who annihilatest falsehood, who dissipatest the evil
 influence
 10 of wonders, omens, sorceries, dreams, evil apparitions,
 11 who turnest to a happy issue malicious designs, who
 annihilatest men and countries
 12 that devote themselves to fatal sorceries, I have taken
 refuge in thy presence.
 13³
 14 Do not allow those who make spells, and are hardened,
 to arise ;

¹ From this verse onwards the Assyrian version is wanting.

² Cf. also *Chaldean Magic*, p. 185, 186.

³ Here I am obliged to omit a line, which I cannot yet make out.

- 15 Frighten their heart¹
16 Settle also, O SUN, light of the great gods.
17 Right into my marrow, O Lords of breath, that I may
rejoice, even I.
18 May the gods who have created me take my hands!
19 Direct the breath of my mouth! my hands
20 direct them also, Lord, light of the legions of the
heavens, SUN, O Judge!
21 The day, the month, the year¹
22¹ conjure the spell!
23¹ deliver from the infirmity!

¹ Lacunæ.



END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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