

TEXT OF AMMISATANA, KING OF BABYLON
FROM ABOUT 2115 TO 2090 B.C.

TRANSLATED BY THEO. G. PINCHES

THIS text is written on a small broken tablet of unbaked clay, in archaic characters. Unfortunately, however, the end of the obverse and the beginning of the reverse are wanting, and many of the lines are exceedingly imperfect. The text is nevertheless of the first importance, not only on account of the historical information it gives, but also for the Akkadian language. As it is recorded in the colophon that it is "from Bêl-usallim," written in late Babylonian, it is clear that it is a copy made about 550 B.C., probably from a stone slab. The number is 80-11-12, 185.

TRANSLATION

OBVERSE

1. Ammi-sa[tana]

2. the powerful king,

3. king of BABYLON,

4. king of KĒS,

5. king of SUMER [and AKKAD],

6. king of the *vast* (?)
 7. land of PHENICIA am I;
 8. descendant
 9. of Sumu-la-ilu (or Sumulan),
 10. eldest son
 11. of Abēsu' am I,
 12. obedient (?) [to ?] BEL,
 13. the seat (?)

REVERSE

1. his (?)
 2. . [in] a seat of gladness
 3. he has made him sit
 4.
 5. his stronghold.
 6. MERODACH
 7. has disclosed him (as) a man of power—
 8. let be confirmed in heaven and earth,
 9. his name.
 10. From Bêl-usallim
 11. son of . . . -bi, the incantor.¹

¹ The following is a transcription of the original text :—

OBSERVE

1. Am - mi - sa - [ta - na]
 2. lugal esig - [ga]
 3. lugal Ka - dingir - ra ki
 4. lugal Kês ki
 5. lugal Ki-en-gi ki Ura
 6. lugal da - ga - [la ?]
 7. mada Mar - tu-(ki)-me[-en]
 8. (khi-bi-es-su):sa-pal[-pal]
 9. Su-mu-la-ilu[-gi ?]
 10. du ur-sag -
 11. A-bi-e-su'-a-me-en
 12. se-[ga ?] . . D.P. En-lil-la
 13. ki-[tur ?]

REVERSE

1. . . bi
 2. . . ki-tur alal-la
 3. . ne-ni-dur-ru-
 4.
 5. bada - ga (?)
 6. D.P. Silik - lu - sara
 7. lu ni-a ne-in-bur-ru-da-a
 8. imi-ki-a gha-ra-ab-ga-ga
 9. mu - bi - im
 10. Sa¹Bêl-u-sa-al-li-im
 11. abil . . bi (?) D.P. a-si-pu

The importance of this text lies in the statement that this king Ammi-satana, descendant of Sumula-îlu or Sumulan (2317-2282 B.C.), the second of the Dynasty of Babylon,¹ son of Abēsu'² (2140-2115 B.C.) the eighth of the same dynasty, was not only king of Babylon, Kês (Hymer), Sumer, and Akkad, but of Phœnicia (Martu) as well. This is probably the first indication that the sway of the Babylonian kings of that early period extended so far, and would explain (as Prof. Sayce has pointed out to me) how it was that Babylonian became the language of diplomacy throughout Western Asia.

In this text Ammi-satana traces his descent from Sumula-îlu or Sumulan, the second king of the dynasty, without mentioning any of the intermediate rulers (six in number), of whom Khammu-rabi, a most renowned king, was one. The reason why he does not mention the first of the dynasty, Sumu-abi, as his ancestor, probably lies in the fact that (as indicated by the Babylonian canon) he was not descended from him,³ though belonging to the same family.

It is worthy of note that the names of the kings (eleven in number) of this dynasty are Semitic, all but two or three being of foreign form, though some seem to be expressed in the Akkadian style. The

¹ See vol. i. p. 13.

² Called Ebisum in the canon (vol. i. p. 13).

³ The words "son of the same" (*i.e.* of Sumu-abi, the first king of the dynasty) are not placed against the name Sumula-îlu or Sumulan. See *P. S. B. A.* for Dec. 1880, p. 21, and Schrader, *Die Keilinschriftliche Babylonische Königsliste*, col. i. l. 2 of the *Anlage*.

dynasty to which Ammi-satana belonged is called by the Babylonians "the dynasty of Babylon," but, notwithstanding this, they may easily have been of foreign origin—perhaps Arabian.

In line 8 there was in Bêl-usallim's original a mutilated part at the beginning of the line. This he has indicated in the usual way, by inserting *khibi essu* or *khibessu*, "a recent break," or "defaced." The following word, however, is clear,—it is *sa-pal*-[*pal*], generally transcribed *lib-pal-pal*. This group is equivalent to *binbinu*, "grandson," "descendant," and seems to be a genuine Akkadian word. If this be so, the forms of the Assyrian names Assur-natsir-pal, Assur-banî-pal, etc., are even more incorrect than was formerly supposed, for it takes away the justification for reading the Assyrian for "son" as *pal*. The correct forms are Assur-natsir-apli, Assur-banî-apli, etc., for that *aplu* (*apli*, *apla*) could ever become *pal* in the mouth of an Assyrian is an impossibility.

END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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