

ODDS AND ENDS

A PAYMENT IN REEDS

The NA text discussed here was edited in photograph (only Obverse), copy, transcription and translation by A. Kirk Grayson in the volume *Ladders to Heaven*¹, as no.84 (pp. 126-127). There is, of course, very little to be added to Grayson's edition: thanks to his fine copy, a few variant suggestions on Aramaic personal names (ll. 13, 19, etc.) may be offered. And the final clause of this judicial decision from Guzana may be subjected to a closer look and a more literal translation (ll. 21 ff.).

Transliteration

Obverse

- 1 NA₄.KIŠIB ¹MAN-nu-ri A ¹Na-ni
- 2 de-e-nu ša ¹MAN.ZÁLAG *TA Se-er-nu-ri
- 3 ina UG^U ^{SAL}GÉME^{MES} ig¹-ru-u-ni
- 4 ina IGI ^dIM ^rURU^U Gu-za-na iq-ṭar-bu ^dIM

(2 STAMP SEAL IMPRESSIONS)

- 5 1 1/2 MA.NA KÙ.BABBAR a-na ¹Se-er-nu-ri e-te-me-di
- 6 ¹Se-er-ZÁLAG 1 1/2 MA.NA KÙ.BABBAR a-na ¹MAN-ZÁLAG
- 7 ú-sa-IGI^{II} it-ti-din šùl-mu bir-ti ¹MAN-ZÁLAG

Lower Edge

- 8 bir-ti ¹Se-er-ZÁLAG ma-nu ša i-bal-kàt-u-ni
- 9 10 MA.NA KÙ.BABBAR 5 MA.NA KÙ.GI a-na ^dIM

¹) O.W. Muscarella (Ed.), *Ladders to Heaven. Art Treasures from the Lands of the Bible*, Toronto 1981.

Reverse

- 1 *i-dan* ^dAš+šur ^dUTU *lu-u* <EN> *de-e-nu-šú*¹
 2 ^{ITI}ŠE *lim-mu* ¹10-*rém-a-ni*
 3 IGI ¹10-AŠ.A A ¹Di-[?]*i-ba-a*
 4 IGI ¹10-na-*tar*¹ ^{LÚ}ŠANGA *ša* ^dIM
 5 IGI ¹Mar-^rda¹-*ša-ni*
 6 IGI ¹Sa-si-i IGI ¹Sa-na-a
 7 IGI ¹Ta-da-la-a IGI ¹Sa-gíb-MAN[?]
 8 IGI ¹Bu-u[?]-šú[?] IGI ¹KUR.DINGIR-a-a
 9 IGI ¹Za-bi-ni A ¹SUHUS-^{URU}Ni-nu-u
 10 IGI ¹Ha-la¹-rim IGI ¹10-KI-ia
 11 IGI ¹10-ra-hi-me IGI ¹ZÁLAG-DINGIR

Left Hand Edge

- 12 2 MA.NA KÙ.BABBAR ¹MAN-ZÁLAG
 13 ¹Se-er-nu-E¹ *ina* ^{URU}Ni-nu-u
 14 *TA *e-bi-su qa-ni*
 15 2 MA.NA KÙ.BABBAR 1 1/2 MA.NA KÙ.BABBAR
 16 ^dIM *e-te-me-di*
 17 *ú-sa-IGI*^{II} *it-ti-din*
 18 *šul-mu ina bir-ti-šú*<-nu[?]>

Translation

(1) Seal of Šarru-nuri, son of Nani. The lawsuit which Šarru-nuri initiated against Ser-nuri concerning handmaids: they came before the god Adad of Guzana, and Adad imposed 1 1/2 minas of silver as fine upon Ser-nuri. (6) Ser-nuri has given in full the 1/2 minas of silver to Šarru-nuri. There is judicial peace between Šarru-nuri and between Ser-nuri. (8) Whoever will contravene (against this decision), will pay 10 minas of silver, 5 minas of gold to the god Adad. Aššur and Šamaš will truly be his judicial adversaries.

(Rev. 2) The month Addaru (= XII), eponymy of Adad-remanni.

(Rev. 3-11) (Witnesses)

(Rev. 12) (Concerning:) The two minas of silver of Šarru-nuri. Ser-nuri was in Nineveh, and out of a bundle of reeds of 2 minas of silver in weight, the god Adad imposed the 1 1/2 minas of silver, and gave it to him (= Šarru-nuri) in full. There is judicial peace between them (?)”

Notes

2. Admittedly, with Grayson, *Se-er* is an unusual form of the Aramaic divine name

*Š^ohr (usually presenting initial š in cuneiform renderings). But in the light of an analysis of West Semitic personal Names in NA and NB cuneiform bearing the phoneme /š^o/, it must be noticed that forms with initial Š- exist alongside the ones with Š- or even with T- (e.g. *Sa-gab*, *Ta₅-gab*, etc; *Sa-am-si*, *Ta₅-meš*, etc: cf. F.M. Fales, OrNS 47 [1978], pp. 91-98).

4. Grayson translates (a bit too liberally) “the case was referred to the god Adad of Guzana”.

Rev. 4. The first name is not *Adad-na-qut*: for the Aramaic root *ntr, “to guard”, cf. Zadok, *On West Semites*, p. 84.

7. The name is composed with the predicative element *dly, “to lift up” (Aram.) in the *qal* perfect. The subject element is either an abbreviation for the divine element *A-ta (*attā: cf. Zadok, *cit.*, p. 38), or the scribe wrote TA of AD (for *abu/abi*-).

10. This must surely be emended to *Ha-la¹-rim*, “May the brother be exalted!”. For other forms, cf. Zadok, *cit.*, p. 95.

11. *Adad-rahime* is a well-known name in the late 7th century texts from Tell Halaf/Guzana: cf. AfO Beiheft 6, p. 79a.

12-18. NA legal texts show a handful of good examples of the use of leftover space on the edges for random additional notations, usually of technical content, pertaining to the case. Cf. e.g. *NALK* 199a = *FNALD* 22, for a final remark on which of the debtors shall make the payment²; or *BT* 124 = *FNALD* 20, for a last-moment alternative option on the place of repayment of the debt.

In the present case, the note would seem to concern a description of the way in which the payment of the fine imposed by the god Adad of Guzana³ was practically effected. Ser-nuri, the losing party, was in Nineveh⁴; from a bundle of reeds of his, of the value of 2 minas of silver⁵, the divine judge imposed his fine. It is unclear from the expression in the text whether Adad’s decision implied leaving the 1/2 mina “change” to its rightful owner, or whether 2 minas’ worth of reeds was considered factually equivalent to 1 1/2 minas of silver “cash”. The ambiguous “heading” of line L.H.E. 12 would seem to point rather to the latter solution. Notice also the quaintly truncated expression on (mutual!?) satisfaction in L.H.E. 18.

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²) Cf. discussion in *FNALD*, p. 126.

³) For gods as judges, cf. F.M. Fales, *Un dieu comme “juge” dans un texte néo-assyrien*, RA 71 (1977), pp. 177-179.

⁴) Notice the relatively rare orthography *Ni-nu-u* (cf. Parpola, *NAT*, s.v.) both here; and in the personal name of l. 18.

⁵) For the great weight that these bundles of reeds could reach, cf. the eloquent message in *SAA* I, 26.