

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *Journal of Biblical Literature* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_jbl-01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jbl-01.php)

Assyr. *atmu*, fledgling, in the Old TestamentPAUL HAUPT  
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

IN the memorial volume published on May 17, 1914 in honor of Julius Wellhausen I have shown that the Assyr. *māru*, colt — Arab. *muh*r is found in the Song of Deborah: instead of כַּרְיִן, which is supposed to mean *rugs* or *saddle-cloths*, we must read כַּרְיִן, or כַּרְיִן, and יִשְׁבִּי עַל כַּרְיִין is a late gloss to רִכְבִּי אֲתוֹנֹת which formed the beginning of the original poem (cf. JAOS 34, 422).<sup>1</sup> While *māru* means *colt*, Assyr. *māru*, which is derived from the same stem, is the common term for *son*. For the etymology of this word and its connection with תוֹרָה see ZDMG 69, 170, l. 19; cf. GB<sup>16</sup> xvii, ad 398<sup>a</sup> and 403<sup>a</sup>, also my paper on Assyr. *mār-nisqi*, war horse (GB<sup>16</sup> xviii<sup>b</sup>, l. 6) in AJSL 32, part 3 (contrast ZA 17, 357).

Another synonym of *māru* is *atmu*, nestling, fledgling, especially *young pigeon*. Sennacherib (vi, 19) says in his account of the Battle of Halūle (AL<sup>5</sup> 74): *ki ša atmi summati kuššudi itāraqu libbušun*, their heart cracked like that of a chased young pigeon (they were *pigeon-hearted*). Assyr. *tarāqu* corresponds to Heb. נתק for which we have רתק in Eccl. 12 e (cf. GB<sup>16</sup> xix, ad 776<sup>b</sup>): עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִרְתַּק חֵבֶל הַכֶּסֶף, *ere the cord of silver* (the spinal cord) *be snapped* (for *n* — *r* cf. ZDMG 63, 517, l. 41).

Hos. 11 4 JHVH says that He watched Israel's first steps like a nurse supporting, with leading-strings, a child beginning to walk (cf. Deut. 32 11; JBL 33, 81). We use *leading-strings* now in the sense of *restraining guidance*; what was formerly known as *leading-string* is now called *safety-strap*. In French

<sup>1</sup> For the abbreviations see above, p. 41.

you say *mener un enfant à la lisière* or *laisse*, i. e. our *leash*. The term *leading-strings*<sup>2</sup> is used also for *yoke lines*, i. e. the ropes attached to the ends of the yoke, or bar, of the rudder-head. Dr. Ember informs me that the modern Heb. names for *leading-strings* are *מושכות*, or *חבלי צעידה*, or *חבורת התרנגל*. The last term is, of course, based on the gloss in Hos. 11 3 where we must read:

ואנכי הרגלתי אמרים ולא ידעו כראני רבאתים

I taught Ephraim to walk,  
but they know not that I nursed them.

The verb *ידע* in the present passage does not mean *to acknowledge* (ZAT 28, 24). For *לא דעו*, *they know not* (לא ידעין) see GK<sup>28</sup> § 106, g. The reputed Tiph'el *תרגלתי* in miswriting for the Hiph'il *ורגלתי* (so Marti) and the ל before *אמרים* belongs to the following tertiary gloss *לקחם על זרועותי*, *He took them on His arms* (cf. WF 217, below). Duhm (ZAT 31, 35) reads *לקחתו לזרועי*, which is supposed to mean *ihn nehmend an (l) seinen Armen*. He thinks the meter is 3 + 2. The verb *תרגל* cannot be derived from Assy. *tarkullu* (GB<sup>16</sup> 744<sup>a</sup>) since this word (cf. HW 303; SGI 140) means *mooring-post*; cf. *ركن*, *pillar*, from *رکن*, *to fasten*. Arab. *رکل*, on the other hand, is connected with *رگل*, lit. *footer* = *foot-hawker*, and *רגל* (for *g* = *k* see ZDMG 65, 107, 14, and for *l* = *n* ZA 34, 230; GB<sup>16</sup> xvii<sup>b</sup>, l. 4). Instead of *רפאתים*, *I healed them* we must read *רבייתים* = *רבייתים*, *I nursed them*. According to Geo A. Smith, *The Twelve Prophets* (1896) 1, 294 this hemistich means *They knew not that I healed them*—presumably when they fell and hurt themselves. For the מ instead of ך in *רפאתים* see GK<sup>28</sup> § 75, rr. On the other hand, we find in Assyrian instead of *רפסה*, *to sink, decline* (Jud. 19 9) from which *רפאים* (= *רפיים*; cf. ZAT 34, 143, below) is derived, *רבי*, e. g. *lām Šamaš rabī*, before the sun sets (see my paper on Assy. *rabū*, to sink =

<sup>2</sup> The modern use of *safety-strap*, or *security-strap*, instead of *leading-strings* is incorrect. A *security-strap* is a belt for a baby in a high-chair or baby-carriage. This belt is fastened around a baby's waist, and the ends are carried around the back of the chair.

Heb. *raphâh* in AJSL 32, part 3). We cannot read רפאתים — רפאתים, from רפף = רַפַּף = رَفَفَ, to spread the wings, shield, protect, since this root appears in Hebrew as רתף (cf. AJSL 23, 245; GB<sup>16</sup> 756<sup>a</sup>). For רָבַח cf. Ezek. 19 2, Lam. 2 22. Just as we find in Lam. 2 23 רבַח in connection with נַפַח, so *irib* appears in Assyrian as a synonym of *uṭappî* — *uṭappih* (ASKT 46, 44; cf. ZA 30, 98).

For *leading-strings* Hosea used the term תבלי אתם, lit. *fledgling-strings* or *youngster-strings*. אדם is a phonetic corruption of אתם (GB<sup>16</sup> xiv, ad 10<sup>b</sup>). We can hardly assume that אתם became אדם in Hebrew owing to the final *m*, although this partial assimilation is common in Assyrian (SFG 43, 2; AG<sup>2</sup> § 57, c; AJSL 26, 230, n.\*). Similarly we say *rhythm* with ר instead of ר. Delitzsch formerly read *admu* instead of *atmu*; but the byform *atamu* shows that the stem was אתם, not אדם (HW 721<sup>a</sup>; AL<sup>5</sup> 157<sup>b</sup>). The incorrect reading *admu* is still found in Dennefeld's *Geburts-Omina* (Leipzig, 1914) p. 84, l. 5; (cf. pp. 88. 220). Winckler (AoF 3, 231) thought that אדם in Hos. 11 4 meant *leather*; for אהרה he read אהרה, *ich will sie herumschleppen*. Grætz (*Psalmen*, p. 144) suggested חסד for אדם; this reading has been adopted by Cheyne and Nowack, but in his *Emendationes* Grætz proposed רחמים or גתומים.

I believe that *atmu*, fledgling, is connected with *ummu*, mother, just as we have in Assyrian *atxu* — *axu*, brother (AW 269; HW 39<sup>a</sup>; *atxû* is plural) and *atmû*, speech (HW 82<sup>a</sup>; AG<sup>3</sup> § 40, b) from *amû*, to speak — הטה (not — תנה, GB<sup>16</sup> 217; cf. OLZ 17, 6). Also Assyrian *amātu*, entrails (and extispicy, omen) is derived from this stem; cf. המו מעי (Jer. 31 20, Cant. 5 4) and המון מעיך (Is. 63 15) as well as Assyrian *içcarix kabitti* (HW 574<sup>a</sup>). An etymological connection between *amātu* and מעים (HK 89. 176) is impossible. For the meanings of הטה cf. my paper on the Trumpets of Jericho in WZKM 23, 361. Jensen (KB 6, 2, p. 92, l. 39; p. 94, l. 12) reads *a(t)he* for *atxê*, but this parenthesizing is gratuitous; the character AT cannot be read *a* in Assyrian; nor can AT be ideogram for *brother*. Schrader made this mistake more than forty

years ago in his *Höllenfahrt der Istar* (1874) p. 106 (cf. RP 3, 137).

If *atmu*, fledgling, is derived from אַמ, the primary meaning of the word may be *mothered* (cf. Span. *madrero*). Since we have a number of stems with an initial ' instead of an original א (ZA 2, 278) יתום, *orphan* might be regarded as a privative (NBSS 101) reflexive of אַמ, so that the original connotation would be *unmothered*, although יתום means *fatherless* rather than *motherless*. Delitzsch, *Assyr. Studien* (1874) p. 143 identified Assyr. *atamu* with Heb. יתום, but יתום = יתים would appear in Assyrian as *itāmu* or *itēmu*; cf. *išaru* = יִשָּׂר. *Anāqāti*, milch-camels (Syr. אֲנַקְתָּא; cf. Syr. אֲנַקְתָּא, *wet-nurse* = Assyr. *mušēniqtu*, ZDMG 34, 761, n. 1) is a loanword; see BA 1, 171, n.\*; AkF 50; NBSS 205 (cf. אֲנַקְתָּא = יִנְקָתָה).

אֲנַקְתָּהּ says of Israel in Hos. 11 4:

אֲנַקְתָּהּ בְּתַבְלֵי אֲתָם אֲנַקְתָּהּ עֲלֵי וְאֲנַקְתָּהּ:

I led it with fledgling-strings,  
I bent over it, and fed it.

Cf. GB<sup>16</sup> xviii, ad 500<sup>b</sup>. Peiser, *Hosea* (Leipzig, 1914) p. 47 reads for the second hemistich: וְאֲהִיָּה לָהֶם מֹכֵל, which is supposed to mean *und bin ihnen Helfer*; he adds: *Der Sinn erinnert an كميل*. Similarly Riessler (cf. JBL 32, 111, n. 13) renders: *Ich neigte mich ihnen zu, um ihnen Widerstandskraft zu verleihen*, deriving אֲנַקְתָּהּ from יָלַל, following Ἐ δυνήσομαι. *I declinavi ad eum ut vesceretur* is preferable. Nor must we read אֲנַקְתָּהּ instead of אֲנַקְתָּהּ (cf. GK<sup>26</sup> § 68, g, n. 1; § 49, e). Rashi correctly explains our passage: וְאֲנַקְתָּהּ מִמֶּנּוּ, *I constantly led them with soft cords wherewith a man leads his child* (cf. Wünsche's *Hosea*, p. 486). An old glossator has added to אֲנַקְתָּהּ (which should not precede, but follow וְאֲנַקְתָּהּ) the explanation בְּעֵבְתוֹת אֲהִבָּה, *with cords of love*. Nowack correctly marks this as a gloss. *Bonds of an enemy* would be עֵבְתוֹת שִׂנְאָה, *cords of hatred*. Peiser cancels אֲנַקְתָּהּ, and leaves בְּעֵבְתוֹת אֲהִבָּה in the text.

After **בעבתות אהבה** we find a second explanatory addition, **ואהיה להם כמרימי על על לחיהם**, which is supposed to mean *And I was unto them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws*. A yoke, however, is not on the jaw, or on the cheek, but on the neck (cf. JBL 32, 113, n. 23 and p. 169 of the translation of *Ezekiel* in SBOT). § therefore gives the unwarranted, but sensible, rendering **דמרים נירא מן קלהון**. But we must evidently read: **ואהיה להם כמרימי עללים בתבלים תחת**, *I was to them like those who hold up children with strings under their armpits* (cf. Jer. 38 12 and GB<sup>16</sup> xviii, ad 589a). There were male nurses for children: we read in Num. 11 12 **כאשר ישא האמן את הילק**, *as a (male) nurse carries the sucking child*, and in Is. 49 23 we find:

**והן מלכים אמנדן ושרותיהם מיניקותן**

And kings will be thy nurses,  
their princesses thy wet-nurses.

Cf. ZAT 34, 230, l. 8. The word **עללים**, *children* in our passages was corrupted to **על על**, *yoke upon*, whereupon the following **תחת**, *under* was omitted as was also the preceding **בתבלים** owing to the **בתבלי** in the preceding verse (*vertical haplography*). Both **עללים** and **תבלים** were written **עללי**, **תבלי** (cf. AJSL 26, 205, ii). **ואהיה להם** is a corruption of **שתייהם** or, rather, **שתייהם**. The noun **שתי** is the masculine to **שתיית**, *pit*. In post-Biblical Hebrew we find both **שתי** and **השתי** for *armpit*. In Assyrian we have *šaxātu* — Aram. **שחאתא** (cf. GB<sup>16</sup> s. v. **שחה**).

In *Shabb.* 128<sup>b</sup> (BT 1, 633, below) we read: **האשה קנדה את בנה אמר רבי יהודה אימתי בזמן שהוא נוטל אחת ומניח את האחר**, *A woman may lead her child on the sabbath. Rabbi Jehudah said, When?—She may do it in case the child lifts up and puts down one foot after the other; but when it drags, it is not permitted*. For **אימתי**, i. e. **אימתי** (not **אימתי** or **אימתי**; cf. Dalman's *Wörterbuch* and Albrecht's *Neuhebr. Gr.* § 14) see AJSL 22, 251, and for **קנדה** cf. Is. 38 15, Ps. 42 5 (where 'A read **אנדה**, *I led them* instead of **אנדה** for **אנדה**).

It is hardly necessary to add that Hos. 11 2 is a theological gloss; for קראו read כקראי and הם מפני for מציהם following § καθὼς μετεκάλεσα and ἐκ προσώπου· αὐτοὶ κ. τ. ε. § מן קרמי ולבעלא דבתו.

The two genuine lines of Hosea's beautiful poem should be read as follows:

1 כִּי־נַעַר יִשְׂרָאֵל וָאֶהְבֵּהוּ      וּמִמִּצְרַיִם קָרָאתִי לְבִנְיִי:  
4 וָאִמְשַׁכְתִּהוּ בַחֲבִלֵי אֶתֶם      וָאֶמְתָּה עָלָיו וָאוֹכִילִי:

1 In Israel's youth I loved it,  
from Egypt I called my child;

4 I led it with leading-strings,  
I bent over it, and fed it.