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https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jts-os_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[1st page of article]

A STUDY IN THE PARABLE OF THE TWO KINGS.

'*He sendeth an ambassage and asketh conditions of peace.*'

So ends in the Revised Version the little parable of the two kings peculiar to St Luke's Gospel (xiv 31 f). The last four words are, I venture to think, a misrendering of a phrase which has from the first been misinterpreted, mainly through lack of appreciation of the Evangelist's intimate knowledge of the Septuagint. The Old Testament parallel, to which I propose to call attention, striking as it is, and strangely overlooked by the commentators, does not, however, stand alone. The Semitic phrase which lies behind St Luke's words occurs in a similar connexion in Assyrian cuneiform records, while the Egyptian hieroglyphic and hieratic monuments yield further illustration. To understand this little picture, by which our Lord inculcates the lesson that His followers must count the cost of discipleship, we have to look to the language of diplomacy common to a large part of the ancient Oriental world. The mistake in the past has been to treat St Luke's phrase as purely Hellenic. To Professor Burkitt I am indebted for the parallel in the history of Ašur-bani-pal. The Oxford Hebrew lexicon (s.v. שָׁלֵם) introduced me to the parallels from Egypt; an instance, not, as in the Exodus story, of Israelites borrowing of the Egyptians, but, reversely, of Egyptians taking on loan a word from their Semitic neighbours. For further assistance and introduction to the recent literature in these to me unfamiliar regions of cuneiform and hieroglyphic script I am indebted to the kindness of Mr L. W. King, Assistant in the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities of the British Museum, and of his colleague Mr H. R. Hall.

(1) *Text.* The parable runs in the Revised Version:—

Lk. xiv 31 'Or what king, as he goeth to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him
32 with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and asketh conditions of peace.'

The Revisers, among other minor verbal alterations, have substituted 'asketh' for 'desireth' of the A.V., but have made no change of substance. The first 'with' in the original is ἐν ('armed with'), the second μετά ('accompanied by'); the slight difference may or may not be significant.

There is first the question of text in the concluding words. Verse 32

runs εἰ δὲ μήγε, ἔτι αὐτοῦ πόρρω ὄντος πρεσβείαν ἀποστείλας ἐρωτᾷ . . ., and then we have a choice of four readings :—

(i) εἰς εἰρήνην B

(ii) τὰ εἰς εἰρήνην K Π 'al plus[10]'[1]

(iii) πρὸς εἰρήνην ℵ* Γ

(iv) τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην the majority of MSS, including ℵ^c A D L R X Δ Λ.

The Versions (*ea quae pacis sunt* or *pacem* or the like) leave us in doubt as to the original Greek lying behind them.

The Revisers adopted the last of these four variants, which to scribes and editors with Hellenizing proclivities has always seemed to present the least difficulty. It is a little doubtful, however, whether this reading, even in κοινή Greek, would bear the meaning which has been put upon it by our English translators. At all events no exact parallel has been cited. Dr Plummer refers us to Wetstein, but the nearest parallel which Wetstein can adduce is Polyb. v 29. 4 παρακαλέσας . . . οὐ τὰ πρὸς διαλύσεις πράττειν (not εἰσπράσσειν Wetst.[2]), ἀλλὰ τὰ πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον. But here and in a passage like Thuc. ii 17 τῶν πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον ἥπτοντο ('applied themselves to the war', Jowett), the phrase with article and preposition amounts to little more than the noun standing by itself. The translation 'conditions of peace' seems to be unwarranted. Luke himself elsewhere writes αἰτεῖσθαι εἰρήνην for 'to petition for peace' (Acts xii 20).[3] Apart from its greater lucidity or supposed lucidity (a circumstance which, on the principle 'proclivi scriptioni praestat ardua', is in itself suspicious), this reading has, however, one point in its favour. St Luke does in fact once elsewhere write τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην : xix 42 Εἰ ἔγνως ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ταύτῃ καὶ σὺ τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην.[4] But there the phrase in any case cannot mean more than 'the things which make for (or "belong unto") peace'. If there were no other readings to be considered, we might adduce this latter passage and the classical use of τὰ πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον above-mentioned, to support the rendering of the Revisers' text in the Parable by 'to ask for peace' (compare the ancient Versions) or 'to ask for a state (or "condition") of peace'; but 'to ask conditions of peace' suggests a bargain as to terms, an idea which does not seem to be inherent in the Greek. A sufficient condemnation of the reading is that it fails to account for the variants with εἰς. It probably owes its origin, in part at least, to the occurrence of τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην in Luke xix 42, which would not escape the notice of the early copyists.

Dr Hort has for once deserted the B text, which stands alone. At

[1] I quote rom Tischendorf.

[2] πράσσειν is Schweighaeuser's emendation ; πράττειν Teubner text.

[3] Cf. δεῖσθαι εἰρήνης, Xenoph. *Hell.* ii 2. 13.

[4] Cf. also Acts xxviii 10 τὰ πρὸς τὰς χρείας, 'such things as we needed' Tischendorf cites from Origen a v.l. with εἰς in Luke xix 42.

least, he has not given it priority; it would be contrary to his principles to ignore it altogether. He relegates it, along with the Revisers' readings, to the margin, as alternatives to the variant ἐρωτᾷ πρὸς εἰρήνην which he prints in the text on the authority of ℵ* Γ. Dr Hort's reasons for abandoning the B reading can only be conjectured, since he has left no comment. Considerable hesitation on his part may be inferred from his offering three alternatives. If ἐρωτᾷ τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην, though apparently unparalleled, is intelligible, ἐρωτᾷ πρὸς εἰρήνην is unique and almost impossible to translate. Mere difficulty, however, is no proof of genuineness, unless an interpretation is forthcoming. This reading probably arose from a clerical error, the natural omission of one ΤΑ in ΕΡΩΤΑ[ΤΑ]ΠΡΟΣΕΙΡΗΝΗΝ. Like the Revisers' reading, it fails to account for the variants with εἰς. It is between these two other variants, I am convinced, that the choice lies, and the prestige of the B text naturally inclines us to follow that MS.

(2) *The Hebrew phrase 'to ask about peace'.* The commentators, through neglect of the LXX (always of importance for the interpretation of the N. T., and above all in the case of St Luke, who for much of his work took it for his model), have entirely failed to do justice to these other variants. Dr Plummer can only suggest that εἰς has perhaps come in from the companion parable of the Tower-builder, εἰ ἔχει εἰς ἀπαρτισμόν (ver. 28). Neither he nor, to my knowledge, any other editor has remarked on the fact that ἐρωτᾶν εἰς εἰρήνην and ἐρωτᾶν τὰ εἰς εἰρήνην are recognized 'translation-Greek' for the Hebrew phrase שָׁאַל לְשָׁלוֹם, 'ask after (a person's) health', 'greet' or 'salute'.

The Hebrew שלום differed from the Greek εἰρήνη in that it connoted the welfare of an individual. It was the ordinary form of salutation. Apparently the primitive root-meaning was 'soundness', 'completeness' (ὁλοκληρία), and the meaning of peace as opposed to war was secondary.[1] 'To ask after a person's welfare' was expressed by 'to ask about (ל) some one with reference to (ל) (his) peace'. The Greek translators of the O. T. doubtless all alike understood the meaning of the phrase; but here, as elsewhere, the pioneering translators of the Pentateuch differed from their successors in their greater freedom of style. They properly employed Greek idioms where the later interpreters preferred a literal version.

[1] Εἰρήνη in N.T. is as a rule Hebraic rather than Greek; and the primitive meaning of its Hebrew equivalent is clearly kept in view in some passages. Note in particular the interchange of σύνδεσμος τῆς εἰρήνης, Eph. iv 3, and σύνδεσμος τῆς τελειότητος, Col. iii 14; 1 Thess. v 23 Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης ἁγιάσαι ὑμᾶς ὁλοτελεῖς, καὶ ὁλόκληρον ὑμῶν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα ἀμέμπτως . . . τηρηθείη; and cf. with this last passage Heb. xiii 20 f ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης . . καταρτίσαι ὑμᾶς, 'make you perfect'.

Contrast the following passages :—

(*a*) In the *Pentateuch*. Gen. xliii 27 ἠρώτησεν δὲ αὐτούς Πῶς ἔχετε; (וישאל להם לשלום) καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Εἰ ὑγιαίνει ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν . . .; (השלום אביכם) οἱ δὲ εἶπαν Ὑγιαίνει ὁ παῖς σου . . . (שלום לעבדך). Ex. xviii 7 καὶ ἠσπάσαντο ἀλλήλους (וישאל איש לרעהו לשלום); cf. Jd. xviii 15 A. Cf. also Gen. xxxvii 14 ἴδε εἰ ὑγιαίνουσιν οἱ ἀδελφοί σου.

(*b*) The *later books* use either ἐρωτᾶν (τινὰ) τὰ εἰς εἰρήνην or the baldly literal ἐρωτᾶν (τινὰ) εἰς εἰρήνην: Jd. xviii 15 B, 1 Regn. x 4, xvii 22 A (passage not in B), xxv 5, xxx 21 B (A ἠρώτησαν αὐτὸν εἰρήνην), 2 Regn. viii 10 = 1 Chron. xviii 10, 2 Regn. xi 7 (*ter*). The insertion of τὰ was a slight accommodation of the Hebraism to Greek syntax. The man to whom we owe the completion of the Greek version of Samuel–Kings (possibly Theodotion)[1] did not scruple to perpetrate such a barbarism as 'to inquire into the peace of the war', meaning 'to ask how it fared with the war': 2 Regn. xi 7 καὶ ἐπηρώτησεν Δαυεὶδ εἰς εἰρήνην Ἰωὰβ καὶ εἰς εἰρήνην τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ εἰς εἰρήνην τοῦ πολέμου.

(3) *Special significance of the phrase as applied to royalty.* But, it may fairly be urged, surely the translation 'to greet' is ridiculous in the Lukan parable, and the familiar rendering must be right. It was no unexpected announcement last autumn that 'Kiamil Pasha, the Grand Vizier of Turkey, has asked King Ferdinand to agree to a cessation of hostilities with a view to the direct discussion of the preliminaries of peace'.[2] But it would have surprised us to read that the Sultan or his ministers had sent to beleaguered Adrianople or Kirk Kilisse to make kind enquiries after the health of his Majesty of Bulgaria! A similar argument doubtless weighed with St Luke's copyists, in so far as they understood the Hebraic ἐρωτᾶν εἰς εἰρήνην at all. I was formerly of their opinion,[3] supposing that the Evangelist had borrowed but *Hellenized* the LXX phrase, giving εἰρήνη its classical sense. Such an adaptation on his part would not, it seems, be foreign to his manner.[4] In this instance, however, it is not he, I think, but his editors, who have Hellenized. St Luke knew and understood his Greek Bible better than they. If we may trust the B text, he has not even adopted the slight concession of some of the O. T. translators to Greek idiom by inserting the article τά. He wrote ἐρωτᾷ εἰς εἰρήνην and employed the words in a technical sense. For, where royalty was concerned, the Semitic phrase seems to have acquired a special connotation. To ask after the health of a king was to do him homage,

[1] For the early and late portions of the Greek history of the monarchy see *J.T.S.* viii 262. The first translators omitted nearly half the narrative as unedifying.

[2] *The Times*, November 16, 1912. [3] *Gramm. of O. T. in Greek* i 40 note.

[4] Plummer *Int. Crit. Comm.* li 'Anyhow Luke shows that he is able to give an Hellenic turn to his Hebraisms, so that they would less offend a Greek ear'.

to tender one's allegiance.[1] Where the salutation to the monarch was offered by another king, the latter thereby recognized the suzerainty of an overlord. 'To salute' in this case was tantamount to *voluntary submission* or unconditional surrender. The special sense of 'submission' thus acquired by *shālōm* is commoner in Semitic languages other than Hebrew[2]; indeed the ordinary sense is so predominant in the Old Testament that the special connotation has perhaps not been sufficiently recognized. But there is at least one passage in the O. T. where it is clearly present. The passage, rightly interpreted, offers so close a parallel to the Lukan parable (if it does not actually enable us to name the two kings) that it must be considered in detail.

(4) *King Toi and king David.* The eighth chapter of the second book of Samuel describes a series of victories of king David over various enemies. After the defeat of Philistines and Moabites we read (*v.* 3) how he smote also Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his dominion[3] on the river Euphrates, and how the Syrians of Damascus came to the aid of Hadadezer and met the same fate. Incidentally we note that David took from Hadadezer twenty thousand footmen. The narrative proceeds in the R. V. (*vv.* 9–12):—

9 'And when Toi, king of Hamath, heard that David
10 had smitten all the host of Hadadezer, then Toi **sent**
Joram his son unto king David **to [a] salute him**, and to
bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and
smitten him: for Hadadezer [b] had wars with Toi. And
[c] *Joram* brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of
11 gold, and vessels of brass: these also did king David

[a] Heb. *ask him of his welfare.*
[b] Heb. *was a man of wars.*
[c] Heb. *in his hand were.*

[1] The technical meaning of *shālōm* in connexion with royalty was so well established that the verb might be omitted: 4 Regn. x 13 *καὶ κατέβημεν εἰς εἰρήνην* (וּנְרֵד לְשָׁלוֹם) *τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ βασ. καὶ τῶν υἱῶν τῆς δυναστευούσης.* Cf. the Egyptian parallels cited in (6) below and Jer. xv 5 LXX *τίς ἀνακάμψει εἰς εἰρήνην σοι*;

[2] For Aramaic and Arabic see Robertson Smith *Religion of Semites* 79f: 'To the same conception may be assigned the proper name Salm, "submission", shortened from such theophorous forms as the Palmyrene Salm al-Lāt, "submission to Lat"': 'The same idea of a religion accepted by voluntary submission is expressed in the name *Islām*.' For Hebrew parallels cf. Is. xlii 19, 'Who is blind as the surrendered one?' with Cheyne's note: the proper name Meshullam: and Jos. xi 19, 'There was not a city that voluntarily surrendered to the children of Israel' (השלימה אל, not the usual את 'made peace with'). In this last passage the B text of the LXX boldly paraphrases, giving the general sense correctly, *οὐκ ἦν πόλις ἣν οὐκ ἔλαβεν Ἰσραήλ*; the A text has *οὐκ ἦν πολ. ἥτις οὐ παρέδωκεν τοῖς υἱοῖς* 'I., in which the second negative seems to be an interpolation, due to misunderstanding of *παρέδωκεν* = 'voluntarily surrendered'.

[3] Or, 'stablish his hand', Driver *Notes on Heb. Text.* Text and meaning are uncertain.

dedicate unto the LORD, with the silver and gold that he dedicated of all the nations which he subdued. [A list of nations follows.]

'To salute him' is the usual phrase לִשְׁאָל־לוֹ לְשָׁלוֹם. I append the LXX text of *v.* 10 according to codex B with such variants from the *apparatus criticus* of Holmes and Parsons as deserve mention. The bracketed parenthetical words are, as explained below, perhaps a gloss.

καὶ ἀπέστειλεν Θόου Ἰεδδουρὰν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ πρὸς βασιλέα Δαυεὶδ ἐρωτῆσαι αὐτὸν τὰ εἰς εἰρήνην καὶ εὐλογῆσαι αὐτὸν ὑπὲρ οὗ ἐπάταξεν τὸν Ἀδραάζαρ· [καὶ ἐπάταξεν αὐτόν, ὅτι κείμενος ἦν τῷ Ἀδραάζαρ·] καὶ ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ ἦσαν σκεύη ἀργυρᾶ καὶ σκεύη χρυσᾶ καὶ σκεύη χαλκᾶ.

τα εις ειρηνην] *περι της ειρηνης* Arm. Georg. : *τα περι της ειρηνης* Slav. The evidence of these VSS cannot be set against that of all the Greek MSS which have the usual translation phrase in its articular form (as opposed to Luke's *εις ειρ.* without article).

επαταξεν 1° BA 55 121* 245 247] *επολεμησαν* 106 120 134: *επολεμησε* the rest (with the MT).

και επαταξεν—τω Αδρααζαρ] Λ 44 74 106^{txt} (marg. ∴ *hostis quippe erat theu Adadezer*) 120 134 144 245. In the last named MS the omission possibly extends to the end of the verse; H. and P.'s '&c.' is ambiguous.

και επαταξεν αυτον] Λ 55 247.

κειμενος B] a mere slip for *αντικειμενος* of A &c.

In the Masoretic text this incident appears as a 'congratulatory embassy'[1] from king Toi to king David upon the latter's victory over a common enemy. This impression, however, is conveyed by words in *v.* 10, the meaning and authenticity of which is doubtful. If we follow the text of the two oldest uncial MSS of the LXX, we should read, not

> 'Toi sent Joram . . . unto king David to salute him and to bless him, because he had fought against H. and smitten him: for a man-of-wars of Toi was H. And in his [Joram's] hands were,' &c.,

but

> 'Toi sent J. . . . unto king David to salute him and to bless him, because he had smitten H. (and he smote H. because he [David] was an adversary of H.); and in his hands were,' &c.

But, if we follow the text of an important group of MSS, we should omit the bracketed parenthesis altogether. The omission might of course be attributed to *homoioteleuton*; but the clause clearly interrupts the construction, leaving the 'his' so far removed from its antecedent Joram that our English translators feel it necessary to introduce the name:

[1] So Dr Kirkpatrick in the *Cambridge Bible.*

'And *Joram* brought with him,' &c. The words are probably an early gloss[1] referring to the fact that this was not the only occasion on which David was engaged in battle with Hadadezer, a marginal reference, as it were, to 2 Regn. x 16 ff. Gloss or no gloss, the rendering 'Hadadezer had wars with Toi' is not supported by our most ancient authorities.

Removing the doubtful words, we have the ordinary picture of the voluntary submission of one monarch to another, for which parallels are quoted below. The context leaves no doubt as to what manner of 'salutation' is meant, ποταπὸς εἴη ὁ ἀσπασμὸς οὗτος, as St Luke would say. To 'salute' David is, as Cheyne observes,[2] 'to recognize his suzerainty'. To 'bless' him is to bow the knee in homage. The vessels of silver, gold, and brass are the tokens of submission, the usual form of tribute sent on those occasions. Like the Moabites and Syrians (*vv.* 2 and 6), Toi 'became David's servant and brought gifts'; his case differed from theirs only in that by non-resistance he escaped the drastic punishment which fell to their lot. The resemblance to other cases of voluntary surrender extends to details of phraseology; the expression 'in his hands were' may be illustrated from descriptions of the offering of tribute to an Oriental monarch.[3]

The parallel to the Lukan parable is surely striking. We see, on the one side, king David advancing victorious from the Euphrates valley upon Hamath, his army possibly swelled by the 20,000 infantry captured from Hadadezer[4]; on the other, king Toi, taught wisdom[5] by the defeat first of Hadadezer and then of his Syrian allies, taking timely precautions, while David was yet far off, by despatching across the desert an embassy under the Crown Prince to 'salute' him.

(5) *Gyges and Ašur-bani-pal.* While the narrative in 2 Samuel is not improbably the immediate source of the parable, the technical sense of 'to salute' is shared by Hebrew written with other Semitic languages. An interesting illustration of what is meant by the 'salutation' of one monarch by another is furnished by the story of the

[1] The context bears marks of interpolation. 'It is not unlikely that [*v.* 11] and the following verse are a late insertion', H. P. Smith (*Int. Crit. Comm.*); *vv.* 7 and 8 in the LXX contain additional matter, apparently interpolated from Chronicles.

[2] *Encycl. Bibl.* s.v. Toi.

[3] Cf. an inscription describing how when Pharaoh (Rameses II) paid his annual visit to the land of Naharain 'the chiefs of every country came bowing down in peace, because of the fame of his majesty. From the marshes was their tribute: silver, gold, lapis lazuli, malachite and every sweet wood of God's land *were upon their backs*'. Breasted *Ancient Records of Egypt* iii § 433 ff.

[4] This cannot be pressed; such parallels may easily be carried too far.

[5] Cf. Josephus *Ant. Jud.* vii 5. 4 δείσας περὶ αὐτῷ καὶ τὸν Δαυίδην πρὶν ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἔλθοι φιλίᾳ καὶ πίστει γνοὺς ἐνδήσασθαι, πέμπει πρὸς αὐτὸν Ἀδώραμον κτλ.

relations between Ašur-bani-pal king of Assyria (668–625 B.C., the 'Asnapper' or 'Osnappar' of the book of Ezra, Sardanapalus of the classical writers) and Gyges king of Lydia.[1] I translate from Jensen's German version,[2] which is, as Mr. L. W. King informs me, more trustworthy than the older English rendering of G. Smith.[3] Ašur-bani-pal *loquitur*.

> 'To Gûgu king of Lydia, a district across the sea, a distant land, the name of which the kings, my fathers, had not heard, Ašur, my begetter, revealed my name in a dream [saying]: "Embrace the feet of Ašur-bani-pal, king of Assyria, and thou wilt through his name defeat thine enemies." On the [same] day on which he saw this dream, *he despatched* his horseman *to salute me*[4]: sent [word of] this dream which he had seen through his messenger, and he narrated it to me. From that very day on which he embraced the feet of me, the king, he defeated the Gimirians (Cimmerians), oppressors of the peoples of his country, who had not feared my fathers nor embraced the feet of me, the king. In reliance on Ašur and Ištar, the gods, my lords, he took from the Gimirians whom he defeated two chiefs, bound them fast in chains (?), iron fetters and iron bands, and had them brought to my presence together with a weighty present from himself.'

Then came a change: Gyges threw off his allegiance to Assyria. 'His horseman whom he *had constantly sent to salute me*,[5] he thereupon discontinued.' Trusting in his own might, he aided Psammetichus in his struggle for Egyptian independence and, in fulfilment of the prayers of Ašur-bani-pal to Ašur and Ištar, paid the penalty for his rashness by renewed victories of the Cimmerians and by his death. His son and successor (Ardys) submitted to the Assyrian yoke.

The phrase 'to salute' (ask after the welfare of) a monarch is of constant occurrence in the Assyrian records. The greater part of the article on the word *šulmu* in the Assyrian Lexicon of Delitzsch[6] is devoted to its illustration. I quote the following extract: '*Šulmu šarri ša'alu*: urspr. das Wohlergehen des Königs erfragen, sich erkundigend wünschen, dass es dem Könige äusserlich und innerlich wohl ergehe, mit ihm allseitig zum Besten stehe, dann aber nur s.v.a.: den König huldigend begrüssen. er der niemals seinen Gesandten geschickt,

[1] As stated, I am indebted to Professor Burkitt for this instance.

[2] In E. Schrader's *Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek* Bd. ii, Berlin 1890, p. 173.

[3] *History of Assurbanipal translated from the cuneiform inscriptions*, London 1871 (cuneiform with interlinear transliteration and translation).

[4] *a-na ša-'-al šul-me-ia*: Jensen 'um mich zu begrüssen', G. Smith, 'to pray for my friendship'.

[5] 'To salute me': original and versions as before (see preceding note).

[6] *Assyrisches Handwörterbuch*, Leipzig 1896.

la iš-('a)-a-lu(m) šú-lum šarru-ti-šu-un ihre Majestät nicht begrüsst hatte. . . . Tammaritu, der sich auf den Thron gesetzt hatte, *la iš-a-lu* (*V. iš-al*) *šúlum šarrûtia* ohne meine M. darum zu begrüssen . . .'

G. Smith's rendering 'to pray for my friendship' seems clearly incorrect. Mr L. W. King writes to me: 'In Assyrian the expression *šulum* . . *ša'alu* always means "to greet, to salute". Its context may sometimes shew that submission is intended or implied, but the phrase in itself has not this meaning. I believe that the Hebrew שאל לשלום was used in precisely the same way, the idea of submission being in some passages implied by the context, never by the phrase itself.' Though in doing homage to his overlord a king doubtless had most at heart the 'peace' and welfare of himself and his country, the words which he employed were strictly no more than a prayer for the well-being of his suzerain. But the sense of submission in the root SH-L-M, which is explicit in Aramaic and Arabic,[1] is clearly already implied in the Assyrian and Hebrew use of the phrase 'ask after the peace of a monarch'. On the other hand, the phrase never means 'to ask for peace' as opposed to war. This was apparently a secondary sense of the noun; the Semitic salutation was a prayer for one neighbour's welfare and was not tantamount to the schoolboy's 'Pax!'

Since writing the above, I have read with interest a paper by Mr F. Beames in a recent number of the *Expository Times*,[2] in which the Lukan parable of the Unrighteous Judge is illustrated from the Babylonian contract tablets. The following passage is so germane to my subject that I am tempted to quote it in full. 'To understand the parables aright we must remember that they are Semitic tales retold to us in the common language of the Greek empire, the medium through which Christianity came to us. The leading Semitic influence was Babylonian, an influence which had pervaded all lands east of the Mediterranean for many centuries. The parable of the house built on the rock as found in St Luke is a case in point. If we read the standard inscription of Aššur-naṣir-pal, where he describes the building of his palace, and the well-known inscription of Nabu-na'id, where he describes his discovery of the foundation-stone of Naram Sin, we realize that this parable refers to common Babylonian usage. Thus while the study of Greek inscriptions and ostraca, as Dr Deissmann has shewn, throws light on the Pauline writings, the parables are also illustrated by the domestic literature of Mesopotamia and Babylon.' I do not doubt that light might be thrown from the same quarter upon the parable which forms the companion to that of the Two Kings, namely, that of the Tower-builder.

[1] See note 2 on page 393.

[2] January 1913, vol. xxiv pp. 150 ff.

(6) *Egyptian parallels.* For illustration of the Lukan parable, however, we are not limited to the Semitic records of the Old Testament and Assyria. The Hebrew שלום, along with a somewhat obscure derivative, had already, before the earliest date to which any writings in the Old Testament have been assigned, been adopted as a loan-word in Egypt and transliterated in hieroglyphic characters. Here again we find this root used to denote homage or tribute paid to a monarch. It was Brugsch who first identified the hieroglyphics which are now read as *šarm(a)* or *šalm(a)* with the Hebrew שלום, and the identification has been accepted by all later Egyptologists.[1] The meaning of the word is fixed by its context, by its 'determinative' sign, which is consistently a human figure, standing or kneeling, with arms uplifted in an attitude of supplication, and by the fact[2] that it is used interchangeably with purely Egyptian words for 'to do homage' or 'greet'. It appears in such contexts as 'We salute him doing homage, we shew our respect'[2]: 'They are in *šarma* (i. e. "implore health", Burchardt) for thy name'[3]: 'Kapur [a Libyan chief] comes to *šarma* [do homage] in the manner of (?) a blind man [*t'ar*], lays his weapons on the ground along with his soldiers, utters a cry [another loan-word, *t'aāuq* = צעק] to heaven.'[4]

A second form, *šarmati(t)* or *šalmati(t)*, the Egyptian representative of some derivative of שלום, which has not with certainty been identified,[5] is used in the sense of 'tribute', 'contribution'. Its 'determinative' sign is a barrel or similar device symbolizing victuals, though the tribute did not always take this form. In the Papyrus Anastasi I (a letter from a witty scribe to a friend, whom he accuses of shewing inefficiency as head of the commissariat department on a military expedition in Syria and Palestine in the fourteenth century B.C.) Mr Gardiner[6] renders the word 'a complimentary gift'. 'A complimentary gift has been brought for thee (and set) before thee, bread and cattle and wine. The number of men is too great for thee, the provision (made) is too small for them.' M. Chabas, commenting on this document, remarks that 'quoique déterminé par le signe des vivres, ce mot ne s'appliquait pas uniquement aux provisions de bouche', and goes on to refer to a hieratic papyrus[7] in the British

[1] See Brugsch *Hieroglyphisch-demotisches Wörterbuch*, Leipzig 1868, vol. iv p. 1429, *šarom*: J. H. Bondi *Dem hebräisch-phönizischen Sprachzweige angehörige Lehnwörter in hierogl. und hierat. Texten*, Leipzig 1886, §§ xlix–l *šarmā*, *šarmāθa*: M. Burchardt *Die altkanaanäischen Fremdworte u. Eigennamen im Aegyptischen*, Zweiter Teil, Leipzig 1910, s.v. *šrm*, *šrmt*.

[2] Bondi l.c. [3] Bondi, Burchardt.

[4] Bondi, F. Chabas *Études sur l'antiquité historique*, ed. 2, Paris 1873, p. 238.

[5] Cf. שֶׁלֶם translated 'peace-offering', שִׁלֻּם 'recompense', &c.

[6] A. H. Gardiner *Egyptian Hieratic Texts*, Series i part i, Leipzig 1911; cf. Chabas *Voyage d'un Égyptien en Syrie*, &c., Paris 1866, p. 70.

[7] Pap. Vasalli, 1860. No translation has been published.

Museum of the first year of Rameses X, which 'parle de la réception *de l'or, de l'argent, du bronze* et des vêtements' as the outcome of the *šarmati*. This document falls approximately within the half century preceding David's foreign wars, and the contribution, it is noteworthy, takes almost exactly the same form as in the case of king Toi of Hamath. M. Chabas adds: 'Il y a quelque probabilité que les *šarmaθa* étaient les contributions en nature, imposées dans certaines circonstances aux populations, et auxquelles on avait donné le nom d'offrande, de don, car le mot égyptien rappelle très directement l'hébreux שלמים.' Herr Bondi concludes from the loan-word that Semites whose speech was of the Canaanite branch paid regular taxes to Egypt (a conclusion which is confirmed from other sources) and that the Egyptians interpreted the word שלמת as 'tribute'.

(7) *The Lukan parable and its moral.* We have travelled far from the Lukan parable, from which we set out, but return to see it in a new light. We shall not care to appeal to it, as did Archbishop Trench, to prove that ἐρωτᾶν 'implies on the part of the asker a certain equality as of king with king'.[1] Nor, I think, will the translation 'conditions of peace' prove tenable. On the contrary, we recognize a primitive and widespread Semitic phrase implying in certain circumstances unconditional surrender, whether we prefer to regard its use in the Gospel as a literary reminiscence of the story of David's wars or to trace its origin to Babylonian sources. Moreover, interpreted in the light of the Semitic parallels, the phrase furnishes two links (one of substance, one verbal) between the parable and the moral which immediately and, according to the usual exegesis, rather abruptly follows it: 'So therefore every one of you who renounceth not (saith not farewell to) all his possessions cannot be my disciple.' The commentators, no doubt with some justice, urge that stress must not be laid on the 'details' which 'are part of the framework of the parables and by themselves mean nothing'.[2] But St Luke's οὖν binds the moral closely to the parable, and are we not intended to recall that king Toi in 'saluting' king David surrendered not only his vessels of gold, silver, and brass, but his independence? Again, is it not a strange coincidence that immediately after the Hebraic phrase for 'to say How do you do?' St Luke employs the κοινή word for 'to say Goodbye' (ἀποτάσσεται)? Ἀσπάζεσθαι would cover both. Was there not perhaps an intentional word-play in St Luke's source?

H. St J. Thackeray.

[1] *Synonyms of the New Test.*, ed. 2, 1854, p. 166.

[2] Plummer *in loc.*