

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 *The Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php

BREVIA.

M. Naville and the Exodus. (*The Store-city of Pithom.* By M. Naville. Trübner & Co., 1885.) At last the publication of the Egypt Exploration Fund has appeared, and we turned to it with the feeling that all our difficulties and doubts were to be straightway solved. The first glance over the pages showed that our impression was wrong, and when we studied the book carefully, to our dismay we find that the promoters of the Fund have no definite proofs to give us that the place which they have found is, in reality, the Pithom of Exod. i. 11. M. Naville begs the whole question, by saying in his preface that he is fully aware how much conjecture there is in the matter, and all he seems to affirm is that excavations in Egypt are very necessary. Briefly the matter is this: M. Naville found at Tell-el-Maskhutah Egyptian remains which bore the name of Pa-Tum, i.e. "the house or temple of the god Tum": he further found that the district in which Pa-tum was situated was called *Thukut*. Lepsius, Chabas, and others believed that this town was called Ramses; but M. Naville came to the conclusion that it was Succoth, arguing that Pa-tum was Pithom, and that *Thukut* was Succoth. In the present work he gets over the philological difficulty of identifying Succoth with Thukut by referring to the article by Brugsch in the *Zeitschrift* of 1875. Brugsch, however, argues the wrong way round; he thinks that because at times the Egyptians represented the D in סִקְרָה ("a buckler or shield") by *t* or *th*; therefore the Hebrews when they wanted to represent an Egyptian *th* would use D . This is not the case, however, for the Hebrews used D to express the ordinary *s* (as in the name Rameses, where they have double *Samech*, corresponding to the double *s*) and Egyptian *th* would be represented in Hebrew by N .

Besides this, *Succoth* means "tents," while the Egyptian *Thukut* is the name of a town and has not this meaning. Also, the word for tent (*sekti*) is found in Egyptian and is not spelt with *th* but with *s*. M. Naville has, apparently, forgotten that Heliopolis also was called *Pa-tum*. Brugsch, after placing Pithom in various parts of Egypt has come round to the view that M. Naville's *Pa-tum* may be the Pithom of the Bible; but one asks with reason why all the celebrated English Egyptologists should hold themselves aloof and not support the alleged discovery of Pithom, unless they have good reason for so doing. They are not the only

exceptions, for the names of Lanzoni, Pierret, Lieblein, Piehl, Erman, Wiedemann, and others may be mentioned with them.

It is a sad fact, but many people believe what they wish, and we are afraid that the promoters of the Egypt Exploration Fund are to be classed among the number who do so. It is, indeed, praiseworthy of the Fund to excavate in Egypt, but it is not right to draw money from people's pockets under the plea that they have found a Biblical city while the proofs are not forthcoming. We much regret that the name of so great a scholar as Naville is joined to so questionable a theory. E.

The Cherubim.—It is very far from my wish to open a controversy in the EXPOSITOR on a point of Biblical archæology. If Mr. Budge's statement (which I implicitly trust so far as the British Museum cuneiform inscriptions are concerned), that the original of the word Cherub has not yet been found in the Assyrian and Babylonian tablets, should be verified, we shall have a striking proof of the necessity of testing the Assyriological statements of Lenormant. Up to this time, continental Assyriologists have been inclined, I think, to accept Lenormant's statement (*Origines*, i. 118), that *kirubu* occurs frequently in the talismans of M. de Clercq's collection as a name for the Babylonian steer-god. *Se non è vero, è ben trovato*; but I earnestly hope that it is true. M. Renouf's paper I have already referred to (*Isaiah*, vol. ii. pp. vi. 298). The *cherefu* which he has found in the Book of the Dead seems as nearly akin to the cherubim as the *seraf* or lion-bird, pointed out by Mr. Tomkins, is to the seraph. But I decline entirely to accept any Egyptian etymology for either cherub or seraph. May I add, how much finer is the characteristically Old Testament or later Hebrew conception of the celestial beings, as humanity idealized, than those originating on their earthly side in nature-myths? T. K. CHEYNE.

The word *kirubu* does occur in Assyrian, but does not appear to have the meaning or signification of *Cherubim*. The *kirubu* of a man is spoken of, and a *kirubu* of hearing. We shall, however, speak of this in a future paper. Unfortunately I have never seen M. le Clercq's collection, and therefore cannot say how far M. Lenormant's statements need verification. It is much to be wished that M. le Clercq would publish copies of his gems, for then scholars could be certain about readings, etc., once and for all. E. A. W. BUDGE.