

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES ON JEWISH ANTIQUITIES.

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(Continued from Q.S. 1919, p. 139.)

LVIII.—*The Semitic Name of Pithom.*

THE proof afforded by Prof. Naville's excavations at Tell el-Retabah, near Tell el-Kebir, of the true site of the city of Pithom (Pi Tum = House of Tum), referred to in the story of the Exodus, is quite conclusive. A further light upon the matter deserving of mention because it explains the divergences in some of the versions of Gen. xlvi, 28, is now derivable from an essay by M. Naville, proving that a name which the Egyptians, and, following them, the Greeks and Romans including the Septuagint translators, gave to the town, and which was also used as a title for its presiding city, was of Semitic origin. The name in question is *Ari* (ארִי), one of the Hebrew terms for a lion. It is also used in Egyptian, but only in a restricted sense, being used when that animal is under the form of, or supposed to be endowed with, the magic powers of the Sphinx.

The Egyptian equivalents of the Semitic *Ari* were  (or ) and . This was also the title of Pithom's tutelary god Atum, who was one of the forms of the newborn Horus, as the rising sun, particularly personified by the well known symbolic Sphinx. The Egyptian pronunciation of the hieroglyphic words just given was transliterated by the Greeks as "Hρω". They, therefore, by popular etymology, called Pithom Heroopolis, city of Atum, sometimes termed "Hρων", as at a shrine of his at Magdala in the Fayoum. This was the Ero of the Roman Itinerary, "Hρω" and Eron of classic geographers, and Ero of the inscriptions published by Naville many years ago.

As mentioned, the *Ari* (, or lioned Sphinx, was in Egyptian imagery symbolic of Horus as Atum the rising sun. This

explains one leonine Sphinx being found, still well preserved, near an entrance to his temple. The text, engraved for a priest of Pithom, says that he was "chief of the house of the lion" (or of the Sphinx), the word may be rendered either way. In the inscription of the obelisk of Hermapion the words *vīōs Ἡρωνός* occur, meaning either "son of the lion," "son of the Sphinx," or equivalent to "son of Tum," or Atum. Dr. Gardiner says that by this route we see that "Heropolis would originally have been simply a translation of Pithom." As Egyptian clerics are continually found claiming to be son of their particular deity, the last meaning, doubtless, is the chief one intended. Their scribes however delighted in using such phraseology as could bear several variant significations.

In Gen. xlvi, 28, instead of "Joseph directing his face to and coming to Goshen," the LXX reads Ἡρώων πόλιν; whilst a Coptic version has Pithom, and the Sahidic Coptic Heroonpolis. Josephus also gives Heroonpolis. This shows that the LXX, translating Genesis in Egypt, used the proper title for the meeting place of Joseph and Israel, and the first Egyptian Christians in both Coptic versions, also being aware of it, did the same; though why they substituted the other name Pithom for that of Goshen is not clear.¹

One reason why Atum, when worshipped at a shrine near to the eastern (Asiatic) boundary of Egypt, should assume a semi-Hebrew name is not far to seek. He stood for the sun at dawn springing in splendour into light above the Eastern desert or Sinaitic foot-hills—as seen from Goshen, the region of Pithom—leaping lionlike into view as from behind a rocky crag.²

In practice, and also owing to the mentality of these early times, and because of his appearance above it, he was a Syrian object to dwellers in the Delta, and so that country's title for a lion was applied to him. For the populace of Pithom, frequented by Asiatic visitors from Palestine, a most suitable appellation for Atum as the lionid sphinx was a Hebrew Syrian term for the lion. That he was the Sphinx-lion Horus, is proved by many Atum effigies which depict him with a lion's head and plume, and between them is shown the Horus falcon. At Gizeh was reared his famous effigy but with a human head. The mystic creature stands gazing east-

¹ The cause of the erroneous introduction of the letter **N** into Hero(**N**)opolis need not, I think, be discussed.

² Another figure of the sun was the hare, because it leaps from its form; see Renouf, *Book of the Dead*.

ward to welcome the celestial orb, of which he is a type, at its appearance at dawn. But in addition to the leonine symbolism of force and virility, so applicable to the sun in his power of daily resurrection, the conception of him in the "Wisdom of the Egyptians," also included the idea of regularity and governance of time and celestial order.¹ The perpetually rising Atum, *Ari*, Horus, was by his action the diurnal timekeeper. By his daily birth throughout all the year at varying orientation points, he was the annual almanac. His "day springings" point from month to month were by him kept in unerring astronomical order.

The Egyptians and the Semites of Pithom, many of whom were for a period Hebrews, were not very strictly differentiated as to their reverence for the lion of Atum. Perhaps Judah formed the majority of the sufferers beneath the taskmasters of *Ari*, at Pithom. His symbol was the lion. No golden calf was ever in Zion's temple, though there was one at Bethel's. But Solomon's throne "had two lions besides its steps," and each of the tribes seem to have claimed this animal as a symbol, for twelve lions ornamented the steps of the throne. Before this throne was erected, Solomon's artificers had made "ten bases of brass ornamented with lions, oxen, and cherubim, and for a time the horses of the sun were stalled at the gate of the temple where these bases stood." Pharaoh's daughter queen may have felt more at home in the Court at Jerusalem than is generally thought. The "Wisdom" acclaimed by her royal spouse "declared *Her* voice," and part of Prof. Naville's essay is concerned with the Sphinx as being sometimes lioness, like Neith, the Wisdom-goddess at Sais, in the Delta.

LIX.—*Newly-published Palestinian Papyri.*

The readers of the *Quarterly Statement* will desire to possess a preliminary notice of the surprising discovery of a number of letters and documents written in and concerning Palestine early in the third century B.C. These have been found during the unrolling and publication of some hundreds of the more promising of the

¹ Owing to their ignorance of the precise length of the year, to the Egyptians the stars seemed irregular compared with the sun. Had they known it, and thus correctly adjusted their calendar, Sirius would always have risen heliacally on the first of the month Thoth; but it took a period of more than fourteen centuries for their error to be corrected astronomically.

great mass of records which once belonged to a Carian Greek named Zeno, who for many years was a subordinate official of Ptolemy Philadelphus in the Fayoum. His duties, as a sort of administrative surveyor, caused him at various times to be travelling and temporarily residing in all parts of Egypt, and we now also know that, for some two or three years, he was upon some special mission in Palestine.

The first of his papyri to be published were edited by Italian scholars, and under the supervision and erudition of Signor Vitelli. He noticed several names of Palestine cities in deeds and despatches, but knowing that immigrant Jews in Egypt sometimes gave the name of one of the towns in their homeland to a village they had founded, and believing that the whole of Zeno's official career was spent in Egypt, he considered that these titles applied to places in Egypt itself.

Many more of the Zeno papyri are now in the possession of the Cairo Museum, and Mr. Edgar, who has commenced the publication of them in the *Annales du Service*, and has already edited some twenty documents, shows that several of these are from Palestine itself, where for a time Zeno was living.

Two of the most interesting ones concern an Ammonite named Tobias, a name also of another member of that race who was a source of considerable vexation to Nehemiah. Zeno and Tobias were, for a time, joint residents at a place called Birta, in Ammonitis. This, it will be remembered, is also the title for the fort mentioned in the Elephantine papyri; it is, in fact, the Aramaic word for a fort or citadel. It may be a name for some other community clustering around some castle east of the Jordan.

The most complete of the Palestine papyri concerns the buying of a female slave by Zeno for the moderate sum of twenty drachmae. Tobias is one party in this transaction. Tobias must have been a man of means, because the letters prove that a certain Appolonius, a very high official at Alexandria who was Zeno's superior officer, suggested to him to make a gift to the king, and Tobias did as he was advised. Tobias was sufficiently important to write to Ptolemy himself, and his letter is preserved. The present took the form of a number of selected animals, including several specimens of the results of cross-breeding. These would be peculiarly appropriate as an offering, because the classics reported that this king was particularly interested in strange animals.

Another Palestinian piece gives an account of an attempt to recover a debt from a Jew there; the Greeks, so far as the papyrus discloses, came off second best in the dispute, their application for redress being received with contumely and blows. There is also a long text, a sort of bill of lading, for the dispatch of a cargo of flour from Palestine to Egypt, a trade which we know, from other sources, was very flourishing at this era. Number 14 of the letters given by Mr. Edgar is from a certain Herakleitos to Zeno, and came from Syria, probably from Sidon, which is mentioned in its text.

These notes are only intended to indicate of what value this correspondence is likely to prove now that it appears that several of the papyri edited by Signor Vitelli have to be assigned to a Palestinian series, and not to the Fayoum. A reconsideration of them will doubtless produce facts of interest, but quantities of the records have not yet been carefully scrutinised, and fresh facts concerning Syria may come to light at any time.

The value of a literary discovery of this character, reproducing the vocabulary and style of an educated Graeco-Egyptian writer, almost contemporary with the composition of the Septuagint Version, need only be mentioned. It will probably as much augment our knowledge of the verbal basis of that work as the Graeco-Roman papyri have done for the wording of the New Testament.

The number of unpublished papyri is now so great that their study has become a science by itself, and it would be a wise step to secure the co-operation of the scholars who are devoting themselves to it in producing a "Journal of Papyrology" for articles and notes by French, British, Italian, and United States writers. Hitherto the only work of the kind has been a German periodical.

MR. HIORTH'S SCHEME FOR THE RESTORATION OF PALESTINE.

MR. ALBERT HIORTH, C.E., a Carnegie Scholar of the Iron and Steel Institute, has written to us complaining that we did not give sufficiently serious consideration to his pamphlet "Concerning the Colonisation of Palestine" (*Q.S.*, April, 1919, p. 91 *seq.*). He informs us that the late Sir William Crookes wrote (Sept. 27th, 1913)