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**31) The Shared Use of the Address “You, Man!” in *Erra* and *Ezekiel*** — Scholars have long made comparisons between the *Book of Ezekiel* and the *Poem of Erra* (for a summary of such comparisons, BODI 2020 [“The Mesopotamian Context of Ezekiel,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Ezekiel*, Oxford UP, 2020, 34–59], 36–38), with the most extensive being BODI 1991 (*The Book of Ezekiel and the Poem of Erra*, OBO 104). To my knowledge, neither Bodi nor other scholars who have written on *Ezekiel*’s Babylonian context—e.g. WINITZER 2014, “Assyriology and Jewish Studies in Tel Aviv: Ezekiel among the Babylonian literati” (in *Encounters by the Rivers of Babylon* [eds. U. Gabbay and S. Secunda], 2014, 163–216); and NISSINEN 2015, “(How) Does the Book of Ezekiel Reveal Its Babylonian Context?” (*WO* 45/1, 85–98)—have noted one point of similarity between the two works. That is the shared use of the vocative second-person address “You, man/human being!” (Akk. *atta amēlu*/Heb. אתה בן אדם). This phrase occurs once in *Erra* (IV 26), namely as part of Išum’s description of the havoc Erra caused in Babylon. (For an edition of *Erra*, CAGNI 1969 [*L’epopea di Erra*, StSem 34]; a score edition with additional material, TAYLOR 2017 [*The Erra Song*, Harvard University Dissertation]. A more up-to-date edition is now under preparation by eBL, with the edition of Tablet I already up [<https://www.ebl.lmu.de/corpus/L/1/5/SB/I/>].) In *Erra* IV 1–19, Išum tells Erra of how Erra had entered Babylon and manipulated its citizens into rebelling against their governor (*šakkanakku*, here likely referring to the Babylonian king himself). Erra then left the city for its outskirts and, after putting on a “lion’s features” (*zīm labbi*), entered the royal palace (IV 20–21). Upon seeing Erra, the soldiers girded on their weapons (IV 22). Then the governor himself became enraged, and sent his army—headed by a general (*ālik pān ummāni*, “he who goes before the army”)—to plunder Babylon:

- IV 23    *ša šakkanakki mutēr gimil bābili tteziz libbašu*  
 IV 24    *kī šallat nakiri ana šalāli uma” ara šābāšu*  
 IV 25    *ālik pān ummāni ušahhaza lemutta*  
 IV 26    *ana āli šāši ša ašapparūka **atta amēlu***  
 IV 27    *ila lā tapallaḥ lā taddar amēla*  
 IV 28    *šeḥra u rabā ištēniš šumītma*  
 IV 29    *ēniq šizbi šerra lā tezziba ayyamma*  
 IV 30    *nakma bušē bābili tašallal atta*
- IV 23    “The heart of the governor, Babylon’s champion, became enraged:  
 IV 24    “He gave his army the command to plunder, as if to plunder foes,  
 IV 25    “He inflamed the general to evil:  
 IV 26    ““As for that city to which I am sending you, **you, man (atta amēlu)**:  
 IV 27    ““Fear no god, respect no man,  
 IV 28    ““Slay young and old alike,  
 IV 29    ““Do not spare a single suckling babe,  
 IV 30    ““You yourself shall plunder the heaped up wealth of Babylon!”

In no other Akkadian text of which I am aware is someone addressed with the phrase *atta amēlu*. The Hebrew phrase אתה בן אדם is likewise unique to *Ezekiel*—as, in fact, is the vocative use of אדם. God addresses Ezekiel as אדם בן אדם no less than twenty-four times in the book. To cite four examples:

- (1) ואתה בן אדם אל תירא מהם ומדבריהם אל תירא כי סרבים וסלונים אותך ואל עקריבים אתה יושב מדבריהם אל תירא ומפניהם אל תחת כי בית מרי המה

“**And you, human being**, do not fear them and their words—for *nettles and thorns* are with you, and you dwell among scorpions; do not fear their words, nor cower before them, for they are a rebellious house.” (*Ezekiel* 2:6)

(2) **וַאֲתָהּ בֶן אָדָם** קח לך לבנה ונתתה אותה לפניך והקות עליה עיר את ירושלם

“**And you, human being**, take for yourself a brick, and place it before you, and engrave upon it a city—Jerusalem.” (*Ezekiel* 4:1)

(3) **וַאֲתָהּ בֶן אָדָם** קח לך חרב חדה תער הגלבים תקחנה לך והעברת על ראשך ועל זקנך ולקחת לך מאזני משקל וחלקתם

“**And you, human being**, take for yourself a sharp blade, a barber’s razor you will take for yourself. And you will pass (it) over your head and beard, and you will take weighing scales and divide them (the hairs).” (*Ezekiel* 5: 1)

(4) **וַאֲתָהּ בֶן אָדָם** עשה לך כלי גולה וגלה יומם לעיניהם וגלית ממקומך אל מקום אחר לעיניהם אולי יראו כי בית מרי המה

“**And you, human being**, make for yourself tools of exile, and go into exile daily before their eyes. And you will go into exile from your place to another place before their eyes—perhaps they will see that they are a rebellious house.” (*Ezekiel* 12: 3)

In the same way that the governor of Babylon addresses his subordinate, the general, as *atta amēlu* before giving him commands, God addresses his prophet Ezekiel as **אתה בן אדם** before issuing him instructions. The significance of this similarity, as well as of the fact that such a phrase appears to be found nowhere in the preserved Mesopotamian corpus outside of *Erra*, and of the biblical one apart from *Ezekiel*, is unclear. Is this a coincidence? An indication of dependence of *Ezekiel* on *Erra*? Or a shared use of a phrase—current in contemporaneous Aramaic, perhaps—used in Babylonia at the time of the composition of both works yet surviving nowhere else? (On the contentious dating of *Erra*, TAYLOR 2017, *The Erra Song*, 251–4 with references to previous literature. On that of *Ezekiel*, GREENBERG 1983 [*Ezekiel*, 1–20, Yale Anchor Bible 25], 12–17, among many others.) At present, one may only wonder.

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**32) An Egyptian in two cuneiform texts from the first century BCE** — A man by the name *Paširî* (<sup>m</sup>*Pa-ši-ri-i*) is mentioned in the archive of the temple treasurer *Raḫimesu* from the city of Babylon. The archive in question is dated to 94–93 BCE (i.e. the reign of Mithridates II and the Parthian period) and consists of 29 documents (VAN DER SPEK 1998, 209–210).<sup>1)</sup>

*Paširî* appears in two of the texts, which (like the rest of them) are documents that centre on the financial administration of the temples of Babylon (VAN DER SPEK 1998, 209). The texts (CT 49 150; BRM 1 99) include a passage that “3 shekel is given to/for the rations of *Paširi* and *Nabu-iddina*, the cleaners of the Day One Temple”.<sup>2)</sup> *Paširî* is not mentioned any further in the two texts.

The title of *Paširî* and the man with the Akkadian name *Nabû-iddina* is not immediately clear. According to the CAD (M II, p. 217), the word translated as “cleaner” (*muremmiku*) derives from *ramāku*, which means “to bathe, wash o.s.”, and it is attested only in these two texts and in a text from Middle-Babylonian times. The AHw (II, p. 675) gives the translation “Bademeister” and brings up just the Middle-Babylonian attestation. It is unclear whether the cleaning act had a directly religious connotation, with people having professions like miller, brewer, soaker, porter, and butcher likewise allotted rations. Thus, *Paširî* and his companion *Nabû-iddina* probably did not enjoy an elevated social status. Regarding the sanctuary referred to as “the Day One Temple”, it can be identified with the *Akītu* temple, or the “New Year Festival House”, in Babylon (VAN DER SPEK 1998, 225).

*Paširî*, whose name clearly is Egyptian and probably corresponds to the Egyptian name *p<sup>3</sup>-n-Wsir*, which means “the one who belongs to (the Egyptian god) Osiris” (MAHLICH 2022, 58),<sup>3)</sup> stands out in research on relations between Egypt and Western Asia by representing the latest clear example of an individual with an Egyptian name in a cuneiform text.<sup>4)</sup>