

Ancient Near East HARRAN

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http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/sitchin/Adda_Guppi_Harran.htm

General Information on the Site:

The *ancient city of Harran* is located on the west bank of the **Balikh River**, a tributary of the Euphrates, in Northern **Mesopotamia**.{1} Its' location is a major crossroad for primary trade routes from Mesopotamia to the west and the northwest.{2} The city was an important trade center in ancient times.{3} It appears to be named after it's geographic function. **Harran** is derived from the *Akkadian harranu* which means road or caravan.{4} The *Bible* refers to **Harran** as *Paddan-aram* which is *Aramean* for highway. {5}

A city by the name of Haran has been continuously inhabited **Since** at least 3000 BCE.{6} The city is written about in the Cappadocian tablets (19th century BC) and Mari texts (19th and 18th centuries BCE). On these tablets it is referred to as a thriving city. The primary deity for Harran was the moon god **Sin**. The city is found in the biblical record of Abraham's migration from Ur to Canaan (Genesis 12) and it was visited by Rebecca (Gen. 24:10-61) and Jacob (29:1-31:21).{7}

Harran was conquered by **Sennacherib** king of Assyria (2 Kings 19:12; Isaiah 37:12) Ezekiel 27:23. It survived under various dynasties, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, until 1260 when it was destroyed by ten Mongols. Its' ruins laid untouched until 1951.{8} In 1951 **Dr. D. S. Rice** oversaw excavation of the ancient city of **Harran**. {9} In the late 1950's the only archeological evidence that could be associated with any time period was found: The ruins Pottery dated the Middle Bronze I period (2000-1800 BCE). It is believed that the earlier levels of archeology lay beneath the ruins of a medieval castle and mosque. {10} They remain unexcavated. Therefore beyond the information that can be deduced from the pottery there is little evidence of the inhabitants of **Harran** except in writings found at other sites. {11}

However in August-September of 1956 **Dr. D. S Rice** did make an important discovery in the pavement (steps) of the mosque. While examining the ruins of the medieval mosque he discovered some *Babylonian Stele* with inscriptions which were dated the sixth century BC. These stele were turned face down and used as steps at the North, East and West entrances to the Mosque.{12} The inscriptions were by the Babylonian ruler, **Nabonidus** and his mother during the time of Daniel's captivity.

There is no archeological evidence of **Abraham** or any of the patriarch's habitation of this city. As has been noted, nowhere, in **Harran** or **Ur** or any other Babylonian city, have their names appeared in ancient texts.{13}

The date of **Harran's** transfer of control from *Aramaeans* to the control of the *Assyrians* is uncertain. It is known that it was one of the first distance provinces to move. The community remained loyal to the king even when other provinces insurrected. It is the city where the last Assyrian King attempted to restore his kingdom. Olmstead comments, with the defeat of **Ashur-uballit** at *Harran*, **Cyaxares** destroyed the last presence of *Assyrian* rule and won all northern Mesopotamia. {14}

It appears from inscriptions that sometime around the sixth century under **Nabonidus**, vis-a-vie **Cyrus**, the *Babylonians* gained control. Under the neo-Babylonians it recovered some of its' former glory. It served as the center for worship of the moon god **Sin** for many centuries. According to **Adad-Guppi's** biography, *Harran* lay desolate (in the possession of the Medes) for fifty-four years (610-556) until, at the beginning of **Nabonidus'** reign (555-539) a vision informed him that **Marduk** was to raise up his young servant Cyrus to scatter the Medes. Out of obedience to the divine order **Nabonidus** rebuilt the temple and committed it to **Sin**. (CR. Isaiah 44:28-45:1). He further built centers of worship for **Sin** in *Ur* and in *Teiba, Arabia*. The work in *Arabia* moved *Babylonian militia* to *Yatrib* (Median). This was an ominous venture by the king. This act was later viewed as self-imposed exiling of the king and an act madness. In Daniel this journey is said to have been a seven year prolongation by the king **Nebakadnezar** (**Nabonidus'** predecessor)

The Qumran scrolls redirect the work to **Nabonidus**. The veneration of **Sin** was seen as a forsaking of the national deity, **Marduk**, in the eyes of the people. Thus the **Marduk** priesthood led a rebellion against **Belshazzar**, **Nabonidus'** son who left to rule in the capital while **Nabonidus** was campaigning in Arabia for some ten of his 17 year rule. The control was then given to **Cyrus** of the *Persians* (539). With his control of all of *Babylonia* He rang down the curtain on the last native Akkadian state. {15}

Major Discoveries from the site:

Description of the find: In this section I will focus primarily on the *Stelae* found at the *Harran* site by **Dr. Rice**. The sole resource used in this discussion is **C. J. Gadd's** article in *Anatolian Studies*.

In August-September of 1956 **Dr. D. S Rice** made an important discovery at the *Harran* site. **Rice** was examining the ruins of a medieval mosque when he discovered some Babylonian Stele with inscriptions dating back to the sixth century BC. The stele were turned face down and used as steps at the North, East and West entrances to the Mosque.{16} These are now believed to be part of a set of four inscriptions that probably once hung at the doors to the temple of the **Babylonian moon god-Sin**.

Dr. Rice's find makes the probable location from which the fourth had been moved fairly certain. This was believed to have been removed by bandits. It was found near Harran in 1906 by H. Pognon. In the ensuing discussion the stele ([below image](#)) will be referred to as H1.A, H1.B, H2.A and H2.B.



- H1.A - stele found by **H. Pognon** and believed to be the misSing stele for the South entrance.
- H1.B - stele found at the North entrance to the Mosque.
- H2.A - stele found at the East entrance to the Mosque.
- H2.B - stele found at the West entrance to the Mosque.

H1 A & B are inscriptions authored probably uSing an amanuensis by the *Royal mother* of a sixth century Babylonian king, **Nabonidus**. It is important to note that both inscription A and B appear to be copies of the same information. For the complete translation of the inscription see (below insert).

NABONIDUS HI, B

Col. I

1. I (am) the lady Adda-guppi', mother
2. of Nabium-na'id, king of Babylon,
3. votaress of the gods **Sin**, Nin-gal, Nusku, and Sadarnunna, my deities
5. who, from my childhood, have sought after
6. their godheads. Whereas in the i6th year of Nabopolassar,
7. king of Babylon, **Sin**, king of the gods, with his city
8. and his temple was angry and went up to heaven-the city and
9. the people that (were) in it went to ruin.
10. (Now) forasmuch as the shrines of **Sin**, Nin-gal, Nusku,

11. and Sadarnunna I sought after and was worshipper of their godhead,
 12. (and) that I laid hold on the hem of the robe of **Sin**, king of the gods, night and daytime
 13. I had ever in mind his great godhead@aily, without cea**Sing**,
 14. of **Sin**, gamag, Igtar, and Adda, so long as I am alive,
 15. I (am) their votaress (both) in heaven and earth. My bles**Sings**,
 16. the goodly things which they gave me, I (too) by day, night, month, and year, gave (back) to them.
 17. I laid hold on the hem of the robe of **Sin**, king of the gods, night and daytime
 18. my two eyes were with him, in prayer and humility of face
 19. was I bowed before them (and) thus (I prayed), " May thy return
20. to thy city be (vouchsafed) to me, that the people, the black-headed,
 21. may worship thy great godhead." For calming
 22. the heart of my god and my goddess, a dress of fine wool, jewels,
 23- silver, gold, a new shift, perfumes, sweet oil,
 24. I applied not to my body, (but in) a torn shift
 25- I went clothed, my goings-out were noiseless, I proclaimed
 26. their praises : the glory of my city and of my goddess
 27. was (ever) set in my heart, I kept watch upon them,
 28. anything good of mine I did not omit, but carried it (ever) before them.
 29. From the 20th year of Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, that I was born (in)
30. until the 42nd year of Assurbanipal, the 3rd year of Asur-etillu-ili,
 31. his son, the 2 I St year of Nabopolassar, the 43rd year of Nebuchadrezzar,
 32. the 2nd year of Awel-Marduk, the 4th year of Neriglissar,
 33. in 95 years of the god **Sin**, king of the gods of heaven and earth,
 34. (in) which I sought after the shrines of his great godhead,
 35. (for) my good doings he looked upon me with a smile
 36. he heard my prayers, he granted my saying, the wrath
 37. of his heart calmed. Towards E-hul-hul the temple of **Sin**
 38. which (is) in Harran, the abode of his heart's delight, he was reconciled, he had
 39. regard. **Sin**, king of the gods, looked upon me and
40. Nabu-na'id (my) only son, the issue of my womb, to the kingship
 41. he called, and the kingship of Sumer and Akkad

42. from the border of Egypt (on) the upper sea even to the lower sea
43. all the lands he entrusted hither
44. to his hands. My two hands I lifted up and to **Sin**, king of the gods,
45. reverently with imploration [(I prayed) thus, " Nabu-na'id
46. (my) son, offspring of my womb, beloved of his mother,]

Col. II.

1. thou hast called him to the kingship, thou hast pronounced his name,
2. at the command of thy great godhead may the great gods
3. go at his two sides, may they make his enemies to fall,
4. forget not, (but) make good E-hul-hul and the finishing of its foundation (?)
5. When in my dream, his two hands had been laid on, **Sin**, king of the gods,
- 6, 7. spoke to me thus, " With thee I will put into the hands of Nabu-na'id, thy son, the return of the gods and the habitation of Harran ;
8. He shall build E-hul-hul, shall perfect its structure, (and) Harran
9. more than (it was) before he shall perfect and restore it to its place.

10. The hand of **Sin**, Nin-gal, Nusku, and Sadarnunna
11. I. he shall clasp and cause them to enter E-hul-hul ".
The word of **Sin**,
12. king of the gods, which he spoke to me I honoured, and I myself saw (it fulfilled);
13. Nabu-na'id, (my) only son, offspring of my womb, the rites
14. forgotten of **Sin**, Nin-gal, Nusku, and
15. Sadarnunna he perfected, E-hul-hul
16. anew he built and perfected its structure, Harran more
17. than before he perfected and restored it to its place ;
the hand
18. of **Sin**, Nin-gal, Nusku, and Sadarnunna from
19. Suanna his royal city he clasped, and in the midst of Harran

20. in E-hul-hul the abode of their hearts' ease with gladness
21. and rejoicing he let them dwell. What from former times **Sin**, king of the gods,
22. had not done and had not granted to anybody (he did) for the love of me
23. who had ever worshipped his godhead, laid hold on the hem of his robe-**Sin**, king of the gods,
24. uplifted my head and set upon me a good name in the

- land,
 25. long days, years of heart's ease he multiplied upon me.
 26. From the time of Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, until the 9th year
 27. of Nabu-na'id king of Babylon, the son, offspring of my womb
 28. 104 years of happiness, with the reverence which **Sin**, king of the gods,
 29. placed in me, he made me flourish, my own self : the sight of my two eyes
30. is clear, I am excellent in understanding, my hand and both feet are sound,
 31. well-chosen are my words, meat and drink
 32. agree with me, my flesh is goodly, glad is my heart.
 33. My descendants to four generations from me flourishing in themselves
 34. I have seen, I am fulfilled (with) offspring. O **Sin**, king of the gods, for favour
 35. thou hast looked upon me, thou hast lengthened my days : Nabu-na'id, king of Babylon,
 36. my son, to **Sin** my lord I have devoted him. So long as he is alive
 37. let him not offend against thee ; the genius of favour, genius of favour which (to be) with me
 38. thou hast appointed and they have caused me to attain offspring, with him (too)
 39. appoint (them), and wickedness and offense against thy great godhead
40. endure not, (but) let him worship thy great godhead. In the 21 years
 41. of Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, in the 43 years of Nebuchadrezzar,
 42. son of Nabopolassar, and 4 years of Neriglissar, king of Babylon,
 43. (when) they exercised the kingship, for 68 years
 44. with all my heart I revered them, I kept watch over them,
 45. Nabu-na'id (my) son, offspring of my womb, before Nebuchadrezzar
 46. son of Nabopolassar and (before) Neriglissar, king of Babylon, I caused him to stand,
 47. daytime and night he kept watch over them
 48. what was plea**Sin**g to them he performed continually,
 49. my name he made (to be) favourite in their sight, (and) like
50. [a daughter of] their [own] they uplifted my head

Col. III.

(Translation of lines 1-19 is supplemented from the duplicate inscription, as rendered by **B. Landsberger**, loc. cit.)

1. I nourished (their spirits), and incense offering
2. rich, of sweet savour,
3. I appointed for them continually and
4. laid ever before them.
5. (Now) in the 9th year of Nabu-na'id,
6. king of Babylon, the fate
7. of herself carried her off, and
8. Nabu-na'id, king of Babylon,
9. (her) son, issue of her womb,

10. her corpse entombed, and [robes]
11. splendid, a bright mantle.
12. gold, bright.
13. beautiful stones, [precious] stones,
14. costly stones.
15. sweet oil her corpse he [anointed]
16. they laid it in a secret place. [Oxen and]
17. sheep (especially) fattened he [slaughtered]
18. before it. He assembled [the people]
19. of Babylon and Borsippa, [with the people]

20. dwelling in far regions, [kings, princes, and]
21. governors, from [the border]
22. of Egypt on the Upper Sea
23. (even) to the Lower Sea he [made to come up],
24. mourning and
25. weeping he performed, [dust ?]
26. they cast upon their heads, for 7 days
27. and 7 nights with.
28. they cut themselves(?), their clothes
29. were cast down(?). On the seventh day.

30. the people(?) of all the land their hair(?)
31. shaved, and.
32. their clothes.
33. the of their clothes.
34. in(?) their places(?).
35. they ? to.
36. at meat (?).
37. perfumes refined he amassed (?).
38. sweet oil upon the heads [of the people]
39. he poured out, their hearts.

40. he made glad, he [cheered (?)]
41. their minds, the road [to their homes]
42. he did not(?) withhold(?).
43. to their own places they went.
44. Do thou, whether a king or a prince.

- (Remainder too fragmentary for translation until: --)

51. Fear (the gods), in heaven and earth
52. pray to them, [neglect] not [the utterance]
53. of the mouth of **Sin** and the goddess
54.

55. - - - make safe the of thy seed
 56. [ever(?)] and for [ever(?)].

H2 A & B are inscriptions authored probably **uSing** an amanuensis by **King Nabonidus**. It is important to note that both inscription A and B appear to be copies of the same information.

H1 B and **H2 A & B** are all mostly readable accept for the edge of the third column which is illegible. For a complete translation of the inscription see **(below insert)**.

NABONIDUS H2, A AND B

(Lines numbered according to the arrangement of H 2, A)

Col. I.

1. The operation of **Sin**, greatest of the gods and goddesses,
2. nobody knows it, **Since** from distant days
3. it came not down to the land, (wherefore) the people of the land saw it (indeed), but
4. wrote it not on a tablet and set it not (down)
5. for days to come. **Sin**, lord of the gods and goddesses, dwellers
6. of the heavens, (thou art he) who, in front of Nabonidus king of Babylon,
7. earnest from the heavens. I (am) Nabonidus,
8. who have not the honour (?) of (being a) somebody, and kingship
9. is not within me, (but) the gods and goddesses prayed for
10. me, and **Sin** to the kingship
11. called me. In the night season he caused me to behold a dream
12. (saying) thus " E-hul-hul the temple of **Sin** which (is) in Harran quickly
13. build, (seeing that) the lands, all of them, to thy hands
14. are verily committed ". (But) the sons of Babylon, Borsippa,
15. Nippur, Ur, Erech, Larsa, priests (and)
16. people of the capitals of Akkad, against his great
17. divinity offended, whenever(?) they sought after (anything) they did wickedly,
18. they knew not the wrath, (the resentment), of the king of the gods, (even) Nannar,
19. they forgot their duty, whenever(?) they talked (it was) treason
20. and not loyalty, like a dog they devoured
21. one another ; fever and famine in the midst of them
22. they caused to be, it minished the people of the land.
 But I

23. hied myself afar from my city of Babylon
 24. (on) the road to Tema', Dadanu, Padakku[a],
 25. Hibra, Iadihu, and as far as Iatribu
 26. ten years I went about amongst them, (and) to
 27. my city Babylon I went not in. At the word of **Sin**,
 28. king of the gods, lord of lords of the gods and
 goddesses, dwellers
 29. of the heavens, they accomplished the word of **Sin**-
 Nannar,
30. of Samas, Istar, Adda, and Nergal ; a guard of (my)
 safety and life
 31. they appointed (to be) with me. In that year, in the
 month of Nisannu
 32. and the month of Tasritu, the people of Akkad and of
 the Hatti-land the produce of the plains
 33. and of the sea received. In the rigour of summer,
 34. the month(s) of Siwanu, Du'uzu, Abu, Ululu, Tasritu, in
 these months
 35. in all these years without cea**Sing**.
 36. at the command of **Sin** the god Adda, lockkeeper of
 heavens and earth, waters
 37. of rain gave them to drink, their property and
 possessions
 38. in peace they brought before me. At the word
 39. of **Sin** also Istar, lady of battle, without whom hostility
 and peace
40. exist not in the land, and a weapon
 41. is not forged, her hand(s) over them
 42. she crossed(?) and the king(s ?) of the land(?) of Egypt,
 the city of the Medes,
 43. the land of the Arabs, and all the kings (who were)
 hostile, for
 44. peace and good relations sent (messengers)
 45. before me. People of the land of the Arabs, who
 weapons
 46. of the land of Akkad
 47. and for
 48- plunder and capture of property they.

Col. II.

1. at the word of **Sin**, Nergal their weapons
 2. shattered and all of them he bowed down at [my feet].
 3. Samas, lord of the oracle, without whom a mouth
 4. is not opened and a mouth is not shut,
 5. (he), accomplishing the command of Nannar, the father
 who created him,
 6. made the people of the land of Akkad and the Hatti-land,
 whom he had committed
 7. to my hands, (to be) of true mouth and heart with me
 8. they kept guard for me
 9. they accomplished my command in the seclusion of tracts

10. far distant and roads secluded which I traveled.
11. (In) ten years arrived the appointed time
12. the days were fulfilled which Nannar, king of the gods, had spoken
13. on the I 7th day of the month Tasritu, the day when **Sin** vouchsafes
14. his revelation, **Sin**, lord of the gods, who on the 1st (of the month)
15. (as) the scimitar of Ann his name invoked attacks the heavens
16. and shatters the earth—uniting the functions
17. of Anu's office, completing the functions of Enlil's office,
18. occupying the functions of Ea's office,
19. in whose hands all of every function of heaven

20. is held, Enlil of the gods, king of kings, lord of lords,
21. upon whose command they go not back
22. and his word is not spoken twice,
23. with the fear of whose great godhead heavens
24. and earth are filled, like his countenance heavens
25. and earth are outspread ; without thee who
26. does anything ? A land whereof thy heart has devised its habitation
27. 28. thou puttest into it the fear of thy great godhead and for days to come
29. its foundations are secure. (But) a land whereof thy heart

30. has devised its ruin, the fear of thee from
31. the heart of it thou sunderest, thou overthrowest it
32. for days to come: of whom all the gods and goddesses,
33. inhabitants of heaven, observe
34. what proceeds from his mouth, they accomplish the command
35. of Nannar, the father who created them; completing
36. the functions of heaven and earth, without(?) whose exalted command
37. which day by day in heaven
38. they pronounce the land is not founded(?)
39. and there is no light in the land.

40. The gods like ? ? quake and tremble,
41. the Anunnaki who before the command of his great
42. godhead, which (is) notthe mountains

(Rest of column fragmentary and unintelligible)

Col. III.

1.
with diviners
2. and interpreters I instructed myself (in) the way, I laid (my hands to it ?)

3. In the night season a dream was disturbing, until the word.
4. Fulfilled was the year, came the appointed time which.
5. from the city of Tema' I (returned ?)
6. Babylon, my seat of lordship, (I entered)
7. they beheld me, and.
8. reconciliation, presents they took to.
9.the kings (that were) near
10. came up and kissed my feet
11. and those far away heard it, and feared his great godhead.
12. The gods and goddesses who had appeared and were afar off
13. returned back and spoke good for me,
14. and in the oracle of the diviner the organs were disposed favourably for me. In plenty
15. and wealth and abundance my people in the distant tracts
16. I spread abroad and in prosperity I took the road
17. to my own land. The word of his great godhead I observed,
18. I stayed not, I shrank not, I rested not ; I let summon
19. the peoples of Akkad and of the Hatti-land from the border of Egypt
20. on the Upper Sea as far as the Lower Sea, whom **Sin**, king of the gods,
21. had committed to my hands. E-hul-hul the temple of **Sin** anew
22. I built, I finished its work. The Hands of **Sin**,
23. 'of Nin-gal, Nusku, and of Sadarnunna from
24. Nuanna my royal city I clasped, and with joy
25. and gladness I made them enter and dwell in their lasting sanctuary,
26. generous libations before them I poured out and
27. I multiplied gifts. The " head " of E-hul-hul
28. I supported, I brought pleasure to the hearts of its people,
29. I accomplished the command of **Sin**, king of the gods, lord of lords,
30. dwelling in the heavens, who, in comparison of the gods in heaven, his name is surpass**Sin**g :
31. (also) of Samas, who is his brightest (peer), of Nusku, Istar, Adda, Nergal,
32. (those) who accomplish the command of Nannar
33. their surpasser. Wheresoever I put on my arms
34. (even) to wheresoever (I put them off?), I have set before me
35. to accomplish the command of Nannar. Whoso thou (art)
36. whom **Sin** shall call to the kingship and
37. shall say to thee "O son, my son", the shrine of **Sin**

He shall . . ." {20}

Similar claims are made by **Nabonidus** himself. In his own testimony he acknowledges his own non-hereditary rights to the throne and compensates for this by calling out that it was the god **Sin** who choose him. It all seems very perfect for his taking of the throne. A god who is separate from the priesthood of **Marduk** endorses him, in turn **Nabonidus** endorses that god, the moon god-**Sin** as the god of gods. The inscription of this reads

"The operation of **Sin**, greatest of the gods and goddesses, nobody knows it, **Since** from distant days it came not down to the land, (wherefore) the people of the land saw it (indeed), but wrote it not on a tablet and set it not (down) for days to come. **Sin**, lord of the gods and goddesses, dwellers of the heavens, (thou art he) who, in front of **Nabonidus** king of Babylon, camest from the heavens. I (am) **Nabonidus**, who have not the honour of (being a) somebody, and kingship is not within me, (but) the gods and goddesses prayed for me, and **Sin** to the kingship called me. In the night season he caused me to behold a dream (saying) thus . . ." (column 1:1-12) {21}

He further tells of his reverence toward his god, **Sin**. The reading is reminiscent of a Psalm.

". . . in whose hands all of every function of heaven is held, **Enlil** of the gods, king of kings, lord of lords, upon whose command they go not back and his word is not spoken twice, with the fear of whose great godhead heavens and earth are filled like his countenance heavens and earth are outspread; without thee who does anything?" (column 2:19-26) {22}