

# Saltair na Rann

In 1883 Whitley Stokes published an edition without translation of the Middle Irish biblical poem *Saltair na Rann* from MS Rawlinson B 502<sup>1</sup> in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Anecdota Oxoniensia. Mediæval and Modern Series Vol. I, Part III). During the 1970s Professor David Greene conducted a seminar on this text at the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. As a result, he published with Fergus Kelly an edition and translation of *The Irish Adam and Eve story from Saltair na Rann* (lines 833–2240) in 1976. This was accompanied by a volume of commentary by Brian O. Murdoch, published in the same year. Both volumes are currently in print, and for sale at €15 each (€25 for the pair).

Professor Greene intended to produce an edition and translation of the entire *Saltair*, accompanied by linguistic analysis and commentary on the subject-matter, but his death in 1981 put a halt to this project. In his weekly seminar he had covered about half the text, but he had established a provisional text and translation of the entire work, which was typed out by the Librarian Clerk, the late Peggy Walsh. He had inserted various hand-written notes and corrections on her typescript.

Since his death many scholars have come to the Institute to consult Greene's text and translation. As there is no immediate prospect of a new edition in book form of the entire *Saltair* it seemed to be of benefit to reproduce Greene's typescript on the website exactly as he left it. The published text and translation of lines 833–2240 have also been reproduced for the sake of completeness. The School would be most grateful for any suggestions relating to the provisional text and translation, which might be used (with due acknowledgement) in a future edition.

This work has been carried out by Sandra Carrick with the assistance of the School of Celtic Studies computer consultants Gavin McCullagh and Andrew McCarthy. The images were scanned on an Ubuntu Linux workstation, and post-processed using the ImageMagick suite before being assembled into PDFs using gscan2pdf.

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<sup>1</sup>For a discussion of this manuscript, see Brian Ó Cuív, *Catalogue of Irish language manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and Oxford College Libraries* (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies 2001) 163–200.

4185 Rí ro-ráidi friū oen lén  
 fri clainn n-amrai n-Israhél,  
 co nderndtais dōib eclais nglain  
 ocus ind arcc testemain.

4189 Dikis dōib fri soirsi slecht,  
 fri cerdaicht, fri prīngoibnecht:  
 Adiar adma irdaig mūr  
 is int amra Ithidūn.

4193 Do t[h]reib Leui, lāt[h]ar ndil,  
 do rēir ind Rīg do noebnim,  
 sechtmogo fer, fobaid fecht,  
 fria cobair, fria timthirecht.

4197 Cētna gnīm, gnisset mar chlo<sup>c/</sup>  
 dabach humai, istudloc,  
 co n-ilur delb, lethan lecht,  
 trethan derb trí fer <sup>n/</sup>le<sup>de</sup>o.

(4185--8) The King said to them without sorrow, to the famous Children of Israel, that they should build for themselves a pure church, and the Ark of the Covenant.

(4189-92) There were two of them engaged in craftsmanship of cuttings, in artefaction, in fine smith's work: skilful Adiar<sup>1</sup> who restored walls, and the famous Ithidun.

(4193--6) There were seventy men of the tribe of Levi, a dear state, by will of the King of holy heaven, to help and serve them, a prompt movement.

(4197-4200) The first deed, they made like a bell a brazen vat,<sup>2</sup> a treasure-place, with many figures, a wide monument, the certain ... (?)<sup>3</sup> of thirteen men.

1. Adian, Adiair etc. in the prose versions. The Biblical names of these two are Beseleel and Ooliab, Exod. xxxi 2, 6. Ithudun appears to be identical with Ithithun, one of the temple musicians; see Éigse xviii 30 §6, where he is paired with Ethän.

2. Exod. xxx 18: *Facies et labrum aeneum cum basi sua ad lavandum.*

3. Perhaps trethan 'strength' (cf. 3644), in the meaning 'burden'. The prose texts have i téigtis oethri fir déc 'into which fourteen men could go', which cannot be right.

- 4201      Gnīm tēnaissi tadbat rūin,  
            admat ad-fēt in scriptāir  
            eter firu is maccu is mná,  
            bacc íairnn cech cenfir iarna.
- 4205      In tres gnīm ro glé cen chol,  
            tagdas Dé, tabernacol;  
            nírdu dín[n]im la Día ndil  
            cona mílib mírbailib.
- 4209      Cethramad gnīm ind Ārc úag  
            cain im-rācht fri cach imlúad  
            ōr delgnaid, dín do cach threib,  
            amal cach scrín n-ildelbaig.
- 4213      Rí do-rōrainn dóib, ba búaid,  
            in n-eclais n-ōrhuill noebúaig,  
            etir fot, cen chaillti cert,  
            etir airdi ocus lethet.

(4201--4) The second deed which shows a mystery, a matter which Scripture recounts, an iron hook for every man then, men, women and children.

(4205--8) The third deed which he revealed with fault -- the house of God, the tabernacle; God did not despise it, with its thousands of miracles.<sup>1</sup>

(4209-12) The fourth deed was the holy Ark; gold fairly covered<sup>2</sup> it for every motion, a protection to each tribe like any ornamented shrine.

(4213--6) The King marked out for them, it was a virtue, the great golden holy pure church, its length, correctness without hardness, its height and width.

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1. Lit. 'with miraculous thousands'.

2. For the anomalous length of im-rächt, cf. 2641.

- 4217      Trícha cubat, comul nglé,  
            etir lethet is airde,  
            ceíca cubat fe chucht cruth  
            inna fut fri suidiugud.
- 4221      Cláraib cainib crotha glain  
            slánaib soeraib sodelbaib,  
            iar timrud tairchil each greim  
            do fídrud saindil sechein.
- 4225      Cúairt cethrochair, cuntaig grád,  
            nirbo drechrothail dermár;  
            catho[h]laí gelbdai, gnín n-ógdai,  
            fachlaí febdai forórdai.
- 4229      Rí ros orddaig clethaib clár,  
            do-s-forgaib srethaib soergrád,  
            re-das cinn fri hērgna alt:  
            dá chlār sēgdai sescat.

(4217-20) Thirty cubits, a bright joining, in both width and height, fifty cubits in its length for founding in a shape of beauty.

(4221--4) With fair boards of pure shape, perfect, noble, well-formed, each portion serving as an enclosure, of dear noble shittim wood.

(4225--8) A rectangular circuit, a dignity of building, it was not a huge ... ..<sup>1</sup> bright nails (?),<sup>2</sup> a pure deed, excellent gilded coverings (?).<sup>3</sup>

(4229-32) The King ordered them with planks of boards, he raised them with rows of noble dignities, he fixed them with wisdom of joints: ~~many~~<sup>scarcely</sup> two noble boards. sixty/

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1. The second element is obscure. Perhaps connected with trochlaigid, trothlaigid 'defiles, profanes', the origin of which is also obscure.

2. Perhaps 'battle nails', referring either to paxillos 'pegs', Exod. xxvii 19, etc., or incastraturae 'tenons', Exod. xxvi 17 ff.

3. The reading is not certain, since fechlai has been corrected to fechrai at 4249. SSR has co fechreib foréndaib aicce 413, translated by Dillon as 'with gilt edges', but there are no other examples of ochair 'edge' with prosthetic f-; for fechair (from fechraib) see O'Rahilly, Celtica i 142 ff. Perhaps 'partition', cf. DIL fechraí, though it is hard to find an answering word in the Bible version.

4233 Dá chlár déo 'mon doras ndron,  
caintomus oen imfórdul;  
cethri oláir déo, derbdair sein,  
semtair imon senisteir.

4237 Trí oláir fichet in each slise  
clíchet oen ag oen anfise;  
dá chubát, ní deohelt táir,  
bí d i llethet each cenchláir.

4241 Cethri oláir fo <sup>h</sup>ammib de [h]  
i nhuillib na eolase,  
feib do-rumát, ríga ríad,  
trí chubát in each cenchláir.

4245 Sé fotha dēo, derb oen lecht,  
ar secht fichtib do argot;  
eturru is lār, líth fri báig,  
da fotha díb each cenchláir.



(4233--6) Twelve boards around the strong door, a fair measure without error; let fourteen boards, that is proved, be arranged around the window.

(4237-40) Twenty-three boards in each side, they move (?) without ... <sup>1</sup>, without ignorance; two cubits, it is not an unseemly covering, let there be in the width of each board.

(4241--4) Four boards under ... <sup>2</sup> from it in the corners of the church, three cubits in each board, as it was thought, a royal saying.

(4245--8) 156 silver sockets, it is true without fault, between them and the ground, a festival for combat - two of them for each board.

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1. It is not clear which meaning of ág is appropriate here.

2. If this is from suim, the meaning is not clear.

- 4249      Airdí na focraí fo lí  
             hús na fothaib findruini:  
             cubat fri fut a lāme  
             oen imfocraid n-imfírme.
- 4253      Dorus anéid sair segdai máil  
             solus fri gréin cain omláin;  
             oen ardgréin gúin, oían each cruth  
             int sanotair 'na fírfáthur.
- 4257      Cethri oláir o[h]omláin, gúin nglé,  
             o[o] congbáil na sanotare,  
             eo fothaib fíad túsathaib treib  
             oona fúsathaib foróndaib.
- 4261      Altóir fri dorus an-túaid,  
             fri loscud n-edpart noebúnaig;  
             altóir aurgnaide 'n-a dess  
             fri aurnasthi náid imchress.

g/

(4249-52) The height of the bright coverings<sup>1</sup> above the silver sockets was a cubit and a hand's breadth without excess of computation.

(4253--6) A door in the east which poets approach swiftly,<sup>2</sup> brightly towards the fair full sun; the sanctuary in the extreme west, without horror of deeds, lasting in every way.

(4257-60) Four full boards, a clear deed, supporting the sanctuary, with sockets, in the presence of peoples, a tribe, with its gilded shapes.

(4261-64) An altar north of the door for the burning of holy pure<sup>3</sup> sacrifices; an altar prepared south of it for prayers which are not narrow.

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1. Cf. 4228 n.

2. Reading Dorus sair snéid ...

3. The form neebuaig is difficult.

- 4265 In prímaltóir cosind rath,  
fri gníngartglóir ro turebad;  
cech thuocht, fo ardbilib óir,  
ba harddidir ucht Aróin.
- 4269 Deil telchinne tiar is tair,  
a mníab amal chorcarglain,  
díрге cech tolgdāil tailce  
fri torgabáil na drumslaite.
- 4273 Tuirí trēn díriuch do lār,  
fri síniud, sruthi soergrād,  
fon drumslait déin derbtha slóig  
co tríb delbaib dēc dergóir.
- 4277 Co luid triasin drumslait druin  
-- fri tuidmí, na suanemuin -- ;  
fair túas cen lēn, laíd lōrda,  
ēn úais co n-aíb forōrda.

(4265--8) The chief altar of grace was raised with glory of  
generous deeds; <sup>1</sup> with high rims of gold, it was in every  
way as high as Aaron's breast.

(4269-72) A roof support to the west and to the east,  
their brightness like red crystal, to hold up the ridgepole,  
the straightness of every strong division of firmness.

(4273--6) A strong pillar straight from the floor for  
stretching -- dignity of noble ranks -- under the firm  
ridgepole, which hosts affirm, with thirteen images of  
red gold.

(4277-80) So that it went through the strong ridgepole --  
for binding, the ropes; <sup>2</sup> up on top of it without sorrow,  
as adequate song, a noble bird <sup>3</sup> with gilded form.

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1. Cf. gartglóir : altóir, 4527--8.

2. 'for fastening the ropes', DIL T 357, 48-9,  
but this involves taking súainemuin as gpl.

3. Perhaps read úas (: túas).

- 4281 Co roiset lár di cech leith  
for na clāraib hi comsreith,  
gníthi ōn drumslait im-mach  
síthbi n-anart n-ildathach.
- 4285 Oenanart tairsiu an-echtair,  
coemthorasht cia comnertaíd  
fri sníma seirgthi sóeba  
fri gníma, fri garbgaetha.
- 4289 Clār di argut glē cen meth  
cechtar dē, na dā prímleth;  
iar tuidmidib, togaeh tóir,  
sechtmoga folach ndergóir.
- 4293 Fri sreng dōib, fri cuimrech nglē,  
na n-anart cōir coimtíge,  
baeān dron dergóir togaig  
do chur for cech n-oenfolaig.

<sup>1</sup>

(4281--4) Poles for variegated cloths were made out from the ridgepole so that they reach the floor on each side in equal array.

(4285--8) One cloth over them from the outside, fair and complete though it protects against perverse withering torments, against (violent) acts, against harsh winds.

(4289-92) A board of bright untarnished silver on each of the two main halves; seventy rings of red gold attached to fastenings, a choice aid.

(4293--6) For drawing, for bright binding of the proper appropriate cloths, a firm hook of choice red gold is put on each ring.

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1. Reading sithbi anart.

- 4297      Suidigdir tairsib im-muig  
            dia taibsin dona slōgaib,  
            slessa sēt fri sella slōg,  
            trī cessa dēc do dergór.
- 4301      Dēnaid fri tarba cech druing  
            ārc amra, demin forgaill,  
            'mon fleisc, 'mon maind, monor nglē,  
            im na tāiblide lecdai.
- 4305      Cethri eubait, comol nglē,  
            do bith i fut na āirce,  
            a trī 'na hairde, mod cert,  
            ocus a dó 'na lethet.
- 4309      Cethri drolaim di ór dron  
            asind āirc dia himmarchor;  
            dá drol treothu, derg a ngnē,  
            dond ōr amra forloiscthe.



(4297--4300) There are arranged over them outside to be shown to the hosts thirteen baskets of red gold, walls of jewels for the gazings of the hosts.

(4301--4) Make, for the benefit of every people, a famous Ark, a certitude of judgment, to contain the rod, the manna -- clear work -- and the stone tables.<sup>1</sup>

(4305--8) There are to be four cubits in the length of the Ark, three in its height -- sure work -- and two in its width.

(4309-12) Four rings of stout gold attached to the Ark to carry it; two poles through them, of red hue, of famous refined gold.

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1. Reversing the order of R.

- 4313 Delb hiruphín fersin áíroc  
dind ór hilarcaín intháíro,  
co fáthaib níam, nássaíd glé,  
co scáthaib a scíath scáilte.
- 4317 Sint sanotáir suidigt[h]er lib  
ind áro noeb cona aídáib,  
is anart sróil, sreth cen táir,  
eter in slóg 's in sanotáir.
- 4321 Co cétláib gríannaib cech cruth,  
co olíaraib, co n-airfítíud,  
co n-orthonaib, co córaib,  
co mólthogaib dermóraib.
- 4325 Flesc Moísi, flesc Aróin áith,  
cen laísi, línib ollgráid;  
coíca n-unga n-óir glé glain  
cechtar dé na da flesc-sain.
- 4329 Flesc maith Moísi, monar cert,  
ro fer for aesa AEgypt,  
nathir doilbth[e], dalgnaid cruth,  
derbaid for a firúachtar. u/

(4313--6) Provide the shape of a cherubim on the Ark of varied fine gold, with causes of brightnesses, a bright festival, with the shadows of its spread wings.

(4317--20) Let there be placed by you in the sanctuary the holy Ark with its implements, and a satin cloth, a spreading without shame, between the people and the sanctuary.

(4321--4) With brilliant songs in every way, with companies, with music, with prayers, with choirs, with great praises.

(4325--8) The rod of Moses, the rod of keen Aaron, without ..., with ranks of great dignity; each of these two rods contained fifty ounces of bright pure gold.

(4329--32) The good rod of Moses, proper work, which he used on the people of Egypt -- assures on its very top a wrought serpent, excellent shape.

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1. Perhaps from \*imm--tairoi.

2. Laisi (Moisi) is a hapax, but cf. laeschur 5723.

3. Apparently plural here.

- 4333      Flesc Árðin, ba amra dūis,  
             grēdglōir glanna fied gelgnūis,  
             fo blāth bil bolaid noībe  
             fo thorui oech degmoīne.
- 4337      'Sind lestar lán oosin maind  
             sé oēt di ōr oen tādraim,  
             hisin prīschaindelbra ohōir  
             trí ohēt n-unga nīerb ndergōir.
- 4341      Secht mbenna búana, búaid ferb,  
             forsin chaindelbrau orúanderg;  
             gnītis dind ōr glē glanna,  
             fors mbītis secht sutralla.
- 4345      Cūich gela, cúairt oen nach cleith,  
             sūig fri sreba, súairo sainred;  
             intu no bruindis bannae  
             no sildis na sutralla.

(4333--6) Aaron's rod, a famous prize, a pure glory of dignity before (his) bright face, with the good flower of the odour of sanctity, with the fruit of all good riches.

(4337-40) In the vessel full of manna six hundred (ounces) of gold without ... <sup>1</sup>; in the good main candelabra three hundred <sup>2</sup> full ounces of red gold.

(4341--4) Seven lasting points, triumph of words, on the candelabra of red enamel, made of bright pure gold, on which were seven candles.

(4345--8) Bright cups for streams of liquid, a circuit with no concealment, a pleasant marvel; into them fell the droppings which the candles gave off.

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1. tathrainn 're-division', or táthrainn  
'melting and division' ?

2. The nasalisation after trí chét is  
unhistoric, as is Rat after coíca, 4327.

- 4349      Secht céit unga 'sin mēis móir  
co cethri crossaib dergóir;  
         furri a dó sechtmogat sla  
         d'arān remúir nemdesctha.
- 4353      In caindelbra 'sind leith tess,  
caīn, caindelbda, cen dīmess;  
         in mías a-túaid táircthi rúin,  
         cosna bargaib remúir.
- 4357      Ilar na cúach, na cód cass,  
ilar lestar lór lānmass,  
         ilar mías menmaib móirdaib,  
         cosna delbaib dergóirdaib.
- 4361      Di ōr huili, ilar ndelb,  
co ndrúine, nī mod inderb,  
         na stāba, tōlaib gestal,  
         stomacha is tūslestar.

(4349-52) Seven hundred ounces in the great dish with four crosses of red gold; on it place (?) <sup>1</sup> 72 (loaves) of unleavened showbread.

(4353--6) The candelabra on the southern side, fair, well-shaped, not despised; the dish, which mysteries produce, on the north side, with the loaves of showbread.

(4357-60) The multitude of the cups, the ornamented goblets, of copious very fine vessels, of dishes with stately details, <sup>2</sup> with shapes of red gold.

(4361--4) The cups, with hosts of markings, with ornament, no uncertain work, . . . . <sup>3</sup> and thuribles all of gold, with many shapes.

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1. Possibly a by-form of lá ('put' ? But the syntax is strange. A dó sechtmogat is a noun phrase, 'seventy-two things', and something like di bairgenaib would be expected after it.

2. Taking menmaib = menbaib, cf. ru menmaiged, 4149; menmaigfitir, 8216.

3. There is no Latin word in Exodus even faintly resembling stomacha.

4365      Srethaib sutrall, soillsi scuir,  
fri soimsi 'sin tabernacuil;  
caindelbrai gelbdai glōrdai,  
it é delbdai dergórdai.

4369      For lassad co léir do-grēs,  
ola ocus chēir fo chomlēs,  
iarna terchur fri dídnad  
cen herchur, cen airdíbdad.

4373      Tech fri comdāil ceeh tharbai,  
cen chomrāid, cen chomlabrai,  
cen fāilti, cen tēirsi traig,  
soillsi eter lá ocus adaig.

4377      Tempul díada, dín ceeh aín,  
tegdais rodígrais rochaín,  
fri acallaim Dē sunn sel,  
fri tinchosc, fri forcetal.



(4365--8) With rows of lamps, light of a host, for seemliness  
in the tabernacle;<sup>1</sup> bright glorious candalabras, well shaped,  
of red gold.

(4369-72) Oil and wax burning diligently and continually in  
equal brightness, having been placed for solace, without fading<sup>2</sup>  
or extinction.

(4373--6) A house for the shaping<sup>3</sup> of every benefit,  
without conversation or talking, without rejoicing, without a  
step of sorrow, brightness both day and night.

(4377-80) A holy temple, the protection of every man, a very  
zealous very fair dwelling, for speaking to God here for a  
time, for instructing, for teaching.

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1. Read taberneuīl (Meyer); otherwise the line is  
too long.

2. Read erchra, making amus with terchur.

3. Read comdāl, and chomrād in the next line.

- 4381 'Nāchas tathigi aes baeth,  
mná nā meicc nā laine laech;  
nā cinged sét a sossad,  
acht aes fírfien firfossad.
- 4385 Aes trúag, aes deōda dessa,  
athlaích ocus laíchessa;  
slúaig sin, súairc dúairc, tólaib gair,  
impe 'mo cúairt dia n-echtair.
- 4389 Tíagat 'sind eclais fo lí  
aes óg, sacairt, lēignidi,  
is aes humal, céim forais,  
íar n-athirge, íar nglanchobais.
- 4393 In chlass, in chlēir, ba cert cóir,  
toirnet co lēir dond altóir,  
tairismig, nībat lúamnaig,  
at hé fēta forhúamnaig.
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<sup>1</sup>  
(4381--4) 'Let no foolish people frequent it, women or children  
or a band of warriors; let none tread the path of its dwellings  
but righteous responsible people.

(4385--8) The wretched, holy people of justice (?), athlaích,<sup>2</sup>  
lay-women: these hosts, whether pleasant or gloomy, with  
many words, are round about it on the outside.

(4389-92) Let holy people, priests and learned men go into  
the bright church, and the humble, a step of strength,  
after repentance and a good confession.

(4393-96) The choir, the clergy, as is right and proper, let  
them bow down<sup>3</sup> diligently to the altar, constant, let them  
not be flighty (but rather) quiet and reverent.

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1. For nách- with jussive subjunctive, cf. nachfor  
fuca lais dia thig, 1459.

2. It is difficult to say which of the meanings of  
this word is intended here.

3. = tairnet, from do-airindi.

4397      Gaibed cāch a greimm tarbai  
do rēir Aróin meic Amrai,  
glaini glēthig fria cacairt  
fria brēthir in p[h]rimsacairt.

4401      Dēntar lib iar mbēs cech cuir  
do-grēs isin tabern(a)cuil  
edpart matinda, mét blā,  
ocus idpart fescorda.

4405      Bolud na luba as cach thoeb  
la torroma in Spirta Noeb,  
olū co n-áne fri gnāssad  
fri slāne, fri sīrsāssad.

4409      Rī ro rāid friu: 'Sernnaid sreith  
'mond eclais di cach oenleith  
for son reilgce co rebaib  
do anartaib oengelaib.

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(4397-4400) Let each undertake his beneficial work under the rule of Aaron the son of Amra, according to the word of the high priest, a bright firm purity to direct them.

(4401--4) Let there be made by you according to the custom of every contract a morning and an evening sacrifice, an amount of fame, perpetually in the tabernacle.

(4405--8) The scent of the herbs from every side, with the visits of the Holy Spirit, pleasant fame for frequentation, for health, for perpetual satisfaction.

(4409-12) The King said to them, 'Set a row of pure white cloths about the church actively on every side for a cemetery.

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1. Following DIL R 24. 16.

- 4413 Dorus ind indliss fo-dess  
cain sēt solus narb imchress  
fri tuttacht Dé, deoda núall,  
fri athigid na mōrslúag.
- 4417 Nā bīd for n-aittreib, mod n-ēim,  
eter chrann chaingil is grēin,  
sēt in Spirda Noeb fo leith  
fri tauttacht, fri tathigeid.
- 4421 Bīd am-ne ind eclas fo lí  
feib dos-rorann int ardrí,  
uas cach maig rodas derscaig,  
cen forcraid, cen imthesbaid.'
- 4425 Rī dos-rat fo ríaglaib recht,  
dos-fuc a híathaib Ēgept,  
is hé māl na slōg, slān siú  
in rī rān ra rāidi friú.

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4428. raid, R.

(4413--6) The door of the courtyard southwards, a fair bright path which should not be narrow, for the entry of God, a divine cry, for the frequenting of the great hosts.

(4417-20) Let you not dwell, swift work, between the chancel and the sun; (that is) the path of the Holy Spirit alone, for entry, for frequenting.

(4421--4) Let the bright church then be as the High King marked it out; He has made it surpass every plain, without excess, with deficiency. '

(4425--8) The King put them under the rules of laws, he brought them out of the lands of Egypt; He is the prince of the hosts, safe here, the noble king who said to them.

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- 4429 Rí ro ráid friū athesc n-úag  
do horddogud forsin slúag  
immon eclais n-ena n-aird  
trí treba do each oenaird.
- 4433 Trí treba co ndéni an-air  
grēni fri turcbāil toebdein,  
is a trí dond leith an-íar  
fri sreith, fri fuiniud fírían.
- 4437 Trí treba dond leith an-des  
cen cleith fri feba fírles,  
is a trí tecrais cech mbúaid  
frisín n-eclais a-fírthúaid.
- 4441 Rí ro ráidi friū tria rath  
fri aiffrenn, fri celebrath,  
treb Leui lerōl cen greis  
i mmedōn immon n-eclais.



(4429--32) The king said a pure saying to them; as an arrangement for the host -- three tribes in each direction around the ... <sup>1</sup> high church.

(4433--6) Three tribes swiftly to the east, at the brightsided rising of the sun, and three on the western side, arranged towards the righteous sunset.

(4437--40) Three tribes on the southern side, without concealment for the true benefit of excellence, and three -- he arranged every virtue -- <sup>2</sup> on the true north of the church.

(4441--4) The king said to them through his grace that the bounteous <sup>3</sup> tribe of Levi should be unopposed in the middle around the church, during the mass, during the celebration.

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1. This word is obscure, see DIL s.v. ena.

<sup>Formed</sup>  
2. ~~Formed~~ apparently by inserting fír- into a-túaid.

3. The first element is ler- 'abounding'; the second is uncertain.

- 4445 In dara mac d'Iosēph án,  
Manasse mġlib ollgrád,  
dessid iar ndligud Dé de  
i n-inud trebe Leue.
- 4449 Rí do-rat Áró<sup>n</sup> fo smacht  
combad hē ba prġmsacart,  
ocus Moġsi, mō cech n-ail,  
i toġsigecht in p[h]opail.
- 4453 Rġ betha buirr, búan a blat,  
rġ domuin [duinn] do-rōsat,  
rġ ōs cach rġg, cen gleo ceġt,  
rġ ro rāid friu in n-athesc.

(4445---8) The second son of noble Joseph, Manasses with  
thousands of great dignities, sat, according to God's  
ordinance regarding him, in the place of the tribe of Levi. <sup>1</sup>

(4449--52) The king put Aaron under command so that he was the  
high priest and Moses, greater <sup>2</sup> than any roek, in the  
leadership of the people.

(4453---6) The king of the swelling world, lasting his fame,  
the king of the strong globe, who created, a king above  
every king, without strife of contentions, the king  
said the saying to them.

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1. There appears to be no Biblical authority for this.

2. Cf. 3770 and 4513.

~~3. Reading cebt (r atnas) for cert.~~

LIII

4457 Ba formtech iar sain in slóg  
fri Moísi agus fri hĀrón,  
im dlíged sacairt, saer smacht,  
agus immon toísigecht.

4461 At-rachtár iar sin co dían  
tria ~~di~~ummus is tri ~~an~~riad,  
i n-agaid Moísi, mod n-ān,  
Core, Abiron, Dathān.

4465 In rī ro dīgail in-sain  
forru fēin, for a slúagaib,  
ro-s loisc tene, tōlaib gal,  
agus ro[-s] sluic in talam.

4469 At-raig in slúag diarb gnāth cath  
dia mbās a rrodīs brāthar,  
co n-érlatar līn a tuir  
co rice in tabernacuil.

### LIII

(4457--60) The host was envious after that of Moses and of Aaron, about the dignity of the priest -- noble ordinance -- and about the chieftainship.

(4461---4) They rose up then swiftly through pride and evil conduct against Moses, renowned work -- Core, Abiron, Dathan.

(4465---8) The king avenged that on themselves and on their hosts, fire burned them, with numbers of battles, and the earth swallowed them.

(4469--72) The host, accustomed to battle rose up to kill them, the two great brothers, so that they fled with all their host to the tabernacle.

4473      Re-s n-ort int angel co glē  
         ar hēрге dōib fri Moīse,  
             cethri mīli dēc dont slúag  
             la cēt toísech ndían dermúad.

4477      I n-agaid mac n-Ámmra n-án  
         triallsat cath calma comlán,  
             int slúraig 'na srethaib 'mo-sech,  
             sech ba fechair, ba formtech.

(4473---6) The angel clearly killed them for rising up  
against Moses, fourteen thousand of the host, with a  
hundred swift noble chieftains.

(4477--80) Against the noble sons of Amram  
they brought a great valiant battle, the hosts in their  
varied ranks -- it was both fierce and envious.

- 4481 Ráidid Moísi frisin slúag  
arna betis for imlúad  
flesc cacha treibi cen geiss  
do thabairt leo dond eclais.
- 4485 'Nech assa flesc, búan bolud,  
úraigfes foa lāntorud,  
toimled do deōin Dē, dīn nglē,  
ord saer na sacerdóte.'
- 4489 Clannaid Moísi dōib cech fleisc  
ba túaslucud do mōrcheist;  
flesc Ārōin, amra bolud,  
ro thaitni fo lāntorud.
- 4493 Ro oirdned Ārōn in-sain  
i sacerdoti in phopail:  
do-rairned díummus na mborb  
ro airbered cech fodord.
- 4497 Moísi mōrglan moltais māil  
targai in slōgrath 'na s[o]erdāil,  
clethaib cialda, gair cen cleith  
iar rethaib ríagla ráidid.



(4481--4) Moses tells the host, so that they might not be disturbed, to bring a rod for every tribe without fault with them to him in the church.

(4485--8) 'He whose rod, lasting perfume, will grow green, with full fruit, let him enjoy by God's will, bright protection, the noble dignity of priesthood.

(4489-92) Moses plants each rod for them, it was a resolving of a great difficulty; Aaron's rod, wonderful perfume, shone in full fruit.<sup>1</sup>

(4493--6) Aaron was ordained then into the priesthood of the people; the vanity of the proud was brought down, every murmur was subdued.<sup>2</sup>

(4497-4500) Great pure Moses, whom princes praised, he dominates the host in its noble assembly, with wise supports, a word without concealment, he speaks according to the ranks of a rule.

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1. Read do-rairni (KM); cf. 6509, 7531. But no. Raitne, 6509.

2. Read do-rairbered (KM), or do-airberad; cf. 6362  
Or no fairbered

- 4501 Ro-cluned cāch, clū cen geis,  
tan tēged Ārōn d'eclais;  
dō di cech leith, deōda tíi,  
cantaís eeóla clucíni.
- 4505 A dō, secht ndeich, comgrinn cóir,  
tuidmide dronmind dergóir,  
ocus ubull dond ór glē  
eter cech dá cluicíne,
- 4509 Iarna cumrech, cumnech glóir,  
di chocholl huillnech Ārōin,  
iarna crechad, crichid cruth,  
iar srethad, iar suidiugad.
- 4513 Ārōn ba amru cech n-aíl  
saíded 'sin taberncuil,  
cen tathaír dia grād fo glóir  
'na chathaír druimnig dergóir.

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4514. tabernacuil, R.

(4501--4) Everybody used to hear him, fame without restraint,  
when Aaron went to the church; on every side of him, a divine  
garment, little bells made music.

(4505--8) Two, seven tens, accurate and proper, fixed firm sacred  
objects of red gold, and an apple of bright gold between each  
two little bells,

(4509-12) Bound to the cornered cloak of Aaron, a remembered  
glory, engraved, a prudent shape, ranked (and) arranged.

(4513--6) Aaron, who was more famous than every rock, used to sit  
in the tabernacle in his backed chair of red gold in glory  
without reproach to his dignity.

1. Cf.

- 4517 In chathaír chóir, cain a cucht,  
cen tathaír don p[h]rímsacurt;  
lór duis fiad cach druing dein,  
is a druim frisin tuirid.
- 4521 Do-thairced cāch dīb a dāil  
do cech leith immon sanctáir;  
senad sruithi, sóerda slóig,  
do-fuctais recht is canōin.
- 4525 A chethri meic, monor nglē,  
Ārōin úasail meic Amrae,  
bītis fri gartglōir, cain cacht,  
ōs altóir noíb na n-edpart.
- 4529 Slúaig na sacart, srethaib grád,  
cāch dīb 's a druim fria choemchlār,  
dond eclais noeb ba masse  
fri cumtach na coemchlaisse.

---

4520. a druim frisin tuiridein, R.

(4517-20) The proper chair, fair its shape, without reproach to the high priest, with its back to the pillar -- sufficient protection in the presence of every good band.

(4521--4) Everybody used to come into his presence from every direction around the sanctuary; they used to expound the law and the canon, an assembly of sages, noble hosts.

(4525--8) The four sons of noble Aaron son of Amra, clear work, were engaged in glorious honour, a fair bondage, above the holy altar of the sacrifices.

(4529-32) The hosts of the priests, in ranks of orders, each of them with his back to his fair board, at the maintaining of the fair choir -- it was an adornment to the holy church.

4533. Na fográid ann fria ndeochair,  
na deochain, na suibdeochain,  
fria annad cainde, gnim cert,  
fria tairbe, fria timthirecht.

4537 In slóg bíd i fus fria feis  
de cech leith immon n-eclais,  
seólaib soidangeib, suilgib srath,  
ceólaib cuidbib ro-chluined.

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4537. bíd, R.

(4533--6) The sub-grades there in their distinction, the deacons, the sub-deacons, for candle-lighting, a good deed, for usefulness, for service.

(4537-40) The host which used to be in celebration there, on every side around the church, it was heard with comforting strains, with pleasantness of arrangements,<sup>1</sup> with proper music.

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1. Perhaps read sreth.

- 4541 Ba mertnech Moísi, mod n-úag,  
 fri hilchaingni, fri imlúad,  
 fri forcetal as cech cruth  
 fria srethad, fria suidigud,
- 4545 Fri orddugud cáich fo mām,  
 is fri immad a n-ilgrād,  
 fri cuibdiugud fo glóir glain  
 fria tinchosc, fria timmarcain,
- 4549 Fria mbreith co óg fo recht rún,  
 fri sreith iar slecht na slógdūn,  
 fo húamun Dé, dind ar thlus,  
 cen húabur, cen immarbus.
- 4553 Do-rat a chlíamain co glé  
 comairli maith do Moísi:  
 'Guid domd Ríg réil, réim fobaid,  
 nech dont slúag dot' imchobair.'



LVI

(4541--4) Moses was fatigued, perfect work, by many disputes,  
by disturbance, by teaching in every form, by arranging them,  
by settling them,

(4545--8) By placing everybody under discipline, and by the  
number of their varying grades, by reconciling them<sup>1</sup>  
in pure glory, by instructing them, by restraining them,

(4549-52) By bringing them completely under the law of mysteries,  
by arranging the camps of the hosts according to divisions,  
in the fear of God, a protection through compassion, without  
pride, without sin.

(4553--6) His father-in-law gave clearly good advice to Moses :  
'Ask the bright King, a swift course, to give you someone from  
the host to help you'.

---

1. Reading fria.

4557      Ro gáid [Moísi], monor nglé,  
            iar sin for rīg nāir nime,  
            coro thogad nech dont slúag  
            dia chobair fri cach n-inluad.

4561      In rī do-raíga tria rath  
            as int slúag, fri síd sonthach,  
            fri etargleód caingen nglice,  
            dá fer déc is trí fichit.

4565      Seissiur derb díb do cach treib  
            do b[r]ithemnaib bronngaethaib,  
            fri cocairt caingen, gnīm glé,  
            for bélaib mōrglain Moíse.

4569      Cangnib glēraib, glōraib cacht,  
            ardib trēnaib tochomrac[ht],  
            la Moíse modmar cen meth,  
            sech ba molmar ba mertnech.

(4557-60) Moses then asked the king of pure Heaven, clear work,  
that he should choose somebody from the host to help him  
against every dispute.

(4561--4) The king chose out of the host through his grace  
twelve men and three score, for joyful (?) <sup>1</sup> peace, for  
determining wise disputes.

(4565--8) (There were) a certain six of them from each tribe,  
of wise-hearted <sup>2</sup> judges, to resolve disputes, a bright deed,  
in front of great pure Moses.

(4569-72) With bright disputes, with voices of captivity,  
[with] ~~high~~ <sup>signs</sup> strong (~~signs~~) <sup>3</sup> of vexation, although  
noble Moses, without fault, was voluble he was fatigued.

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1. It is not certain that this word (see also 4642)  
is identical with súntach, DIL.

2. Following Stokes.

3. Reading techomracht, cf. 6922. Emendation  
is also necessary at 1090 and 1354. But see vocab.

- 4573      Isna sabbōtib saeraib,  
             isna fēlib fīrnóebaib,  
             tictis d'eclais, tōla trén,  
             slóig móra mac n-Israhél.
- 4577      Ticed cāch dīb do cach leith  
             co n-edpartaib dia Choimdeid;  
             bātar hili slóig a seuir  
             fri tóir don tabernacuil.
- 4581      Ticed ann Moīsi co mbúaid,  
             cathbarr gaīssi cach mōrslúaig;  
             ba sainigthi sech cech ngnūis  
             -- fíal glainidí fria gelgnúis.
- 4585      Cid dond eclais, cid do dáil,  
             cid do chertchlais a chomráid,  
             diis ar sechtmogait, mod cert,  
             ba hé lín bíd 'na choemthecht.

## LVII

(4573--6) On the noble sabbaths, on the most holy festivals, the great hosts of the Children of Israel used to come to church, a strong multitude.

(4577-80) Each of them used to come from every side with sacrifices to his Lord; the hosts of their assembly helping the tabernacle were numerous.

(4581--4) Moses of virtue used to come there, the helmet of wisdom of every great host; a glass-like veil over his bright face -- it was distinguished beyond every (other) face.

(4585--8) Whether to the church or to an assembly or to the proper meeting of his discourse, seventy-two, a proper arrangement, were the number who used to accompany him.

1. But perhaps read dhīs, which frequently agrees with ghūis, cf. 1857, 2103, 3581, etc.

4589      Cen ócdaíne, cen aes mbaeth,  
            acht toga fer fíal fírgaeth  
            fria timarcain, cuibdi cacht,  
            fri fuigli, fri brithemnacht.

4593      Do choistecht fri timna trel,  
            fri hidna, fri forcitel,  
            sreba na slúag as cach threib,  
            tictis isna sabbōteib.

(4589-92) No young people, or incompetents, but the choice of modest truly wise men, for restraining, a discipline of propriety, for decisions, for judgment.

(4593-96) The streams of the host from every tribe used to come on the sabbaths to listen to instruction for a time, to purity, to teaching.

4597 For-congrad Moīsi maith mór  
cen baīsse braith for Ārón,  
dar cenn int ślúaig, tōlaib smacht,  
dul do erdduch na n-idpart.

4601 At-raiged Ārón fria ndāil  
co slánóg isint śanctáir,  
ba cēim comlān comgrāid ndil,  
i comdāil in glanaingil.

4605 Tairced int angel do nim  
i comdāil Āróin imdil  
co n-innised dó cen lén  
adlaice maco n-Israhél.

4609 Aisnēided Ārón fo leith  
do Moīsi cen imthesbaid,  
mōr do athescaib idnaib,  
do chétlaib, do glantimnaib.

---

4607. innisenn, R.



(4597-4600) Great and good Moses used to call upon Aaron, without perception of foolishness, to go to offer the sacrifices on behalf of the host, with multitudes of disciples.

(4601--4) Aaron used to arise most perfectly in the sanctuary to meet them; it was a perfect equal dear step to meet the angel.

(4605--8) The angel from heaven used to come to meet very dear Aaron, so that he might tell <sup>1</sup> him without sorrow the desires of the Children of Israel.

(4609-12) Aaron used to tell Moses separately, without lack, many pure responses, songs and holy commandments.

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1. Apart from the fact that the present is inappropriate here, there are no other examples of the 3 sg. conjunct ending in -enn in S.R. All the prose texts read co n-innised or the like.

4613 Aisnēided Moīse cen chleith  
dia thúathaib, dia dagdoīneib,  
connach beth díb nach slúag sen  
digsed húad cen forcitel.

4617 Co ndechaid co glé cen táir  
d'acallaim Dé 'sin sanctáir,  
bríathar bunaid, bág cen brath,  
húair ba cubaid for-congrad.

---

~~4618~~

(4613--6) Moses used to tell his tribes, his eminent men,  
without concealment, so that there should be no old (?) <sup>1</sup>  
host of them who should go away from him untaught.

(4617-20) So that he went clearly without insult to speak  
to God in the sanctuary; he used to call upon him at the  
proper time, an original word, a deed without treachery.

---

1. It is hard to see what the force of sen 'old'  
is here.

- 4621 Rī ros bíath iar n-urd rí[a]gla  
 fri rē dá fíchet blíadna  
 isin díthrub, dígrais scél,  
 dí threib dēc mac n-Israhél.
- 4625 Rī thuc dōib in maind do nim  
 fri túara tarbaig nderbdil,  
 ocus ind íall én dia déoin  
 cona betis cen ūrféoil.
- 4629 Rī thuc dōib srúam usci úair  
 asind ailig réil rachrúaid;  
 cech blas ba maith leo fo nim  
 fo-geibtis fors n-uisci-sin.
- 4633 Na dá thúath dēc cen trebad  
 mnaib, maccaib, is trēnfēraib,  
 soillsidir in [n]gréin a lí,  
 in rī réil ro-das bíathai.

---

4623 díthrub, R  
 4634. trēnferab, R.

(4621--4) The king fed them regularly for the space of forty years in the wilderness, an excellent matter, the twelve tribes of the Children of Israel.

(4625--8) He gave them the manna from Heaven as a truly dear beneficial food, and the flock of birds by His will, so that they should not be without fresh meat.

(4629-32) The King gave them a stream of cold water from the bright very hard rock; they used to get from that <sup>1</sup> water whatever taste in the world they wished.

(4633--6) Bright as the sun is his splendour, the shining king who fed them without husbandry, the twelve tribes, women, boys and strong men. <sup>2</sup>

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1. The elision of the vowel of the article in fors n-uisci-sin is unusual.

2. The spelling trenferab seems unlikely. See 3928.

4637 Maire ingen Ammrai āin,  
 fimmgel fri samlai soergráid,  
 mōr d'ulcc do-romnat a clú:  
 ro bá ic format fria bráthriu.

4641 Ros gab claimi, ro soí dath,  
 fíad roscaib na slúag sonthach;  
 menbad Moísi, monar ndein,  
 at-bēlad din chlaimi-sein.

4645 Duini delbda, togu drong,  
 banscāl fēdbda fōrētrom,  
 cen a liūd im gaíssi gné  
 siūr maith do Maísi Maire.

---

4637. mor dul dulce, R.

4640. formait, R.

(4637-40) Miriam the daughter of noble Amram, a bright fair woman as an example of noble dignity, much of evil,<sup>1</sup> they forget<sup>2</sup> her fame, she was envious<sup>3</sup> of her brothers.

(4641--4) Leprosy seized her, she changed colour before the eyes of the . . . .<sup>4</sup> host; were it not for Moses, good work, she would have died of that leprosy.

(4645--8) A shapely person, the choice of hosts, a frivolous widowed woman, not renowned in respect of wisdom, Miriam, the good sister of Moses.

1. dul has been written before d'ulce by dittography.

2. Following Strachan, Verbal System, p. 25 n. 4.

DIL D2, 367. 67 suggests reading impf. 3 sg.

do-rommat[h] 'she was forgetting', which gives better sense, but spoils the rhyme with format (see next note).

3. format is attested only as an o-stem.

4. See 4562.