

THE REPORT OF WENAMUN

I. Departure from Thebes and journey to Tanis

|^{1,1}"Year 5, fourth month of the Third Season, day 16: The day on which the Elder of the Portal Wenamun of the Temple of Amun, |^{1,2} [Lord of the Thrones] of the Two Lands, departed in order to obtain the lumber contract for the great and august [river] bark of Amun, King of Gods, |^{1,3} [whose name is] 'Amun, strong of leadership.' The day I arrived at Tanis |^{1,4} [at the place where Smendes and Tanetamun were, I gave to them the dispatches of Amun-Re^C, King of Gods, and they |^{1,5} had them read before them. They said 'Yes!!!' to the saying of Amun-Re^C, King of Gods, |^{1,6} our [Lord]."

II. Departure from Tanis

"I began the fourth month, while I was in the Residence of Tanis, when Smendes and |^{1,7} Tanetamun dispatched me with the ship's master Mengebet, and I embarked for |^{1,8} the Great Syrian Sea."

III. Arrival and larceny at Dor

"Within the month I reached Dor, a harbor of |^{1,9} Zeker. Beder, its chief, had brought to me 50 loaves (of bread), 1 flagon of wine, |^{1,10} 1 hunch of beef. One man of my ship ran away stealing |^{1,11} . . . vessels of gold worth 5 deben, 4 jars of silver worth 20 deben, bagged silver 11 deben. |^{1,12} [Total of what he stole]: 5 deben gold, 31 deben silver."

IV. Wenamun's complaint to the ruler of Dor

"When I got up on that morning, I went |^{1,13} to the place where the

chief was. I said to him: 'I was robbed in your harbor and since you are the ruler of this land and since |¹¹⁴ you are its (investigating) judge--retrieve my money! Indeed, as for the money, it belongs to Amun-Re^c, |¹¹⁵ King of Gods, the Lord of those of the Two Lands; it belongs to Smendes, it belongs to Herihor, my lord and <to> other |¹¹⁶ great ones of Egypt. Yours it is. It is for W-r-t, it is for M-k-m-r. It is |¹¹⁷ <for> Zeker-ba^cl, the ruler of Byblos!'"

V. The reply of the ruler of Dor

"He said to me: 'To your importance! To your excellence! But look, I do not |¹¹⁸ understand that statement you said to me! If the thief belongs to my country, who boarded |¹¹⁹ your ship and stole your money--then I will replace it to you from my storeroom until one |¹²⁰ has found your thief with his name. Alas--as for the thief who robbed you--yours is he, (as) he belongs |¹²¹ to your ship! Spend some days here and visit me! I will search for him!'"

VI. Wenamun's remonstration

"I spent 9 days, while being moored |¹²² in his harbor. And then I went and visited him. And I said to him: 'Lo, you have not found my money! |¹²³ [O, that I could contend] with the ship captains and with the seafarers!'"

VII. Beder's advice

"But he said to me: 'Calm down! |¹²⁴ [If you wish to f]ind yo[ur money, hea]rken to my [words! Do what I tell] you and do not |¹²⁵ [do When you are,] where you want to be, then take possession of their bundles and take possession of [their contents |¹²⁶ . . .] and they will set out and search for their thief, who [stole your money]. |¹²⁷ . . . [And after you leave] the harbor, lo, you should [sail into open water and avoid] |¹²⁸ Tyre!'"

VIII. Wenamun's journey to and arrival at Byblos

"And I went clear of Tyre by taking the light [of the stars as the only guidance until reaching |¹²⁹ the realm of] Zeker-ba^cl, the ruler

of Byblos. [And after we had moored, I searched] |¹³⁰ the ship, and I found 30 deben of silver in it. I took possession of it. [When I had disembarked from the boat, I said to its owners: 'Lo, as for] |¹³¹ your silver, it will remain with me until you have found [my silver and also the thief], |¹³² who stole it. Although you have not stolen, I shall confiscate it, except you [yourself compensate] me concerning the money!'

|¹³³ And when they had finally gone, I got myself shelter in a tavern at the shore of the harbor [of the Sea] of Byblos, and [I set up a shrine |¹³⁴ for] Amun-of-the-road and placed his things inside it."

IX. The reception at Byblos

"The ruler of Byblos sent to me saying: 'Get [out of |¹³⁵ my] harbor!' And I sent to him saying: 'Where [shall I go?] . . . go |¹³⁶ If [you find a ship] to transport me, let me be taken |¹³⁷ to Egypt again!' And I spent 29 days in his [harbor and he spent] the time to send to me daily saying: 'Get |¹³⁸ out of my harbor!'"

X. The miracle in Wenamun's favor

"And while he offered to his gods, the god seized a page of |¹³⁹ his pages and ~~he~~ put him in ecstasy. And he said to him: 'Bring [the] image up! Bring the envoy who is carrying it! |¹⁴⁰ It is Amun who sent it! It is he who caused it to come!'"

XI. Wenamun gets ready for departure

"While the ecstatic carried on the ecstasy until that night, I had |¹⁴¹ found a ship which was bound for Egypt, and I readied all my belongings for it. And while I was looking |¹⁴² for complete darkness, so that when it descends, I shall transport the god in order not to allow that another eye see him, |¹⁴³ the harbor master came to me and said: 'Stay until morning, says he, the ruler!' And I said to him: Aren't you the one |¹⁴⁴ who always spent his time coming to me daily saying, 'Get out of my harbor!?' Aren't you saying, 'Stay the night!' |¹⁴⁵ in order to let the ship, which I found, depart? And then you shall come and say again, 'Move on!' And he went and told it to |¹⁴⁶ the ruler. And the ruler sent to the captain of the vessel, saying: 'Stay until morning, says he, |¹⁴⁷ the ruler!'"

XII. Wenamun's audience with Zeker-ba^{c1}: The opening

"And when morning came about, he sent <for me> and had me taken up while the god rested in the tavern, |¹⁴⁸ in which he had been (already) at the edge of the Sea.

And I found him squatting <in> his loft and when he turned his back |¹⁴⁹ against a/the window, the waves of the great Sea of Syria were breaking against the rear |¹⁵⁰ of his head. And I said to him: 'Amun will be merciful!' And he said to me: 'How long is it until today, since you came from where |¹⁵¹ Amun is?' And I said to him: '5 months exactly until now!'"

XIII. The request for Wenamun's credentials

"And he said to me: 'Granted that you are right, but where is the |¹⁵² edict of Amun, which should be in your hand? And where is the letter of the First High Priest of Amun, which should also be in your hand?' And I said |¹⁵³ to him: 'I gave them to Smendes and Tanetamun!' He was really irate and said to me: 'Indeed, edict |¹⁵⁴ or letter you have not! Where is the ship for the fir wood, which Smendes assigned to you? Where is |¹⁵⁵ its Syrian crew? Did he assign you to that captain and the barbarians in order that he have you killed |¹⁵⁶ and that they throw you into the Sea? Because of whom has one desired the god or you? |¹⁵⁷ Because of whom has one desired you?'--so he spoke to me."

XIV. Who has maritime power?

"And I said to him: 'Isn't an Egyptian ship and an Egyptian crew those who sail |¹⁵⁸ under Smendes? So can he hire Syrian crews?' And he said to me: Aren't there 20 liners |¹⁵⁹ there, belonging to this my harbor, which are in charter with Smendes? And for this, |²¹ Sidon is another, concerning which you are experienced, aren't there another 50 liners there, which are in charter |²² with W-r-k-t-l, which have hauled for his (i.e., Smendes') house!' And I was silent to this a long |²³ time."

XV. Getting down to business

"And then he proceeded and said to me: 'For what commission did

you come?' And I said to him: 'I have come |2⁴ after the lumber contract for the great and august bark of Amun-Re^c, King of Gods. As your father did |2⁵ and as your father's father did (it), you should also do (it)!' --so I said to him. And he said to me: 'They did it in trade! |2⁶ When you pay me for doing it, I shall do it! Yea, my forefathers performed this commission, when the |2⁷ Pharaoh, l.p.h., had sent 6 ships and they were loaded with Egyptian goods and they emptied them into their |2⁸ storehouses. But you, what is it that you have brought for me, myself?'"

XVI. Zeker-ba^c1's objections to the present deal

"He had brought records of the time of his ancestors |2⁹ and had them read before me. And 1,000 deben of silver were tallied up for all in his records.

|2¹⁰ And he said to me: 'As for the ruler of Egypt, the master of mine--for I am also his servant-- |2¹¹ is it possible that he actually did send silver and gold while saying "Do the commission for Amun!"? Is it the delivery |2¹² of coronation gifts, as they used to exist, when he acted for my father? As for me--indeed--am I your |2¹³ servant, am I the servant of the one who sent you? (Assumed) I will call loudly to the |2¹⁴ Lebanon, which makes the heaven open, and the wood is delivered there at the shore of the Sea--produce |2¹⁵ for me the sails you have brought to tackle your ships, which are carrying your wood to <Egypt> |2¹⁶ (or) produce for me the ropes you have brought [to tie the firwood,] which I shall cut, to supply it to you |2¹⁷ . . . (Assuming) I supply it to you and the sails <for> |2¹⁸ your ships--(and then) the main yards might be overloaded and might break--and you yourself might die at Sea-- |2¹⁹ lo, Amun could make a thunder in the heaven and appoint Seth for his time!'"

XVII. Zeker-ba^c1 praises the traditional order and decries the present

"Indeed, Amun takes |2²⁰ care of all those belonging to the Two Countries; (but) he takes care of them, (after) having taken care of the land of Egypt, from which you come, |2²¹ previously! Indeed, reward came forth from it as far as the place where I am! And punishment came forth |2²² from it as far as the place where I am. What is this

unsupported travel which you are caused to make?"

XVIII. Wenamun's reply and his praise of Amun

"And I said to him: |²²³ 'Wrong! It is not an unsupported journey that I am on. There is not any ship on the river which |²²⁴ does not belong to Amun! His is (also) the Sea! And his is the Lebanon which you think "It is mine!" He makes |²²⁵ the growth (there) for (the ship) Amun-woser-hat, the queen of all ships. Aye! he said, namely Amun-Re^C, King of Gods, in speaking to |²²⁶ Herihor, my lord, who dispatched me. And he sent me bearing this mighty god. Now look, you caused that |²²⁷ this mighty god spent 29 days moored <in> your harbor, while you did not find out whether he is there and whether he is the one |²²⁸ he used to be. You dally to empty the Lebanon on behalf of its lord!

As for your saying, that |²²⁹ former kings used to send silver and gold--if they could have given life and health, they would not have sent those things! |²³⁰ They had to send those (material) things instead of life and health <to> your ancestors. Now as for Amun-Re^C, King of Gods, he is the |²³¹ lord of *the* life and health! And he was the lord of your ancestors! They spent their time of life offering |²³² to Amun. You as well, you are a servant of Amun! If you say 'Yes!' to Amun and carry out his |²³³ commission--while you live you shall be well and prosperous and successful for your entire country and your people. Do not desire |²³⁴ for yourself anything else from Amun-Re^C, <King> of Gods!'"

XIX. Wenamun requests funds from Smendes

"Truly a lion loves his things! Let your scribe be brought to me, that |²³⁵ I may send him to Smendes and Tanetamun, those organizers of the land, whom Amun appointed for the North of his country, |²³⁶ and they will have brought the wherewithall. And I will send him to them, saying: "Let it be brought before I can actually go back South!" And I shall |²³⁷ bring to you any shortcomings as well!"--so I said to him."

XX. The arrival of funds sent by Smendes

"And he put my letter in the hand of his messenger. And he readied the mud-guard, |²³⁸ the top of the bow, and the top of the stern together with 4 hewn timbers--total 7. And he sent them to Egypt.

|²³⁹ And his messenger went to Egypt and came back to me to Syria within the first month of the *pṛt*-season. And Smendes and Tanetamun sent: |²⁴⁰ of gold: 4 jars, 1 *k3.k-mn* vessel; of silver: 5 jars; clothing of byssus: 10 pieces; Upper Egyptian linen: 10 veils; smooth material: 500 doublets; |²⁴¹ 500 ox-hides; 500 ropes; lentils: 20 sacks; fish: 30 baskets. And she sent to me clothing |²⁴² of Upper Egyptian linen: 5 pieces; Upper Egyptian linen: 5 veils; 1 sack of lentils; 5 baskets of fish."

XXI. Zeker-ba^c1 procures the lumber

"And the ruler was pleased and he supplied |²⁴³ 300 men and 300 oxen, and he appointed supervisors in charge of them, to have them fell the lumber.

And they felled it. And they spent the winter at it |²⁴⁴ isolated until the third month of the *šmw*-season, when they hauled them to the shore of the Sea."

XXII. Another audience with Zeker-ba^c1: An incident

"And when(ever) the ruler came out, he stopped at them. And then he sent to me, |²⁴⁵ saying: 'Come!' And then when I approached him, the shadow of his lotus-fan fell on me. And Penamun, |²⁴⁶ a cupbearer who was with him, intercepted me, saying: 'The shadow of Pharaoh, l.p.h., your lord, has fallen on you!' And he became angry |²⁴⁷ at him, saying: 'Leave him alone!'"

XXIII. Zeker-ba^c1's request

"And I approached him (again). And he was responding and said to me: "Look! The commission which |²⁴⁸ my ancestors used to do previously, I have done it (too). But you, namely yourself, have not done for me that which your forebears would have done for me. Look! |²⁴⁹ The end of your wood donation has arrived and it is stacked up. Do me a favor when you intend to transport it--then could it be denied to you? |²⁵⁰ Do not intend to see the terror of the Sea! In case you want |²⁵¹ to see the terror of the Sea, you shall also see my own!'"

XXIV. A grim reminder

"Truly, I have not done to you what was done <to> the messengers of Kha^Cemwese, because they spent 17 years |²⁵² in this country and they (actually) died in their positions!' And he said to his servant: 'Take him! Let him see their tomb |²⁵³ in which they lie!'"

XXV. Wenamun's claim of special status

"And I said to him: 'Do not let me see it! As for Kha^Cemwese, humans were those whom he sent to you as messengers. While human |²⁵⁴ of body, you don't have one of his envoys here that you could say: "You go and look at your colleagues!"'"

XXVI. Wenamun proposes the wording
for a commemorative inscription

"Do you not enjoy |²⁵⁵ when you cause that one makes for you a stela and that you (can) say on it: "Amun-Re^C, King of Gods, sent to me Amun-of-the-road (as) his envoy, |²⁵⁶ l.p.h., together with Wenamun, his human envoy, in quest of the lumber-donation for the great and august bark of Amun-Re^C, King of Gods. I cut it, |²⁵⁷ I transported it, and I paid for it and my ships and my crews. I let them reach Egypt to request for me |²⁵⁸ 50 years of life from Amun in addition to my fate. And it happened!" And when afterward in another time an envoy comes |²⁵⁹ from the land of Egypt and he knows writing; and when he reads your name on the stela, you will receive water <in> the West in the way of the gods who are |²⁶⁰ there."

XXVII. Zeker-ba^Cl accepts and
Wenamun promises further spiritual benefits

"And he said to me: 'An important instruction for the wording is this, you said to me!' And I said to him: 'As for those many things which you have said to me--if I reach |²⁶¹ the place where the First High Priest of Amun is and when he sees your commission--it is your commission which will draw |²⁶² profit for you!'"

"And I went by myself to the shore of the Sea to the place where the lumber was stacked up. And I looked at 11 vessels; |²⁶³ they had come in from the Sea and they belonged to the Zeker (ports?) . . . saying: 'Restrain him! Do not send ships |²⁶⁴ with him to the land of Egypt!'"

XXIX. Wenamun's despair

"And I was ready to sit down and cry. And the letter writer of the ruler came out to me |²⁶⁵ and he said to me: 'What is the matter with you?' And I said to him: 'Have you not seen those migratory birds which are going down to Egypt for the second time? |²⁶⁶ Look at them, they are able to move to the northern Delta! Until what has to arrive that I, who have been abandoned, am there? Have you not seen those who came |²⁶⁷ to restrain me anew?'"

XXX. Zeker-ba^c1 sends consolation to Wenamun

"And he went and he told it to the ruler. And the ruler was ready to cry because of the words which were quoted to him and which were |²⁶⁸ sickening. And he let come out to me his letter-scribe bringing to me 2 flagons of wine and a sheep. And he sent |²⁶⁹ to me Tanetne, a songstress from Egypt who was with him, saying: 'Sing for him! Don't let him be desperate!' And he sent to me, |²⁷⁰ saying: 'Eat and drink! Do not despair! You shall hear what is to be said during the morning!'"

XXXI. Wenamun's case is settled and he departs

"And when morning |²⁷¹ came, he had his assembly called together. And when he stood in their midst, he said to the Zeker: 'How about your journey?' |²⁷² And they said to him: 'Assign to us who comes for those ships, (but) beat the one whom you are sending to Egypt as our enemy!' |²⁷³ And he said to them: 'I would not know (how) to restrain the envoy of Amun within my country! Let me dispatch him and you pursue him |²⁷⁴ to restrain him!' And he loaded me and came with me as far as the harbor of the Sea."

XXXII. The adventure at Cyprus

"And the winds threw me to the land of |^{2,75} Alasiya. And the inhabitants of the landing place charged against me to kill me. And I forced my way through them to the place where *H3-ti-b3*, |^{2,76} the princess of the town, was. And I met her, because she was going forth from her one house and was entering into another (house). And I |^{2,77} greeted her and I said to the people who were standing around her: 'Isn't there one among you who can understand Egyptian words?' And one |^{2,78} of them said: 'I understand!' And I said to him: 'Say to my lady that I have heard as far away as Thebes, the place where Amun is, the following: "Even so |^{2,79} evil is done in all towns, but right is done in the land of Alasiya!" Or is evil committed there, too, every day?' And she said: 'Truly, what is it |^{2,80} that you talk (about)' And I said to her: "As the sea raged and the winds blew me to the land in which you are-- |^{2,81} are you allowing that they accept my bow line in order to kill me? As I am an envoy of Amun, look, one should welcome me |^{2,82} at any time! As for the crew of the ruler of Byblos, whom they wish to kill--couldn't their lord find |^{2,83} 10 crews of yours and kill them, namely he?' And she let call to the people and one arranged them. And she said to me: 'Be at rest! . . .'"