

## Skin disease and the doctor

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One might think that skin problems present an obvious reason to visit the doctor. For one thing, skin lesions are relatively easy to see and classify, since they do not require medical instruments or theoretical concepts of inaccessible internal anatomy, and they are very common. On the other hand, as any dermatologist will attest, skin problems can be notoriously difficult to treat, and even the most common afflictions such as eczema and psoriasis can cause major discomfort for patients and frustration for someone trying to treat them.

Perhaps this is why our earliest encounters with skin diseases occur within the contexts of incantations, and especially a group of mostly Akkadian incantations dating from the Old Babylonian period.<sup>1</sup> Many skin diseases, such as *ašû*, *girgiššu*, *ekketu*, *šennitu*, *rišutu*, and even *garābu*, are known from Old Babylonian incantations, and Wasserman described these incantations as ‘between magic and medicine’, but I would describe them somewhat differently. These Akkadian spells are quite different from the formal poetry of Sumerian incantations with their structured dialogues between healing gods deciding on the appropriate healing rituals for a patient attacked by demons. The particular Old Babylonian incantations discussed by Wasserman focus upon medical problems and as such may be considered as forerunners to later Akkadian therapeutic medicine. In any case, it is no coincidence that the one extant medical text which is analogous to these incantations is an Old Babylonian medical tablet from Jena (BAM 393), which lists various kinds of ailments with their natural causes, such as dog-bite or tooth-worm, and this particular medical tablet from Jena contains no magic or incantations (see Geller 2006 and Schwemer 2007: 27-28). This brief glimpse into the obscurity of the second millennium in Mesopotamia, afforded by these few incantations and one medical text, suggest that *āšipūtu* and *asūtu* were quite separate literary genres in the Old Babylonian period, probably reflecting very different roles of exorcists and doctors at the time. Nevertheless, the problems they attempted to solve were similar.

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<sup>1</sup> See Wasserman 2007 [Disease In Babylonia] 41f., basing his evidence mostly on Goetze 1955 (= JCS 9) and van Dijk 1985, as well as the bilingual incantation CT 4,3. For *simmu* incantations dealing with skin disease, see Geller and Wiggermann: 159-160, duplicating late *Muššu'u* incantations (cf. Böck 2007: 147ff., although noting some differences in readings).

The present known corpus of medical texts has few tablets specifically devoted to skin diseases, which may reflect the fact that there was relatively little a physician could do. This situation is not unique to Mesopotamia, of course. John Nunn has an astute comment on Egyptian medicine: ‘the conspicuous nature of skin diseases and their common occurrence must have driven countless patients to seek the help of the *swnw*’ (Nunn 1996: 94), the Egyptian equivalent to a doctor. Nunn wonders why skin disease recipes in Egyptian medicine are relatively sparse and uninformative.

We can also look to the Bible, which is generally a poor source for medical history, but it so happens with skin disease that we have to take its reporting seriously. The skin ailment *tsorat* is described in some detail, in terms of its white colour and being raised above the skin and itchy, but it can also mysteriously spread to clothing and walls of a house and hence appears to be highly contagious. There are several interesting points about biblical *tsorat*: 1) The priest had to make the diagnosis, much like the *ā·ipu* in Mesopotamia who acted as diagnostician; there is no mention of a doctor at all. 2) The disease has no reported treatment except for quarantine, and 3) the disease has no recognisable modern counterpart. This last point is particularly significant: we should avoid trying to attach modern disease labels to ancient diseases, for a simple reason. If one rings up his family doctor one night to say that he is covered with reddish spots or blisters, and that the blisters emit fluid when scratched, and that this condition affects his eyes, I very much doubt whether the doctor will come up with a diagnosis of ‘onchocerciasis’, without even having a look at the patient. Diagnosing disease over millennia is a treacherous business, much more likely to be wrong than right, and actually does not tell us very much.

The most important Mesopotamian source by far dealing with skin disease is a Late Babylonian tablet from Uruk, with an unprovenanced British Museum duplicate, last published by Heeßel as Tablet 33 of the Diagnostic Handbook (Heeßel 2000). This tablet is an admirable example of academic medicine, and if we look closely at the text we can even see some attempts at classifying diseases, which in our case luckily turn out to be skin diseases. The important thing to note is that various symptoms are given under a heading of *simmu šikinšu*, ‘the nature of a lesion’, and after each brief description of a symptom, the text adds the Sumerogram MU.NI ‘its name is’, and the disease name is then given.

The first six lines of this tablet concern the disease *ašû*, a disease characterised by reddish spots or blisters. Let’s have a closer look at *ašû*-disease as described in this tablet.

- 1 A1 [DIŠ GIG] GAR-šú GIM *um-me-di a-šu-ú* MU.N[I]  
 2 A2 [DIŠ GI]G GAR-šú GIM *um-me-di i-raš-ši-šum-ma ug-gag* IGI GIG A ŠUB  
 [a-šu-ú MU.N[I]  
 3 A3 [DIŠ GI]G GAR-šú GIM *um-me-di u È-su e-bít* SU-šu *i-raš-ši-šum-ma* EN 'x'  
 [ ] 'x' TE GIG *ug-dal-lab a-šu-ú* MU.N[I]  
 4 A4 [DIŠ *pa*]-*nu-šú* u IGI.II-šú MÚ.MEŠ-*ha di-ig-la ka-bit* u DIRI *a-šu-ú* MU.N[I]  
 5 A5 [DIŠ *pa*]-*nu-šú* MÚ.MEŠ-*hu di-gíl-šú ma-ṭi* SU-šú *bir-di ma-lu* u ŠÀ-šú  
 [D]AB-*su a-šu-ú* MU.NI  
 6 A6 [DIŠ] GIG GAR-šú GIM *ni-šik uḫ ma pa-gar-šú* SA<sub>5</sub> *a-šu-ú m[u-ta]p-ri-šu*  
 MU.NI

The first line begins with a general observation, that the nature of this lesion is like *ummedi*; it would help to know exactly what this word means; Scurlock translates ‘clusters’, but I prefer to leave the question open. The second clause builds upon this with a further description: repeating what came before, it now adds that the patient itches and scratches, and the surface of the lesion produces fluid. Next, in addition to clause one (the general description) we see that its discharge ‘changes’ [I think from *ewû*] and he again itches. It is only in the fourth clause that the comparison with *ummedu* is abandoned in favour of two clauses highlighting loss of eyesight associated with this disease, although this time the patient is affected by a different kind of skin lesion, *birdu*. Finally, the patient’s sores are irritating like lice bites, and this variation of the disease is called ‘flying *ašû*’, whatever that means. Bearing in mind the rudimentary instruments for diagnosis, since they could not even measure fever properly, Babylonian scholars are doing their best to make some order out of the chaos of diagnoses which had accumulated by the Persian and Hellenistic periods. But from our modern point of view, there is no real reason for us to categorise these descriptions in the same way that the ancients did, nor should we even try to copy their taxonomy. In other words, even though ancient physicians assigned the same disease name *a·û* to both skin lesions and diminished eyesight, these symptoms are likely to be associated with completely different clinical ailments that have no relation to each other in today’s terms.

Let us look at one further example of skin problems in this same tablet.

- 19 A19 DIŠ GIG GAR-šú SA<sub>5</sub> BABBAR GU<sub>7</sub>-šú u A ú-[k]al *ru-ṭib-tu<sub>4</sub>* MU.[NI]  
 20 A20 DIŠ GIG GAR-šú GE<sub>6</sub> *ha-ra-ṣu* MU.[NI]  
 21 A21 DIŠ SU LÚ *bir-di* SA<sub>5</sub> UZU.MEŠ-šú *ú-zaq-qa-ṭ[u-š]ú* u *ri-šu-tu<sub>4</sub>* ŠUB.ŠUB-*su*  
 B1' [ *r]i-šu-ṭ[u<sub>4</sub>* ]

A21	<i>ḫa-ra-su</i> M[U.NI]
B1'	[ ]
22	A22 DIŠ GIG <i>ina</i> GÌR LÚ <i>lu ina</i> ŠIR' LÚ E <sub>11</sub> - <i>ma</i> [ <i>i-ra</i> ]š-š <sub>i</sub> -š <sub>um</sub> - <i>ma ug-gag ru-ṭib-tu</i> M[U.NI]
B2'	[ ] 'x' 'x' 'x'- <i>ma u</i> [ <i>g-gag</i> ]

We are dealing with descriptive disease names which can be associated with good Semitic roots, namely *rṭwb* 'moist' and *hrṣ* 'scratch'. The descriptions are what we might expect, but with the interesting addition of *rišûtu*, which can be a symptom (as here), namely itchy skin. But Tablet 33 had already described *rišûtu* as the name of a disease characterised as looking like fish scales, red skin, fever, and even more interesting is that it has an *adannu* or 'critical period' referring to course of the disease over a specific period of time.

11	A11 [DIŠ GIG GA]R-šú GIM BAR KU <sub>6</sub> SU-šú SA <sub>5</sub> <i>u a-dan-na</i> TUK <i>ri-[šu-t]</i> <sub>u</sub> MU.NI
12	A12 [DIŠ GIG GA]R-šú GIM TAB KÚM- <i>ma</i> 'x' 'x' GIG <i>ri-[šu]-tu</i> <sub>u</sub> MU.NI

Babylonian scholars were never successfully able to sort out their disease terminology, to be able to distinguish easily between symptom and disease. There can be no doubt, however, that an attempt is being made here to classify diseases, which is remarkable in itself.

Finally, we present below a copy of a therapeutic recipe from a private collection dealing specifically with skin diseases, for which no duplicates have been identified, partly because so few texts dealing with this genre of disease are known. The tablet itself is far from orthodox in its orthography, with some unusual phraseology and sign forms. The obverse is in a pretty sorry state, and the copy tries to recover as much as possible from traces remaining on the damaged surface. The reverse is in much better shape, and here we can find some diagnostic clauses: if his hand itches him and he scratches, and his skin is peeled off..., you then apply juniper and fat and other standard medicaments. A second diagnosis describes his skin as suffering from both *birdi*-pocks and *rišûtu*-dry skin, with the recipe calling for more standard *material medica* such as pulses and cedar oil. A third diagnosis gives both *rišûtu* and *rišiktu* together, probably as two different types of dry skin, and for this one has to heat *material medica* in an oven and afterwards bathe the patient. Nothing very remarkable here or any tips for modern pharmacology. Other diagnoses give us little information to go on: 'if a man's skin is peeled off', various standard medicaments are smeared on and the patient is to bathe and be anointed with warm oils, which are all what we might expect.

Although we do not learn very much from the diagnostic descriptions, it is obvious that these are the very same diseases being treated in Tablet 33 of the Diagnostic Handbook. As for other drugs prescribed, several recipes call for bark of trees, including oak and tamarisk, to be applied in a dry state, while other *material medica* are to be dried out before being applied. The emphasis on drying substances may reflect a common practice in ancient medicine, to try to counteract an ailment perceived as ‘wet’ with drugs perceived as being ‘dry’. Another strategy used in this tablet was to rub the patient with various oils, which is to be expected. Less expected are some more exotic *materia medica*, such as latrine dust, wall plaster, or goose leg; many of the prescribed drugs were smeared into the skin as liquids and applied as bandages. As usual, the text optimistically reports that the patient may get better, but this can be treated with scepticism.

The question is whether any of this tells us anything about the doctor in Mesopotamia. The first problem, of course, is what we mean by doctor? It was the ka.pirig, a type of *āšipu*, who was sent to the patient’s house to give a prognosis, but the Diagnostic Handbook never refers to any connection with the family or knowledge of any family medical history, which could have been relevant to a diagnosis. It is always well worth bearing in mind that none of the entries of the Diagnostic Handbook refers to a single case history or single patient, but these are rather descriptions of diseases rather than patients. We do know that the ruling classes had plenty of access to physicians and exorcists, although for some reason (probably coincidental) members of the Assyrian royal court do not appear to have suffered from skin complaints. Nevertheless, the roles of Chief Exorcist and Chief Physician at the Assyrian Royal Court would come closest to what we are looking for in a personal physician.

However, there is a danger of imposing modern concepts onto a rather limited body of information, probably restricted to the upper crust of society who could afford the services of an *āšipu* and *asû*. What did the common person think of doctors? We all laugh at the antics of the Poor Man of Nippur who disguised himself as an *asû* and mercilessly throttled the Mayor, while pretending to be a doctor. The sardonic humour is based on the idea that the physician is *supposed* to cause pain and discomfort. In fact, not everybody wants to have a doctor or wants to visit him, out of fear of what can result. This fear of the doctor is the very image that the Poor Man of Nippur story had in mind, but nothing of this is likely to appear in the standard medical literature.

Obv. col. i

- 1' [.....] ʾi.nun mar.m[eš]  
 2' [.....]-ʾti tur<sup>1</sup>-ár-ma ina-eš  
 3' [.....] x ʾšéš.šéš.me-ma ina-eš  
 4' [.....] x ʾid<sup>1</sup>-ra I-niš súd i+na ì<sup>giš</sup>eren hi.hi ki.min  
 5' [.....] súd i+na ì<sup>giš</sup>eren hi.hi šu.bi.aš.àm  
 6' [.....] a x luh-ʾsī<sup>1</sup> x ina kaš tara-bak šéš u lá.lá

7'-15' [broken]

- 16' [.....] ti ik  
 17' [.....] x ana zi-ih<sup>na4</sup>zu.lum.ma  
 18' [.....] x [..] ina-eš  
 19' [.....] x x [..] ina-eš  
 20' [.....] x nu x x  
 21' [.....] x [....] x x súd ra.meš

22'-23' traces

- 24' [.....] x a x x [.....]  
 25' [diš k]i.min [.....] ʾa i x ka x súd<sup>1</sup>  
 26' traces  
 27' [.....] ina-eš

28'-30' traces

- 31' [.....] ina a gazi.ʾsar<sup>1</sup> [.....]

32'-34' traces

- 35' [h]i.hi su gim kal<sup>?</sup> [.....]  
 36' [.....] x x ta x x [.....]  
 37' traces

col. ii

- 1' x [.....]  
 2' [diš] ʾki.min<sup>1</sup> [.....  
     maš.sila x x x x [.....  
     igi ù maš.sila lá-ī[t] .....

- 3' diš.ki.min ½ sila <sup>šim</sup>gúr.gúr giš x [.....  
 ½ sila še x x 1-niš gaz s[im .....  
 4' [diš] 'ki.min<sup>1</sup> maš.sila še.bar kiš-pu x [...  
 5' [diš] 'ki.min<sup>1</sup> [<sup>na4</sup>k]a.ʿgi<sup>1</sup>.na ì.u[du ...  
 6' [diš] 'ki.min<sup>1</sup> ki ì.giš amar<sup>2</sup>.bíl.za.za<sup>2</sup> hád.du gaz 'sim<sup>1</sup> [...  
 7' 'diš ki.min ì.udu<sup>1</sup> ti šéš kuš x [.....  
 8' 'diš ki.min u<sup>5</sup>.gar.ib<sup>mušen</sup> ina ì tu-šab-ʿša<sup>1</sup> 'šéš<sup>1</sup> [.....  
 9' diš 'ki.min ì šéš<sup>1</sup>-ma en [...  
 10' diš 'ki.min<sup>1</sup> ì ur.mah š[éš .....  
 11' diš 'na di-ʿi-u<sup>1</sup> min [.....  
 x ù kaš 'tara<sup>1</sup>-bak-ma [.....  
 ina ì.giš ù kaš tara-muk šéš-su min ì [..]  
 x x x x x x x x it [..]  
 x x x ù<sup>2</sup> xx -mi-šu ù ì x  
 ú [...] 'kaš<sup>1</sup> sur ina im.kal.ku<sub>7</sub>.ku<sub>7</sub> tar-ha-ša  
 šu ta-[k]ar raq-raq 'tur<sup>1</sup>.ra ana ì.giš  
 šéš-ma a x x [.....  
 12' diš [n]a x x x x 'šim<sup>1</sup> x ].....  
 ù a súd [..... k]i ì.giš [...  
 13' [.....] x ri ma [.....] x <sup>šim</sup>gam.m[a ....  
 [...] x 'šéš-ma<sup>1</sup> [...  
 14' diš [ki.mi]n 'i<sup>1</sup> [...] x x a i-se-er x [...  
 15' [diš] k[i.min .....] x x ì.giš 'ta<sup>1</sup>-[.....  
 [.....] ina a i ga x [..  
 16' [.....] x x x súd [...  
 17' [..... i]k da tuk [.....  
 18' [.....] la x x [...  
 19' [.....] x x x [...  
 20' [.....] <sup>šim</sup>i<sup>1</sup> x [.....  
 21'- end illegible

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<sup>2</sup> atam muša'irānu

Rev. col. iii

- 1' [i<sup>giš</sup>ere]n síg an[še ..... ]  
 2' [.....] *bir*-<da> sa<sub>5</sub> *i-se-er*-r<sup>1</sup>ma<sup>1</sup> x [.....]  
 3' [... s]úd *ina* ì hi.hi [.....]  
 4' [diš] ki.min *qut-ra ša* im.šu.rin *i-se-er* [.....]  
 5' diš na kuš-šu *i-ra-ši-šum-ma ug-gag u* x [...] <sup>3</sup>  
     kuš-šú *iq-qal-lap* <sup>šim</sup>li ì.udu [.....]  
 6' diš ki.min <sup>ú</sup>*tar-muš* <sup>ú</sup>*im-hur-aš-ra* 1-*niš* súd [.....]  
 7' diš ki.min numun <sup>giš</sup>šinig <sup>ú</sup>sikil numun ú.dili x [.....  
     *ina* ì ù ì.udu dug.útul šeg<sub>6</sub>-šal igi/r<sup>1</sup>ù<sup>1</sup> [...  
 8' diš ki.min <sup>na4</sup>peš<sub>4</sub>.anše *tur-ár a-na* igi gig m[ar .....  
 9' diš ki.min *si-ra ša* iz.zi *ša* hād.da *ti-d*[a .....]  
     *lá-ma* [.....]  
 10' diš ki.min é nim *lab-bi*-r<sup>1</sup>ni ì <sup>giš</sup>eren<sup>1</sup> [...] [...]  
 11' diš ki.min <sup>šim</sup>gúr.gúr <sup>šim</sup>li *sah-lé-e ka-man-tú* [.....]  
     *ana* <sup>giš</sup>nàga *ina* ì <sup>giš</sup>eren hi.hi 3-šú x [.....]  
 12' diš ki.min peš<sub>10</sub>-<sup>d</sup>íd <sup>šim</sup>li súd šu.[bi.aš.àm]  
 13' diš na kuš-šu *iq-qal-lap* <sup>ú</sup>nu.luh.ha <sup>ú</sup>*ka-m*[*u-nu*]  
     *ina* a *i-se-er i-ra-muk* ú.meš *ina* ì kúm [.....]  
 14' diš ki.min <sup>ú</sup>eme.ur.gi<sub>7</sub> úkuš.hab *tur-ár* súd *in*[a .....]  
 15' diš ki.min ú babbar súd *a-na* igi gig m[ar<sup>2</sup> .....]  
 16' diš na kuš-šu <sup>r</sup>*bir-dī* *im-ta-na-al-la* u[zu.meš ....] <sup>4</sup>  
     ù *ri-šu-tu* šub.šub-*su* na bi [*ha-ra-su* gig]  
     *a-na* ti.la-šu gú.gal gú.tur gú.[nig.àr.ra]  
     2 kisal ta.àm 1-*niš* súd *ina* ì <sup>giš</sup>e[ren .....]  
 17' diš ki.min útul.zì.da l[á .....]  
 18' diš ki.min zì.kum *ina* a gazi<sup>sar</sup> *ta-lá-aš* x [.....]  
 19' diš ki.min <sup>šim</sup>šeš *ina* ì <sup>giš</sup>eren.hab <sup>r</sup>ì<sup>1</sup> [.....]  
     *a-na* igi gig [mar .....] <sup>5</sup>  
 20' [diš] <sup>r</sup>na<sup>1</sup> x [.....] x x

<sup>3</sup> Heeßel 2000: 33: 2

<sup>4</sup> BAM 409; cf Heeßel 2000: 33 5.

<sup>5</sup> See parallels BAM 3 i 52, ii 6, BAM 152 17', BAM 34 10, BAM 42 66, AMT 17,1 5; AS 16 285:18.



*ina* ì.nun hi.hi kuš-šu *ta-kar tu-* x [.....]

- 21' diš na *ri-šu-ta ù ri-ši-ik-tú tuk-m*[a ...]  
 a im.šu.rin *te-sek-kir tu<sub>5</sub>-šu* [....]  
 šeg<sub>6</sub>-šal tu<sub>5</sub>-šu <sup>šim</sup>li [....]  
*ina* kašbir šeg<sub>6</sub>-sal t[u<sub>5</sub>]-š[u .....]  
*tar-pa-su egir-nu* kašb[ir ....  
*hád-ma ir-ru-ú* gub.a [ ]
- 22' diš [ki.min .....]

rev. col. iv

- 1' [diš na ...] x <sup>r</sup>l<sup>1</sup> *lu tag-ma a-na* gig s[u nu.gíd.da<sup>6</sup> .....]  
 [... l]a sahar ki.mah *si-ra ša i*[z.zi .....]  
 [anš]e.kur.ra 1-*niš* súd *ina* kaš *tara-bak* x [.....]
- 2' [diš na u]d.da<sup>7</sup> *ha-mi-iṭ*<sup>7</sup> im.gú<sup>8</sup> *ša* ud.da<sup>9</sup> s[á.sá<sup>10</sup> gaz<sup>11</sup>]<sup>12</sup>  
*ina* a gazi<sup>sar</sup> *tara-bak* x [.....]
- 3' diš ki.min bar <sup>giš</sup>ù.suh<sub>5</sub> súd *ta-bi-la* [šub.šub-*ma ina-eš*]  
 4' diš ki.min bar <sup>giš</sup>*al-la-ni* súd *ta-[bi-la šub.šub-ma ina-e]š*  
 5' diš ki.min bar <sup>giš</sup>šinig súd *ta-[bi-la šub.šub-m]a ina-eš*  
 6' diš ki.min šika *gul-gul-li* súd t[*a-bi-la*] šub.šub-*ma ina-eš*  
 7' diš ki.min <sup>sig</sup>za.gìn *tur-ár* súd [ta-*b]i-la šub.šub-ma ina-eš*  
 8' diš ki.min *sú-pa-lam tur-ár* [súd t[*a-bi-la šub.šub-ma ina-eš*]  
 9' [diš] na kúm diri numun <sup>giš</sup>ši[nig] súd *ina* ì šéš-*ma ina-eš*  
 10' diš ki.min ú.sig.za.gìn.na<sup>13</sup> s[ig<sub>7</sub>-s]u súd *ina* ì šéš-*ma ina-eš*  
 11' diš ki.min <sup>ú</sup>nínda súd *ina* ì šéš-*ma ina-eš*  
 12' [diš ki.min] x <sup>r</sup>ki<sup>1</sup> [..] *mu-du-la ga ù ì nag-ma ina-eš*  
 13' [diš na .... g]ig pa *liš-ša-bit* diš <sup>r</sup>nu du<sub>8</sub>-*ma ina-eš*<sup>1</sup>  
 14' [diš ki.min] x kúm lá.lá-*ma*<sup>1</sup> *a-na* <igi> *šer-ri* <sup>giš</sup>ig

<sup>6</sup> BAM 416 rev. 6'

<sup>7</sup> cf. Heeßel 2000: 33 15 (TAB KÚM)

<sup>8</sup> *qadūti*

<sup>9</sup> *šēta*

<sup>10</sup> *kašdat*

<sup>11</sup> *tahaššal*

<sup>12</sup> CAD Q 53 citing AMT 78,7 7 (= BAM 584)

<sup>13</sup> AHw *šammi uq-na-a-ti* (DAB 171), ú.za.gìn.na zerstösst du frisch (*arqûssu*) BAM 264 ii 19 ; s. RA 54, 176 Rs.8

7-šu u 7-šu tu-maš-ša-ah-šu-ma ina-eš

- 15' [diš ki.m]in hu-uš-šú ik-šu-su-ma x tuk-ši gim ši-de-ti  
kúm-ti lá.lá-ma ina-eš
- 16' [diš] ʿna<sup>1</sup> [h]i-mi-it <še>-tu i-na ugu-šu it-ta-bi-ik ʿzē<sup>1</sup>-er-di  
hád.du súd ina ì.nun šéš tu-kàš-ša-ʿšu-ma<sup>1</sup> ina-[eš]
- 17' [diš] ki.min <sup>u</sup>hur.sag súd tu-pa-ša ina ì.giš ni-kip-ti hi.hi  
šéš-ma ina-eš
- 18' [diš n]a tab i-na kuš-šu hád.du síg munus.áš.gàr nu.nu <ta>-sá-hat<sup>14</sup> 3-šu  
ina ugu gig tara-kàs-ma ina-eš
- 19' [diš ki.min] 1 kisal <sup>u</sup>ap-ru-ša 1 kisal zú.lum 1 kisal sahar a-sur-re-e  
1 kisal ʿú-ra am gu ra<sup>15</sup> téš.bi gaz luh-ʿsī<sup>1</sup>  
ina ì ta-lá-aš lá-ma ina-eš
- 20' [diš ki.min] x x ʿtú sig<sub>7</sub>-su súd lá.lá<sup>1</sup>-ma ina-eš
- 21' [diš ki.min] x ina a šeg<sub>6</sub>-šal i-ra-muk-ma <sup>d</sup>utu mi-nu-ú an-nu-ú  
dug<sub>4</sub>.ga-ma ina-eš
- 22' [diš ki.min]1 kisal <sup>u</sup>tál.tál 1 kisal illu <sup>šim</sup>buluh i-na ì.sumun  
lá-id  
[...-t]i gir.pad.du gíd.da ša kur.gi<sup>mušen</sup>  
[....] x ti 1-niš súd lá-ma ina-eš
- 23' [diš ki.min ..... ar-q]u-us-su lá.lá-ma ina-eš
- 24' [diš ki.min .....] x x ina ì.nun hi.hi <a-na> igi gig x  
(traces)

<sup>14</sup> 2-šu is erased.

<sup>15</sup> error for am.ha.ra

TRANSLATION

- 1' You keep daubing [.....] with ghee.  
 2' You dry out [.....]... and it may get better.  
 3' You keek rubbing (it) with [.....] x x it may get better.  
 4' You crush together saltpetre ..., you mix (it) in cedar oil, ditto.  
 5' You crush [.....], you mix (it) in cedar oil, ditto.  
 6' You wash it in [.....] ..., you decoct it in beer, you rub it in and keep binding it

7'-16' broken

- 17' [If a man suffers from .....], in order to remove it: date stones,  
 18' [.....], it may get better.  
 19' [.....], it may get better.  
 20' ..... 21' [.....] you crush it, you keep soaking it.

col. ii

- 2' If ditto [.....  
     the shoulder ..... [.....  
     bandage the face and shoulder [.....  
 3' If ditto, half a sila of *kukru*, ....[.....  
     grind and sieve half a sila of ...-barley together, ... [.....  
 4' [If] ditto, .....  
 5' [If] ditto, [.....] ....., fat, [.....  
 6' [If] ditto, dry out with oil 'frog-stone', grind and sieve it [...  
 7' [If] ditto, take fat, rub (it in), ...  
 8' If ditto, you anoint bat guano in oil [... and it may get better]  
 9' If ditto, you rub oil until [.....  
 10' If ditto, you rub lion fat [...  
 11' If a man, headache ditto [... / you decoct it in ... and beer and [... /  
     you soak it in oil and beer, rub it in, ditto, oil [...  
     ...../ your wash ... .... in *kalgukku*  
     you daub your hand and rub in stork-young into oil, juice of ....  
 12' If a man ..... / you crush [.....] and fluid, ... with oil [...  
 13' .....

14' If ditto, .... he rubs body with medication

col. iii

1' cedar [oil], donkey hair [.....

2' he rubs medication on the red *blister* and ....

3' Crush ....., mix it in oil, [...

4' [If] ditto, he applies oven-soot [... he may get better].

5' If a man's skin is hot and makes him itch and ...

and his skin peels, ... juniper and fat [and he may get better].

6' If ditto, crush together *tarmuš* and *imhurešra* [... [note syllabic writing]

7' If ditto, you boil in a *diqāru*-bowl tamarisk-seed, *sikillu*, see of *ēdu*-plant, in oil and fat ...

8' If ditto, you dry out *biššūr atāni*-shell and daub the surface of the lesion ....

9' If ditto, bandage (him) with dried out wall-plaster, mud, [..... and he may get better].

10' If ditto, [...] fly and wasp nest, cedar oil.

11' If ditto, mix *kukru*, juniper, cress, *kamantu*, ..., into a pestle in cedar oil, 3 times ...

12' If ditto, crush sulphur and juniper, ditto.

13' If his skin peels, he applies *nukurtu* and *kamunu* in water, he soaks it and ... drugs in hot oil.

14' If ditto, you dry dog's tongue-plant, and cucumber, you crush it and in .....

15' If ditto, you crush 'white plant' and daub the surface of the lesion ....

16' If a man's skin is always filled with *birdu*-sores, his flesh ....

and *rišūtu*-disease has always affected him, that man suffers from *harāsu*,

In order to cure him: crush together 2 *kisal*-measure each of peas, lentils and pulse in cedar oil [.. and he may get better].

17' If ditto, bind on a decoction ...

18' If ditto, knead *isqūqu*-meal in *kasû*-juice ....

19' If ditto, *murru* in smelly cedar oil, daub oil [.....]

into the surface of the legion [and it may get better].

20' If a man .....

you mix in ghee, you smear it on his hand, you ....

- 21' If a man has *rišūtu* and *rišiktu* and [...]  
 you heat up water in an oven, you wash it, [...]  
 you boil it and wash it, you boil juniper [and ....]  
 in thin beer (*h qu*), you wash it ...,  
 dry out *tarpasu* and afterwards thin beer [...  
 and *planted cucumber* .....

- 22' If [ditto .....

rev. iv

- 1' [If a man], ... has affected (him), in order for the skin-disease not to be chronic,  
 Crush together ..., dirt of the grave, wall plaster ...  
 horse-[hair/urine<sup>3</sup>), dissolve it in beer ....
- 2' [If] a man burns with sun-fever, you crush up mud which *is exposed* to sunlight,  
 and dissolve it in *kasû*-juice, .....
- 3' If ditto, crush bark of conifer (*ašūhu*), [keep applying] (it as) dried stuff (*tab lu*) [and  
 it may get better].
- 4' If ditto, crush bark of acorn, [keep applying] (it as) dried stuff and it may get better.
- 5' If ditto, crush tamarisk bark, [keep applying] (it as) dried stuff and it may get better.
- 6' If ditto, crush pieces of skull, [keep applying] (it as) dried stuff and it may get better.
- 7' If ditto, you dry out woad, crush and keep applying (it as) dried stuff and it may get  
 better.
- 8' If ditto, you dry out s.-juniper, [crush] and keep applying (it as) dried stuff and it  
 may get better.
- 9' If a man is filled with fever, crush tamarisk-seed, rub him in oil and it may get  
 better.
- 10' If ditto, crush woad-plant when it is fresh, rub him in oil and it may get better.
- 11' If ditto, crush *illūru*, rub him in oil and it may get better.
- 12' [If ditto], he will drink salted ..., milk, or oil, and it may get better.
- 13' [If a man ] suffers [...], ....., if not released, it may get better.
- 14' [If ditto], keep binding on hot ..., and you massage him 7 times 7 times  
 down to the anus (lit. door-pivot), and it may get better.

- 15' If ditto, and stomach pains have overwhelmed him and you  
bind on him ... like hot *bandages* and it may get better.
- 16' If a man is overcome (lit. poured over) with sunlight-fever *in his brain*, crush  
dried olive-tree, rub it in in oil, cool it down and it may get better.
- 17' If ditto, you crush *azup ru*, you break it up, you mix *nikiptu* in oil, rub it in  
and it may get better.
- 18' If man is feverish in his body, twist the hair of a virgin kid, you *rinse* it three  
times, you bind it over the lesion and it may get better.
- 19' [If ditto], you crush together 1 kisal(-measure) *aprušu*, 1 kisal dates, 1 kisal  
latrine-dust, 1 kisal *tūru*, ..., (and) wash (them), you knead them in  
oil, bind them and it may get better.
- 20' If ditto, you crush, while still fresh ..., you keep binding it on and it may get  
better.
- 21' If ditto, you boil ... in water, he will bathe, saying, 'Šamaš, why is this?', and  
it may get better.
- 22' [If ditto], 1 kisal *urānu*-plant, 1 kisal resin of *baluhhu*, you bind it in old oil,  
... take the femur of a goose [...], crush them together, bind it  
on and it may get better.
- 23' [If ditto .....] while fresh, you keep binding it on and it may get better.
- 24' [If ditto, .....], mix ... in ghee, apply it to the surface of the lesion .....

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