The Meaning of the Ammonite Inscription from Tell Siran

In 1973, H.O. Thompson and F. Zayadine published an inscription on a bronze bottle, which had been found at Tell Siran on the campus of the University of Jordan, and which is probably to be dated not far from 600 B.C. (see Cross, p. 14).

1 mʿbd ʿmndb mlk bn ʿmn
2 bn hšʾlʾ. mlk bn ʿmn
3 bn ʿmndb mlk bn ʿmn
4 hkrm . wh.gnt . whʾṭhr
5 wʾšḥt
6 ygl ʾwyšmh
7 bywmt rbm wʾšnt
8 rḥqt

Four translations of the text have been published:

(1) **H.O. Thompson and F. Zayadine (1973)**
1 The works of Amminadab, king of the Ammonites,
2 the son of Hiṣṣalʾel, king of the Ammonites,
3 the son of Amminadab, king of the Ammonites,
4 a vineyard and the gardens and the ʾṭḥr
5 and cisterns.
6 May he rejoice and be glad
7–8 for many days and long years.

F.M. Cross suggests a slightly different rendering of the last two lines:
For many days to come
And in years far off.

(2) **C. Krahmalkov (1976)**
1–3 The poem of Amminadab, the king of the Ammonites, the son of Hasselʾel, the king of the Ammonites, the son of Amminadab, the king of the Ammonites:
4a "To the vineyard and the orchard!
4b–5 Or shall I be left behind and destroyed?"
6 He (who says this) rejoice and be happy
7a That life is long
7b–8 And there are years yet unlived
   (lit. Let him rejoice and be happy because of many days and far-off years).

(3) **W.H. Shea (1978)**

   (The wine in this vessel comes)
   1 from the cultivation of Amminadab, [king of the sons of Ammon,
   2 the son of Hiṣṣalʾel, king of the sons of Ammon,
   3 the son of Amminadab, king of the sons of Ammon,]
   4a of the vineyard and the garden,
   4b–5 and shall I inflame myself (with it) and be ruined?
   6 (No!) It shall make glad and bring joy
   7a for many days
   7b–8 and long years.

The words within square brackets that contain the statement of Amminadab’s office and genealogy are regarded by Shea as an insertion into a poem with six lines.

(4) **O. Loretz (1978)**

   Gegenstand des Amminadab, Königs der Ammoniter,
   2 Sohn des Hiṣṣal-El, Königs der Ammoniter,
   3 Sohn des Amminadab, Königs der Ammoniter.
   4a O Weinberg, o Kelter,
   4b–5 und ich soll zurückbleiben und verderben?
   6–7a Er möge jubeln und sich freuen viele Tage
   7b–8 und lange Jahre!

The translations by Shea and Loretz were published in the same year, and the two scholars worked without knowledge of each other’s work.

**Lines 1–3**

Before the translation of this passage is discussed, a brief comment will be made on the name *ḥṣlʾl*, which is presumably compounded of the perfect