

brazier

אָ

1. Statistics

Torah: 0. Nebiim: 3. Ketubim: 0. Total: 3.

Attested in Jeremiah 36:22, 23[bis].

2a. Literal Use

The *status absolutus* of this noun is given alternately as *אָ (like אָ I ‘brother’ and אָ II ‘aha!’, and ‘alas!’; so e.g. *TPC*; *BDB*; *LHA*; *DCH*) or אָ (with article: אָ; so e.g. *BL* §263m; *GB*; *KBL*; *HALAT*; *HAHAT*). Fem., cf. Jer. 36:22 מְבַעֲרָה.

The word occurs in Jeremiah 36:22, 23[bis] only. It figures prominently in the story of the scroll (מְגִלַּת סֵפֶר, Jer. 36:2 → מְגִלָּה) written by Baruch ben-Neriah, as dictated by Jeremiah, which culminates – after its promulgation to the people in the temple and to the king’s dignitaries in the secretary’s chamber in the royal palace – in it being read by Jehudi ben-Nethaniah (cf. v. 14) to king Jehoiakim himself in the court (v. 20), in the winter house/room (בֵּית הַחֹרֶף, v. 22, cf. Amos 3:15), in the ninth month (November/December) (cf. De Vaux, *IAT*, t. 1, 290). Before him the king had the אָ: אָ לְפָנָיו which had been kindled (מְבַעֲרָה, v. 22).

Thus *GKC* §117l (read Jer 36²² instead of Jer 36³³ *ad loc* and in the Index, p. 585), cf. Joüon, *GHB* §125j (p. 370, ‘Remarque’); ‘The brasier before him was burning’, *BDB*, 29a. Others read אָשׁ ‘and the fire’ for אָ (e.g. *HALAT*, 97b; *BHS ad loc*; the remark ‘cf 55C’ is misleading): ‘the fire in the brazier before him had been kindled’; or, with 5 (αλι ἐσχαράρα πυρός), אָשׁ אָ for אָ: אָ: ‘während die geheizte Kohlenpfanne vor ihm brannte’ (Giesebrecht 1907, 200, who disposes of the reading אָ of 5 as ‘eine unnöthige, ja komische Weitschweifigkeit bei einer einfachen Sache’).

The אָ is used by Jehoiakim to destroy the scroll bit by bit: every three or four columns (→ הִלָּת) that had been read by Jehudi, were cut off by him with a penknife (→ הַעֵר) and thrown (וְהִשְׁלֵךְ, inf. abs. as the continuation of a preceding finite verb, cf. *GKC* §113z) into the fire that was in the אָ (אָ אֲשֶׁר אָ אֲלֵהָ), until the entire scroll was consumed (עֲדִיחָם כָּל־הַמְּגִלָּה) in the fire that was in the אָ (עַל־הָאֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר עַל־הָאָ, v. 23 [bis]).

There may have occurred some interchange of כֶּזַח and עַל in v. 23 by assimilation: probably (the first) כֶּזַח לֵכֶזַח should be read as עַל הַכֶּזַח, like (the second) עַל הַכֶּזַח, cf. Ⓞ ἐπι (bis), Ⓢ *super arulam* (for כֶּזַח לֵכֶזַח; the second time *in arula*, for עַל הַכֶּזַח!). Ⓞ and Ⓢ, however, only have *d*^l for עַל (see ad 5. for their rendering of לֵכֶזַח). For כֶּזַח followed by עַל, cf. Lev. 1:7 and 6:5f. [12f.] (כֶּזַח עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ), Jer. 11:16 (set [יִצְחָק Hiph.] fire to the tree [עֵץ]), and Ezek. 21:36 [31] and 22:20 (with נִפַח ‘blow’). More often כֶּזַח is followed by בְּ, with יִצְחָק Hiph. (Jer. 17:27, 21:14 etc.), נָהַן (Ezek. 30:8, 14, 16, etc.) or שָׁלַח Piel (Amos 1:4, 7, 10, etc.), or by בֵּן, with יָרַד (2 Kgs 1:10.12, etc.) or יָצָא (Lev. 9:24; 10:2; Num. 16:35; 21:28, etc.).

Nothing is said about the size of the כֶּזַח, nor of the material from which it was made, of the kind of fuel that was burnt in it or of its movability. Kelso (*CEVOT*, 34) thinks that, as a king, Jehoiakim probably would have used a metal brazier, but a ceramic one ‘must not be completely ruled out’. As several columns of the scroll could be thrown into the כֶּזַח all at once and finally the whole scroll was consumed in it, the כֶּזַח must have been of some size (*‘olla magna’*, Gesenius & Roediger, *TPC*, 69a), not just a small fire pot or spirit stove, and not *‘super prunas suspensa’* (Zorell, *LHA*, 30a): the fire was in/on the pan, not under it. Perhaps the use of the preposition עַל ‘on’ also points to a fire-pan with a fairly wide and flat bottom, cf. the fire put or kept (up)on the altar, Lev. 1:7; 6:5f. [12f.], and Ⓢ translating כֶּזַח with *arula* ‘small altar’ (in Jer. 36:23, however, the RSV and other modern versions translate: ‘the fire <that was> in the brazier’; but Giesebrecht: ‘auf der Kohlenpfanne’ [bis]).

Some authors translate כֶּזַח as ‘hearth’ (see bibliography below), but this is unlikely. The king was seated (יָשַׁב, v. 22) and the כֶּזַח was positioned before him (לְפָנָיו, v. 22), so he must have bent over to throw the leaves he had cut off in the fire. Because leather does not burn well, it is likely that the scroll was made of papyrus (→ מִגֵּזֶה). Since a leaf of papyrus is very light, the distance between the king’s hand and the brazier cannot have been large, otherwise the pages would have fluttered around erratically. This argues in favour of a brazier on legs. Cf. King & Stager, *LBI*, 34: ‘This was probably a copper or bronze, three-legged hearth’.

N.B.: כֶּזַח in Isa. 44:16 חֲמוֹתַי הַכֶּזַח has been interpreted, already from Ⓞ onwards, as an interjection: ‘aha!’ (cf. Ezek. 25:3, 26:2, etc.), probably correctly so.

ט: Jer. 36:22 ויה נורא 'and the fire (before him they lit)'. For ויה נורא possibly read ויה האש, because נורא is the normal rendering of האש, but harmonisation cannot be excluded. Jer. 36:23 [1e] לנורא דלגומרא, 'onto the fire of charcoal'; a well-attested variant reading is לנורא דלגומרי 'onto the fire of charcoals' (plural, harmonising), for ויה האש אשר על האש אשר על גומרי 36:23 [2e] 'onto the fire which was over the charcoals' for ויה האש אשר על האש אשר על גומרי (plur. גומריין) – Jastrow, 223a: 'burning, glowing coal'; Dalman, *ANHT*, 82b (sg. גומרהא): 'glühende Kohle' (Lev. 16:12; 2 Sam. 22:9). So the ט thinks of a fire of glowing charcoal, but omits to specify the container.

ס: Jer. 36:22 *wnwr*° *symyn hww qdmwhy*, 'and they placed a fire before him', perhaps inspired by ט; Jer. 36:23 [1e] *wšdh bgwmr*° *dnwr*° 'and he threw it in the charcoals of the fire' (cf. Rom. 12:20) for ויהשליך אל-האש אשר אל-האש; *gmwrt*° (plur. *gwmr*°, cf. Nöldeke, *Kurzgefasste syrische Grammatik*, § 81): Brockelmann, *LS*, 121b-22a: 1. 'pruna, carbo'; 2. 'variolae' ἄνθρακες; 3. plur. 'particulae hostiae'; Payne Smith, *TS*, 740-41: 'pruna, carbo' ἄνθραξ; Payne Smith (Margoliouth), *CSD*, 72a: 'a coal, live coals', *gwmry dnwr*° 'fiery coals', etc. (but 64b *ad gwmryn*: 'burning coals', cf. RSV *ad* Rom. 12:20); 36:23 [2e] *dyqdt klh mglt*° *bnwr*° *d'l qmyn*° 'so that the complete scroll was burnt in the fire that was on the κάμινος'. The latter is a Greek loanword which designates a furnace, oven or flue (*LSJ*, 872). Because this is impossible here since the fire is *on* the *qmyn*°, Payne Smith (Margoliouth) may have opted for a wider semantic range: 'a stove, fire-place, metal (!, MDK) hearth' (*CSD*, 508b).

ט: Jer. 36:22, 23 [bis] *arula[m]* - 'small altar' (Lewis & Short, *LD*, 169); in v. 22 *plena prunis* 'full of coals' for מְבֹעֲרָה ויה.

6. Judaic Sources

The rabbis did not know the meaning of the word anymore. Their guesses are recorded b. Shab., 20a (cf. Levy, *WTM*, Bd. 1, 54a).

Several medieval Jewish commentators, however, describe the פא as a metal brazier or frying pan (Rubiato Díaz *et. al.* 1991, 375).

7. Illustrations

Whereas clay burners were extensively used among Palestinians (Dalman, *AuS*, Bd. 4, Abb. 5, 6, 11, and Bd. 7, Abb. 34, 52a, 96, 98-100; Avitzur, 108-9, 116-7), metal braziers were too expensive for common people.

8. Archaeological Remarks

‘The most common means of heating was, therefore, the brazier’, ‘in classical times there were no special devices for heating the home except the usual small portable fires with charcoal, the braziers’ (Forbes, *SAT*, vol. 6, 31, cf. 16f., 30, 61 [Rome], and 65 [Egypt, Mesopotamia], all mentioning charcoal; in ancient Palestine, however, wood and straw were preferably used, *ibid.*, 15f., 64); charcoal (כִּיזֵר) was a costly fuel, cf. j. Ter., 45d; ‘Abod. Zar., 41a; Exod. R., 42 (99a); ‘It was also used in the portable stove or brazier in the King’s palace’ (*ibid.*, 20, with notes 126-131). According to Kelso, the king probably would have been using a metal brazier, but ‘the common Israelite would employ a pottery one just as does the poor Arab today’. However, as ‘ceramic work, when highly decorative, could compete with metal ware’, a brazier of clay must not completely be ruled out (Kelso [34, p. 16], referring to the elaborately decorated incense altar found at Taanach and the cult shrines at Beth-shan and Megiddo; cf: ‘carrying <fire> in clay hearths’, Forbes, *op. cit.*, 6, 2). For Kelso’s remark on ‘the stove family’, → כִּיזֵר, 8.

9. Conclusion

Many mysteries still remain around כִּיזֵר which is *de facto* a *hapax legomenon*, though not recognised as such by Greenspahn, *HLBH* and Cohen, *BHL*. In Jer. 36:22, but also in v. 23, confusion and interchange with כִּיזֵר and/or כִּיזֵר could have taken place in the textual tradition, see Section 5 on the ancient versions.

Analysis of the context learns that the כִּיזֵר which was standing before the king was probably a metal brazier on three or four legs. As it is not said in v. 22 that the king ‘was seated before the כִּיזֵר’ but that somehow the כִּיזֵר ‘was positioned before the king (לְפָנָיו)’, it seems most likely that a movable brazier or fire-pan had been placed in front of the king, cf. Vulg. *et posita erat arula coram*

eo and Pesh. *wnw*ʾ *symyn hww qdmwhy*; cf. Giesebrecht: 1907, 200: ‘während die geheizte Kohlen-pfanne vor ihm brannte’. The Egyptian word from which 𐤀𐤃 was probably taken over suggests a fairly large brazier, as does the number of leaves the king cut off and burnt in the 𐤀𐤃.

Also the ancient versions, especially 6, point in the direction of a fairly wide firepan (Section 5), as do some medieval Jewish commentators (Section 6). The rendering ‘brazier’ may be adopted therefore with a fair amount of confidence.

10. Bibliography

Dalman, *AuS*, Bd. 4, 10; Bd. 7, 205: ‘Heizherd’ – *BDB*, 28/9: ‘fire-pot, brazier’ – Kelso, *CVOT*, 13, 16 [= No. 26 and No. 34]: ‘brazier’ – Alonso Schökel, *DBHE*, 33: ‘Brasero’ – *DCH*, vol. 1, 179a: ‘brazier’ – *GB* 22b: ‘Kohlenbecken zur Heizung d. Zimmers’ – Giesebrecht 1907: F. Giesebrecht, *Das Buch Jeremia* (HKAT, 3: 2/1), Göttingen ²1907, 200: ‘Kohlenpfanne’ – *HAHAT*, 32: ‘Kohlenbecken (tragbar, aus Metall od. Ton)’ – *HALAT*, 28b: ‘Kohlenbecken aus Metall od. Ton’ – *HAWAT*, 10b: ‘Kohlenbecken’ – *HCHAT*, Bd. 1, 51: ‘Feuerbecken’ – *HWAT*, 22: ‘der Feuertopf, Wärmtopf’ – *KBL*, 26b: ‘Kohlenbecken *brazier*’ – Lambdin 1953: T.O. Lambdin, ‘Egyptian Loan Words in the Old Testament’, *JAOS* 73 (1953), 145-55 – King & Stager, *LBI*, 33-4 – *LHA*, 30a: ‘foculus, olla calefactoria super prunas suspensa’ – Lundbom 2004: J.R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21-36* (AncB, 21B), New York 2004, 604 – McKane 1996: W. McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah* (ICC), vol. 2, Edinburgh 1996, 899f. ‘brazier’ (‘with a brazier burning in front of him’, v. 22; cf. discussion of 𐤀𐤃 in v. 22, 906f.) – Kaddari, *MHH*, 21: כְּלִי חִימוֹם מִיִּטְלֵטַל – Müller 1900: W.M. Müller, ‘Zwei ägyptische Wörter im Hebräischen’, *OLZ* 3 (1900), 51-3 – *NIDOT*, vol. 1, 349: ‘brazier, firepot’ – Rubiato Díaz 1991: T. Rubiato Díaz *et al.*, ‘Recipientes bíblicos IV: ʾAH, ʾASŪK’, *Sef.* 51 (1991), 369-87 – Forbes, *SAT*, vol. 6, 31, cf. 16f., 30, 61 [Rome], and 65 [Egypt, Mesopotamia] – Loewenstamm & Blau, *TLB*, 66: ‘Portable heating vessel’ – Gesenius & Roediger, *TPC*, 69a (cf. 61a): ‘olla magna, in qua ignis alebatur’.

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