Vessel, utensil, etc.

1. Statistics

2a. Literal Use
The masculine noun יָלִי has a broad spectrum of meaning. The noun generally signifies vessels and utensils of all sorts, but can – depending on the context – also refer to various specific objects, such as weapons, musical instruments, ornaments, ships. The utensils under consideration have been made from a variety of materials, but mainly from baked clay, stone or metal. The Hebrew Bible mentions the following:

- יָלִי קִשׁ, ‘vessel(s) of gold’ (e.g. Num. 31:50; 2 Kgs 12:14; Est. 1:7);
- יָלִי מַלְאָה, ‘vessel(s) of silver’ (e.g. 1 Kgs 10:25; Ezra 1:6);
- יָלִי הָרוֹד, ‘vessel(s) of bronze’ (e.g. Lev. 6:21 [ET 6:28]; 2 Kgs 25:14);
- יָלִי בְּרֵזָה, ‘implement of iron’ (Num. 35:16; 1 Kgs 6:7);
- יָלִי עֶשֶׂ, ‘wooden utensil’ (e.g. Lev. 15:12; Num. 35:18);
- יָלִי נוֹרָה, ‘vessel(s) of (baked) clay’ (e.g. Lev. 6:21; Jer. 32:14);

The various meanings of the general term יָלִי are here discussed according to their life-settings.

Agricultural implements
The yoke for the oxen is sometimes called יָלִי עֶשֶׂ (2 Sam. 24:22; 1 Kgs 19:21; see A. Ruwe, U. Wiese, ZAR 8 [2002], 293-4). In the story of David and Araunah these ‘yokes’ are offered as fuel for a burnt offering, implying that they were made of wood (2 Sam. 24:22).

Baggage
When preparing for the encounter with Goliath, David left his ‘baggage (יָלִי חֲמֵס) in charge of the keeper of the baggage (יָלִי חֲמָס חֲמָס), before greeting his brothers who were already in the army (1 Sam. 17:22). In Isa. 10:28, יָלִי refers to the ‘baggage’ of the Assyrian army that will be stored at Michmash.

Bags
When he was viceroy of Egypt, Joseph ordered that the bags of his brothers who were about to return to Canaan had to be filled
with corn (Gen. 42:25; see also 43:11). The parallelism with יָלִי ‘sack’ and the fact that later on these bags were loaded on donkeys implies that יָלִי here refers to some sort of sack. When preparing for the encounter with Goliath, David took five smooth stones from the wadi and put them into his יָלִי, ‘shepherd’s bag’ (1 Sam.17:40 see also 17:49).

The prophet Ezekiel is summoned to prepare for himself יָלִי, ‘an exile’s baggage’, probably the most important personal belongings to be carried in a sack (Ezek.12:3-4). A comparable call is directed to ‘the daughter of Egypt’ in the oracle against Egypt in Jer. 46:19.

Boats
Just like the English ‘vessel’, יָלִי might denote a boat. In one instance יָלִי has the meaning of a ship or a boat. In Isa. 18:2 Ethiopia is depicted as a country that is ‘sending ambassadors by the Nile in יָלִי,’ vessels of papyrus’, on the waters’; see, e.g., BDB, 480; E. Hilgert, BHH, Bd. 3, 1691-96; M. Wüst, BRL2, 276.

Building utensils
The responsibility for the tabernacle with all its accessories נֵס was assigned to the Merarites (Num.3:36). They were also responsible for the carrying of the constructive elements of the desert sanctuary, such as ‘the pillars of the court all around with their bases, pegs, and cords, with all their equipment (ךֹלְעַר יָלִי, Num. 4:32). Here יָלִי refers to either constructive elements of the sanctuary or to the equipment necessary for its de- and reconstruction.

The narrative of the building of the temple under Solomon gives as a specific detail that the sanctuary was constructed in such a way that ‘neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron was heard in the temple while it was being built’ (1 Kgs 6:7). The absence of these instruments makes it impossible to determine their character.

Cargo
The Book of Jonah narrates that the seamen on the ship Jonah took for his flight to Tarshish, in fear of the mighty storm that
hurled the waters threw into the sea the ‘cargo that was in the ship’ (יוֹלְדוֹת, Jon. 1:5).

Clothing
Garments of leather are mentioned in the section on leprosy in Lev. 13. The illness can also infect a person’s clothes, among them the כל־עור, ‘garments of wool’ (Lev. 13:47-59, cf. שעון, ‘anything made of skin’ in v. 48). Like the other infected clothes, these need to be washed out. In Num. 31:20 – in the context of a revenge campaign against Midian – it is stated that seven days after the battle a man should purify himself and his belongings including ‘every garment, every article of skin, everything made of goats’ hair, and every article of wood’. This passage implies that warfare can make utensils of various kinds unclean.

In Deut. 22:5, women are forbidden to wear a כָּל־ורָא, ‘man’s apparel’. The expression stands parallel to כָּל־אֹת, ‘woman’s garment (see also DCH, vol. 5, 423). Both words are generic descriptions of upper garments.

Cultic vessels and objects
In Exod. 27:1-8 Moses receives the instruction to make the burnt offering altar. Within that instruction he is summoned to make ‘pots for it to receive its ashes’ (v. 3). This is one of the rare cases where the exact function of a cultic vessel is specified. The construction of the burnt offering altar is narrated in Exod. 38:1-7, including the ‘pots for it to receive its ashes’ (v. 3). It is, however, not Moses, but Bezaleel who makes the altar.

In Exod. 25:31-40 very specific instructions are given for the construction of the תַּמִּיס,ם. This lamp-stand together with all its utensils (לֹא, v. 39) should be made out of one talent of gold. In Exod. 37:17-24 these instructions are carried out. In Exod. 31:7-8 the actual construction is assigned to the craftsman Aholiab.

In Exod. 39:32-43 it is narrated that after finishing the construction of the tabernacle it was brought to Moses who approves and blesses the construction. The textual unit also enumerates the contents of the desert-sanctuary. In this description the phrase כל־כַּל־כָּל, ‘and all its utensils’, occurs as a kind of refrain (Exod.
The expression probably depicts the various minor utensils for the service in the tabernacle. In Exod. 40 Moses receives the divine instruction for the monthly service of the Tabernacle. He has to consecrate the tabernacle ‘and all its utensils’ (v. 9) and has to anoint the altar of burnt offering and ‘all its utensils’ (v. 10). Num. 7:1 narrates Moses doing so. In Exod. 30:22-25 the preparation of a precious oil is described with which ‘the tabernacle of the congregation’, ‘and the ark of the testimony, and the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense, and the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the basin with its stand’ have to be anointed (Exod. 30:25-27; see also Lev. 8:11).

In the regulations concerning the sin-offerings it is stated that the ‘earthen vessel in which it (= the meat) was boiled shall be broken; but if it is boiled in a bronze vessel, that ‘shall be scoured and rinsed in water’ (Lev. 6:21 [ET 6:28]; P).

Num. 1 states that the tribe of Levi is the only tribe that should not be counted. They, however, will be in charge of ‘the tabernacle of the covenant, and all its equipment’ (Num.1:50; 3:8). In a more specific survey of the duties of Levites for the sanctuary it is stated that the Kehatites were in charge of the ‘ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the vessels of the sanctuary with which the priests minister’ (Num. 3:31). The character of this service is made explicit in Num. 4:1-16. A remark in Num. 4:14 reveals the character of the נַפְלֵי הַמַּחְשָׁבָה, ‘all the utensils of the altar’: ‘the firepans (→ בְּנֵי חַמְשָׁבָה), the forks (→ בְּנֵי חַמְשָׁבָה), the shovels (→ בְּנֵי חַמְשָׁבָה), and the basins (→ בְּנֵי חַמְשָׁבָה), all the utensils of the altar’. The responsibility for the tabernacle, the bars, the pillars, the bases, and all their accessories’ was assigned to the Merarites (Num. 3:36). The Gershonites had to serve at the carrying of curtains and coverings, hangings and screen of the tabernacle ‘and all the equipment of their service’ (Num. 4:26). The context suggests that נַפְלֵי הַמַּחְשָׁבָה refers to equipment of wool or linen here. When the building of the temple is finished it is explicitly stated that the Levites no longer have to carry ‘the tabernacle or any thing of its service’. They are now destined for a new duty (1 Chron. 23:26).

An unclear passage is found at Num. 31:6. 12,000 Israelites
are recruited for a battle of revenge against Midian. While sending them away Moses had the קָרָם, ‘holy vessels and the trumpets of sounding the alarm’ in his hands. It is unclear whether these vessels would have a cultic function, as their designation as ‘holy’ suggests, or a military function, as is implied by the parallelism with the signalling trumpets. Because קָרָם might also be taken as ‘the sanctuary’ already אֱלֹהִים הַבְּרֵשִׁית אֲדֹנָי הַכֹּהֵן אֲדֹנָי ‘and the Urim and Tummim of the sanctuary’, probably on the basis of Num. 27:21.

Retelling the account of David’s military exploits in 2 Sam. 8:1-14, the Chronicler adds a note on the vast quantity of bronze that David had taken from the Aramaic cities Tibhath and Cun. These raw materials later served Solomon when constructing ‘the bronze sea and the pillars and the vessels of bronze’ (גּלֵי תַחַשֶׂים, 1 Chron. 18:8).

In the Chronicler’s account David is said to have summoned the elders of Israel to let his son Solomon build the temple ‘so that the ark of the covenant of יְهوָה and the holy vessels of God (קָרָם) may be brought into a house built for the name of יְهوָה’ (1 Chron. 22:19). Both in Kings and in Chronicles it is narrated that after the completion of the temple the Ark of the Covenant and ‘all the holy vessels’ were brought into the temple (1 Kgs 8:4; 2 Chron. 5:5). The entering in the form of a procession and the parallelism ark || holy vessels seem to suggest that the cultic vessels were some sort of an aniconic representation of the Divine.

When building the temple, Hiram made several utensils of bronze for the service in the temple: ‘pots, shovels and basins’. They were made from pure bronze in the plain of the Jordan between Succoth and Zarethan. They were that abundant in size and number that their weight was not determined by Solomon (1 Kgs 7:45-47; 2 Chron. 4:18).

After the completion of the building of the temple, Solomon constructed various objects for the service of יְهوָה: ‘the golden altar, the golden table for the bread of the Presence, the lampstands of pure gold, five on the south side and five on the north, in front of the inner sanctuary; the flowers, the lamps, and the
tongs, of gold; the cups, snuffers, basins, dishes for incense, and firepans, of pure gold; the sockets for the doors of the innermost part of the house, the most holy place, and for the doors of the nave of the temple, of gold’ (1 Kgs 7:48-50 || 2 Chron. 4:19-22). This is the most elaborated list of cultic vessels in the Hebrew Bible. During the inauguration ceremony of the Temple, the Ark of the Covenant together with the tabernacle and ‘and all the holy vessels (כָּלָּהֶלְּכִּיְדָּליֲקִלְּקָר) that were in the tent’ were brought to the new building (1 Kgs 8:4 || 2 Chron. 5:1).

King Joash is famous for his exploits with regard to the restoration of the temple. A collection is organised to finance the repairs. But the money is not spent on the making of cultic vessels, such as ‘basins of silver, snuffers, bowls, trumpets, or any vessels of gold, or of silver’ (2 Kgs 12:14 [ET 12:13]). In the parallel account in Chronicles, it is nevertheless stated that the money was brought to king Joash and the priest Jehoiada and that were made ‘utensils for the house of Yhwh, utensils for the service and for the burnt offerings, and ladles, and vessels of gold and silver’ (2 Chron. 24:14).

Amplifying the negative picture of king Ahaz, 2 Chron. 28:24 narrates that Ahaz gathered and destroyed the ‘vessels of the house of God’. In the report on the reign of Hezekiah, it is narrated that the priests, after having cleansed the temple, report to the king that they – among others things – have cleansed ‘the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils’, and sanctified ‘all the utensils that King Ahaz repudiated during his reign when he was faithless’ (2 Chron. 29:18-19).

In several texts referring to the Babylonian Exile mention is made of the כָּלָּהֶלְּכִּיְדָּליֲקִלְּקָר, ‘the vessels of the temple of Yhwh’. This expression refers to the utensils that were in use for the cult of Yhwh in the pre-exilic temple or were part of the temple treasure. Their carrying away into exile is mentioned in 2 Kgs 25:13-17 || Jer. 52:17-23; 2 Chron. 36:7,18; Dan. 1:2. The prophet Jeremiah is said to have rebuked the false prophets for prophesying illusions such as that the ‘vessels of the temple Yhwh will now shortly be brought back from Babylon’ (Jer. 27:16,18, 21; 28:3, 6).

In a legendary tale in the Book of Daniel, king Belshazzar is
rebuked for having used the temple vessels from Jerusalem for a luxurious banquet (Dan. 5:2-3; Aram. כּוֹפֶל). The return of the temple vessels is referred to on several occasions. In an oracle of salvation, those who will be carrying the ‘vessels of Yhwh’ on the journey back to Jerusalem are summoned not to touch the unclean (Isa. 52:11). In Ezra 1:7 Cyrus is said to have brought out the ‘vessels of the temple of Yhwh’ that had been placed by Nebuchadnezzar in one of his temples. Cyrus then hands the vessels over to Mithredath (Ezra 1:7-8).

In a report included in the letter that Tattenai, the governor of the satrapy ‘Beyond the River’, sent to Darius, the king of Persia, the inhabitants of Jerusalem claim that Cyrus the Great had ordered the return of the temple vessels (Ezra 5:14-15). This claim is then confirmed by a record from the time of Cyrus that was found in the archives of Ecbatana (Ezra 6:5). Both texts use the Aramaic counterpart כּוֹפֶל for ‘vessel’ and state that the utensils were made of gold and silver. In the decree of Artaxerxes, the king stipulates that ‘The vessels (כּוֹפֶל) that have been given you (= Ezra) for the service of the house of your God, you shall deliver before the God of Jerusalem’ (Ezra 7:19). In Neh.10:40 (ET 10:39) the כּוֹפֶל, ‘vessels of the sanctuary’, are mentioned as a side remark in a pericope on the gathering of the firstlings of the harvest. The Israelites are supposed to bring their corn taxes for the temple to the same room where the vessels of the sanctuary are. In Neh.13:9 Nehemiah claims that he had brought back these vessels to the temple. This theme is also present in Bar. 1:8.

In Ezekiel’s vision of the new temple, he also sees a chamber with its door in the vestibule of the gate where the burnt offerings were washed. Close to that chamber – the exact location is unclear – were four tables of hewn stone on which ‘the instruments were to be laid with which the burnt offerings and the sacrifices were slaughtered’ (Ezek. 40:42). In this passage the noun כְּפִל clearly refers to some kind of (butcher’s) knives that were in use for the preparation of the offerings.

A few times vessels for the cult of deities other than Yhwh are mentioned. In 2 Kgs 23:4 Josiah summons the high priest Hilkiah to bring out of the temple of Yhwh ‘all the vessels made
for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven’. They were burnt afterwards. The character of these utensils and the material they were made of cannot be established.

Diplomatic gifts

When the Ark of the Covenant is returned to Israel by the Philistines, they put יָלֵי, ‘objects of gold’, as a guilt offering in a box next to the Ark (1 Sam. 6:8,15).

When congratulating David with his victory over Hadadezer, King of Damascus, Toi, the King of Hamath, send to David by the hands of his son Joram, ‘vessels of silver, gold, and bronze’ (2 Sam. 8:10; 1 Chron. 18:10). The character of these vessels is unclear, but they function as a voluntary gift indicating submission to David who dedicated them to יָהָוה, which means that they became part of the temple treasure.

When David was in Mahanaim, gifts were brought to him by Transjordan chiefs. Among the gifts were יָלֵי, ‘potter’s vessels’ (2 Sam. 17:28).

The importance of king Solomon is underscored by the hyperbolic notice that all kings of the earth came to him to hear his wisdom and offer him presents: ‘objects of silver and gold, garments, weaponry, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year’ (1 Kgs 10:25 || 2 Chron. 9:24). The adverbial adjunct ‘year by year’ might indicate an annual tribute.

Household utensils

A very clear instance of יָלֵי in the meaning of ‘household vessels’ can be found in Neh. 13:8. Angry because Eliashib had allowed Tobiah to prepare a room for himself in the court of the temple, Nehemiah ‘threw all the household furniture of Tobiah (אֲרֹב יָלֵי) out of the room’. In the story of the conflict between Jacob and Laban יָלֵי twice occurs as a referent to household chattels in general (Gen. 31:37). In Gen. 45:20, the Pharaoh summons Joseph that his brothers can in fact leave their household utensils (יָלֵי) in Canaan for the best of Egypt will be at their disposal.

Vessels can be bought and sold. In a lamentation over Tyre Ezekiel complains that ‘Javan, Tubal, and Meshech traded with you; they exchanged human beings and יָלֵי (vessels of bronze)
for your merchandise’ (Ezek. 27:13).

From an oracle in the Book of Ezekiel – in which Jerusalem is compared to a useless vine – it becomes clear that household vessels could be hung on a wooden peg to the wall: ‘Does one take a peg (→ יָלַ֑ד) from it [= from the vines] on which to hang any object (לַֽעֲלָ֣הּ לֵ֑ךְ פֻּ֣לַ֖ים)?’ (Ezek. 15:3; see also Isa. 22:23-24).

In Isa. 22:24 various household utensils are mentioned among which לֶגְלָ֣ה יָכָ֑נִה, ‘bowls’ (→ בֵּית), and לֶגְלָ֣ה יָכָ֑נִה, ‘storage jars’ (→ בֵּית).

Household vessels are mentioned in regulations in the Law codes of the Old Testament. Exod. 22:6-8 (ET 7-9) contains stipulations regarding the theft of בָּשָׁמָּ֣ה יָכָ֑נִים, ‘money or materials’ which have been given for safekeeping. The parallelism with בָּשָׁמָּה יָכָ֑נִים, ‘money, silver’, indicates that precious vessels might be meant.

Household utensils can become unclean as a result of contact with the unclean. When a man is suffering from uncleanness as a result of a bleeding ‘every לֶגְלָ֣ה יָכָ֑נִיה on which he sits shall be unclean’ (Lev. 15:4). A comparable stipulation holds for a woman who is bleeding during a period longer than her monthly time of separation (Lev. 15:26). The construction with the verb בָּשָׁמָּה יָכָ֑נִים and the parallel with the noun בָּשָׁמָּה יָכָ֑נִים, ‘bed’ in both verses suggest that לֶגְגָּה יָכָ֑נִיה refers to a piece of furniture here, as has been suggested by J. Milgrom, Leviticus 1-16 (AncBi, 3), New York 1991, 910: ‘anything to sit on . . . including objects not made for sitting’; J.E. Hartley, Leviticus (WBC, 4), Dallas 1992, 201-2: ‘furniture’. Curiously, only the vessel that the man sat on is mentioned when it comes to destruction of the unclean: ‘Any earthen vessel that the one with the discharge touches shall be broken; and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water’ (Lev. 15:12; see also 15:22). Another form of utensils becoming unclean through contact is stipulated in the section on unclean creeping animals in Lev. 11:29-38. The dead body of one of the creeping animals mentioned brings over uncleanness to a variety of utensils, especially wooden vessels on which they fall and to earthen vessels in which they fall (Lev. 11:32-33). In Num. 19:15 it is stated that when a man dies in a tent, ‘every open vessel [in the tent] with no cover fastened on it is unclean’. In Num. 31:20 – in the context of a campaign out
of revenge against Midian – it is stated that seven days after the battle a man should purify himself and his belongings including ‘every garment, every article of skin, everything made of goats’ hair, and every article of wood’.

Vessels can become a *corpus delicti* in manslaughter. In the regulations on the cities of refuge, it is stated that anyone who kills a person without intent may flee to these cities. However, anyone ‘who strikes another with an iron object’, and death ensues, is a murderer; the murderer shall be put to death (Num.35:16). Anyone who unintentionally hurls any object so that another person dies is entitled to flee to one of the cities of refuge (Num. 35:22-23).

In a miracle story, the prophet Elisha summons the wife of one of the prophets to collect empty vessels from her neighbours so that they will be miraculously filled with oil that could be sold by the woman to pay her debts (2 Kgs 4:1-7). Most probably these were earthenware vessels used for storing victuals. Conversely, vessels might be emptied, or remain empty. In the description of a drought, that is seen as the result of Judah’s sins, ‘Her nobles send their servants for water; they come to the cisterns, they find no water, they return with their vessels empty’ (Jer.14:3).

Vessels not only could store healthy food. In Isa. 65:4 the people of Israel is rebuked for having a ‘broth of abominable things in their vessels’. From the parallel line where swine flesh is mentioned, it may be concluded that they did trespass the food laws.

Kings are depicted as leading a life of luxury. King Solomon is said to have the drinking vessels for his palace ‘Forest of the Lebanon’ made of pure gold. Silver was not esteemed as of great value (1 Kgs 10:21 || 2 Chron. 9:20). In the banquet-scene opening the Book of Esther the wealth of the Persian court is described: ‘Drinks were served in golden goblets, goblets of different kinds’ (Est. 1:7).

Vessels of clay could be used as storage jars for sealed letters and documents (Jer. 32:14); for wine (Jer. 40:11); for refreshing drinks (Ruth 2:9); for corn (Gen. 42:25). In the oracle of doom against the Qedarites, Jeremiah proclaims that almost everything
will be taken away from them, even ‘their tents and their flocks, their curtains and all their goods (ﬂקִים)’ (Jer. 49:29). Here, the word ‘כָּל’ is used in a very general sense.

**Jewelry**

In Gen. 24:53, Abraham’s servant gives to Rebecca ﬂלִים תִּקְנֹת, ‘jewelry of silver and of gold’. This jewelry is meant as a gift for a future bride. On the eve of the Exodus the Hebrew women shall ask their neighbours ﬂלִים תִּקְנֹת, ‘jewelry of silver and of gold’ (Exod. 3:22; see also Exod. 12:35) to be given to the sons and daughters of the Israelites. Later on in the story, the jewelry of gold is offered as a gift for the building of the tabernacle (Exod. 35:22). From the loot taken from the Midianites, women offer ﬂלִים תִּקְנֹת, ‘jewelry of gold’, as an act of atonement (Num. 31:50-51). Both at Exod. 35:22 and Num. 31:50 the jewelry of gold is part of an enumeration of rings, horns, earrings, etc. This might hint at the fact that the expression would refer to such items (see C. Houtman, *Exodus [HCOT]*, Kampen 1993, 35). In Isa. 61:10; Ezek. 16:17, ‘jewelry’ is used in a metaphorical sense. Ezek. 16:39; 23:26 depict the stripping away by the enemy of the ‘fine jewels’ as part of the forthcoming doom.

**Musical instruments**

In some instances, ﬂלִים תִּקְנֹת refers to musical instruments. Although these are excluded from this handbook, a few passages may be cited to illustrate this usage. In a woe-oracle the inhabitants of Samaria are reproached for having ‘composed for their pleasure on ﬂלִים תִּקְנֹת, ‘musical instruments’ (Amos 6:5; see F. Anderson & D.N. Freedman, *Amos [AncBi, 24A]*, New York 1989, 563). ﬂלִים תִּקְנֹת should be seen as a general term referring to musical instruments that accompanied singing (J. Braun, *Music in Ancient Palestine: Archaeological, Written and Comparative Sources*, Grand Rapids 2002, 36). The ﬂל, ‘harp’, is sometimes called ﬂלִים תִּקְנֹת, ‘harp-instrument’ (Ps. 71:22; 1 Chron. 16:5 Plur.). A cultic setting is present in 1 Chron. 16:5; 23:5; 2 Chron. 5:3; 7:6; 23:13; 34:12 (Braun, *Music in Ancient Palestine*, 36). Among the instruments that Heman and Jeduthun had with them were ﬂל תִּקְנֹת, ‘instruments for sacred song’ (1 Chron 16:42). At
the celebration of Hezekiah’s cleansing of the temple (2 Chron. 29:26-27) and at the celebration after the rebuilding of the walls (Neh. 12:36), the Levites played on the מַלְשֶׁנֶת חֲדוֹסָה, ‘the musical instruments of David’, suggesting a continuation of the temple service over the ages. A specific expression is used in the description of the Passover festival under Hezekiah. For seven days the priests and the Levites were playing מַלְשֶׁנֶת חֲדוֹסָה, ‘on instruments of might before Yhwh’ (2 Chron. 30:21). Since the term is used in a general meaning, it cannot be established which specific musical instrument(s) is (are) referred to.

**Temple treasure**

After the sack of Jericho, the city and all that is in it, is devoted to Yhwh. ‘All silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are sacred to the Yhwh; they shall go into the treasury of Yhwh’ (Josh. 6:19, 24). It is unclear whether these vessels came from the palace or the sanctuary of Jericho.

After the completion of the temple of Jerusalem, Solomon not only made cultic vessels for the service of Yhwh, he also brought in ‘the things that his father David had dedicated, the silver, the gold, and the vessels, and stored them in the treasuries of the house of the Yhwh’ (1 Kgs 7:51 || 2 Chron 5:1).

King Jehoshaphat is said to have brought to Jerusalem an abundant booty that he and his men found after a battle between Moabites and Ammonites against the inhabitants of Seir that lead to a complete annihilation of both armies. On the battlefield were found: ‘livestock in great numbers, goods, clothing, and precious things (לֹא מַעֲרַת), which they took for themselves until they could carry no more’ (2 Chron. 20:25; no parallel in Kings).

In the Book of Kings it is narrated that Amaziah, king of Judah, is punished for his haughtiness with a raid by Joash, king of Israel, who ravaged Jerusalem by taking away ‘all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of Yhwh and in the treasuries of the king’s house, as well as hostages; then he returned to Samaria’ (2 Kgs 14:14 || 2 Chron. 25:24). King Asa, despite the fact that the ‘heights’ did not disappear during his reign, was a man devoted to the service of Yhwh. He brought to the temple gifts: ‘silver, gold, and utensils’ (1 Kgs...
The prophet Hosea announces the conquest of Samaria. The enemy, ‘like the east wind’, shall ‘strip his treasury of every precious thing (יִשְׁלָכֵן תְּמוֹנָה; Hos. 13:15)’. Nahum, announcing the fall of Nineveh, is using comparable language (Nah. 2:10).

After conquering Jerusalem for the first time, Nebuchadnezzar carried away precious items from the temple. He also ‘cut in pieces all the vessels of gold in the temple of Yhwh, which King Solomon of Israel had made’ (2 Kgs 24:13 || 2 Chron. 28:13). In Chronicles a comparable act after the second fall of Jerusalem is narrated, an account that has no parallel in Kings. One of the things the Babylonians had done was that they ‘destroyed all its precious vessels’ (ךֵלֶף כִּי רַע מֵאָשׁ; 2 Chron. 36:19).

Among the treasure that Cyrus is said to have collected for Sheshbazzar and the returning exiles, were ‘1,000 other vessels’. The total sum of the ‘vessels of gold and silver’ was 5,400 (Ezra 1:10-11). In the ‘Decree of Artaxerxes’ (Ezra 7:12-26), the Persian king promises Ezra who is about to return to Jerusalem, the transfer of financial means, collected in Babylon as the basis of a new temple treasure. The king, however, stipulates that ‘The vessels (אֲדוֹן, the Aramaic counterpart of יָלָד) that have been given you for the service of the house of your God, you shall deliver before the God of Jerusalem’ (Ezra 7:19). The fact that these vessels would serve in the service of the temple, implies that they were cultic vessels. Later in the story, Ezra delivers the money including various vessels of gold, silver and bronze to the chiefs of the priest as funding capital for the temple (Ezra 8:24-30). On arrival in Jerusalem, the vessels together with the gold and the silver are measured in the temple (Ezra 8:33).

**Weapons**

Various instances of יָלָד can only be translated ‘weapon’ (G. Fohrer, *BHH*, Bd. 3, 2124-27). In Gen. 27:3 old Isaak summons his son Esau to ‘take your weapons (חֶסֶף; HALAT, 456, however: ‘Jagdgerät’ [hunting equipment]), your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field, and hunt game for me’. See also Deut. 1:41; Judg. 9:54; 1 Sam. 17:54; 20:40; 21:9 (יָשָׁה, ‘sword’); 31:9.10 || 1 Chron. 10:9.10; Jer. 22:7; Ezek. 9:1. In 1 Sam. 14:1; 16:21;
14

VESSEL, UTENSIL, ETC.

31:4.5.6 || 1 Chron. 10:4.5.6; 2 Sam. 18:15; 23:37 || 1 Chron. 11:39 mention is made of a מַכֵּן (meken), ‘armour-bearer’. In Judg. 18:11.16.17; 2 Sam. 1:27; 1 Chron. 12:34, 38 the expression מַכֵּן מָכֵּן ְ עַל הָאָרֶץ ְ לְאָרֶץ clearly indicates ‘weapons of war’. In some instances it is stated that weapons could be held ‘in the hand’, 2 Kgs 11:8 || 2 Chron. 23:7; 2 Kgs 11:11; Jer. 21:4; Ezek. 9:2.

The enigmatic bicolon in Gen 49:5 should be rendered, ‘Simeon and Levi are brothers; מַכֵּן מָכֵּן, ‘weapons of violence’, are their knives’ (with R. de Hoop, Genesis 49 in its Literary and Historical Context (OTS, 39), Leiden 1998, 97-112).

When he received the envoys from Babylon, King Hezekiah showed them his palace in its entirety and also his מַכֵּן מָכֵּן, ‘armoury’ (2 Kgs 20:13 || Isa. 39:2). In a prophecy against Babylon, Isaiah predicts the mustering of an army by יְהוָה. They, יְהוָה and the מַכֵּן מָכֵּן, ‘instruments of his indignation’, will come to destroy the whole earth’ (Isa. 13:5). The ‘instruments’ are sometimes seen as ‘weapons’ – e.g. by ὁ ὀπλομάχος, ‘fighting with heavy arms’; H. Wildberger, Jesaja, Teilband: Jesaja 13-27 (BKAT, X/2), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1978, 502. The noun could, however, also refer to the army mustered. In Jer. 50:25 the expression מַכֵּן מָכֵּן clearly refers to divine weapons. In Ps. 7:14 God is said to have prepared his מַכֵּן מָכֵּן, ‘deadly weapons’, in order to punish the unfaithful.

In Ezek. 32:27 it is suggested that armoury was a burial gift among the inhabitants of Mesech-Tubal: ‘And they do not lie with the fallen warriors of long ago who went down to Sheol with their weapons of war (מַכֵּן מָכֵּן), whose swords were laid under their heads, and whose shields are upon their bones; for the terror of the warriors was in the land of the living’.

Anyone ‘who strikes another with a weapon of wood in hand which might cause a man’s death, and death ensues, is a murderer; the murderer shall be put to death’ (Num. 35:18). Such a person is not entitled to flee to one of the cities of refuge.

2 Kgs 7:15 narrates how the Arameans had apparently fled from the siege of Samaria, leaving the road to the Jordan ‘littered with garments and weapons (מַכֵּן מָכֵּן) that the Arameans had thrown away in their haste’. The parallelism with בֵּרָד, ‘garments’, might
suggest a different interpretation. In Isa. 54:16-17 Yhwh under-
scores the might of his comforting power by saying that it is He
who created the smith who is able to make a ‘weapon’(16), but
that it is also He who has the power to destroy every weapon.
Therefore all ‘weapons’ directed against Israel will be powerless
eventually (17). The mention of a smith suggests that יִלְּכָלָל would refer to a weapon made of iron here. The phrase from Isa.54:16
is quoted in the Damascus Document (CD 6:8).

In a speech old Samuel warns the people of Israel for the
complications of their wish to be ruled by a king. A king will lay
heavy burden on a people and will call the youths to serve in the
army and to make ‘his implements of war (כַּלֶּל יִלְּכָלָל) and the
equipment of his chariots (כִּבּוֹר יִלְּכָלָל)’ (1 Sam. 8:12).

2b. Figurative Use

In quite a number of cases the noun יִלְּכָלָל is used in a metaphorical
way. The variety of images evoked reflects the broad semantic
scope of the noun.

In one text, יִלְּכָלָל describes numerous offspring. In an oracle
of salvation for Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, who is to replace
the treacherous treasurer Shebna, it is announced that Eliakim
will be fastened like a ‘peg in a secure place’. On that secure
peg all kinds of household vessels (children) will be hung (Isa.
22:23-24). In another text יִלְּכָלָל describes the body. 1 Sam. 21:1-
9 narrates the visit of David to Ahimelech, the priest of Nob.
David asks him for some food. ‘The priest answered David, “I
have no ordinary bread at hand, only holy bread – provided that
the young men have kept themselves from women.” ’ (21:5 [ET 4]).
David assures him that he did not have intercourse with women,
an act that could have defiled him and that the יִלְּכָלָל are holy (21:6 [ET 5]). Within the context this can only signify that
there ‘bodies were not defiled’ and that thus the hallowed bread
will not be made unholy by them (DCH, vol. 5, 424). This use of
‘vessel’ in the sense of ‘body’ is in accordance with the universal
metaphor ‘the body is a container’, cf. G. Lakoff & M. Johnson,
Metaphors We Live By, Chicago 1980, 29. Other opinions on this
text are, K. Budde, Die Bücher Samuelis (KHAT), Tübingen
1902, 149; HAWAT, 179, and others, who assume a euphemism
for the *membrum virile;* H.J. Stoebe, *Das erste Buch Samuelis* (KAT, 8/1), Gütersloh 1973, 393, who argues for the meaning of `weapon'; A. Caquot & Ph. de Robert, *Les livres de Samuel* (CAT, 6), Genève 1994, 259, who opt for `sack (see under Bags).

Sometimes the possibility to empty a vessel triggers imagery of destruction and desolation. Within the context of the Oracle against Babylon, the `inhabitant of Sion’, an expression parallel to the `daughter of Sion’, complains that the King of Babylon has set her aside like an `empty vessel’ (Jer. 51:34). The expression refers to Judah’s feeling of superfluity on the level of history. For the textual problems involved see W.L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 2* (Hermeneia), Minneapolis 1989, 428-9. A similar oracle is pronounced against Moab: it will be emptied out because it has settled down complacently, like a jar filled with old wine (Jer. 48:11-12).

The theme of spoliation and brokenness is present in the following texts. When visiting a potter, Jeremiah observes that the potter spoiled marred vessels and reused the clay for new vessels (Jer. 18:4). The prophet then uses this observation as a metaphor for God who will act likewise with the people of Judah (19:11). In an oracle of doom, Jeremiah announces that the leaders of Israel will be scattered ἔπληκτη, `like a precious vessel’ (Jer. 25:34; the expression might imply a reversal of the election-motif; the proposed emendations ἐπληκτη, `without compassion’; and ἐπληκτη, `like choice rams’, are ingenious but not commendable; cf. W.L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 1* [Hermeneia], Minneapolis 1986, 678).

In Psalm 2:9 one of the qualities of the forthcoming Messiah will be that he will scatter the enemies `like earthen vessels’. Just as pots become useless when broken, the former Judaean king Je-hoiachin, or Coniah, then living in Exile in Babylon, is compared to a `despised broken pot’: none of his sons will sit on the throne in Jerusalem (Jer. 22:28). In the Psalms the image of a broken vessel is used to depict the situation of deadly distress; see, e.g., Ps. 31:12 (ET 31:13): `I have passed out of mind like one who is dead; I have become like a broken vessel’ (cf. Qoh. 12:6). This imagery is also present in an oracle of doom against Moab where the future fate of this country is depicted in an act of YHWH who shall `send to him decanters to decant him, and empty his vessels,
and break his jars in pieces’ (Jer. 48:12; see on the metaphor of brokenness N.L. Lapp, AncBD, vol. 5, 435.

The circumstance that \( כֵּל \) can refer to precious items and to jewelry underlies the imagery language in another set of texts. In Isa. 61:10, the pious rejoices in the salvation brought about by \( יְהוָה \). He construes his life as if God ‘has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels (\( חָלִיל \)).’ The parallelism with \( דָּתָן \), an ornament put on the head by a priest, suggests that \( כֵּל \) refers to jewelry that stands metaphorically for the joy of the bride. In Prov. 25:4-5 the king and his court are compared with a nice silver vessel yet polluted by dross: ‘Take away the dross from the silver, and the smith has material for a vessel’. A comparable idea is to be found in Isa.1:22, where, however, a vessel is not mentioned. In Job 28:17 it is stated that ‘wisdom’ (\( חָכְוָה \)) is of more precious than jewels. It cannot be ‘exchanged for \( דָּתָן \), ‘jewels of fine gold”’. In Prov. 20:15 we find a saying: ‘the lips informed by knowledge are a \( כֵּל \), precious jewel’. The jewelry here stands in parallelism to ‘costly stones’. The other side of the metaphor is present in Ezek. 16:17. Israel is rebuked for having made idle idols out of the ‘jewelry of silver and of gold’ that God had given to them. Here the jewels stand for the Torah.

The elements of ‘power’ or ‘might’ are reflected in Jer. 51:20 where Babylon is metaphorically seen as ‘my battle axe, my weapon of battle (\( כֵּלֵי רֹעַ ה \)).’ Weapons and wisdom are compared in Qoh. 9:18: ‘Wisdom is better than weapons of war (\( כֵּלֵי רֹעַ \), but one sinner destroys much good’. In Hos. 13:15, the temple-treasure turned out to be a worthless means of power. The forthcoming doom for Israel is depicted in strong images, one of them being that the ‘East wind . . . shall strip his treasury of every precious thing (\( כֵּלֵי רֹעַ \)).’ In Zech. 11:15 the prophet is summoned to undertake some sort of a sign-act by taking ‘once more the implements of a worthless shepherd’. The ‘worthless shepherd’ is an image that forecasts the coming of an ideal shepherd before the ‘messianic’ age.

Once in the Hebrew Bible, \( כֵּל \) refers to an immaterial kind
of tool. Isa. 32:7 reads: "The villain, his tools are evil" (e.g. H. Wildberger, Jesaja, 3. Teilband: Jesaja 13-27 [BKAT, X/3], Neukirchen-Vluyn 1982, 1249). The parallelism with יַעַל, ‘wicked devices’, in the next colon, the antithesis with the יָרֵב, ‘noble plans’ of the nobles in vs. 8 and the גויה renditon (בָּוֶל), ‘counsel; advice’, suggest, however, an interpretation of יָרֵב as ‘his evil plans’ (DCH, vol. 5, 424).

3. Epigraphic Hebrew
Not attested.

4. Cognates
The fairly broad attestation of apparently related words in predominantly North-West Semitic languages (see below) seems to indicate that יְלִי is an old Semitic word. In some South Semitic languages it occurs in late texts only and both here and in New Egyptian (Helck, BAV, No. 254 ↔ Hoch, SWET, No. 472) it may well be a loan word from some North-West Semitic language. It is uncertain from which root it should be derived. Sometimes it is supposed that יְלִיָּה ‘kidney’ is a feminine derivative of the same root ‘small vessel’, Gesenius, TPC, 687; Furst & Ryssel, HCHAT, 596; biliteral root perhaps kul-, HSED, 326). The ostensible root יִלֵּי may have evolved from יָלִל ‘to contain’ by metathesis (cf. König, HAWAT, 179; Donner et al., HAHAT, 548; biliteral root perhaps kol- ‘gourd, calabash, jug, pot’, HSED, 321). If so, both circumstances would argue in favour of ‘vessel’ as the primary meaning of the word which by a process of metonymy – the ‘vessel’ with all its paraphernalia – acquired an ever broader semantic spectrum.

AKKADIAN: In Akkadian no evident cognate of יְלִי is attested. Nevertheless, two nouns occur that are assonant to יְלִי, but most probably not etymologically related: kallu, ‘1. bowl; 2. crown of the human skull; 3. a bronze or iron implement’ (see CAD K, 83; AHw, 426); kullatu, B. ‘potter’s clay’ (CAD K, 506; AHw, 502). The common Akkadian word for ‘pot; vessel’ is karpatu (see CAD K, 219-21; AHw, 449-50) which equals Sum. dug (see: Salonen, Hausgeräte; Sallaberger, BTG; Moorey, AMMI, 141ff.).
A karpatu could be made from clay or metal and was generally used to store liquids. The metaphorical language of shattering a pot – Jer. 22:28; 25:34; Psalm 2:9 – has an equivalent in the Mesopotamian expression karpaniš/kíma karpāt hepū, ‘to shatter like a pot’, see B. Becking, ZAW 102 (1990), 59-79.

UGARITIC: Probaly attested in Ugaritic as kl. The expression yd kl klh corresponds to qadu gabbî mimmušu ‘with all its equipment’ in the Babylonian texts of Ugarit. The reading qšt̂m [kl] mhrm in KTU 1.17:VI.39-40, translated by De Moor, ARTU, 239, as ‘the bow is a warrior’s [weapon/equipment]’, is tentative; see B. Margalith, The Ugaritic Poem of Aqhat (BZA, 182), Berlin 1989, 187, but also Del Olmo Lete, Sanmartín, DULAT, 438. kly in KTU 2.72:43 probably does not mean ‘vase’ (as supposed by A. Caquot, ACFr 1974-75, 432), but ‘to put an end to’ (H.J. Marsman, Women in Ugarit and Israel [OTS, 49], Leiden 2003, 666).

PHOENICIAN, PUNIC: CIS I 1948:1 pʾl kl, ‘constructor of vessels’, hesitantly accepted by Hoftijzer & Jongeling, DNSI, 512. Note, however, that N. Slouschz, Thesaurus of Phoenician Inscriptions edited with Commentary, Tel Aviv 1942, 315, construes pʾl kl as ‘someone who does everything’, i.e. an unskilled labourer.

MOABITE: The noun kly is not attested, but almost all scholars accept the reading wʾqh msḥn ’[t k ]ly yhwḥ ‘I took from there the vessels of YHWH’ in the Mesha Inscription KAI 181:17-18; K.P. Jackson, ‘The Language of the Mesha-Inscription’, in: A. Dearman (ed.), Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab, Atlanta 1989, 116; Hoftijzer & Jongeling, DNSI, 512. J.H. Tigay, You Shall Have No Other God (HSS, 31), Atlanta 1986, 34 + n. 67, seems to imply that this temple vessel could have had the form of a holy pomegranate such as the one published by A. Lemaire, RB 88 (1981), 236-39, the authenticity of which is now disputed.

OLD AND IMPERIAL ARAMAIC: The noun kly is attested only once in Aramaic, be it in a broken context. In an ostracon from the reign of Cambyses kln bbly [. . . ‘Babylonian vessels’, are mentioned next to mšky ’prn, ‘hides of stags’; so J.B. Segal, Aramaic Texts from North Saqqāra with some Fragments in Phoenician,
London 1983, 99:2; this interpretation is questioned by Hoftijzer & Jongeling, DNSI, 512. The Aramaic semantic counterpart of is \( m'n \) that has about the same broad spectre of meaning, see Hoftijzer & Jongeling, DNSI, 588-89:

**POSTBIBLICAL HEBREW:** The word לִּבּ occurs frequently in the Hebrew text of the Wisdom of Ben Sira and in Qumran. The attested meanings are practically identical to those found in the Hebrew Bible. See below Section 6: Judaic Sources.

**JEWISH ARAMAIC:** In a Jewish Aramaic inscription on an amulet the phrase [ט]mydh bklyn, ‘wine (?) in vessels (?)’, occurs; J. Naveh & S. Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity*, Jerusalem 1985, No. 1:14. The context, however, is too uncertain to draw any conclusion as to the character of the vessels or to their role in the alleged ritual. Generally, the Aramaic equivalent of Hebrew לִּבּ is \( m'n \), ‘utensil; instrument; garment’ (Sokolo *et al.*, DJPA, 288).

**SAMARITAN ARAMAIC:** The Samaritan Aramaic of Gen. 45:20 contains a Hebraizing translation: \( w'ynykwn l't \) lk l ykwn ‘never mind your sacks’, see Tal, DSA, 389; see also the translation of Gen. 43:11. The general rendition of לִּבּ is the Aramaic \( m'n \), ‘utensil; instrument; garment’ in this translation; Tal, DSA, 448-49.

**PALMYRENEAN:** Not attested; the reference in HALAT, 456, and ThWAT, Bd. 4, 179, to a Palm. noun klyn, is erroneous. Cf. Hoftijzer, Jongeling, DNSI, 508.

**OLD ARABIC:** kelâw, ‘jars’, but only in the dialects from Oman, see K. Vollers, ZDMG 49 (1895), 514, and Southern Arabia, see H. Grimme, OLZ 9 (1906), 261.

**ETHIOPIAC:** kalê, ‘vessel’, in Tigre (Littmann, Höfner, WTS, 389b).

5. Ancient Versions

α: In the Old Greek לִּבּ is generally rendered σκευός which has approximately the same semantic field: ‘thing; vessel; equipment’ (see LSJ, 1607; GELS-L, 428); GELS-M, 214. However, in several instances the Greek translators chose a different translation, demonstrating their awareness of the various semantic nuances of
Agricultural implements (G) In 2 Kgdm 24:22, the yoke for the oxen, יָלַע יִבְּשָׁם, is rendered τὰ σκεύη τῶν βοῶν εἰς ξύλα, ‘the wooden harnesses of the oxen’ (GELS-L, 428).

Baggage (G)

In 1 Kgdm 17:22 the Hebrew text has no counterpart in G. In Isa. 10:28 יֲלֵב is rendered τὰ σκεύη αὐτοῦ, ‘his baggage’.

Bags (G)

In Gen. 42:25 יַלְנָה is translated τὰ ἁγγεῖα χύτῶν, ‘their containers’ (LSJ, 7: ‘vessel for holding liquid or dry substance’; GELS-L, 3). In Gen 43:11 the same Greek word is used. In Lev. 11:34; 14:5; Num. 4:9 the Greek noun ἁγγεῖον is used to denote cultic vessels. In 1 Kgdm 9:7 ‘travel bag’; Lam. 4:2 ‘earthen jar’, the Greek noun has a non-cultic meaning. The ‘shepherd’s bag’ in 1 Kgdm 17:40.49 is represented with the noun χάδιον ‘bag’ (LSJ, 848; GELS-L, 218). The ‘exile’s bag’ is translated as σκεύη αἰχμαλωσίας, ‘bag for exile’ in Ezek. 12:4 (LSJ, 45; GELS-L, 13) and as σκεύη ἀποικισμοῦ, ‘bag for exile; colony’ in G Jer. 26:19 (LSJ, 200; GELS-L, 50).

Boats (G)

In Isa. 18: ς paraphrases the text as καὶ ἐπιστολάς βυζιλίνας ἐπάνω τοῦ ὕδατος, ‘and paper letters on the waters’. So it seems to reject the interpretation of יִבְּשָׁם as boats here. However, a corrupt text may be involved. See P. Walters, The Text of the Septuagint: Its Corruptions and their Emendations, Cambridge 1973, 295, 304.

Building utensils (G)

3 Kgdm 6:7 τῶν σκεύων σιδηροῦν, ‘any iron tool’.

Cargo (G)

The ‘cargo’ in Jonah 1:5 is rendered τῶν σκεύων τῶν ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ, ‘the vessels that were in the ship’.

Clothing (G)

In Lev. 13:49, 52-53, 57 the ‘leather garments’ are rendered σκεύος

**Cultic vessels** (6)

The general word for a cultic vessel is σκεῦος. This has been used quite consistently by θ to render הַכְּלָכִים in this meaning. Only in Lev. 11:34; 14:5; Num. 4:9 the Greek noun ἀγγείον, ‘container’ (*LSJ*, 7; *GELS*-L, 3) is used to refer to cultic vessels.

**Diplomatic gifts** (6)

θ uses σκεῦος to refer to a utensil as part of a diplomatic gift (for the texts involved, see above).

**Household vessels** (6)

Generally, θ also renders σκεῦος if it refers to a ‘household utensil’. In Est. 1:7 the ‘golden goblets, goblets of different kinds’ are rendered with ποτήρια χρυσά καὶ ἀργυρὰ καὶ ἀνθράκινον κυλίκιαν, ‘cups of gold, silver and carbuncle’.

**Jewelry** (6)

The Hebrew בטני הַכְּלָכִים is rendered σκεῦη ἀργυρὰ καὶ χρυσά, ‘jewelry of silver and gold’ (Gen. 24:53; Exod. 3:22; 12:35; Ezek. 16:17; see also Exod. 35:22; Num. 31:50). Χειμωνία, ‘jewels of fine gold’ (Job 28:17), is also translated σκεῦη χρυσά.

**Musical instruments** (6)

יך in the sense of ‘musical instrument’ is generally rendered with ὀργάνον (*LSJ*, 1245: ‘instrument; implement; tool’), or ὀργάνων ὁδόν, ‘instrument for singing’ (see *GELS*, 337). In 2 Kgdm (Sam) 6:14 the Hebrew יָנֵל is rendered ἐν ὀργάνοις ὑμμυσμένοις, ‘with well-tuned instruments’, which might reflect a Hebrew ‘Vorlage’ יָנֵל. The expression יָנֵל is rendered by θ as ἐν σκεῦει ψαλμοῦ, ‘with harp instruments’ (Ps. 70:22); or with ἐν ὀργάνοις νάβλακις, ‘musical instruments’ (1 Chron. 16:5; *GELS*-L, 337). The ἔνοικα ἡ Ἰδοί, ‘instruments for sacred song (lit. ‘of God’)’ in 1 Chron 16:42 are rendered τῶν ωδῶν τοῦ θεοῦ, ‘the songs of God’.

**Temple treasure** (6)

In the enumeration of items devoted to Yhwh in Josh. 6:19 (see
also 24), where only the utensils of bronze are designated as ἱλή, ὁ has smoothed out the differences: πᾶν ἀργυρίον ἢ χρυσίον ἢ χαλκός ἢ σίδηρος ἢ γιγαντίαν ἐσται, ‘and all silver and gold, bronze and iron shall be sacred’. In other instances, ὁ uses σκευός to refer to utensils that became part of the temple treasure.

Weapons (ὁ)

ὁ generally renders with σκευός. In Jer. 22:7 the translator has chosen to render τὸν πέλεκυν, ‘battle axe’ (LSJ, 1357; GELS-L, 364). The expression παρατάξεως is mostly rendered σκευῆς πολεμικά (Deut. 1:41; Judg. 18:11, etc.), but a few times σκεύη παρατάξεως (Judg. 18:11.16) or σκεύη πολεμικά (1 Sam. 8:12; 2 Sam.1:27). The idiom βραχίον ἵλη is translated σκευή πολέμου (Qoh. 9:18). ἵλη πᾶν, ‘armour-bearer’, is rendered πίρον τά σκεύη. The construct chain ἵλη πᾶν, ‘his armory’, is rendered τόν οἰκον τῶν σκευῶν (2 Kgs 20:13 || Isa. 39:2). In Isa. 13:5 ἵλη ἵλη, ‘the weapons of his wrath’, are translated οἱ ὀπλομάχοι αὐτῶν, ‘his fighters in heavy arms’ (LSJ, 1240; GELS-L, 335). In Gen. 49:5 the plural of ἵλη is apparently construed as a form of the verb πᾶν: Συμεὼν καὶ Λευι ἄδελφοι συνετέλεσαν ἄδικαν ἐξ αἱρέσεως αὐτῶν ‘Simeon and Levi, brethren, finished the injustice of their cutting off’.

Figurative use

ὁ generally renders with σκευός in imagery language. In 1 Kgdms (Sam.) 21:5 (MT 6) ἵλης ἄνδρα, ‘the bodies of the young men’, has been misread by the translator of ὁ. The Old Greek πᾶντα τὰ παυδάργα is obviously based on a text ἱλής ἄνδρα, ‘all the young men’. Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion corrected the error, all reading σκευός. In the imagery language of the New Testament σκευός can refer to the body as the vessel of the soul (2 Cor. 4:7; 1 Thess. 4:4; 1 Pet. 3:7; LSJ, 1607).

If ἵλη figuratively denotes a plan, the ὁ opts for βουλή, ‘counsel; advice’ (Isa. 32:7; LSJ, 325; GELS-L, 83).

—to: As indicated above, the common rendering of ἵλη in this Aramaic version is m’n’, with approximately the same meaning.

—τ: The normal rendering of ἵλη in the rabbinic targumim is Ἴλη,
with approximately the same meaning. A few times the Targumists chose יָלָד ‘apparel, equipment’ (Isa. 61:10), עֵשָׁב ‘weapon, equipment’ (quite a number of cases in Neofiti; a few in Onkelos; furthermore Judg. 9:54; often in Samuel; Isa. 54:17; Jer. 22:7), אֲשָׁר ‘place’ (Jer. 48:11), אֲשָׁר ‘property’ (Jer. 48:12). Targum Jonathan on Isa. 32:7 explains בֵּית in Isa. 32:7 metaphorically as wicked acts. The use of יָל in the sense of a metaphor for a person was not lost on the Targumists either. In Isa. 10:28 בֵּית would denote the commanders of the Assyrian army. In Isa. 22:24 it becomes a priest or a Levite. Once we find a verbal paraphrasis of בֵּית in Zech. 11:15 אֲשָׁר ‘Take the implements of a foolish shepherd’ becomes אֲשָׁר אַל תֹּאכֵל אַל פָּרָה מְסַפֵּר ‘Go, prophesy to the foolish administrator’. Probably Hebrew בֵּית was connected with the Aramaic verb אַל ‘to call out’ here.

טי: Usually ṭי has m’n’ for בֵּית also when it renders בֵּית where it has a metaphorical meaning. In Isa. 61:10 the word is omitted.

טי: Generally we find the Latin noun vas as the rendering of בֵּית in the Vulgate. It too often has a more specific translation.

Agricultural implements (ט)

2 Sam. 24:22 is rendered with iuga boun in usum lignorum specifying the contextual intention.

Baggage (ט)

In 1 Sam. 17:22; Isa. 10:28 the Hebrew noun is rendered vasa. The Latin vasa, generally meaning ‘vase; vessel; utensil’, can refer to baggage in a military context.

Bags (ט)

In Gen. 42:25 בֵּית is translated saccos eorum, ‘their sacks’. In Gen 43:11 the Latin word vas is used. The ‘shepherd’s bag’ in 1 Sam. 17:40.49 is represented with in peram pastorem, the noun pera meaning ‘(ruck)sack’. The ‘exile’s bag’ is translated vasa transmigrantis, ‘bag for exile’ in Ezek. 12:4; Jer. 46:19.

Boats (ט)

In Isa. 18:2 בֵּית is translated in vasis papyris, ‘in vessels of papyrus’, leaving the figurative language untouched.
Building utensils (◊)
1 Kgs 6:7 omne ferramentum, ‘any iron tool’.

Cargo (◊)
◊: vasa quae erant in navi in mare, ‘the vessels that were in the ship on the sea’.

Clothing (◊)
The Latin text of Lev. 13:47-58 has a free rendition in which no direct counterpart for ‘leather garments’ occurs. In Deut. 22:5 the noun vestis, ‘garment’ is used both for the man’s apparel and the woman’s clothing: non induetur mulier veste virili nec vir utetur veste feminea.

Cultic vessels (◊)
Generally the Latin noun vas is used if a cultic function is assumed.

Diplomatic gifts (◊)
Also in these instances ◊ renders vas.

Household vessels (◊)
As a rule ◊ has the noun vas. Gen. 31:37, however, renders with supellex, ‘chattel’. In Lev. 15:4 the noun vesel is translated away: et ubicunque sederit. This did not happen in Lev. 15:26 where vas is used.

Jewelry (◊)
The expression קָלֶל הַיָּקְנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל is translated as vasis argenteis et aureis. Similarly, קָלֶל in Job 28:17 is rendered vas aureus.

Musical instruments (◊)
רו in the sense of ‘musical instrument’ is generally rendered vas canticus, ‘instrument for singing’, or vas psalmus (Ps. 70:22). In 1 Chron. 16:5 is rendered organa psalterii, ‘musical instruments for psalmody’.

Temple treasure (◊)
In Josh. 6:19, 24 קָלֶל נִשָּׁתָה בְּשֵׂר הָאָדָם is rendered vasorum aeneorum ac ferri, ‘vessels of bronze and iron’. In the other instances where
refers to the treasure in the temple the noun *vas* is used.

**Weapons (א)**

The lemma is quite consistently translated as *arma*; the נָּצָא הָלָה is rendered *armagerus*, ‘armour-bearer’. Gen. 49:5 is paraphrased as *Simeon et Levi fratres vasa iniquitatis bellantia*, ‘Simeon and Levi, brethren, instruments of iniquity waging war’.

**Figurative use**

א generally renders *הל* in imagery language with *vas*.

א rejects the figurative use in 1 Sam. 21:6: *et fuerunt vasa pu- erorum sancta*, *vasa* being normal Latin for military equipment.

א retains the metaphor in Isa. 32:7: *fraudulentí vasa pessima sunt*, ‘the instruments of the wicked are evil’.

6. Judaic Sources

**Ben Sira**

In Sir. 12:5 the wise man is advised not ‘to give a מַחְלֶה, ‘weapon of war’, in the hand [= of the ungodly]’ since he can master you with it. The Old Greek construed מַחְלֶה as the Hebrew word for ‘bread’ and translated the saying ἐπήδισσɔν τοὺς ἁρτοὺς αὐτοῦ, ‘hold back their bread’.

In Sir. 27:5 the word ‘vessel’ has a metaphorical meaning: as a מַחְלֶה יבש, ‘a potter’s vessel’, is tested in the fire, so a man is tested by his conversation. Note that in the Hebrew MS A of Sirah this saying is placed in a different context, between Sir. 6:22 and 6:26. The Greek renders מַחְלֶה יבש as מַחְלֶה נייר: Σκηνή κεραμέως.

The reference in *DCH*, vol. 4, 420-421 to Sir. 36:10 (Segal) should be treated with great caution since Clines here refers to Segal’s retroversion of a Greek passage for which no Hebrew manuscript is yet known. מַחְלֶה הָרָע, ‘and man too is a vessel of clay’, is a not undisputed rendition of Sir. 33:10 καὶ ἐκ γῆς ἔκτίσθη Ἄδμω, ‘and humankind/Adam was created out of the dust’.

In Sir. 39:15 מַחְלֶה מִנְחַי, ‘instruments of strings’, clearly refers to musical instruments with which God had to be praised (cf. *DCH*, vol. 5, 423). א renders here with ἐν κινύρσις, ‘on lyres’,
using a Semitism in Greek based on Hebr. לָיְרָה, ‘lyre’ (see E. Tov, Bib 60 [1979], 221; GELS-L, 256).

In Sir. 43:2 the sun is seen as a כְּלִיל נָהָר, ‘a majestic device’ (in MS M; MS B reads כְּלִיל הָרָה, ‘how majestic’, apparently harmonising with 43:8) ‘made by the Most High’. In 43:8 the moon is depicted as the כְּלִיל נָהָר מְרוֹז, ‘an army signal of the jars on high’ (cf. DCH, vol. 5, 424; P.W. Skehan, The Wisdom of Ben Sira [AncB, 39], New York 1987, 489).

In Sir 50:9, the high priest Simon when leaving the ‘tent of gathering’ is, among other things, compared with כְּלִיל זָהָב [רָבָּה הָרֶשֶׁת] כְּלִיל, ‘a golden vessel according to (?) the model I perceived (?)’, which is most probably a reference to Num. 31:50 combined with a paraphrasis of 1 Chron. 28:19. The θ offers a free rendition: ὡς σκεύος χρυσίου ὀλοσφόρητον κεκοσμημένον παντὶ λίθῳ πολυτελεῖ, ‘a vessel of hammered gold studded with all kinds of precious stones’.

Wisdom of Solomon

In wisdom literature the metaphorical use ‘vessels’ known from the Hebrew Bible is taken over, for instance in the nice saying: ‘A potter kneads the soft earth and laboriously moulds each vessel for our service, fashioning out of the same clay both the vessels (σκεύη) that serve clean uses and those for contrary uses, making all alike; but which shall be the use of each of them the worker in clay decides’ (Sap.Sal. 15:7). However, since the Hebrew original is not known it is hazardous to retrovert σκεύη automatically to כְּלִיל.

Qumran

In the texts from Qumran the noun כְּלִיל occurs quite frequently. A great variety of meanings is attested.

Building utensils (ק)

In the Damascus document it is stated that ‘every utensil, nail (→ מְסָפָר) or peg (→ חַד) in the wall which is with a dead person in the house will be unclean with the same uncleanness as tools for work’ (CD 12:17-18 = 4Q266 Fr. 9:II.4-5).

Clothing (ק)
The prescription of Deut. 22:5 is taken over in a Halakhic text. 4QOrda (4Q159) Fr. 2:6-7 repeats that ‘a woman is not allowed to wear a man’s apparel’ [...] he is not to dress in a woman’s tunic’.

Cultic vessels and objects (q)

‘All the holy utensils’ are mentioned in a broken context in an apocalyptic text (4QapMes [4Q521] 8:8). Their significance in this context is unclear. In a broken context in a text reflecting daily prayers, mention is made of צל כל, ‘vessels of light; shining objects’ (4QPrQuot. [4Q503] Liii:9). It is uncertain whether lamps or celestial bodies are meant; a reading צל כם ‘the Ur[im] instrument’ may also be considered.

Naturally, the Temple Scroll (11QTemple [11Q19]) often mentions the vessels of the sanctuary (3:8, 13; 45:2; 49:8, etc.). In 4Q385a, Fr. 18:i.5 (olim 4Q385b, Fr. 16:i.5) it is re-narrated how Nabuzaradan took away צל כל חים אלהים ‘all the vessels of the house of God’.

Special attention should be paid to the still enigmatic Copper Scroll (3Q15; see most recently A. Wolters, ‘The Copper Scroll’, in: P.W. Flint, J. Vanderkam (eds.), The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years, vol. 1, Leiden 1998, 303-23). In this text – whether seen as a catalogue of hiding places for real treasures, or as a fictitious text – mention is made of a variety of utensils and vessels that can be found in various places. In the hills of Kochlit צל תפלה, ‘tithe-vessels of Yhwh’, are said to be found (3Q15 1:9). Similar remarks are made throughout the text (3Q15 2:6.8; 3:2.9; 5:6; 8:3; 11:1.4.10.14; 12:6). According to 3Q15 3:2: 12:5-6 they were made of silver and gold. J.K. Lefkovits, The Copper Scroll - 3Q15: A Reevaluation. A New Reading, Translation, and Commentary (STDJ, 25), Leiden 1999, 505-44, has convincingly argued that צל תפלה refers to ‘dedicated objects/vessels/tools’ that had been in use of the temple. 3Q15 10:11 mentions צל תפלה, ‘twenty atonement vessels’ (cf. Num. 31:50).

Household utensils (q)

In a way comparable to regulations in the Priestly code (Lev. 6:21 [ET6:28]; 15:12), the Temple Scroll states that utensils will become unclean by contact with an unclean person (11QT 49:8-9;
50:12). They must be smitten or broken (11QT 50:17-18). On the day of a burial the utensils in the house of a deceased need to be washed clean (11QT 49:14-15.19). Unclean vessels can make whoever touches them unclean too (CD 12:17). In a Halakhic purification rule it is noted that an illness such as gonorrhoea as well as the touching of a persons' semen can inflict uncleanness on vessels (4QTohA I 1:4-5; II 1:4-5). A vessel cannot be purified in water that is dirty and unclean (CD 10:12; 4QDe 10 iv:21).

According to the Damascus Document it is permitted to drink water on the Sabbath, but it is forbidden to ‘draw it in any vessel’ (CD 10:1-2). It is also forbidden to open a sealed vessel on the Sabbath (CD 11:9). In the fragmentary Serek Damascus Rule it is forbidden to take out of the tent or to carry a vessel on the Sabbath (4QSD (4Q265) Fr. 6 (olim 7) 1:4-5, 7-8).

Weapons (ק)

In the War Scroll, both the children of the light and the children of darkness possess of חלם ילק, ‘weapons of war’ (1QM 7:2; 8:8.12; 16:6; 17:1). See furthermore 1QH a X:28; XII:10; XIV:31, 34; 4Q163, Dr. 25:3. The nature of this armour is unknown. In the pesher on Habbakkuk it is said that the Kittim treated their חלם ילק, ‘weapons of war’, as objects of veneration (1QpHab 6:4). In 4Q175:25 the חלם ילק, ‘weapon of violence’ of an apocalyptic ‘man of Belial’ occur (see also 4Q379; Fr. 22:ii.11).

Figurative use (ק)

The Damascus Document (CD 6:8) quotes a line from Isa. 54:16 ‘he [= a smith] produces a tool for his labours’. Since Isa. 54 refers to an iron weapon, this text should be construed in a comparable way. The Damascus Document applies the quotation to the Teacher of Righteousness by interpreting the ‘tool/weapon’ as a means to interpret the Torah. Cf. 2 Cor. 6:7; 10:4.

D.J. Harrington, *DSS* 4 (1997), 252, has proposed to read a line in a Sapiential Work as follows: ‘Do not dishonour the חלם ילק, ‘body of your statute’ (4QInstra 2 ii:21; see also *DCH*, vol. 5, 424). The expression חלם ילק would signify ‘the body that belongs to you by law, i.e. your wife’. However, even if we maintain the reading חלם ילק, ‘the vessel of your [b]osom’, 1 Thess.
4:4 remains an interesting parallel.

Clines, *DCII*, vol.5, 424, refers to two other texts from Qumran where יְלָל would mean ‘body’. 4QMMT B:19 = 4QMMT3-7 ii:3, however, is too fragmentary to draw any conclusions as to the meaning of the noun יְלָל there. In 4QDibHama 15 (4Q504) 2:2, the word יְלָל does not occur.

The image of a broken vessel depicting the situation of deadly distress, as attested in, e.g., Ps. 31:13 (ET 31:12), has been adopted in the Hodayot: ‘all my friends . . . rank me like a broken vessel’ (1QH 12[olim 4]:9). In the Hymns the noun יְלָל referring to armour, is attested three times, possibly with a metaphorical meaning. A situation of despair is depicted with the image that the pious person is ‘surrounded by all their weapons of war (יְלָל מַלְאָךְ; 1QH 10[olim 2]:26)’. The divine hiding-place is that strongly defended that ‘no band at all with its weapons of war (יְלָל מַלְאָךְ) will enter it’ (1QH 14[olim 6]:28). The divine ‘weapons of war’ are depicted as enabling the pious to ‘rule from one end to the other’ (1QH 6:31).

In a text containing blessings it is said that Gods hand ‘will lift the fallen to make them receptacles of knowledge’ (יְלָל הרֵם; 4QBark c 4Q436 1:2). Here the vessel stands metaphorically for a human being who is to receive divine knowledge.

Rabbinic Judaism

Both the Mishnah and the Talmud contain a tractate entitled Kelim in which – elaborating the tradition present in the Hebrew Bible and the texts from Qumran – a complex system is presented regarding the cleanness or uncleanness of several utensils. In these tractates stipulations are given as regards the transfer of uncleanness through various utensils and warnings are given in order to avoid uncleanness. In Rabbinic writings a noun יְלָל is attested with a broad spectrum of meaning: ‘vessel; receptacle; bag; vessel of revelation (Tanh. Bu. 5); outfit; garment; tool; weapon’ (Jastrow, *DTT*, 641; Levy, *WTM*, Bd. 2, 334; Krauss, *TA*, Bd. 1, 74-5). Musical instruments are generally denoted as יְלָל [הֵמָּה], ‘instruments [of music and song]’, e.g., in the Mishnah: m’Arach. 2:4; mKel. 15:7-8 (J. Braun, *Music in Ancient Palestine: Archaeological, Written and Comparative Sources*, Grand Rapids 2002,
36; the expression is echoed in the noun Klezmer referring to a form of Yiddish music).

Cairo Genizah

In an apocryphal Psalm found in the Genizah of the synagogue in Cairo mention is made of a ילק ‘precious vessel’ (Academy of the Hebrew Language, Materials for the Dictionary: Series I: 200 B.C.E.-300 C.E., Jerusalem 1988, Ps. 2:28). In the seventh-eighth century CE Gnomic writing from the Cairo Genizah (ed. H.-P. Rüger, Die Weisheitsschrift aus der Kairoer Geniza [WUNT, 53] Tübingen 1991) the noun ילק is attested four times. Three times it has a meaning that comes close to ‘instrument’, but always in a metaphorical sense: ‘The ילק, instruments of a fool, are wine and drunkenness’ (V:10); ‘Wisdom ... is the ילק, instrument of justice’ (XIII:7); ‘Wrath and lust are the ילק, instruments of a fool’ (XIV:10). An interesting passage is IX:11 ילקה ילק ‘For Wisdom is the instrument of the Potter/Creator’. Rüger, Weisheitsschrift, 122, construes this line as a parallel to Prov. 8:30, a text that Rüger interprets as reflecting the co-creatorship of Wisdom. This theologoumenon is, in his view, also present in the line under discussion. However, C.L. Rogers, ZAW 109 (1997), 208-21, has shown that Prov.8:30 cannot be interpreted as reflecting the co-creatorship of Wisdom. In my view the passage from the Weisheitsschrift only states that God, when creating, used wisdom as his tool and instrument.

7. Illustrations

‘Exile’s bags’ ילקה ילק (Jer. 46:19; Ezek. 12:3.4.7) are depicted on a relief from the palace of Tiglath-Pileser III from Kalhu/Nimrud displaying the conquest of the city of Astartu (R.D. Barnett & M. Falkner, The Sculptures of Aššur-Naṣir-Apli II (883-859 B.C.), Taglath-Pileser III (645-727 B.C.), Esarhaddon (681-669 B.C.) from the Central and South-West Palaces at Nimrud, London 1962, Pl. 68-70). Four men driven by an Assyrian soldier are carrying bags over their shoulders. According to M. Wäfler, Nicht-Assyrer neuassyrischer Darstellungen (AOAT, 26), Keverlaer-Neukirchen 1975, 118-121, Aramaic deportees are depicted. C. Uehlinger, ‘Bildquellen und ‘Geschichte Israels’: Grundsätz-

8. Archaeological Remarks
[Will be added later on.]

9. Conclusion Even though the primary meaning of North-West Semitic *kly* may have been ‘vessel’, the Hebrew noun יַלְיָה developed a much broader semantic spectrum. In the majority of its attestations in the Hebrew Bible this semantic potential slumbers. But in various instances the context evoked a variety of meanings, that at times can be very specific, as has been outlined above. Both the cognates and the versiones antiquae underscore this pattern. As a result, modern non-committal renditions might be English ‘thing’, German ‘Zeug’ or colloquial French ‘truc’.

10. Bibliography

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