רֹאֶה

Introduction

Grammatical Type: n. m.

Occurrences: (Total: 13)
Hebrew Bible – 11 occurrences: *1 Sam* 9:9 (2x), 9:11, 9:18, 9:19, *Isa* 30:10, *1 Chr* 9:22, 26:28, 29:29, *2 Chr* 16:7, 16:10.[1]
Epigraphy – none.
Qumran – 2 occurrences 1QSb 5:4; 4Q446 f2:3.
Ben Sira – none.

Text doubtful

A.1 NONE

B.1 Traditionally, הָרֹאֶה in *1 Chr* 2:52 has been interpreted as a name, but it could be the professional title 'seer'. If the tradition underlying the Masoretic accents is not followed, there is no reason why רֹאֶה should not be interpreted as the title רֹאֶה, either attributed to Kiriath-jearim ('Kiriath-jearim, the seer') or, less unlikely, why it should not be interpreted as a verbal participle ('Kiriath-jearim who saw half of Menuhoth').
B.2 The active qal participle of רָאָה is employed 18x in Qumran in its verbal sense rather as the technical term 'seer'.[2]
B.3 In *2 Chr* 16:12 Jastrow suggests emending בָּרֹפְאָם to בָּרֹאִים.[3] This emendation has not caught on.
B.4 According Jeffers *2 Sam* 15:27 attributes the title רֹאֶה to Zadok the priest.[4] However, according to MT the text is vocalised as an interrogative ה. Most of the versions follow MT with the exception of the Peshiṭta which translates *ḥazōyāʾ* ('seer'). If the emendation were to be accepted the resulting Hebrew syntax would be somewhat unusual, if still possible.

Qere/Ketiv: NONE.

1. Root and Comparative Material

See the verb רָאָה (in preparation).

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[1] JEFFERS (1996:99) counts only nine times because she disregards *Isa* 30:10 and *2 Chr* 16:10.
[2] The term is used as a participle in *CD* 5:7, *1QM* 10:10, *4QPešIsaᶜ* (163) f17:1, *4QPešIsaᶜ* (163) f23ii:17, *4QPešNah* (169) f3-4iii:2, *4QpapJubʰ* (223-224) f2ii:3, *4QpapJubʰ* (223-224) f2v:9, *4QDamᵃ* (266) f13:3, *4QDamᵉ* (270) f4:2, *4QRewPentᵇ* (364) f25a-c:7, *4QRewPentᵇ* (364) f30:3, *4QPsaJoshᵇ* (379) f4:2, *4QLetHalᵃ* (394) f8iii:20, *4QLetHalᵃ* (394) f8iv:1, *4QLetHalᶜ* (396) f1-2ii:2, *4QLetHalᶜ* (396) f1-2ii:3.
[3] JASTROW (1909:49 nt.23).
[4] JEFFERS (1996:99 nt.339).

A.1 רָאָה is the common Hebrew root for 'to see'. In other Semitic languages, the root appears most commonly in Old South Arabic as *r'j*, Ethiopic *rĕ'ĕja*, and Arabic *ra'ā* with the same meaning.[5]

A.2 The attestation of the verb in the Meša-stele in lines four (H-Stem) and seven (G-stem) indicates that Moabite shared the root with Hebrew.[6]

A.3 Ugaritic and Akkadian use the root *'mr* for the verb 'to see'.

2. Formal Characteristics

A.1 *qōtel* of a ל"ה, nominalised qal masculine active participle.

3. Syntagmatics

A.1 רֹאֶה is the subject of רָאָה (*Isa* 30:10).

A.2 Additionally, the following verbs are used for individuals who are identified as a רֹאֶה in the same pericope: אמר ('say') in *1 Sam* 9:23.24 and *2 Chr* 16:7, בוא ('come') in *2 Chr* 16:7, ברך *pi.* ('bless') in *1 Sam* 9:13, דבר *pi.* ('speak') in *1 Sam* 9:25, לקח ('take') in *1 Sam* 9:22, משׁח *pi.* ('anoint') in *1 Sam* 9:16, עלה ('go up') in *1 Sam* 9:14, ענה *qal* ('answer') in *1 Sam* 9:19, יצא ('go out') in *1 Sam* 9:14, קדשׁ *hif.* ('dedicate') in *2 Chr* 26:28, ראה ('to see') in *1 Sam* 9:17, שׁלך *pi.* ('to send') in *1 Sam* 9:19.

A.3 רֹאֶה is the object of כעס (*2 Chr* 16:10).

A.4 רֹאֶה occurs as the subject for the predicate יֵשׁ (*1 Sam* 9:11) and אָנֹכִי (*1 Sam* 9:19).

A.5 רֹאֶה is the *nomen rectum* for בַּיִת (*1 Sam* 9:18).

A.6 Samuel (*1 Chr* 9:22, 26:28, 29:29) and Hanani (*2 Chr* 16:7) are given the title רֹאֶה.

A.7 The following prepositions are used with רֹאֶה: עַד (*1 Sam* 9:9), לְ (*Isa* 30:10).

4. Versions

a. LXX:
βλέπων	*1 Chr* 9:22, 29:29, *1 Sam* 9:9 (2x), 9:11, 9:18.
προφήτης:	*1 Chr* 26:28, *2 Chr* 16:7, 16:10, *Isa* 30:10.
'αὐτός'	*1 Sam* 9:19.

b. Pesh:
nby	*1 Chr* 9:22, 29:29, *2 Chr* 16:7.
ḥzwy	*1 Chr* 26:28, *Isa* 30:10, *1 Sam* 9:9 (2x), 9:11, 9:18, 9:19.
dwq	*2 Chr* 16:10.

c. Targum:
נבי	*1 Chr* 9:22, *2 Chr* 16:7, 16:10, *Isa* 30:10.
חזוון	*1 Chr* 29:29.
חזוי	*1 Sam* 9:9 (2x), 9:11, 9:18, 9:19.

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[5] BEESTON, et al. (1982:112-113) and BIELLA (1982:473-474).

[6] In line twelve the hapax legomenon *ryt* used to be the accepted reading, based on CLERMONT-GANNEAU (1887). LEMAIRE (1987) suggested a reading *hyt*, which has been generally accepted. SCHADE (2007) recently challenged this reading arguing that the old reading (*ryt*) is correct but LEMAIRE (2007) has defended his new reading.

סכוי   *1 Chr* 26:28.

d. Vulgate:
videns   *1 Chr* 9:22, 26:28, 29:29, *2 Chr* 16:10, *Isa* 30:10, *1 Sam* 9:9, 9:11, 9:18, 9:19.
videre   *1 Chr* 2:52 (name in MT).
propheta   *2 Chr* 16:7.

A.1 The versions regularly translated רֹאֶה with a participle from a verb 'to see'.
A.2 Alternatively, they use a word with the meaning 'prophet'.

5. Lexical/Semantic Field(s)

A.1 רֹאֶה is explained as the obsolete term for נָבִיא (*1 Sam* 9:9).
A.2 רֹאֶה is used in parallel with חֹזֶה (*Isa* 30:10).
A.3 The primary connection of רֹאֶה is to Samuel in his function as diviner (*1 Sam* 9, *1 Chr* 9:22, 26:28, 29:29).

6. Exegesis
A.1 Zorell translates *videns*. KBL[3] and GES[18] translate 'Seher'. BDB and DCH have 'seer'.
A.2 It is common, as the dictionaries do, to regard רֹאֶה and חֹזֶה as synonymous, with רֹאֶה as the older and חֹזֶה as the younger term.[7] The possibility that both are synonymous with the נָבִיא is usually denied but the dictionaries point to *1 Sam* 9:9 where רֹאֶה is explained as the older term for נָבִיא.[8]
A.3 The attestations of רֹאֶה are clustered in *1 Sam* 9 and *1-2 Chronicles* (5x each). This indicates that temporal distinction does not explain any possible difference between חֹזֶה and רֹאֶה.
A.4 As morphologically רֹאֶה is the *qal* active participle of the verb רָאָה ('to see') the standard translation to be found in the dictionaries ('seer') seems justified.
A.5 As a direct title רֹאֶה is attributed to Samuel three times and once to Hanani in *1-2 Chronicles*. In addition, the five attestations in *1 Samuel* 9 all refer to Samuel as well, which means that eight out of thirteen attestations of the term refer to Samuel.[9]
A.6 Jastrow links the רֹאֶה with the Babylonian *bārû* as a priestly seer, similar to the חֹזֶה, but – in contrast to the חֹזֶה – access to whom is open to the wider public and not restricted to the royal court.[10] He bases this on the observation that Samuel is approached by common people while Gad – the חֹזֶה *par excellence* – is closely linked to the court.
A.7 *1 Samuel* 9 has long been recognised as a composite text with verse 9 as the centre-piece around which the narrative evolves. According to Petersen it is unclear why 'the original rō'eh was supplanted by 'iš (hā)'ĕlōhîm in the initial part of the folk tale is unclear.'[11] His solution that the author may have chosen a title with 'wider currency' than the 'archaic rō'eh' does not convince, since the antiquity of the title רֹאֶה rests on *1 Samuel* 9 itself.

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[7] See e.g. VETTER (1976:699).
[8] In addition to the dictionaries see e.g. HENTSCHKE (1957:150), RENDTORFF (1968:809-810), VETTER (1976:699).
[9] BLENKINSOPP (1995:124-125) focuses on *1 Sam* 9 and the parallel use of נביא and חֹזֶה there.
[10] JASTROW (1909:46-49).
[11] PETERSEN (1981:38-40).

A.8 As Petersen points out, the רֹאֶה is active in an urban setting and that he is not itinerant.

A.9 According to Petersen, the רֹאֶה was 'held in honor (1 Samuel 9:6)', based on the accuracy of their prediction. While it is likely that a successful diviner would be well respected, the text in question refers to the 'man of god' rather than the רֹאֶה. The same is true for the question of payment in the folk-etymology of נביא in vss 7-8.

7. Conclusions

The semantics of the verb רָאָה suggest that רֹאֶה, the qal participle of the verb, means 'seer' and the dictionaries translate it accordingly. The only person referred to as a רֹאֶה more than once is Samuel in *1 Samuel* 9 and in *1 Chronicles* (eight of thirteen attestations) and it is possible that the title is specifically attributed to him. In the basic meaning 'seer' there does not appear to be any difference to the חֹזֶה, and both titles are mainly used in late texts. The traditional distinction with רֹאֶה as the older title and חֹזֶה as the newer one therefore appears difficult uphold. The main distinction between them appears to lie in the focus of the רֹאֶה on Samuel, and that of חֹזֶה on figures who are situated at David's court; it is possible to interpret the חֹזֶה as a court diviner and the רֹאֶה as a diviner available to the wider public.

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