

## 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 מְבַעֵרָה.

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 לְפָנָיו which had been kindled (מְבַעֵרָה, v. 22).

Thus *GKC* §117l (read Jer 36<sup>22</sup> instead of Jer 36<sup>33</sup> *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 אָ ‘and the fire’ for אָ (e.g. *HALAT*, 97b; *BHS ad loc*; the remark ‘cf 𐤀𐤌𐤃’ is misleading): ‘the fire in the brazier before him had been kindled’; or, with 𐤀 (αλ εἰς ἄρχα πυρός), אָ אָ for אָ: ‘während die geheizte Kohlenpfanne vor ihm brannte’ (Giesebrecht 1907, 200, who disposes of the reading אָ of 𐤀 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 (→ דִּלְתָּ) that had been read by Jehudi, were cut off by him with a penknife (→ דָּעַר) and thrown (וְהִשְׁלָךְ, inf. abs. as the continuation of a preceding finite verb, cf. *GKC* §113z) into the fire that was in the אָ (אֵשׁ אֲלֵהָ), until the entire scroll was consumed (עָרְתָם כָּל־הַמְּגִלָּה) in the fire that was in the אָ (אֵשׁ אֲלֵהָ, v. 23 [bis]).

There may have occurred some interchange of כֶּזַח and עַל in v. 23 by assimilation: probably (the first) כֶּזַח לֵכֶז should be read as עַל הַכֶּזַח, like (the second) עַל הַכֶּזַח, cf. 𐤄 𐤅𐤍 (bis), 𐤅 *super arulam* (for כֶּזַח לֵכֶז; the second time *in arula*, for עַל הַכֶּזַח!). 𐤄 and 𐤅, however, only have *d*<sup>l</sup> for עַל (see ad 5. for their rendering of לֵכֶז). For כֶּזַח followed by עַל, cf. Lev. 1:7 and 6:5f. [12f.] (כֶּזַח עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ), Jer. 11:16 (set [כֶּזַח Hiph.] fire to the tree [עַל-הָיָה]), and Ezek. 21:36 [31] and 22:20 (with נִפַח ‘blow’). More often כֶּזַח is followed by בְּ, with כֶּזַח Hiph. (Jer. 17:27, 21:14 etc.), נָתַן (Ezek. 30:8, 14, 16, etc.) or שָׁלַח Piel (Amos 1:4, 7, 10, etc.), or by בִּן, 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 𐤅 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 (יָשָׁב, 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 (→ מִגִּלָּה). 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.: הֶזַח in Isa. 44:16 הֶזַח חֲמוֹתָי has been interpreted, already from 𐤄 onwards, as an interjection: ‘aha!’ (cf. Ezek. 25:3, 26:2, etc.), probably correctly so.

## 2b. Figurative Use

Not attested.

## 3. Epigraphic Hebrew

Not attested..

## 4. Cognates

SEMITIC: Perhaps Hamito-Semitic \*<sup>ʾ</sup>*ah* ‘fire’ (Egyptian *ḥt*; cf. Orel & Stolbova, *HSED*, 7).

EGYPTIAN: A loan from Egyptian ‘*ḥ* ‘brazier, firepan’ (Erman & Grapow, *WÄS*, vol. 1, 223) seems likely (Müller 1900, followed by e.g. Kelso, *CVOT*, 16, No. 34; Lambdin 1953, 146; Ellenbogen, *FWOT*, 21; *HALAT*, 28; *HAHAT*, 32; *CEDHL*, 16; *NIDOT*, vol. 1, 349), even though normally Egyptian ‘ does not correspond to Hebrew 𐤁. However, the latter argument is not conclusive because in this case two different laryngals in one short word were involved. The Egyptian ‘*ḥ* was used for grilling (sacrificial) meat, burning incense and warming rooms. Especially the latter circumstance suggests that it was a fairly large brazier. The circumstance that it was also used to bake the typical flat bread of the Near East (in Egyptian: *t-ḥ* ‘brazier bread’) ties in with the translation of 𐤀, see below section 5.

PHOENICIAN, PUNIC: Some authors refer to Punic <sup>ʾ</sup>*ht šmm* (*KAI* No. 145:4) but the meaning of this is hardly ‘the braziers of heaven’ and a connection with Hebrew 𐤀𐤁 is highly uncertain (*KAI*, Bd. 2, 142; *DISO*, 9).

## 5. Ancient Versions

𐤀 and other Greek versions: 𐤀 Jer. 36:22.23 [bis] ἐσχάρα (cf. → 𐤀𐤁𐤁, 5.) - *LSJ*, 699a: 1. ‘hearth, fire-place’; 2. ‘pan of coals, brazier’; etc.; *GELS-L*, 182b: ‘grate, grating’ (Ex. 27:4 etc.) and ‘hearth, fire-place’ (Prov. 26:21 ἐσχάρα ἀνθραξιν καὶ ξύλα πυρί for מִשְׁאֵי הַחַיִּים וְעֵצִים לְחַיֵּי הַחַיִּים ‘<as> charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire’). Cf. Curtis, *AFT*, 290: ‘... unleavened, or flat, breads (ἄρτος ἄζυμος) were baked on a brazier in ashes (ἐγκρυφίας and σποδίτης) or charcoal (ἀπανθρακίς) – sometimes called simply “brazier-bread” (ἐσχαρίτης)’. *GELS-M*, 294: ‘1. hearth ...; 2. grid or lattice-work forming the base of various structures’.



## 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 (⌒⌒) 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’, → ⌒⌒, 8.

## 9. Conclusion

Many mysteries still remain around ⌒ 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 ⌒ and/or ⌒ could have taken place in the textual tradition, see Section 5 on the ancient versions.

Analysis of the context learns that the ⌒ 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 ⌒’ but that somehow the ⌒ ‘was positioned before the king (⌒⌒)’, 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. *wnwr* '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 𐤄, 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 <sup>2</sup>1907, 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 מִיִּשְׁרָאֵל – 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: 'AH, 'ASÛK', *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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