

glowing fire

יְקוּדִי

1. Statistics

Torah: 0. Nebiim: 1. Ketubim: 0. Total: 1.

Only attested in Isa. 30:14.

2a. Literal Use

Not attested.

2b. Figurative Use

This *hapax legomenon* is discussed here because several scholars have suggested that it is a household utensil like a ‘brazier’, ‘hearth’ or even ‘oven’ in Isa. 30:14. יְקוּדִי is a *qātūl*-form (*GKC*, § 84^am; Joüon, § 88c) from the verb יָקַד Qal ‘to be kindled, burn’. This verb is rare in biblical Hebrew, but common in other Semitic languages (see below). Normally the *qātūl*-form serves as passive participle of the Qal (cf. the adjectival use of the active participle in Isa. 65:5 אֵשׁ יִקְדֶּה כָּל־הַיּוֹם ‘a fire burning all day’). Here it seems to have developed into a verbal noun, cf. *BL*, § 61x^a. Although the word might denote the low-lying hearth of Palestinian houses by metonymy, the existence of a noun *מוֹקֵדִי which according to many scholars denotes a ‘hearth’ (e.g. Dalman, *AuS*, Bd. 7, 196ff.: ‘Der in Palästina häufige Kochherd’), i.e. the place where a fire is burning continuously, argues in favour of ‘glowing fire’ for יְקוּדִי (the present writer suggests that also *מוֹקֵדִי could mean ‘glow[ing fire]’ in Isa. 33:14 and Ps. 102:4). With regard to the feminine מוֹקֵדָה in Lev. 6:2 it should be observed that on a big altar only part of the surface was reserved for the fire (or *lege* sg sf. מוֹקֵדָה, *KBL*, 505^b, cf. *HALAT*, 530^b).

In Isa. 30:13-14 ‘this iniquity’ (הַעֲוִן הַזֶּה) of the people – they reject all true vision and prophecy (vv. 9-11) – is compared with a breach (פְּרִץ) which causes a high wall to fall down, so that its collapse comes all of a sudden; and again this collapse is compared with the smashing/crushing of a potter’s vessel (כִּשְׁבֵּר נִבֵּל יוֹצְרִים), v. 14), which is smashed so ruthlessly (כְּתוּת לֹא יִחַמַּל) that among its fragments (מִכְתָּוֹתָיו) not a sherd (חֶרֶשׁ) is found which is big enough to snatch some burning coals (לְחַתוֹת אֵשׁ) from a יְקוּדִי without burning the hand (cf. Levy, *WTM*, Bd. 2, 260), or to scoop water

from a puddle (לְחֹשֶׁף מַיִם מְנוֹבָא).

It is also possible (reading פְּחוֹמָה for פְּחוֹמָה in v. 13, and leaving out וְשִׁבְרָה in v. 14 [ditt.]) to take vv. 13-14 as three independent metaphors (פְּרִיז, חוֹמָה, שְׂבָר) instead of one long simile (Wildberger 1978, 1174-5, 1178), but this does not affect the interpretation of יְקוֹדִי.

There is no indication of the size, the kind of material or the kind of fuel for the fire, but the parallel with scooping water from a puddle might suggest that the יְקוֹדִי is low-lying too. According to several scholars Isa. 30:14 alludes to the custom of using a fairly big potsherd to take a few coals from a charcoal fire to a neighbour. According to Dalman it served ‘doch wohl um für das Kochen oder Backen anderes Feuer im Gang zu bringen’ (*AuS*, Bd. 7, 207). Elsewhere he quotes the Arabic proverb ‘He who comes without a sherd, goes without fire’ and refers to Abraham, who took fire with him for Isaac’s offering (Gen. 22:6f.; *AuS*, Bd. 4, 24-5.). Since in Isa. 30:1-5 and 6-7 the iniquity of the people concerns its policy of looking for help to Egypt, this could also be the case in vv. 8-17, though there is no mention of Egypt in these verses.

The word יְקָדִי or יְקוֹדִי in Isa. 10:16 is probably the same word with a slightly different vocalisation. The phrase וְתַחַת כְּבֹדוֹ יִקְדֵּי ‘and under his pomp a glowing fire will burn, like the glow of a fire’ evokes the image of a pot being heated on or over the hearth.

3. Epigraphic Hebrew

Not attested.

4. Cognates

AKKADIAN: *qādu*, originally *qiādu* (metathesis of $\sqrt{w/yqd}$), ‘to set afire, kindle, burn’ (*CAD* (Q), 52). The plural noun *qidātu* designates ‘lit fires’ or the ‘lighting’ of brush piles (*CAD* (Q), 249-50).

UGARITIC: *mqd* ‘scorched, singed’ according to Del Olmo Lete & Sanmartín, *DLU*, 567, but very uncertain.

OLD AND IMPERIAL ARAMAIC: *yqd* ‘to burn’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling, *DNSI*, 466; Porten & Lund, *ADE*, 151). The root occurs

twice in the Aramaic Targum of Job from Qumran: 11Q10 XVI.7 יָקִידוֹן גִּרְמִי 'my bones are on fire'; XXXVI.6 לְכוֹשׁ יָקִיד וּמְגִמֵּר 'a kettle on the fire and glowing coals' (among other words describing fiery phenomena).

POSTBIBLICAL HEBREW: In Qumran the verb יָקִיד occurs describing the fire of hell (1QM XIV.18; 4Q491, fr. 10, II.17) and the heat of God's anger (4Q434, fr. 1, 5).

JEWISH ARAMAIC: Several derivations of \sqrt{yqd} occur in rabbinic sources (Levy, *WTM*, Bd. 2, 260; Sokoloff, *DJBA*, 540; Sokoloff, *DJPA*, 243-4).

SAMARITAN ARAMAIC: Several derivations of \sqrt{yqd} occur in Samaritan, among them $\text{'}wqdh$, 'wqydh , $yqdh$, $yqydh$, $mwqdh$, all meaning 'fire' (Tal, *DSA*, 356, 457).

SYRIAC: *yqd* Pe. 'to burn, be burned, be enflamed'; *yaqdā* '1. fire conflagration 2. burnt offering'; *yaqdānā* 'conflagration, heat' (Sokoloff, *SLB*, 580-1).

CLASSICAL ARABIC: *waqada* 'to burn' and 'to ignite'; *waqd* fire'; *waqūd* 'holocaust, burnt offering'; *mawqid* 'hearth, place where people kindle a fire' (Kazimirski, *DAF*, 1581-2).

MODERN SOUTH ARABIC: Mehri *awōq^ed* 'to build up a fire' (Johnstone, *ML*, 427); Jibbāli *ōqud* 'to build up a fire' (Johnstone, *JL*, 290).

MODERN PALESTINIAN ARABIC: *waqd* 'to kindle a fire' and 'to burn'; *uqīd* 'combustible, fire'; *mawqed*, *moqed* 'hearth' (Barthélemy, *DFA*, 903); *waqūd* 'holocaust, burnt offering' (Denizeau, *DPASyr*, 556).

ETHIOPIC: Geez *moghada* 'ignite, kindle', possibly a denominative from a supposed noun **mgd* 'firewood' (Leslau, *CDG*, 332).

5. Ancient Versions

Ⲅ and other Greek versions: Isa. 30:14 Ⲅ leaves מִיָּקִיד and מִיָּבֵא untranslated. However, the Lucianic recension adds ἀπὸ καύστραζ 'from the burning-place', cf. *LSJ*, 932b: καύστρα, 'place where corpses were burnt'.

Ⲫ: Isa. 30:14 מִמְּבֵעֵר 'from the fireplace, hearth' (Lewy, *CWT*, Bd. 2, 5).

ס: *yaqdānā* ‘conflagration, heat’ (not ‘hearth or ‘brazier’!). Brockelmann, *LS*, 306b ‘incendium’; Payne Smith, *TS*, 1621/22: ‘1. incendium, conflagratio, exustio; 2. fomes; 3. calor’; Payne Smith (Margoliouth), *CSD*, 196a: ‘burning, fire; firing, fuel; heat’ (not: ‘hearth’!).

ו: *de incendio* ‘from the fire’. For *incendium* Lewis & Short, *LD*, 918, give the meanings ‘burning, fire, conflagration’, but neither ‘hearth’, nor ‘brazier’.

6. Judaic Sources

See the attestations quoted above under section 4.

7. Illustrations

No suggestions, because the word does not refer to a utensil, see Section 9 below.

8. Archaeological Remarks

Many remains of flat hearths in the middle or in a corner of a room have been found, cf. *BRL*², 146-147.

9. Conclusion

The Lucianic recension of ט and ט^J understand קִינִי as the place where fire is burning, so it might be a hearth or a brazier then. The majority of modern translations and commentaries and some of the modern dictionaries of Biblical Hebrew also point in that direction (see below). Probably the rendering ‘hearth’ arose as a solution for the enigmatic ‘to take fire from the fire’. Isaiah could circumvent this difficulty by using, in continuation of שֶׁן, the rather uncommon קִינִי (cf. ס *nwr*’, followed by *yqdn*’).

However, ס, ו and the cognates argue in favour of the fire itself. This also fits the context of Isa. 30:14 – and that of the similar noun in Isa. 10:16 – even better. Therefore I think that the proper meaning of קִינִי lies more in the direction of ‘glowing fire’ than of ‘hearth’, ‘brazier’ or ‘oven’. For the place where it is burning *בְּקִינִי seems a more likely candidate, although in my opinion this too could designate ‘glow(ing fire)’.

10. Bibliography

See in addition to the literature cited above: Dalman, *AuS*, Bd. 4, 28: ‘das angezündete Feuer’, but in Bd. 4, 25; Bd. 7, 207 Jes. 30:14 is quoted as: ‘Feuer vom (brennenden) Herd(e) zu nehmen’ – *BDB*, 428b (s.v. יָקַד ‘be kindled, burn’): ‘pt. יָקוּד, *kindled*, as subst. ... <Is> 30¹⁴ *to take fire from that which is kindled*, i.e. from the hearth’ – *BRL*², 146: ‘Feuerstelle’ (serving as a hearth, Isa. 30:14); *BRL*¹, 280, quotes מְדוּרָה ‘das Herd-Loch’, Isa. 30:33; Ezek. 24:9 – Klein, *CEDHL*, 263; ‘hearth’ – Alonso Schökel, *DBHE*, 305: ‘rescoldo, i. brasero?’ (embers, brazier?) – *DCH*, vol. 4, 273a: ‘hearth’ – *GB*, 314a: ‘das auf d. Herde brennende Feuer’ – *HAHAT*, 487: ‘Feuerstelle, Herd od. Glut’ – *HALAT*, 411a: ‘Feuerstelle’ – *HAWAT*, 158b: ‘was in Brand gesetzt ist (ar. *waqîdun*, ardor ignis)’ – *HCHAT*, Bd. 1, 538: ‘Brandscheit’ – *ISBE*, vol. 2, 653: ‘bed of live coals’ – *KBL*, 397b: ‘Feuerstelle *fire-place (hearth)*’ – *LHA*, 325a: ‘*materia ardens, focus accensus* <burning matter, a kindled hearth> [ar. *waqûd* id., Lane 2959a]’ – *MHH*, 455: מוֹקֵד – *NIDB*, vol. 2, 766: ‘The term **yaqudh** [Isa 30:14] probably refers to a domestic hearth, either a hole in the ground or an aboveground oven where a fire was kindled for cooking or warmth.’ – Procksch 1930: O. Procksch, *Jesaja I* (KAT, 9/1), Leipzig 1930, 392: ‘um aus einem Brande (*miyyaqud*) etwas Feuer zu holen’ – Gesenius & Roediger, *TPC*, t. 3 (additamenta), 93a: ‘*incensum*, i.e. foci materia ardens’ <the burning material of a hearth> – Wildberger 1978: H. Wildberger, *Jesaja* (BK, Bd. 10/13-15), Neukirchen 1978.

Last update: 20-06-2014

M.D. KOSTER