



Inscribed Pots and Zechariah XIV 20-1

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Source: *Vetus Testamentum*, Vol. 42, Fasc. 1, (Jan., 1992), pp. 120-123

Published by: BRILL

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1519128>

Accessed: 18/06/2008 14:38

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translation provides “a complete sequence of mythological imagery”, whereas what he has actually done is to demythologize the text. The literal translation provides a perfect sequence of mythological imagery connected with the Descent to Sheol namely: womb, maggot, tree.

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J.B. Geyer

INSCRIBED POTS AND ZECHARIAH XIV 20-1

In a recent article (“A Bowl with the Hebrew Inscription *qđš*”, *IEJ* 40 [1990], pp. 124-9) G. Barkay has published details of a bowl, probably made in Judah in the late 8th century B.C., which was purchased in Jerusalem in 1984 and is now in a private collection. The bowl may have come to light in the course of illicit excavations at Tell Beit Mirsim, but this is not certain. Its most noteworthy feature, and the one which is most helpful as regards date and provenance, is the occurrence, near the edge of the inner surface, of the word *qđš*, which was chiselled into the burnished surface after firing.¹

Barkay goes on to list several similarly inscribed vessels from Iron Age II sites in Israel. These include an 8th-century bowl from Stratum Va at Hazor (with *qđš* as the second word of an inscription on the outer face and the letters *qđš*, with large spaces between them, near the rim),² a krater from Stratum II at Beersheba with *qđš* inscribed on its shoulder,³ two small flat dishes from Stratum X at Arad inscribed with the abbreviation *qš* (or *qk*),⁴ and, also at Arad, an unstratified potsherd bearing the word *qđš*, which evidently had been incised on the original vessel after firing, as in the other examples already noted.⁵ Of other comparable finds from the same period we may mention an ivory pomegranate (late 8th century) inscribed on its grenade with the legend *lbš[ʿt yhw]h qđš khnm* (“Belonging to the hou[se of YHW]H; holy to the priests”),⁶ and a storage jar from Tel-Miqne-Ekron bearing the words *qđš* and *lʿšrt*.⁷ Representing the Second Temple period is a jar from Masada upon which the form *lqwđš*⁸ has been inked (the *lamedh* and *ʿaleph* apparently added by a later hand).⁸ Barkay makes appropriate reference to such Old Testament texts as Num. vi 20 and Zech. xiv 21, deducing that items inscribed in this way were used to hold

offerings given to the priesthood (cf. Lev. ii 10, vii 6, xxii 2-16; Num. vi 20). In contrast with the "most holy things" (cf. Lev. vi 19, vii 6), offerings described merely as *qđš* ("holy") could be taken away from the temple by the priests who received them as perquisites (cf. Num. xviii 11, 13), which may explain why most of the vessels under discussion were located away from temple precincts (Barkay, p. 128).

The present writer had also collected information several years ago, on the finds at Hazor, Beersheba and Arad mentioned above, mainly for the light that they possibly shed upon Zech. xiv 20-1. Since Barkay has performed the descriptive task satisfactorily and has referred to Zech. xiv 21 in illustration of the idea of "holy pots", it remains simply to make the further point that, if the preceding verse is taken into account, there may be not only a reference to holy pots but perhaps also an allusion to the practice of inscribing pots, in certain circumstances, with the word *qđš*.

On that day "Holy to the LORD" will
be upon the bells of the horse(s), and
the pots in the LORD's house will be like
the bowls in front of the altar.
Every pot in Jerusalem and Judah
will be holy to the LORD of hosts...(vv. 20-1).

First, we should note that there is not much to be said for the reading *kl* ("all") ("all the bells of the horses will be holy") which replaces the MT ^l ("upon") in a few Hebrew manuscripts, despite the view of some earlier critics (cf. H. G. Mitchell,⁹ *BH³*).¹⁰ The words "holy to the LORD", occurring elsewhere as the legend on the plate attached to the turban of the Israelite high priest (Exod. xxviii 36), are usually and with justification envisaged as actually inscribed upon the bells of the horses. The question whether the idea of inscribed legend extends to the second member of the unusual pairing of equestrian adornments and temple vessels also involves verse 21 where it might be argued that "Holy to the LORD of hosts" partly reflects the legend form and the writer's acquaintance with inscribed sacred bowls.

In his commentary on Zechariah, W. E. Barnes sought to illuminate ch. xiv 20-1 from jar handles which had been found to the east of Jerusalem and which had a short form of the tetragrammaton (Yah/Yahu) stamped on them.¹¹ About the same time H. G.

May, in discussing a sherd discovered at Megiddo and inscribed with the form *lyw* (“Belonging to Yō”[?]), noted similar finds elsewhere and suggested a possible (“obscure”) link with Zech. xiv 20.¹² It is thus interesting to find these two scholars voicing an expectation that the practice of inscribing bowls underlies the biblical reference. Now that inscriptions of the *qdš* type have come to light this possibility deserves to be taken with greater seriousness.¹³

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¹ Cf. also the list published by Y. Nadelman, “‘Chiselled’ Inscriptions and Markings on Pottery Vessels from the Iron Age II (Discussion and Catalogue)”, *IEJ* 40 (1990), pp. 31-41.

² See Y. Yadin, *Hazor* (London, 1972), plate XXXVc, and cf. A. Lemaire, “A Note on Inscription XXX from Lachish”, *Tel Aviv* 7 (1980), p. 92.

³ See Y. Aharoni (ed.), *Beer-Sheba I, Excavations at Tel Beer-Sheba, 1969-1971 Seasons* (Tel Aviv, 1973), p. 73.

⁴ See Y. Aharoni (ed.), *Arad Inscriptions* (2nd [E. tr.] edn, Jerusalem, 1981), pp. 116-17. For references to other discussions of the possible significance of the abbreviation (still possibly involving *qdš*) see Barkay, p. 126, n. 11. As is well-known, the expression “holy cup” (*ks qdš*) occurs in the Ugaritic text *Palace of Baal*, CTA 3.I.13 (“a holy cup/which no woman could regard”) (see J. C. L. Gibson, *Canaanite Myths and Legends* [Edinburgh, 1977], p. 46).

⁵ Aharoni, p. 118.

⁶ Cf. A. Lemaire, “Une inscription paléo-hébraïque sur grenade en ivoire”, *RB* 88 (1981), pp. 236-9; idem, “Probable Head of Priestly Scepter from Solomon’s Temple Surfaces in Jerusalem”, *BAR* 10 (1984), pp. 24-9.

⁷ Cf. S. Gitin, “Ekron of the Philistines, Part II: Olive-Oil Suppliers to the World”, *BAR* 16 (1990), p. 59, n. 18.

⁸ See Y. Yadin, “The Excavation of Masada 1963/64: Preliminary Report”, *IEJ* 15 (1965), p. 111.

⁹ *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai and Zechariah* (Edinburgh, 1912), p. 357.

¹⁰ Cf. also *BHS*, where the support of a few Hebrew manuscripts for the reading *kl* is noted. The possibility that the variant has come about under the influence of *v. 21* (“every pot”) must be allowed.

¹¹ *Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi* (Cambridge, 1934), p. 10. See also F. Horst, *Die Zwölf Kleinen Propheten* (Tübingen, 1938), p. 252 (2nd edn, 1954, p. 260).

¹² “An Inscribed Jar from Megiddo”, *AJSL* 50 (1933/4), pp. 10-14.

¹³ Earlier this century the suggestion was made by J. E. Hogg that the inscription on the high priest’s turban (cf. Exod. xxviii 36) consisted solely of the tetragrammaton and that *qdš* in the biblical expression “Holy to the LORD” referred to the sacredness of the name (“the sacred name ‘Jahwe’”) (see “A Note on Two Points in Aaron’s Head-Dress”, *JTS* 26 [1925], pp. 72-5; idem, “The Inscription on Aaron’s Head-Dress”, *JTS* 28 [1927], pp. 287-8). Hogg based his case upon references in several ancient writers who state that it was the tetragrammaton alone that was inscribed on the high priest’s diadem (*Letter of Aristaeus* 98; Philo, *De Vita Mosis* ii 114, 132; Josephus, *Ant.* iii §178; *Bellum* v §235). His point

was taken up in a short note by F. C. Burkitt ("A Further Note on Aaron's Head-Dress", *JTS* 26 [1925], p. 180) who pointed out that the same view is represented by Bar-Hebraeus, in this case possibly under the influence of Origen (on Ps. ii 2; see J.-P. Migne [ed.], *PG* XII [Paris, 1857], 1104). Hogg is followed by H. St J. Thackeray in a note to the passage in *Bellum* v §235 (*Josephus III: The Jewish War, Books IV-VII* [London, 1928], p. 273, n. 1), but subsequent scholarship appears not to have paid much attention to his case (e.g. M. Haran, *Temples and Temple Service in Ancient Israel* [Oxford, 1978], p. 169, n. 45 [simply noting the Hellenistic references, without mention of Hogg]). Hogg (p. 75) suggests that, properly understood, *Zech.* xiv 20-1 means that only the tetragrammaton was envisaged as being inscribed on the bells of the horses. The epigraphic evidence discussed in this short note no doubt has a bearing upon the question of the exact form of inscription not only in *Zech.* xiv 20-1 but also in *Exod.* xxviii 36, etc.

THE JUDGE BEDAN (1 SAMUEL XII 11)

Samuel recounts the leaders through whom God has saved Israel from its enemies. He numbers himself, as well as Jerubbaal, Jephthah and Bedan. The identity of the last is a mystery. The LXX considered it a reference to Barak, the Rabbis took it as an allusion to Samson, H. Ewald took it as a reference to the little-known judge Abdon from *Judg.* xii 13-15.¹ Y. Zakovitch has recently pointed out that at 1 *Chron.* vii 17 there is mentioned a man of Gileadite stock whose name is Bedan. Noting that Jephthah is also a Gileadite, Zakovitch argues that Bedan is indeed Jephthah and that 1 *Sam.* xii 11 originally mentioned the name Bedan and only later did an explanatory gloss indicating that Bedan was Jephthah creep into the text. This is a little contorted, but perhaps not out of the question. But a serious difficulty that Zakovitch ignores is that Jephthah is not only a Gileadite, but his father's name is Gilead (*Judg.* xi 1-2). In contrast, Bedan's father is Ulam (1 *Chron.* vii 17).

Probably, the most likely solution to the problem is Ewald's,² namely, that *bedān* is *ʿabdōn* of *Judg.* xii 13-15. R. Kittel (in his *Biblia Hebraica*) considered this a possibility. Ewald thought *bedān* a scribal corruption; it could be just a variant of the name. To Ewald's identification two objections have been raised. The first is that the identification with *ʿabdōn* violates chronological sequence. But there is no reason to assume that the order must have been strictly chronological. Neither the LXX nor the Rabbis thought it necessary to take this into consideration when making their identifications. Second, the biblical account of Bedan gives no indica-