

the like, above the abecedarium, not unlike the name [אבין] at the very end of the Gezer table (cf. *infra*, p. 253).

The palaeography of the abecedarium fits well into a mid-tenth century BCE date.

R. E. Tappy, P. Kyle McCarter, M. J. Lundberg and B. Zuckerman, "An Abecedarium of the Mid-Tenth Century B.C.E. from the Judaean Shephelah," *BASOR* 344 (2006), pp. 5-46.

JERUSALEM

THE SILOAM INSCRIPTION

The inscription was accidentally discovered in 1880 in the Siloam tunnel, which was partially blocked by alluvium. The text was incised at the western end of the tunnel about six meters from the outlet to the Siloam pool at the western end of the ridge known today as the "City of David." This is not unlike Sennacherib the king of Assyria who had also inscribed several memorial texts in hidden spots at his own great water project at Nineveh. The Siloam Inscription of six lines was inscribed in beautiful letters in straight lines on the lower half of a rectangular area in the rock that had been smoothed beforehand. Perhaps the smoothed area was prepared to receive a longer text, or else the mason was unsure of just how much space the whole text would take.

The inscription was extracted from the rock surface by a Greek resident of Jerusalem who sought to sell it. During the carving process the inscription was broken into six or seven pieces. The text was repaired on the basis of a squeeze that had been taken shortly after the original discovery (1880) by the Swiss architect Conrad Schick, a long-time resident of Jerusalem. The repaired stone bearing the inscription was transferred to Istanbul where it is now displayed in the Museum of Ancient Near Eastern Antiquities.

The inscription tells about the final stages of the tunnel's excavation in the reign of Hezekiah who fortified Jerusalem and prepared it for the siege by Sennacherib, as detailed in 2 Kgs 20:20; Isa 22:9-11; 2 Chr 32:3-5, 30. The work of excavating the tunnel was included in the general description of the fortifying process and only mentioned specifically in 2 Kgs 20:20: וְאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֶת הַבְּרֵכָה וְאֶת הַתְּעָלָה וַיָּבֵא אֶת הַמַּיִם הָעֵיכָר וְהוּא יְחֻקְקֵהוּ סָתָם: "and how he (Hezekiah) made the pool and the channel and brought the water into the city," and 2 Chr 32:30: וְהוּא יְחֻקְקֵהוּ סָתָם: "and he, Hezekiah closed up the upper outlet of the waters of Gihon and directed them down westward to the city of David." The source which gives the most detailed account about the project is *Ecclesiasticus* composed by Ben Sira, who lived in the beginning of the second century BCE: וַיְחַצֵּב בְּנֹחֶשֶׁת צוּרִים וַיְחַסֹּם: "Hezekiah strengthened his city by diverting water into it. And he quarried flinty rocks like copper and he blocked up hills for a pool" (48:22-23 [17]). But it is doubtful whether we should accept the biblical allusion concerning the circumstances of the quarrying of the tunnel at face value. It is difficult

to assume that the tunnel was excavated under the pressure of the siege. It is likely that we have a water project well planned, with forethought and without undue pressure.

The style of the inscription, biblical and literary, looks as if excerpted from a chapter in one of the biblical historiographical sources, perhaps from the "Chronicles of the Kings of Judah" itself (as suggested by Levi Della Vida). The inscription succeeds in preserving the excitement of the meeting between the diggers on both ends of the tunnel, and of the completion of the mighty project which was carried out in the depth of the hill. The inscription was inscribed within the main water project of Jerusalem, a place where not just anyone was allowed to enter, on a smooth surface and by a skilled professional (as mentioned above). All these data strengthen the impression that the inscription was installed by the authorities. The person who commanded in the seventh century BCE that the text be inscribed wanted to immortalize the great hydro-technical project of King Hezekiah.

[הנקבה. וזה. היה. דבר. הנקבה. בעוד]
 הגרון. אש. אל. רעו. ובעוד. שלש. אמת. להנן] [ע. קל. אש. ק
 [א. אל. רעו. כי. הית. וזה. בצר. מימן. ומן] [אל. ובים. ה
 נקבה. הכו. החצבם. אש. לקרת. רעו. גרון. על] [רון. וילכו
 המים. מן. המוצא. אל. הברכה. במאתי] [אלף. אמה. ומ]
 ת. אמה. היה. גבה. הצר. על. ראש. החצב]

דבר] הנקבה. וזה היה דבר הנקבה. בעוד [החצבם מנפם את
 הגרון אש אל רעו ובעוד שלש אמת להנן קב, נשמ] ע קל אש ק
 [א אל רעו, כי הית וזה בצר מימן ומן] אל. ובים ה
 נקבה הכו החצבם אש לקרת רעו, גרון על [ג]רון, וילכו
 המים מן המוצא אל הברכה במאתי]ם [אלף אמה, ומ] א
 ת אמה היה גבה הצר על ראש החצב]ם

[The matter of] the breakthrough: And this is the matter of the breakthrough. While [the hewers were swinging the] axe, each towards his companion, and while there were still three cubits to he[w, there was hea]rd the voice of a man ca[ll]ing to his companion because there was a fissure(?) in the rock, on the right and on the le[ft]. And on the day of its breakthrough, the hewers struck each man towards his companion, axe towards [axe, and the waters flowed from the

outlet to the pool, one thousand [and t]wo hundred cubits, and a [hu]ndred cubits was the height of the rock above the heads of the hewe[rs].

דבר] הנקבה — An opening phrase for a new section; the details of the section follow.

נקבה — *nq̄bā* (*n^oqibā^h*). Breakthrough, verbal noun perhaps on the pattern of *šmittā^h* (Deut 15:1), *klmā^h* (Jer 51:51). There is also the possibility of *nq̄bā^h*, or even *nq̄bā^h*, though this pattern is rare in the Bible; better than *nq̄bā^h*, *nq̄bā^h*, cf. Arabic *nuqba^h* (*nuqba^h*), "hole, perforation." In the Bible the actual tunnel is called *teqēla^h*, "channel" (2 Kgs 20:20). For the ה as a final *mater lectionis* cf. below *הברכה*.

וזה היה דבר הנקבה — Cf. Deut 15:2, *וזה דבר השמטה*, "And this is the matter of the remission" (also Deut 19:4; 1 Kgs 9:15).

לא תניף עליהם ברזל — Restoration *ad sensum*; cf. Deut 27:5, "Do not wield an iron tool over them" (cf. also Ex 20:21; Josh 8:31); Isa 10:15: *אם יתגדל* אם יתגדל, "Does an axe boast over him who wields it?"

בעוד [החצבם מנפם] — Thus corresponding to the biblical word order. Cf. 1 Kgs 22:44: *ועוד אני מדבר*, "the people still sacrificed"; Dan 9:20: *ועוד אני מדבר*, "and while I was still speaking and praying," though it is also possible to render: בעוד מנפם החצבם.

בעוד — Some would see in this orthography the preservation of the diphthong, thus **awd* rather than Massoretic *od^c*.

רעו — As in the rare Massoretic form *rē^co* (Jer 6:21). The normal form was *rē^cehū*, and it would be an anomaly if final ו represented final *ō* at this early period. So perhaps the intended pronunciation here was **rē^cēu*.

שלש אמת — One cubit was c. 45–52 cm, so the workmen heard one another when they were still separated by c. one and a half meters of rock.

הית — Third feminine singular; cf. 2 Kgs 9:37 where the *ktiv* is *והיה* while the *q^ri* is *והיתה*. The vocalization may have been **hayāt*, the ancient form from third weak verbs. Cf. the Mesha Inscription, line 12 (*infra*, pp. 392–393).

וזה — Either **ziddā^h*, or **zādā^h*. A hapax of an uncertain meaning. From the context it may be interpreted as a "crack, fissure"; such a fissure might have permitted the hewers to hear one another in spite of the three cubits of rock separating them. According to this conjecture, the fissure extended from the Gihon spring westward and is to be equated with *הארץ* *הארוץ*, "The brook that flowed through the land" (2 Chr 32:4). The knowledge of the

"stream flowing within the earth" would have led Hezekiah's men to execute the hewing out of the tunnel. They followed its course from both ends and thus managed to meet in the depths of the earth. The fissure would also have furnished the air for the workers to breathe and for the lamps to burn, giving them light. However, recent geological researches have challenged the theory that there was a karstic fissure for the hewers to follow and this clouds the issue with regard to the meaning of the word זדה.

לא נטה זמין ושמאל: "Turning off neither to the right nor to the left." Although the pair זמין ושמאל, "right and left," is well attested as a literary pattern, it might be translated also as referring to south (זמין) and north (שמאל). Another suggestion is that the fissure was to the right of the hewers coming from the west and to the left of those coming from the east.

ובים הנקבה — The form הנקבה is evidently a *Nif^cal* infinitive plus third feminine suffix (subjective genitive). Better than *hinnaqbô*, "its (the rock's) being bored." For the combination of the word "day" with *Nif^cal* infinitive, cf. Gen 21:8: וקיום ביום הנושא, "on the day that Isaac was weaned" and also Lev 6:13: ביום הנושא, "on the day of his anointing."

לקרת — This is the proper form for this vocable which is from the root קרי. The accepted biblical form, לקראת, reflects contamination from the root קרא.

מוצא — Some assume that this orthography preserves the diphthong, e.g. **mawšā*. This "outlet" is the Gihon spring. Cf. 2 Chr 32:30: מוצא מימי גיחון העליון, "the spring of water of upper Gihon"; Isa 58:11: וכן מוצא מים אשר לא יכזבו מימיו, "Like a spring whose waters do not fail."

הברכה — This pool is the pool of Siloam to the west of the City of David. Today it is called *birket ʿal-ḥamra* which is full of gardens.

The orthography of the Siloam Inscription raises several questions with regard to the use of internal *matres lectionis*. And this is connected to the matter of the preservation of diphthongs (in מוצא and עור) or its contraction (as in קל and ובים). Final answers have not been given, but it should be observed that in Massoretic Hebrew there is a certain inconsistency in the preservation of diphthongs: cf. שור, *šôr*, "ox" contracted from proto-semitic **šawr* with מות, *mawet*, "death," which remained uncontracted in the independent form but contracted to מות, *môṭ* in the bound form; cf. also חק, *hêq*, "bosom, lap" which is always contracted to בית, *bayit*, "house" which preserves the diphthong in the independent form but contracts to *bêt* in the bound form.

As for the putative singular **yām*, "day" (Cross and Freedman), it is a ghost word. J. Barth had shown long ago that the Hebrew plural ימים, *yāmîm* was developed through reciprocal analogy between the word pair **yômîm w'šānôt* by which the first member acquired the base vowel of the second and the second member acquired the plural suffix of the first, thus ימים ושנים, *yāmîm w'šānîm* (while the bound forms often developed into ימות, *y'môṭ* and שנות, *š'nôṭ*).

Cross and Freedman, *EHO*, pp. 49–51; G. Levi Della Vida, "The Siloam Inscription Reconsidered," in M. Black and G. Fohrer (eds.), *In Memoriam Paul Kahle* (BZAW 103), Berlin 1968, pp. 162–166; E. Peuch, "L'inscription du tunnel de Siloe," *RB* 81 (1974), pp. 196–214; V. Sasson, "The Siloam Tunnel Inscription," *PEQ* 114 (1982), pp. 111–117; Z. Talshir, "The Detailing Formula ... וזה הרבר," *Tarbitz* 51 (1981/2), pp. 24–25 (Hebrew; English abstract, p. vi); A. F. Rainey, Review of Ziony Zevit, *Matres Lectionis in Ancient Hebrew Epigraphs*, Cambridge, MA 1980, in *JBL* 102 (1983), p. 630; A. E. Shimron et al., "The City of David Waterworks: A Geological and Engineering Overview," in A. Baruch (ed.), *Hiddušim beḥeḡer Yerušalaim* (Proceedings of the Fourth Symposium), Ramat Gan 1998, pp. xi–xvi.

STELA FRAGMENT FROM THE CITY OF DAVID

A fragment of an inscription incised on stone, apparently some sort of stela. Its date is c. 700 BCE. Although the letters are clearly incised, it is not possible to determine the context.



[צבר הכן]	[צבר. הכן]
[בִּשְׁבַע עָשָׂר הַשָּׁנָה]	[בשבע. עשר]
[בְּרִבְעִי וַיְנָ]	[רבעי. וי]
[זָכַר]	[זָכַר]

...] the accumulation (heap) of the [...
 ...] on the seventeenth [year. ...
 in the] fourth (month) and [...
 [.....]

צבר — Perhaps a verbal form for which the prefix is not preserved or a noun, צבר (2 Kgs 10:8).

הכן — Thus Cross, reading [הכסף], “the silver,” but Naveh reads a מ or נ.

Y. Shiloh, “City of David—1978,” *BA* 42 (1979), p. 170; J. Naveh, “Hebrew and Aramaic Inscriptions,” in D. T. Ariel, *Excavations at the City of David 1978–1985, VI: Inscriptions* (Qedem 41), Jerusalem 2000, pp. 1–2; F. M. Cross, “A Fragment of a Monumental Inscription from the City of David,” *IEJ* 51 (2001), pp. 44–47.

OSTRACA FROM THE CITY OF DAVID

OSTRACON No. 1

A three-line inscription on a jar fragment dating to the seventh century BCE. It is a list of men and their titles, one poor and the other two perhaps a little wealthier. The purpose of the list is not clear.

[אִמּוֹ]	[בֶּן אַחִיאֵל הַסָּרֵט שְׁחָבַת.]	[עַמָּן]	[בֶּן אַחִיאֵל הַסָּרֵט שְׁחָבַת.]
[יָהוּ]	[בֶּן חַסְדִּיָּהוּ הַכֹּנֵס כֶּסֶף]	[יָהוּ]	[בֶּן חַסְדִּיָּהוּ הַכֹּנֵס כֶּסֶף]
[יָהוּ]	[דַּעִיָּהוּ הַכֹּנֵס.]	[יָהוּ]	[דַּעִיָּהוּ הַכֹּנֵס.]

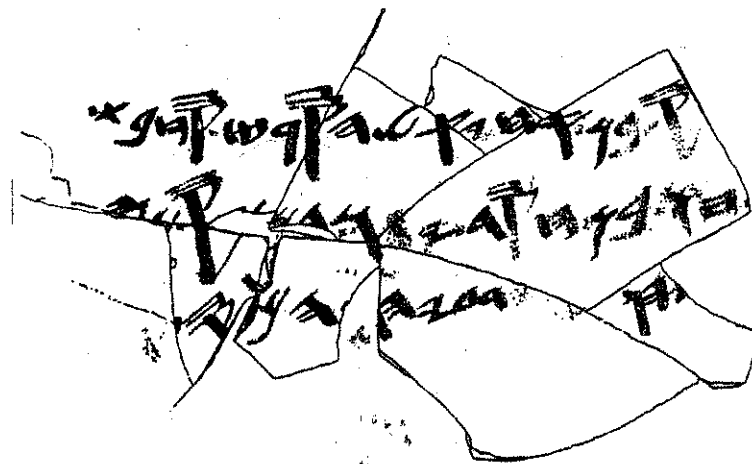
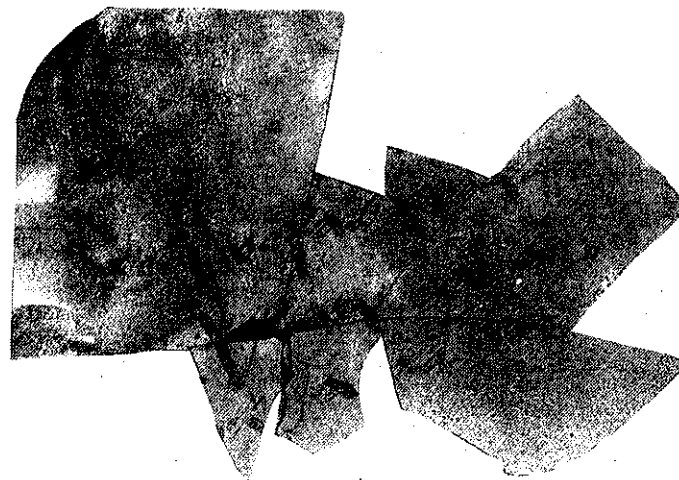
Amo]s son of ^ahī²ēl, the rag shredder

... yā]hū son of H^sadyāhū, the sil[ver] collector

...]yāhū [son of Y^a]dā^cyāhū the [silver] collector

עמָן — An obvious restoration in view of the name's ending with ס.

הסרט שחבת — “The shredder of rags,” the latter being worn-out garments, Jer 38:11–12: וַיִּקַּח מִשָּׁם בְּלוֹי סְחָבוֹת וּבְלוֹי מְלָחִים... בְּלוֹאֵי הַסְּחָבוֹת וְהַמְּלָחִים “and he took from there worn-out clothes and worn-out rags... worn-out clothes and rags.”



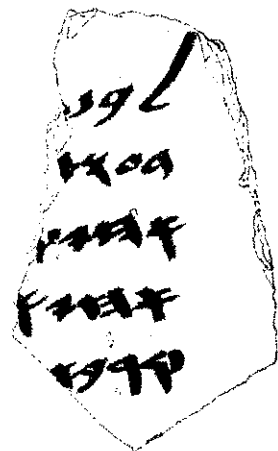
הסרט — Participle from סרט, “to tear, shred,” cognate to Akkadian *šarātu* and Arabic *شَرَط* (*šarāṭa*), still written with ש in biblical Hebrew. This orthography with ש is further testimony to the fact that ס had lost its distinctive value (from the second millennium BCE) and was now substituted for ש. This was evidently a lowly occupation.

יָהוּ כֶּסֶף — “The sil[ver] collector.” Cf. Eccl 2:8: כָּנֹסְתִי לִי גִם כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב, “I collected for myself silver and gold.” But, unlike the wealthy Koheleth, these collectors of silver might have been collectors of scrap silver to be sold or traded to the silversmith. This would place them almost on the same social level as the “rag shredder.”

OSTRACON No. 2



לְבָנִיהוּ
דְעוּאֵל
אַחִיקָם
אַחִיאֵל
קִרְבָּאֵנֹר



לבנ
דעוא
אחיק
אחיא
קרבא

A list of names.

לְבָנִיהוּ — The *lamed* applies to all the names in the list.

קִרְבָּאֵנֹר — This is the second attestation of this otherwise unknown Hebrew name; cf. Arad No. 24, *infra*, p. 127.

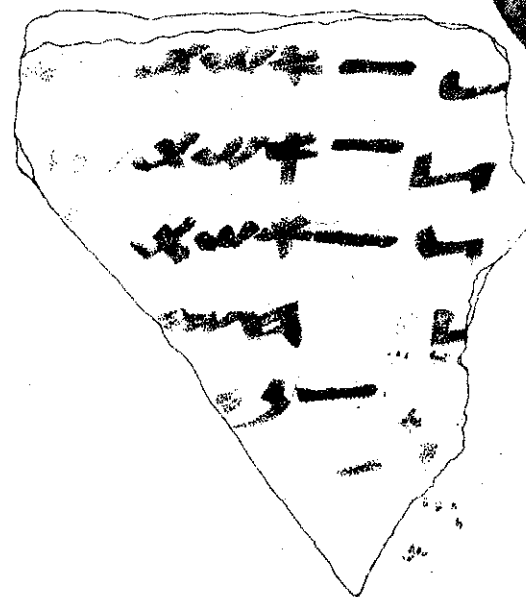
OSTRACON No. 3

] אַשְׁתּוּ — [] אַשְׁתּוּ — [
] אַשְׁתּוּ — [] אַשְׁתּוּ — [
] אַשְׁתּוּ — [] אַשְׁתּוּ — [
? חֶשְׁבֵּן יְהוּ — [חֶשְׁבֵּן — [
נְ — [נְ — [

[...] *hin*(?) — (to) the wife of [...]

[...] *hin*(?) — (to) the wife of [...]

[...] *hin*(?) — (to) the wife of [...]



[...] *hin*(?) — (to) H^šā[byāhū(?)]
[.....] — N[.....]
[.....]

A list of quantities of a commodity, evidently wheat, issued to the wives of some individuals and possibly also to a man.

J. Naveh, "Hebrew and Aramaic Inscriptions," in T. D. Ariel (ed.), *Excavations at the City of David 1978–1985 VI: Inscriptions* (Qedem 41), Jerusalem 2000, pp. 2–4.

THE OPHEL

A STELA FRAGMENT

A badly broken inscription on limestone (27 x 24 x 10 cm) found in secondary use in a Byzantine house. The text was apparently longer than four lines, all of which are quite fragmentary. The precise letters indicate that the original inscription was incised with great care.

Because of the fragmentary nature of the text it is impossible to reconstruct the content but it would seem that the inscription dealt with some water project within Jerusalem. On palaeographical grounds the text may be tentatively dated to the first half of the seventh century BCE.

[מתחת לזרם
[רזך. המים
[בירכתי ה'
[נסח. הכס]

[מתחת. לז'
[רזך. המי'
[בירכתי ה'
[נסח. הכס]



...] from under the st[ream(?)

...] ?? the water[s ...

...] at the extremity of the [...

...] remove the thr[one(?)

לזרם — Hypothetical restoration. In biblical Hebrew זרם refers to a flow of water but I do not understand how something could be “under” a flow of water, unless we have to understand זרם as a channel or a pipe. Is the missing word זרה as in the Siloam Inscription? The meaning is still unclear.

רזך — In Naveh’s opinion there is a space between these two letters due to an imperfection in the stone; Ben-Dov thinks that a defaced letter was in that space. In any case there is no satisfactory restoration for this combination of letters.

בירכתי ה' — In spite of the lack of a word divider between the vocables, they must be separated. From the partially defaced letter there only remains the leg, which can be restored as ה or ו. One cannot render בירכתיקה or בירכתי because such a vocable would have been written without ם in First Temple orthography.



נסח — The root נסח signifies the transfer of an object or a person from its place to another place, often to remove or uproot. A prefix is apparently missing.

... הכסן — It is impossible to decide between the various possibilities of restoration.

M. Ben-Dov, "A Fragment of a Hebrew Inscription from the First Temple Times found on the Ophel," *Qadmoniot* 17 (1984), pp. 109–111 (Hebrew); J. Naveh, "A Fragment of an Ancient Hebrew Inscription from the Ophel," *IEJ* 32 (1982), pp. 195–198, Pl. 26A.

OSTRACA FROM THE OPHEL

OSTRACON NO. 1: "THE OPHEL OSTRACON"

An eight-line ostrakon, from the end of the Judaeen monarchy according to its palaeography. Only the first three lines are legible; the other lines are almost completely defaced and the visible letters and the personal name found in them are all disputed. The text was a list of personal names and undoubtedly served some administrative purpose.

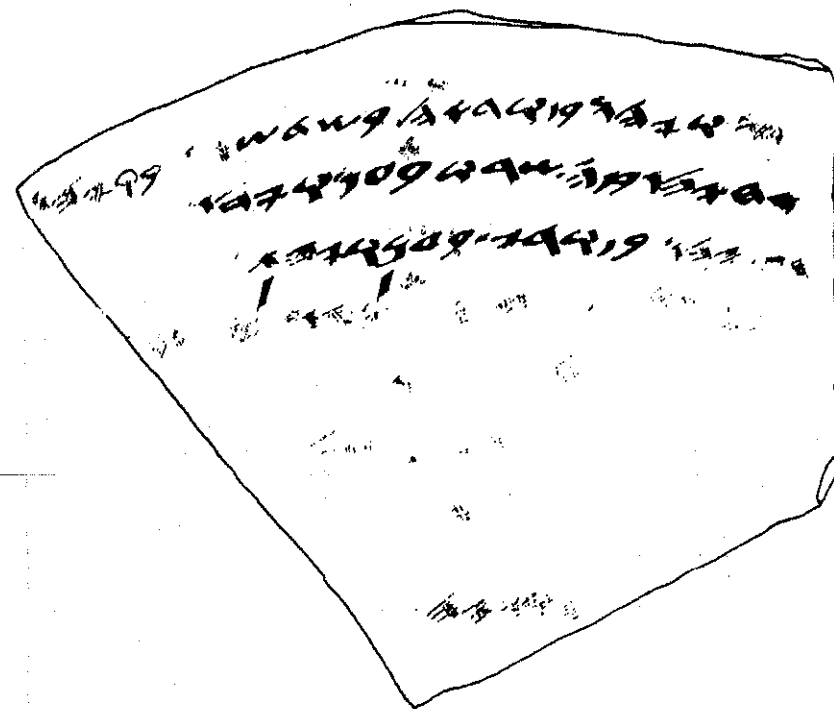
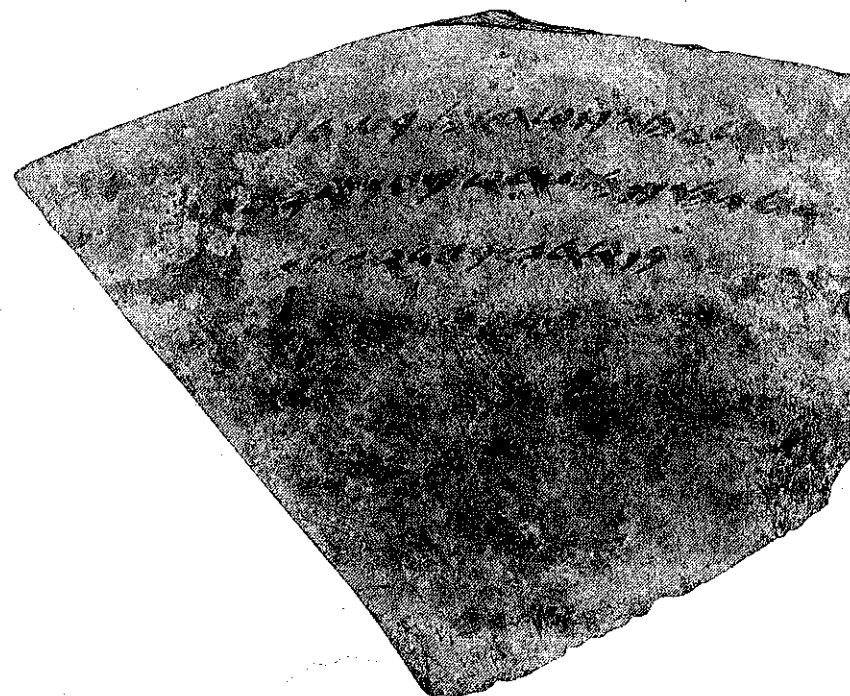
ח[ן]קיהו בן קראה בשרש. בקיהו.	ח[ן]קיהו בן קראה. בשרש[ח] בקיהו
אחיהו בן השרק בעמקיהו	אחיהו בן השרק בעמקין
יהו בן קרי בעמקיהו]	יהו בן קרי בעמקיהו]

Hi[z]qiyāhû son of Q^rā^ah son of Šōreš. Buqqiyāhû
 Ahīyāhû son of "Sandy" son of ^cAmaqyā[hû].
 ...]yāhû son of Qry son of ^cAmaqyāhû

קראה — Gibson took this as a feminine of partridge (קרא) but it is more likely a hypocoristic theophoric name like עורא from עזריהו.

בשרש — "Son of Shoresh," the ב being an abbreviation for בן, "son (of)," as in בעמקיהו further on in the text. This phenomenon is well known, e.g. the biblical personal names בענא, "son of ^cĀnāh"; בקר, "son of Deker." In Hebrew epigraphy, e.g. an incised sherd from Samaria has [לע]בדא בכלבי חן], "[belonging to ^cA]bdā^a son of Kalbī" (B. Mazar, "The Phoenician Inscriptions from Byblos and the Evolution of the Phoenician-Hebrew Alphabet," in *The Early Biblical Period: Historical Essays*, Jerusalem 1986, p. 233); and also in Phoenician epigraphy: ביחמילך, "son of Y^hhīmilīk" (KAI, No. 7:3).

השרק — Nickname from color of hair, cf. Zech 1:8: וסוסים אדמים שרקים ולבנים, "horses, red, sorrel, and white"; שרוק is apparently reddish. However, the vocable השרק could also be taken as the participle, שרק, "one who combs wool."



עמוק — Son of ^{ca}maqyāhû; cf. the shortened theophoric biblical name בעמקיהו (Neh 12:7, 20). Since there is room for another word at the end of lines 2 and 3, some have suggested to read בעמק יהו[שפט], “in the Valley of Jehoshaphat” but this is nothing but a guess.

קרי — Thus and not קרץ as some scholars have suggested.

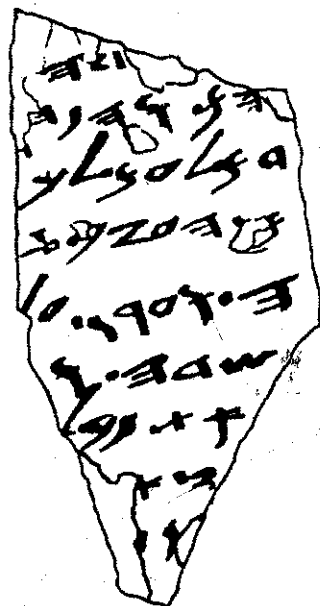
It would appear that the men in lines 2 and 3 had the same grandfather or else they were members of the same family, viz. of ^{ca}maqyāhû.

S.A. Cook, “Inscribed Hebrew Objects from the Ophel”, *PEF QSt* 56 (1924), pp. 183–186; Gibson, *HM*, pp. 25–26; Lemaire, *Ostraca*, pp. 239–244 (with bibliography)

OSTRACON No. 2

An ostracon from the end of the seventh, or the beginning of the sixth century BCE (Lemaire). The text is badly effaced and nothing can be deduced from it except a few isolated words. The ostracon is too fragmentary for translation.

ש[רה]	דה]
הם והנה רן	הם. והנה. רן
דם לעם לפר	דם. לעם. לכו
ם העזב הן	ם. העזב. הן



ה וערו על	ה. וערו. על
שדה ון	שדה. ון
את נבל]	את. נבל]
צאן	צאן
נבל	נבל

הם — perhaps a 3rd masculine plural suffix.

לעם — to the people (masses), or else the word עם has its ancient meaning of “family, clan”; cf. Gen 25:8: וַיִּגְדָּר אֶל עַמּוּ, “and he was gathered to his people” (and in many similar passages).

העזב — Perhaps העזב, “what is abandoned, left over,” or else the question העזב?, “Has he abandoned/left?”

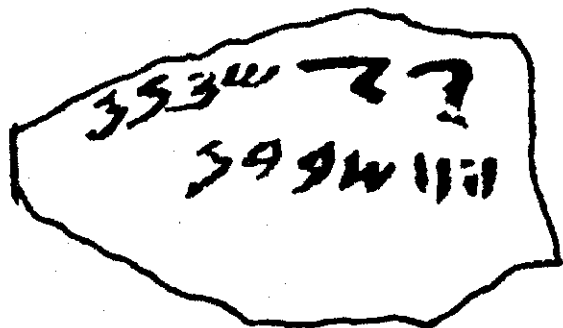
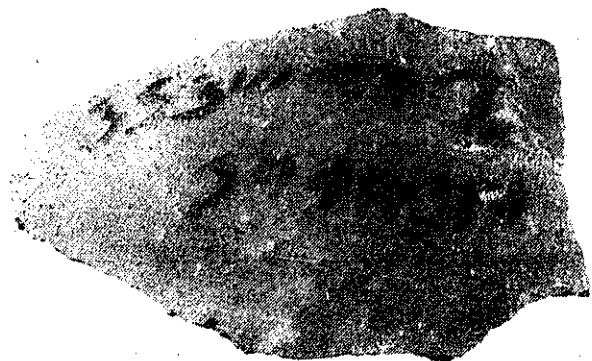
וערו — From the root ערי?

צאן — “Small cattle,” unless this is a verbal form from צא?

על[... — Perhaps to complete: [עלניהם] or the like?

נבל — The name of a store jar; cf. the Samaria Ostraca, *infra*, p. 261 *et al.*

OSTRACON No. 3



An ostracon from the end of the eighth century BCE (Lemaire). In the first line we have the ciphers 50 + 7 in Egyptian hieroglyphic forms used widely in Israel and Judah; in the second line four small marks to designate the numeral four.

57 (jars of) oil
4 (jars of) grain

57 שָׁמֶנִים
4 שְׁבָרִים

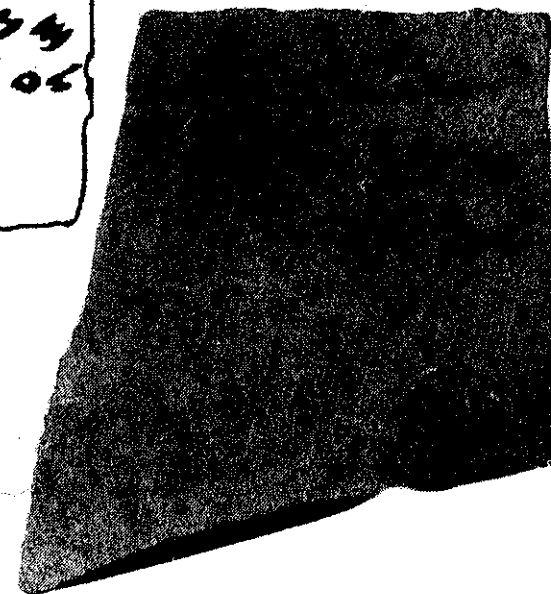
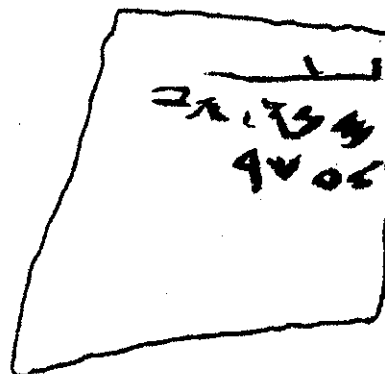
שָׁמֶנִים 57
שְׁבָרִים 4

שָׁמֶנִים — plural of שָׁמֶן, "oil," meaning vessels of oil.

שְׁבָרִים — Plural of שֶׁבֶר, "grain"; cf. Am 8:5: וְנִשְׁבְּרָה שֶׁבֶר... וְנִפְתָּחָה בָרֶךְ, "that we may sell grain? . . . that we may set forth wheat?" Here the meaning is "four containers of grain."

Since the terms used here are collectives and are not known as the names of specific measures of oil or grain, no further refinement in the interpretation is possible.

OSTRACON No. 4



An ostracon from the end of the eighth century (Lemaire). The numerals are hieratic.

200

They counted out 18

For tithing

200

18 מְנוּ

לְעֶשֶׂר

מְנוּ א

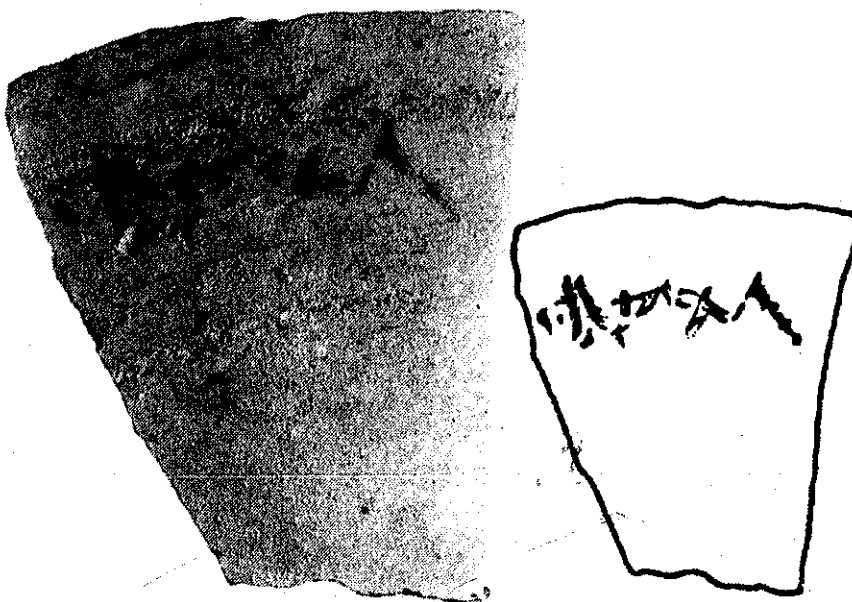
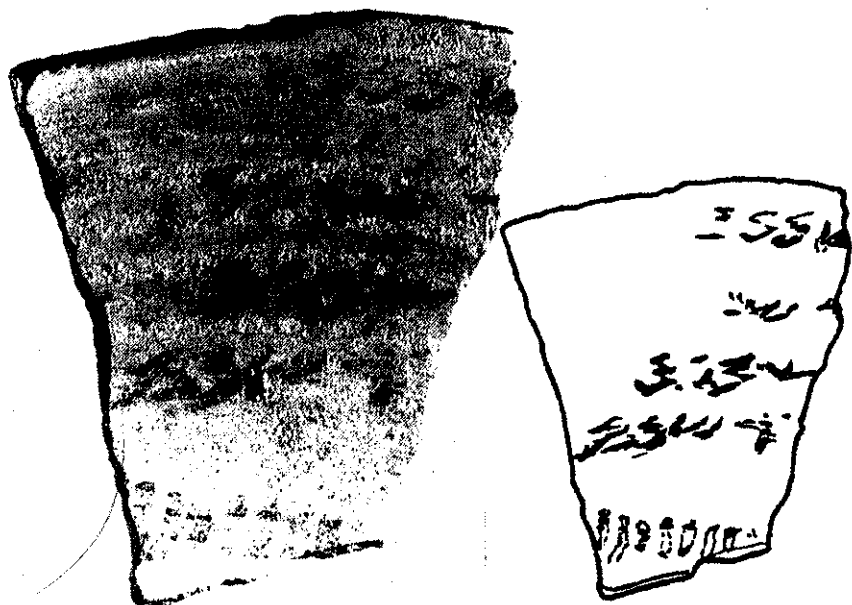
לְעֶשֶׂר

מְנוּ — Either a plural imperative (מְנוּ) or a third person plural suffix form (מְנוּ) from the root מָנָה.

לְעֶשֶׂר — To take the tithe for the Temple or for the king.

OSTRACON No. 5

This ostracon too is from the end of the eighth century BCE (Lemaire). The scribe used some hieratic signs but in line 5 he wrote eight hash marks instead of writing hieratic 5 plus three hash marks.

*Obverse*

(x jars of) oil	שמן	שמן
(x jars of) oil	שמן	שמן
(x jars of) oil	שמן	שמן
5 (jars of) oil	5 שמן	5 שמן
8	8	

Reverse

Gath Pāru ^h	גת פרך	גת. פרך
------------------------	--------	---------

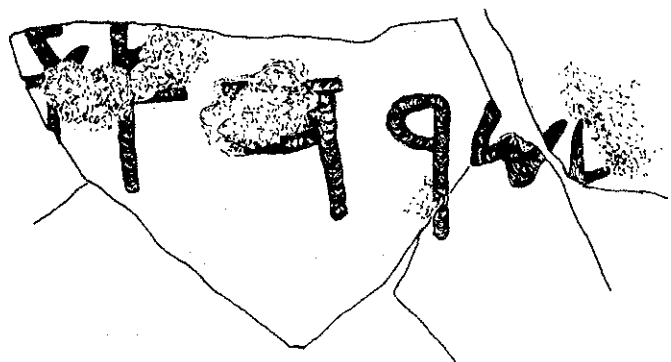
גת פרך — Gath of the Pāru^h family. Compare the biblical GN's Gath, Gath-*hep*her and Gath-*rimmon*. "Gath" is not just a winepress but rather a place for the processing and storing of agricultural produce: wine, oil and grain. Although the Bible uses the word גת in the restricted meaning, a winepress, in place names it still refers to the older meaning.

A. Lemaire, "Les ostraca paléo-hebreux des fouilles de l'Ophel," *Levant* 10 (1978), pp. 156-161, pl. xxiii.

INSCRIPTION FROM THE OPHEL

A chiseled inscription on a shoulder of a pithos found in the excavations to the south of the Temple Mount. Although the short inscription is broken its significance lies in the use of the γ as *mater lectionis* in the middle of the word. The inscription dates to the very end of the First Temple period of Jerusalem.





לשר האונפם/צָר

לשר האון

Belonging to the chief of the Ba[kers]/the Treasury.

לשר האון — If the doubted letters are really α and γ then the title of this minister will be minister of the Bakers, for which cf. the Egyptian שר האופים, “chief baker” in Gen 40:2, etc. The title לשר האונצָר, “minister of the treasure house,” is not attested in the Bible, but 1 Chr 26:24 mentions נגיד על האצורה, “chief officer over the treasuries.”

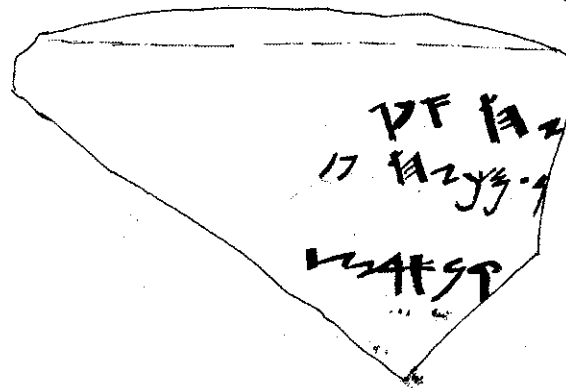
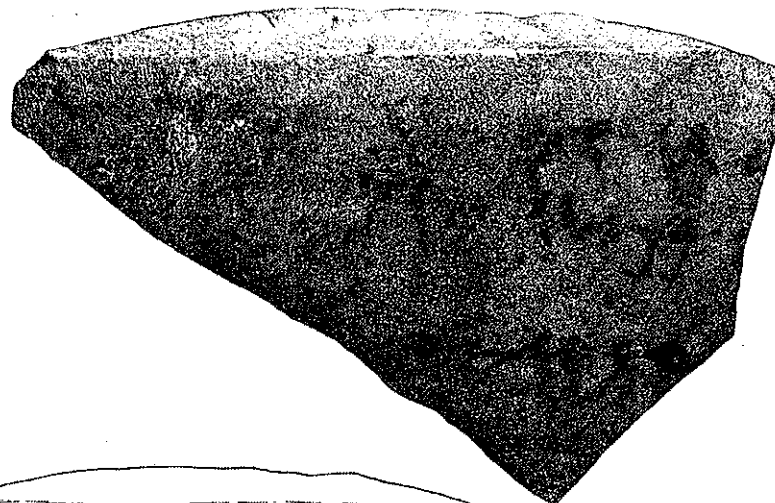
Y. Nadelman, “Appendix B: Hebrew Inscriptions, Seal Impressions, and Markings of the Iron Age,” in E. Mazar and B. Mazar, *Excavations on the South of the Temple Mount (Qedem 29)*, Jerusalem 1989, pp. 128–129, photo 89 (p. 36), pl. 21 (p. 101).

OSTRACA FROM THE UPPER CITY

Two ostraca were discovered in the Upper City of Jerusalem. Both are badly damaged and most difficult to decipher.

“GOD, CREATOR OF EARTH”

This ostracon contained five lines; it is quite possible that there was originally a wide space between the second and fourth lines. Of lines 3 and 4 there are only unreadable traces of letters. Personal names were listed in the upper lines. In the last line one may discern the divine title, אֵל קִנְה אֶרֶץ, “God, Creator of Earth.” The date of the ostracon, on palaeological grounds, would be the end of the eighth or the beginning of the seventh century BCE (Avigad).



[יהו אבר]יהו

[יהו. אבר]

[בן מכיהו בן]

[מכיהו בן]

[]

[]

[]

[]

אל קנארץ

קנארץ

... |yāhû, ^bir|y]āhû

so|n of Mīkā|y]āhû son of [...]

[]

[]

God] Creator of Earth

מכיהו — In the Bible we have both *Mīkāyāhū* and *Mīkāyhū*.

[אל]קנארץ — The meaning of this epithet is "God, creator of the earth." Cf. Gen 14:22 — הרימתי ידי אל יהוה אל עליון קנה שמים וארץ, "I have lifted up my hand unto YHWH, God Most High, creator of heaven and earth."

The title is also known outside of Israel. In the Phoenician inscription of Azatiwada at Karatepe in southeastern Turkey we find: בעל שמים ואלקנארץ, "The Lord of Heaven and God creator of the earth" (*KAI*, No. 26 A:III:18). An Aramaic text from Ḥaṭrā, between the Euphrates and the Tigris in northern Iraq, has בעל שמיין קנה די רעא = בעל שמיין קנה די רעא, "Lord of Heaven, creator of the earth" (other examples of this title are given by Miller, pp. 43-44).

The orthography in this ostrakon, without the final ה of the participle, shows that the title was read as one vocable, קנארץ, *qōnēʿeres*. For the elision of the ה, cf. the interchanging forms of the name חזאל/חזאל. Perhaps the inscription ended with a blessing to "God, creator of (the) earth," intended to apply to all those listed in the preceding lines. However, the fragmentary nature of the text precludes any firm conclusion.

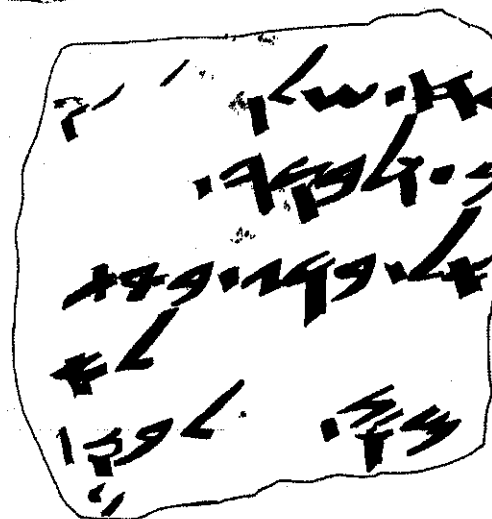
N. Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem*, Nashville-Camden-New York 1980, p. 41; P. D. Miller, Jr., "El, The Creator of Earth," *BASOR* 239 (1980), pp. 43-46.

ADMINISTRATIVE OSTRACON

This is a damaged ostrakon having six lines on one side and two lines on the other, in a very sad state of preservation. It would seem that it dealt with some administrative matter because of the phrases ולבקר (line 2) and לבקר (line 5). The ostrakon is dated to the end of the Judaeen monarchy.

[רח. שלו] [לן] לא	[רח. שלו] [לן] לא
[ן. ולבקר.]	[ן. ולבקר.]
[אל בקי בית]	[אל. בקי. בית]
[לא]	[לא.]
[מס] [לבקר]	[מס.] [לבקר]
[]	[]

.....
 ...] and to check[...
 ...]el Buqqī in the House of [
 and] do not [...



...] to check
 [.....]

יר[— This could be the end of a personal name like יהוהיר, Y^hôzārāh.

שלו[— The doubtful letter is ש, or ל. Thus it cannot be the greeting formula, i.e. שלום, "shalom!" which would have been written שלום[.

ולבקר — "and to check, examine." But further elucidation is impossible.

אל[— Could be the final, theophoric, component of a personal name.

בקי — Buqqî, a known personal name (Num 34:22; 1 Chr 5:31; 6:36; Ezra 7:4).

בית — Undoubtedly the first component in a geographical designation, either a place name, like the gentilic בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים (1 Kgs 16:34), or an important building such as "The House of YHWH."

N. Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem*, Nashville-Camden-New York 1980, p. 42.

THE KIDRON CLIFF

INSCRIPTIONS FROM BURIAL CAVES

During the First and Second Commonwealth periods the rocky cliff on the eastern side of the Kidron Valley, opposite the "City of David," served as a burial place for Jerusalem nobility. In three burial caves from the First Temple period were found traces of inscriptions. Texts from two of these are given below. The palaeographic similarity to the Siloam tunnel inscription would indicate a date around 700 BCE, the age of Hezekiah and Isaiah.

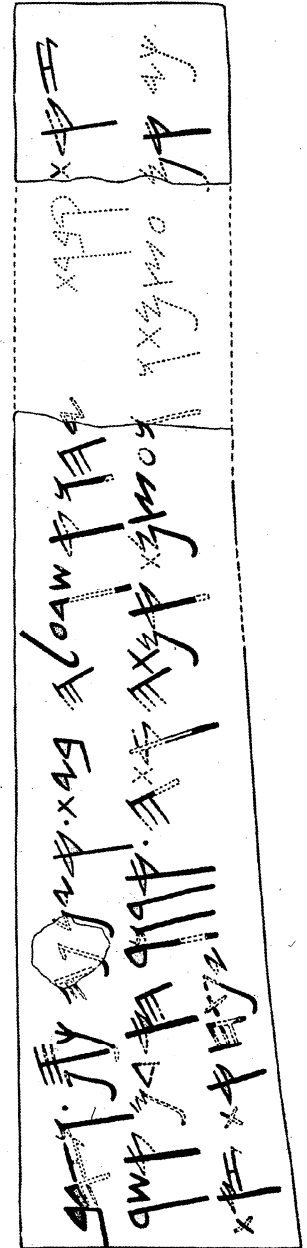
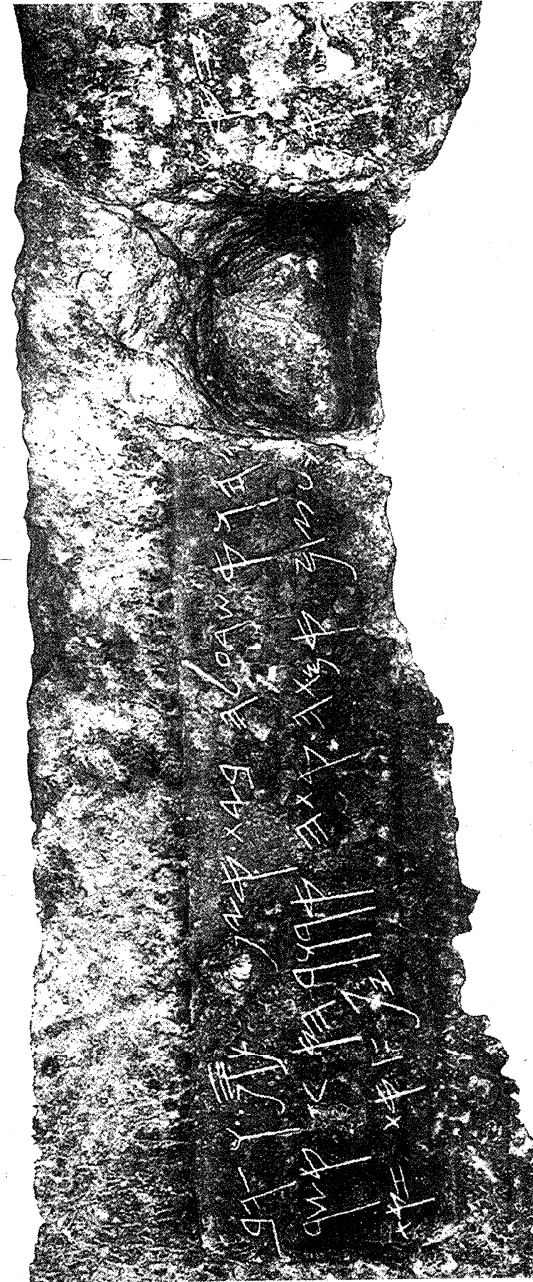
[ŠBĀN]YĀHŪ, STEWARD OF THE PALACE

In burial cave No. 35 two inscriptions were found: one on the front of the main chamber and the second in a side chamber. The inscriptions were removed from their place and are now in the British Museum in London.

The main text:

זאת [] יהו אשר על הבית. אין פה כסף. וזהב
 [] אם [] ועצ[]ת אמתה א[]ה. ארוור האדם. אשר
 יפתח את זאת

זאת [קברת שבנ] יהו אשר על הבית. אין פה כסף וזהב
 [כני] אם [עצמתו] [ועצמ]ת אמתה א[ת]ה ארוור האדם אשר
 יפתח את זאת



of the silver were incised blessing formulae including free citations from the priestly blessing recorded in Num 6:24–26.

יְבַרְכֶּךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ.
יֵאָר יְהוָה פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחֲנֶנְךָ.
יֵשָׂא יְהוָה פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם.

May YHWH bless you, and protect you.

May YHWH cause his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you.

May YHWH lift up his countenance upon you, and grant you peace.

The discovery of these abbreviated formulae provided the oldest testimony to the use of a formula of the priestly blessing which is still used to bless the people today. On the one hand, these formulae bear witness to the biblical formulation, which was apparently already more or less fixed, and also to the free usage made of the principal formula. This freedom of usage is also attested by the differences between the formulations in the two texts. For the formulary usage, note the passage on the second pithos at Kuntillet ⁵Ajrūd: יְבַרְכֶּךָ וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ (cf. *infra*, p. 320).

The tiny scrolls were damaged by corrosion and their ends were eaten away; their measurements today: for the first scroll 9.7 x 2.7 cm, and it apparently contained 19 lines; for the second scroll 3.9 x 1.1 cm, c. 18 lines. The tiny letters were hastily scratched on the thin silver sheets without paying too much attention to its execution, as the amulets were not intended to further exposure, never to be read again. The scrolls were written by two scribes; the letters of the second scroll are much more elegant than those of the first one, written by a more experienced scribe. The amulets accompanied their owners to the grave, to protect them in the nether regions. The belief in magical protecting powers of the Priestly Blessing still persists and it is included in the Jewish prayer said before retiring to rest at night.

FIRST AMULET

[יהוה] צָבָה	[יהוה]
[את האל ה']	[]
גִּדְלָה שְׁמֵר	גִּדְלָה
הַבְּרִית וְ	הַבְּרִית וְ
[החסד לאהב] 5	[חסד לאהב] 5
[ו] וְשִׁמְרֵי [מִצָּ]	[ושמרי]
[ותו מהעלם]	[]

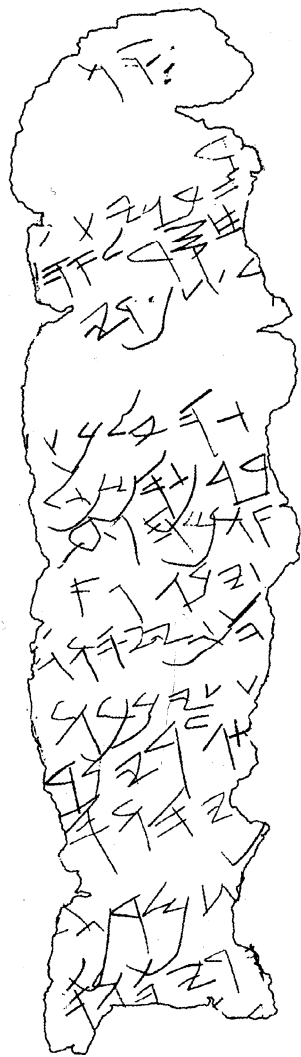
[ועד העלם]	[ועד העלם]
[ה] בְּרַכָּה מְכַל [פ]	[ברכה מכל]
ח ומהרע 10	ח ומהרע 10
כי בו גאל	כי בו גאל
ה כי יהוה	ה כי יהוה
[שיכנו ו]	[שיכנו]
צור יבר	צור יבר
ך יהוה [] 15	ך יהוה [] 15
ישמרך []	ישמרך []
[אר יהוה	[אר יהוה
פנו אלי	פנו אלי
[ך ויחנך]	[]

[YHW[H of the Ho]sts the Gr[eat God keeper of] the covenant [and the] grace to the ones who love him, the keepers of [his commandments, from eternity to] eternity [. . . the] blessing from every [tra]p and from the evil, because by him is deliverance, because YHWH [will] restore/answer him [and] Rock may bless you YHWH [and] protect you. [May] YHWH cause [his f]ac[e] to shine [upon you and be gracious unto you]

There was at least another line which is entirely lost. Maybe the amulet owner's name had been inscribed on it. Cf. the Aramaic amulet incised on bronze from Nirim: קמיע טב לאסתר ברתה דטאטיס, "A valid amulet for Esther, daughter of Tatis" (J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity*, Jerusalem and Leiden 1985, p. 98).

1–2. It seems that there was written here one of the god's epithets. The proposed reading appears to be the most logical one; cf. Jer 32:18: האל הגדול הגבור, "the great and mighty whose name is YHWH of the Hosts." Amulet writers were fond of using the name *S'ba'ot*, "Hosts of Heavens" (cf. Deut 4:19 *et passim*), or "Hosts of Israel" (cf. Isa 13:4), discussed *infra*, p. 230.

4–5. Restored according to Deut 7:9: וְהִסְדֵּךְ לְאַהֲבָיִי וְלִשְׁמֵרֵי, "The faithful god who keeps the covenant and loving kindness with them that love him and keep his commandments, to the thousandth generation"; and Dan 9:4; Neh 9:32, quoting a parallel formulation substituting the great and awesome, "הגדול והגורא" for הגאון. This formula was popular with prayers, and thus also suitable for amulets.



הברית — Note the *plene* writing with ' as internal *matres lectiones*.

7–8. From line 7 there are no readable letters. Nor is the beginning of line 8 certain. The first readable letter of line 8 is most probably ד, and the proposed reconstruction is supported by Ps 41:14; Neh 9:5, and is a substitute for אֶלֶף דִּוֵּר of Deut 7:9.

9. The reading is somewhat problematic. It is uneasy to combine the word

נה]ברכה, "the blessing," to the following: מכל [ת]פן ומהרע, "from every [tr]ap and from the evil." We did not encounter a blessing "from" something.

10–11. Deliverance is through, by, YHWH. Cf. Isa 45:17: יִשְׂרָאֵל נוֹשָׁע בַּיהוָה, "Israel is saved by YHWH"; Jer 3:23: אֲכֵן בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ תְּשׁוּעַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, "Truly through YHWH our god is there deliverance for Israel"; cf. also 2 Kgs 5:1: כִּי בּוֹ נָתַן יְהוָה לְאֶרְם תְּשׁוּעָה לְאַרְם, "For through him YHWH had granted victory to Aram." The בּוֹ is the *beth instrumentalis*.

11. בו — Note the *plene* writing with ו in contrary to the regular ה.

12–14. The text is best read as a prayer. The reading כִּי יְהוָה [נ]שִׁיבֵנו fits well the context, especially if compared to Ps 80:4: אֱלֹהִים הַשִּׁיבֵנו וְהָאֵר פְּנֵינוּ וְנוֹשְׁעָה: "Restore us, O God, and show Your favor that we may be delivered" (cf. vss. 8 and 20, which expend gradually with the names of God: אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת, "God of the Hosts," and יהוה אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת, "YHWH God of the Hosts"). The word [נ] צוֹר seems to be unconnected, not to the preceding clause, nor to the following Priestly Blessing; or perhaps the scribe intended to continue the clause כִּי יְהוָה צוֹר [נ]שִׁיבֵנו and to extend it by [נ]צוֹר יִבְרַכֵּנו, "and Rock will bless us." For the reference to the theophoric epithet צוֹר to blessing formulae, cf. 2 Sam 22:47 = Ps 18:47: בְּרוּךְ צוּרִי, "Blessed is my Rock," and Ps 144:1: בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה צוּרִי, "Blessed is YHWH my Rock," but eventually the scribe passed on to the Priestly Blessing formula יִבְרַךְ, etc.

כִּי יְהוָה [נ]שִׁיבֵנו — A prayer that YHWH will restore the suppliant, will draw him near, as opposed to keep distance from the worshipper and not deliver him; cf. the poet's supplication in Ps 38:22: אַל תַּעֲזֹבֵנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֵל תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי: "Do not abandon me YHWH my God, be not far from me."

צוֹר — The *plene* writing is problematic, but I see no better reading, although the ו is somewhat irregular.

14–15. יִבְרַךְ — The same orthography in the second amulet and on the "second pithos" from Kuntillet 'Ajrūd, יִבְרַךְ וּישְׁמֹר, (cf. *infra*, p. 320), it is impossible to decide if the pronunciation was *yēbhāreḥka*, skipping on one כ only when written (for this phenomenon cf. also Lachish Letter No. 3:8: וּכִיאִמַר אֲדֹנָי [*infra*, p. 63]; and *ibid.* line 9, Arad No. 21:5: חִיהוּה [*infra*, p. 123]), or it was also pronounced *yēbhāreḥka*.

19. Reconstructed after the Priestly Blessing in Num 6:24–26, may be there was enough space for the whole formula, as in the second amulet, but as the end of the scroll is missing there is no way to decide.

I reconstructed [פּוֹנֵן, מְצוֹתוֹן, פּוֹנֵן], unlike פּוֹנֵי in the second amulet—different scribes wrote the amulets.

SECOND AMULET

[For ...] yāhû blessed be he to YHW[H] who helps and who rebukes the evi[l]. May YHWH bless you (and) protect you. May YHW[H] cause his face to shine [upon yo]u and may he grant you p[lea]ce. [...]

The first line, or more, is lost.

1-2. [ל...ה/ו ברך הא ליהוה] — Cf. the dedication inscription on a stone basin from Kuntillet 'Ajrud, לעבריו בן עדנה ברך הא ליהו, *infra*, p. 314), and Gen 14:19: ברוך אברהם לאל עליון: "Blessed be Abram to God Most High"; Judg 17:2: ברוך בני ליהוה: "Blessed be my son to YHWH"; 1 Sam 23:21: ברוכים אתם ליהוה: "Blessed are you to YHWH."

3-5. העזר והגער — העזר והגער are participles. For entreaties for delivery from evil, and its association with blessings cf. Gen 48:16: יברך אתי מכל רע יברך: "The angel who redeemed me from all harm, may he bless the lads." For a rebuke cf. Zech 3:2: יגער יהוה בך השטן ויגער יהוה בך הבחור בירושלם: "YHWH rebuke you O Accuser, may he who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you." The meaning of the root גער is "to rebuke angrily"; cf. Isa 54:9: בן נשבצתי מקצף עליך: "So I swear that I will not be angry with you or rebuke you." The meaning of "drive out, away" is secondary and unattested in the Bible, and is used mostly in amulets; גער is used with people or nature but not with abstracts. Therefore "the evil" mentioned here is not an abstract evil but a specific "entity" like that mentioned in Zech 3:2 (*supra*).

6-7. ישמרך — Without the ו (*waw* consecutive) of the Massoretic text.

9. פניו — With a ך.

10. [אל]יך — With a ך like in the seventh century BCE papyrus from Wādī Murabba'āt (*infra*, p. 213).

The text of the Priestly Blessing is shorter than the one in the Bible; it skips the words ויחנן. ישא יהוה פניו אליך, "and be gracious unto you. May YHWH cause his face to shine upon you." It seems, however, that the biblical text should be preferred: it is literarily well organized, consisting of three sentences, each of the three blessings, composed of three, five and seven words in a blessing. Even the number of consonants and syllables of the biblical text are arranged in an upgrading order of 15, 20, and 25 consonants, and 12, 14, and 16 syllables. The text in the amulet is shorter because of lack of space or because the scribe quoted from memory and was not meticulous.

15-17. Nothing can be made of these doubtful remainders.



ה/ו ברוך ה
[ליהוה]
העזר ו
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