

were unlike stelai, I would suggest the force of the narrative more directly compares them to stelai. Their destruction was not in reference to their function as cultic stelai, though. The covenant was already broken, and so the now-voided contract was to be destroyed before their eyes (Weinfeld 1991, 410). The new set of tablets were immediately placed within the ark (Deut 10:5), and three verses later (10:8), the text clarifies the presencing function of the ark by explaining that the tribe of Levi was to bear the ark of the covenant and (as a result) to stand “before YHWH” (*lipnê YHWH*) to minister to them.



Figure 5.2. Tiglath-Pileser III wall relief depicting a shrine model being carted off from a conquered city. Not depicted in this detail are anthropomorphic divine images depicting two seated female deities and one striding storm deity clutching lightning bolts. Source: British Museum 118931. Drawing by the author.

If figurines such as the small bronze bull discovered near Dothan and the miniature anthropomorphic statue that may be jutting its hand out from the