

4. (hand)	<i>l'nyhw</i>	(hand)	to Oniyahu
5.	<i>wl'srth...</i>		and to Asherah...
6.	<i>wl'srth[...</i>		and to Asherah[...

A downward oriented hand was carved under the third line, which could be interpreted to identify the inscription as Uriyahu's *yād*, "monument," as a reference to the underworld (Schmidt 2016, 140; Schroer 1983; Suriano 2018, 117), or it may represent YHWH's own hand, reaching down to save (Parker 2006, 89).



Figure 1.2. The Khirbet el-Qôm Inscription. Drawing by the author.

The worry expressed in these texts may be for robbers or desecrators of graves, but if the biblical literature reflects salient beliefs about the underworld, the other inhabitants of that underworld may also have been in view for some.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ The Royal Steward Inscription from the Silwan Necropolis (Silw 1) expresses this concern: "This is the [sepulcher of PN-]jah, the royal steward. There is neither silver nor gold [he]re, / [but] only [his bones] and his concubine's bon[es] w[ith] him. Cursed be the one who / opens this (sepulcher)" (Suriano 2018, 103–5). Feder (2019, 422) argues, "the