

## fiery missile

זִיק / קֶזֶ

### 1. Statistics

Torah: 0. Nebiim: 2. Ketubim: 1. Total: 3.

First of all there is the problem of establishing the correct lemma for this word. In זִיק it occurs only twice as זִיקוֹת in Isa. 50:11. So it is actually a *hapax legomenon* in the Hebrew Bible (not recognised as such by Cohen, *BHL* and Greenspahn *HLBH*). The most natural choice is to regard it as a plural of \*זִיקָה (so *TLB*, vol. 3, 30; *DCH*, vol. 3, 102). However, since many Hebrew nouns exist both in a masculine and a feminine form (cf. e.g. Sperber 1959) and feminine plurals are fairly common with masculine singulars (e.g. *GKC* § 87m-p), a singular \*זִיק is an acceptable alternative (so *HCHAT*, 361; *BDB*, 278). Other dictionaries refuse to choose between these two options (e.g. *GB*, 197, 204; *LHA*, 207; *KBL*, 254; *HALAT*, 257; *DBHE*, 169; *HAHAT*, 299). The circumstance that the masculine plural form זִיקִים is well-attested in Postbiblical Hebrew (see sections 4 and 6 below) argues in favour of those who opt for the masculine form of the lemma.

The next question is whether the lemma also occurs in the form of קֶזֶ in Prov. 26:18. Apparently this has the same meaning as זִיק in Isa. 50:11. Some scholars regard זִיקוֹת as a secondary form which developed from an original זִיקוֹת, plural of זִיק which in that case would be the more original form of the lemma (cf. Gesenius & Roediger, *TPC*, 424; *GKC* § 20n). Whether this קֶזֶ in turn is same word as the קֶזֶ which is thought to mean ‘fetter, chain’ in Isa. 45:14; Nah. 3:10; Ps. 149:8; Job 36:8 depends on the etymology and basic meaning of all three words concerned (see section 4). To avoid confusion the statistics above are based only on the three passages where the word is thought to mean ‘flaming missile’ or ‘torch’.

### 2a. Literal Use

In Isa. 50:11 people kindling a fire (אֵשׁ קָדַח Qal) are addressed. In the parallel colon they are called people ‘girding’ (זִיקוֹת אֹרֵר Pi.) into the blaze of their own fire אֵשׁ אֹרֵר || into the זִיקוֹת that they themselves burn (בֵּעַר Pi.). The use of the verb אֹרֵר Pi. often caused translation

problems. Duhm and others solved this by emendation (זִיקִי 'those who light torches'). Nowadays most commentators suggest זִיקִי Pi. has to be taken metaphorically, meaning that the people addressed surround themselves with torches, thus protecting themselves by their light. As a consequence, renderings like 'walk by the light of your fire' (RSV) came into existence. However, it is questionable whether זִיקִי can mean 'light' (cf. Isa. 2:5; Ps. 56:14: זִיקִי בְּאֵזֶר!). Moreover, the verb זִיקִי Pi. occurs 6 times in the Hebrew Bible and in all other 5 cases it is a direct object that is girded. The verb is never used reflexively. Thus, it would be more appropriate to surmise that the people 'gird' or 'wrap' the torches (cf. Watts 1987, 194, who renders 'tying up torches'). Because it stands in parallelism with 'to kindle a fire', it is more likely that the expression describes the preparation of torches by wrapping wooden sticks in wool or pieces of cloth, and drenching them in oil, wax or bitumen (see below, section 8). This preparatory work nicely matches the kindling of fire.

Isa. 50:11 mockingly exhorts those who hope to illuminate the darkness surrounding them by man-made light instead of trusting in the LORD (cf. 51:10). They kindle their torches – possibly to participate in Babylonian nightly processions (cf. *RLA*, Bd. 3, 2) – but these torches will become a pyre on which they will burn (one should not emend זִיקִי into זִיקִי, cf. Korpel & De Moor 1998, 449, n. 7, 486). They seem to forget that it is God himself who commands both the darkness of judgment (Isa. 50:3; 51:6; cf. 47:5, 14) and the light of salvation (51:4, cf. 42:16; 45:7; 49:6).

In Prov. 26:18 the plural זִיקִים is used, which presupposes a singular זִיק (also known from Jewish Aramaic, see below). It occurs in the expression הַיִּזְרֶה זִיקִים חֲצִים וְזִמָּה, literally 'one who continuously shoots זִיקִים, arrows and death'. He who deceives his neighbour is like a madman wildly shooting off זִיקִים, arrows (חֲצִים) and death (זִמָּה). Apparently the writer saw the זִיקִים as potentially deadly weapons which one should not handle carelessly. If it is admissible to view the sequel, Prov. 26:19-20, as an elaboration of the imagery, the missiles are fiery here too. Both biblical texts suggest a kind of torch or fiery missile.

## 2b. Figurative Use

Not attested in biblical Hebrew.

### 3. Epigraphic Hebrew

Not attested.

### 4. Cognates

Klein, *CEDHL*, 197, does not indicate which root he prefers for צִי I, צִי and צִי II, but he derives צִי I ‘chain, fetter’ from the  $\sqrt{\text{צִי}}$ . Gesenius & Roediger, *TPC*, 424 and König, *HAWAT*, 89, 93, assume that both words have been derived from  $\sqrt{*צִי}$ . This is a less exotic proposal than it may seem at first sight. It is indeed noteworthy that both צִי in Prov. 26:18 and צִי in Jer. 40:1, 4 have a double צ. צִי is easily explained as a normal development:  $*zinq > *ziqq > צִי$ . צִי has long been recognised as a case of metathesis of quantity (cf. *BL* § 23c): the ‘long’ consonant *qq* with short preceding vowel *i* in  $*ziqq$  was exchanged for a long vowel  $\bar{i}$  with a ‘short’ (single) *q*:  $*z\bar{i}q$  (cf. *GKC* § 20n). Because the basic meaning of the root *znq* seems to be ‘to wrap tightly’ (see the cognates below) it seems indeed possible that צִי II ‘chain, fetter’ is nothing but a semantic differentiation of צִי ‘torch’. The Pi. of צִי which is thought to mean ‘to leap forth’ in Deut. 33:22 has nothing to do with our lemma. As seen by Guillaume 1959, this verb is a metathesis of  $\sqrt{nzq}$ , ‘to storm ahead, rush forward’.

AKKADIAN: The noun is related to Neo-Asyrian *zīqtu* ‘torch’, and *zīqu* II, ‘torch’, cf. *CAD* (Z), 133; *AHw*, 1532; Salonen, *Hausgeräte*, 138-145; Tawil, *ALCBH*, 90.

POSTBIBLICAL HEBREW: See below, section 6. For some (rare) rabbinic references, Levy, *WTM*, Bd. 1, 531: ‘Feuerkugel, Brandpfeil ... ein Komet’; Jastrow, *DTT*, 395: ‘sparks, burning arrows ... meteors, shooting stars’.

JEWISH ARAMAIC: In the Aramaic Henoch צִי ‘meteor’ occurs several times (4Q201:IV.3; 4Q204:VI.20, 24, 30, next to thunder and lightning). In other apocalyptic works these ‘meteors’ are mentioned too (4Q246:II.1; 4Q558:Fr. 1, II.5). For Rabbinic Aramaic see Jastrow, *DTT*, 395: צִי, ‘sparks, burning arrows; meteors, shooting stars [or comet]’; Idem, 396: צִי I, ‘1. shooting star, or comet; 2. blast, wind, draught (spirit)’. The Job Targum from

Qumran renders the Hebrew לַפִּידִים ‘torches’ of Job 41:11 as יִקִּין (11Q10:XXXVI.6). With regard to rabbinic Aramaic, cf. זִיקָא 2, according to Sokoloff, *DJPA*, 176: ‘flash of fire, comet, demon’; זִיקוֹק ‘spark’ (see also Sokoloff, *DJBA*, 411).

SYRIAC: Payne Smith (Margoliouth), *CSD*, 115: *zīqā* and *zīqtā*, ‘a. violent rain with wind; rain falling in great drops; boisterous wind; b. a shooting star, metaph. radiancy’. Idem, 115: *znaq* ‘to shoot an arrow, to hurl, sling’.

CLASSICAL ARABIC: *zanaqa* ‘to tighten, constrict’ (Wehr, *DMWA*, 383). Lane, *AEL*, 1259: *zanaq* ‘thin part of an arrow-head’. See the introductory part of section 4 above.

### 5. Ancient Versions

Θ and other Greek versions: Isa. 50:11 φλῶξ – *GELS-L* (1992-1996), 505 and *GELS-L* (rev.ed. 2003), 650: ‘flame; light, shine; blade (of a flashing sword)’. Interesting is the fact that Θ translates ‘to gird the torches’ as ‘to strengthen/to feed the torches’ (κατισχύω φλόγα), which also might refer to the binding of pine splinters with cloth or wool into a bundle, and made inflammable with oil, resin or bitumen. Prov. 26:18 ῥόπαλον – *GELS-L* (1992-1996), 418 and *GELS-L* (rev.ed. 2003), 544: ‘club (weapon)’. It is paralleled by sword (μάχαιρα) and arrow (τόξον).

ט: Isa. 50:11 מתקפי חרב ‘(all you) who grasp a sword’.

ס: Isa. 50:11 *šalhebūtā* – Payne Smith (Margoliouth), *CSD*, 518: ‘flame, blaze’; the paraphrasis of ס in Prov. 26:18 does not allow a definite identification of its rendering of זִיקִין: ‘Like the behaviour of boys throwing things (or: words), so are the sharp arrows of death’.

פ: Isa. 50:11 *flamma*, ‘flame’; Prov. 26:18 *lancea*, ‘lance’.

### 6. Judaic Sources

In Sir. 43:13 (17) – according to manuscripts M and B – God’s זִיקִין מִשְׁפֵּט ‘fiery missiles of judgment’ light up in the sky, accompanying his hail (ברד). Both the Hebrew and Aramaic texts of Qumran mention the זִיקִין/זִיקִיא. Here too the expression זִיקִין מִשְׁפֵּט ‘fiery missiles of judgment’ occurs (1QH<sup>a</sup>16.37). According

to 1QM 6.2-3 ‘fiery missiles of blood’ (זִקֵּי דָם) shall be written on darts (שֵׁלֶט). CD-A 5:13 clearly alludes to Isa. 50:11, when it describes followers of Belial as זִקְוֹת אֵשׁ וּמְבַעְרֵי זִקֹּת, ‘kindlers of fire and igniters of fiery missiles’. 1QH<sup>a</sup> 9:12 pairs זִקִּים וּבִרְקִים ‘fiery missiles and lightnings’. Apparently these missiles have acquired a celestial, apocalyptic status.

## 7. Illustrations

On the well-known relief depicting Sennacherib’s siege of Lachish an Assyrian soldier who is almost entirely hidden behind the archer in the foreground is igniting tightly wrapped missiles with a torch (→ לִפִּיד),



Unfortunately it is unclear how the Assyrians hurled these projectiles into the city, but the association with arrows and fire matches the biblical data.

On the Baal-stele from Ugarit the lightning spear the god holds in his left hand is a kind of burning arrow. For the imagery,

see e.g. Cornelius 1994. Probably, the idea was that lightning was created by the god Ba'al throwing his flaming arrows from heaven.

## 8. Archaeological Remarks

The material used to make פִּי cannot have been very different from that of torches. According to Salonen, *Hausgeräte*, 138-145, esp. 138, torches were made of wood and wool, seldom bronze was used for the haft. The ideogram for the word 'torch' is IZI 'burning torch, fire'. The wick or burner was made of wool or a piece of woolen cloth. In Sumerian several words were used for the torch, mostly constructed with GI 'reed-stem' and IZI 'fire'. The Neo-Assyrian word *ziqtu* (see above) is marked as combustible material by the determinative *giš* 'wood' (Von Soden, *AHW*, vol. 3, 1532). In one text the making of the torch is described, 'you insert cedar, cypress and aromatic reed into two torches, wrap white and red wool around them, set fire (to them) by means of sulphur and throw them on the pyre' (Salonen, *Hausgeräte*, 143). Often resinous wood like pine was used to make a torch from a bundle of kindle-wood splinters bound around a stick (Salonen, *Hausgeräte*, 144-5; Forbes, *SAT*, vol. 6, 129, 131). Torches not only were used for lightning but also as a kind of telegraphy. Staves of pine wood were used to which reeds and branches of olive trees were attached by a cord (Forbes, *SAT*, vol. 9, 174).

In ancient Greece too bundles of splinters were used as torches. They were made of resinous wood, and bound together with rushes, papyrus, or vine tendrils, and drenched into resin, pitch or wax (Forbes, *SAT*, vol. 9, 131). Torches were used predominantly when going out by night. The Romans too used *malleoli*, 'fire-darts' and *fascēs sarmentorum*, 'bundles of twigs', to start a fire in the cities they besieged (cf. Lewis & Short *LD*, 1104).

## 9. Conclusion

The evidence assembled warrants the conclusion that פִּי and פִּי are the same word which designated a missile made of tightly wrapped rushes or kindle-wood, impregnated with combustible fluids. As such it could also be used as a dreaded type of weapon that could be used to kindle a besieged city. Only later on it

became a designation of comets or heavenly demons, although it is possible that this was derived from existing popular belief. See also  $\rightarrow$  לִפִּיד.

The root from which the word was derived is most likely the Semitic  $\sqrt{nzq}$  ‘to wrap tightly’. There is insufficient reason to assume the existence of a feminine form \*קֵיָה.

## 10. Bibliography

Dalman, *AuS*, Bd. 4, 269 (*meš'al*), describes the use of torches for light and at nightly wedding processions. The torches were made from pieces of cloth, drenched in oil, and put on wooden staves – *BDB*, 278: ‘missile, spark’ – *BHH*, 462-3 – *BRL*<sup>2</sup>, 72 – Klein, *CEDHL*, 197 – Cornelius 1994: I. Cornelius, *The Iconography of the Canaanite Gods Reshef and Ba'al: Late Bronze and Iron Age I Periods (c 1500-1000 BCE)* (OBO, 140), Fribourg 1994, Pl. 32, BR 1; Pl. 45, BM 5 – *DBHE*, 218, s.v. קֵיָה: ‘teas, antorchas’; 224, s.v. קֵיָה<sub>2</sub>: ‘venablos’ – *DCH*, vol. 2, 102, s.v. קֵיָה: ‘flaming arrow, firebrand, lightning flash’; 129, s.v. קֵי II: ‘flaming arrow, firebrand, lightning flash, perhaps meteor’ – *EM*, vol. 4, 527 – *GB*, 197, s.v. קֵיָה: ‘Brandpfeile’; 204, s.v. קֵיָה II: ‘Brandpfeile’ – Guillaume 1959: A. Guillaume, ‘Hebrew and Arabic Lexicography: A Comparative Study’, *Abr-Nahrain* 1 (1959-60), 3-35 (8) – *HAHAT*, Bd. 2, s.v. קֵיָה: ‘Brandpfeile’ (‘Blitze’ for Sir. 43:13); 309, s.v. קֵיָה<sub>2</sub>: ‘Brandpfeile’ – *HALAT*, Bd. 1, 257, s.v. קֵיָה: ‘Brandpfeile’; 266, s.v. קֵי II: ‘Brandpfeile’ – *HAWAT*, 89: ‘Brandpfeile’ (identifying the two forms of the lemma) – *HCHAT*, Bd. 1, 361: ‘Brandgeschoss, -pfeil’ (identifying the two forms of the lemma) – *KBL*, 254: ‘Brandpfeile fire-arrows’ – Korpel & De Moor 1998: M.C.A. Korpel & J.C. de Moor, *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry: Isaiah 40-55* (OTS, 41), Leiden 1998 – *LÄ*, Bd. 2, 79-81 – *LHA*, 207, s.v. קֵיָה: ‘iacula incendiaria’; 214, s.v. קֵי: ‘1. vincula, 2. iaculum, sagitta’ – *NIDOT*, vol. 1, 1096-7: ‘flaming arrow’ (for both forms of the word) – *RLA*, Bd. 3, 2 – Salonen, *Hausgeräte*, 138-145 – Sperber 1959: A. Sperber, *A Grammar of Masoretic Hebrew: A General Introduction to the Pre-Masoretic Bible*, Copenhagen 1959, 38-40 – Loewenstamm & Blau, *TLB*, vol. 3, 30, s.v. \*קֵיָה: ‘spark’; 54, s.v. קֵי: ‘fiery arrow, or burning coal shot from a sling’ – Gesenius & Roediger, *TPC*,

424: derives the noun from *znq*, and Arab. *znq*, *malleoli*, *tela ardentia*. D.N. Freedman *et al.* (eds), *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, Grand Rapids 2000, 1321 – Watts 1987: J.D.W. Watts, *Isaiah 34–66* (WBC, 25), Waco 1987.

Last update: 28-10-2011

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This article should be cited as:

Marjo Korpel, 'פֶּיַ / פֶּיַ fiery missile',

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