

ומצוקים אחזו בארון הקדש נצחו האראלים את המצוקים ונשבה ארון הקדש. The Mešûkîm are the angels of the upper world, and the Er'elîm are the angels of the lower world, who defeat the former and carry the ark of God (i. e. Rabbi Judah) captive. Midraš Kōnen (Ben Yehuda, *Thesaurus*, s. v.) names as different classes of angels the אראלים, מלאכים, and אופנים, so that the Er'elîm appear as the lowest category, the Ōfannîm being the angels in the מרכבה, or Chariot of God.

THE BABYLONIAN TEMPLE-TOWER AND THE ALTAR OF BURNT-OFFERING

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The studies of my friend Mr. Feigin have placed the old problem of Ariel in a much clearer light, though I am not able to agree with all his suggestions. There can be no doubt that the balance of probability is now in favor of the Assyrian etymology long maintained by Jeremias and others. In Mesopotamian cosmology Mount Aral(l)û. Sum. Arali (for etymology cf. *AJSL.*, XXXV, 191, n. 1), in the far north was the home of the shades, whence Hades was called in Sumerian *kûr*, mountain, and in Assyrian *hursîn*, mountain, as Zimmern has recently shown. Aralû is written ideographically *É-KUR-UŠ* (*BAD*), House of the mountain of the dead. Aral(l)û is also the mountain of the gods, *É-garsag-gal-kûr-kûr-ra*, House of the great mountain of the lands, and is further identified with the fabulous mountain of gold in the land of the gods. As *É-kûr* and *E-gar-ag-kûr-kûr-ra* were two of the most popular names of *ziḫḫurûti*, or temple-towers, we may safely suppose that the latter, being the terrestrial representations of the mountain of the gods, shared its name Aralû. Originally, of course, the mountain of the gods and the mountain of the shades were distinct conceptions, but since both were placed in the far north they were naturally confused.

In Is. 29 2, אריאל clearly means Hades:

*** וְהָיְתָה לִי כְאֲרִיאֵל
וְהָיָה כְּאוֹב־מֵאֲרֵץ קוֹלְךָ
וְחִנִּיתִי כְדוֹר עֲלֶיךָ
וּמַעַפְרָא תִצְפַּנֶּנּוּ

Thou shalt become like Hades; I will encamp like a wall against thee.***
The voice of a shade shall be thine; from the dust thou shalt utter chirps.

The denizens of the underworld were supposed to become birds, clad in feathers (Descent of Ištar, line 10). The conception that the soul of a dead man is embodied in a bird, especially an owl, is almost universal. Is. 33 7,

הֵן אֲרָאִים צַעֲקוֹתֵיחַוָּצָה מְלֹאכֵי שְׁלוֹם מְרִיבֵיכִיּוֹן

is evidently, following the Talmudic tradition (see Mr. Feigin's article), to be rendered as follows:

Behold the Ar'elim cry without; the propitious angels wail bitterly.

The thought seems to be that the destructive spirits of the lower world have invaded the land, howling like jackals without while they spread famine and pestilence; the spirits of heaven weep bitterly over the godlessness of the land and its consequent suffering. The shades were called both *Ar'elim* and *Benê Ar'el* (II Sam. 23 20, LXX), just as they are also both *Refā'im* and *Benê Rafā*, *Anakim* and *Benê 'Anak*.² These expressions are used in the Bible just as in Egypt and Mesopotamia for the demigods and heroes of a bygone age as well as for the shades of the lower world in general.

There is no phonetic objection to the combination of *Ar'el* with *Aralû*; the final *û* is dropped in Hebrew loan-words from Assyrian, as in *edû* > אֶדּ, *inundation*. The various writings point unmistakably to a loan-word which was adapted to Hebrew by popular etymology in different ways. The pronunciation *Ar'el* is evidently based on a reminiscence of Nergal-Irra, called *šar Arali* and usually represented as a lion. The variant *har'el* in

¹ Pronounce metrically *kôbmêres*.

² For the etymology of רפאים see Haupt, *AJSL.*, XXXIII, 48; the stem is רפה = *rabû*, set, of the sun. Similarly ענקים may be connected with Ar. *a'naqa*, set, of the stars (cf. *AJSL.*, XXIV, 142). This is, of course, very doubtful, but is at least more likely than the old combination with *a'nak*, long-necked.

Ez. 43 15 means *mountain of god*, like Arallû. That the word should be a genuine Hebrew compound is impossible, as we have no parallels. Moreover, the rendering *hearth of God* is excluded by the fact that there is no word *irjah*, *hearth*, in Arabic, as lightly assumed by all the commentators. The word supposed to mean *hearth* is one of the many forms of the word *irî*, *arî*, *ârî*, *arîjah*, crib, stall, enclosure (cf. Barth, *ZDMG.*, LVII. 636), a pre-Islamic loan from Aram. *urû*, itself derived from Assy. *urû*, stall, enclosure, another loan from Sum. *ûr* (*Sumerisches Glossar*, p. 49, *ûr* VI), with the same meaning.

As seen by Jeremias, Ariel as the name of Mount Zion³ is identical with Arallû, mountain of god, Heb. *har kôdeš*. Similarly, the highest of the three stages of the altar of burnt-offering in the temple of Solomon and Ezekiel bears the same name. The striking resemblance of this altar to the Babylonian stage-tower was pointed out many years ago by Haupt, who said (Toy, *Ezekiel*, p. 187): "The Temple resembled, to a certain extent, a Babylonian temple-tower of three stories, and the altar of burnt-offering is practically a Babylonian temple-tower on a smaller scale, or rather, the temple-tower is, as it were, a huge altar." The commonest type of stage-tower had three stages; cf. the illustrations in Gressmann, *Altorientalische Texte und Bilder*, II, 39. Descriptions of stage-altars may be found in Dalman's *Petra*, pp. 141 (on the summit of a high-place), 288 (on a terrace), and 299, but all of these are crude compared with the Jewish altar, which was certainly based on Mesopotamian models, coming through Phoenicia.

The reconstruction of the altar of burnt-offering (Ez. 43 13-17) given in the commentaries (cf. Kraetzschmar, *Handkommentar*, p. 279, and Toy, *Ezekiel*, p. 191) requires a slight modification. The *הַיִּסוד* is not the lowest of four stages, but is the foundation of the altar, just as rendered by the Targum, which gives *תְּשׁוּתָא*. Since its surface was then on a level with the

³ The name Zion probably mean *mountain* rather than *necropolis*; Ar. *ḡūwah* means *mound* as well as *stone-heap* - Heb. *צִיּוֹן*, and Eg. *du* means *mountain*.

⁴ Restore *הַיִּסוד* al. o after *הַיִּסוד* in 13, it has fallen out before *הַיִּסוד* by haplography.

surrounding pavement it becomes clear why the גבול, *boundary* (13, 17), was necessary to mark the limit of the sacred altar-area. Thus, while the total height from the bottom of the foundation to the top of the horns was twelve cubits (1+2+4+4+1), the actual elevation of the surface of the *ar'el* above the pavement was ten cubits (2+4+4), agreeing exactly with the ten cubits stated in II Chr. 41 as the height of the altar of Solomon's temple, the cubit being here also presumably the Babylonian cubit of 21 inches specified by Ezekiel. Moreover, the boundary (13) was half a cubit (one span) from the base of the lower stage,⁵ another span in width (17), while the חֵיק projected a cubit beyond the boundary, so the total length and width of the altar would be 12+1+1+2+4 = 20 cubits, just as stated in II Chr. 41.

The enigmatical expression חֵיק הָאָרֶץ, *bosom of the earth*, is very important, as it is simply a literal translation of Assy. *irat kigalli*, bosom of the *kigallu*, commonly used to denote the foundation of a temple-tower. The word *kigallu*, literally *great earth*, means *underworld*, *site*, *basis*, and *foundation-platform*, the latter sense arising from the fancy that the temple-tower was the link of heaven and earth (*dur-an-ki*), founded in the underworld and reaching heaven, a hyperbole recurring countless times in the inscriptions.

No less characteristically Mesopotamian is the use of the term *ar'el* for the highest stage of the altar, rather than for the whole altar. Assy. *zikkuratu* means properly mountain-peak (*zikkurat šadi*), and refers primarily to the topmost stage, though it may be extended by metonymy to include the entire temple-tower, whose original name was *ekurru*, mountain-house,

⁵ The term עוֹרָה, generally misunderstood, and even combined with Assy. *uṣurtu*, means properly *terrace*, *terrace-platform*. Ar. *ʿaḍirah* is *terraced court before a house*, and South. Ar. עוֹרָה has the same meaning (contrast Weber, *MVAG.*, 1901, p. 66). The primary sense is *what is supported, upheld* from the stem *ʿdr*, support, help. The עוֹרָה of Solomon's temple (II Chr. 4 9 6 13) corresponds exactly to Assy. *kisallu*, the terrace-platform in front of the temple. Here Solomon erected his bronze כִּיּוֹר (also Babylonian, as pointed out *JAOS.*, XXXVI, 232) on which to address the multitude assembled before the temple.

whence Aram. *ekurrû*, shrine. idol. The cosmic symbolism appears clearly in the four horns, or rather four mountains, if we may judge from the four "horns" on an altar at Petra. If there were any possible doubt regarding the correctness of our interpretation, it should be removed by the variant *har-el*, mountain of god, in verse 15 (see above).

From Mr. Feigin's discussion it appears that *ar'el* in the Mesha stone means *maššebah*, *pésel*, and not *pillar-altar* or *altar-hearth*, as commonly assumed. As is well-known, among the Western Semites the symbol of deity was rarely more than a stone menhir or a wooden post, and it is seldom possible to distinguish sharply between *maššebah* and *pésel*. It is not certain how *ar'el* came to mean *pésel*. Porphyry says that the altar was regarded as the symbol of deity by the Arabs (cf. Lagrange, *Religions sémitiques*, p. 191) and Robertson Smith (*Religion of the Semites*, p. 201 ff.) maintains that the altar is a development of the *maššebah*. While the latter view cannot be seriously defended, it must be admitted that there is often no clear distinction between the two. On the whole I am inclined to favor Lagrange's theory that the *maššebah* as a stele representing divinity reflects the Mesopotamian temple-tower (*op. cit.* p. 192 ff.), though I would not go as far as he does. The conception is, of course, primitive, taking root in a fetishism found all over the world: the cult-symbolism of later times, however, is often unmistakably Mesopotamian in origin. It is more than likely that Egyptian influences have also been at work here. The Egyptian analogue of the *zikkurat* is the pyramid, which assumes two forms, the stage-tower surmounted by a pyramidion, which developed into the later stageless pyramid, and the obelisk crowned by a pyramidion. This pyramidion bore the name *bn* or *bnbt*,⁶ also applied by metonymy to the

⁶ For the relation between the obelisk and the pyramidion cf. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, p. 70 ff. The *bn* was further combined by paronymasia with the *bnu*, phoenix, also symbolizing the sun. For the etymology of *bn*, *bnbt* see *AJSL*, XXXIV, 223, note. Here also belongs Ar. *banân*, fingers, extremities of the body; cf. Assyr. *u'ân šad'*, mountain peak, it. finger (*ubânu* **ibhâm* is not etymologically connected with *bnbt*) of the mountain.

whole obelisk, just as in the case of the Babylonian *zikkurat*. The pyramidion called *bn*, which stood in the temple of the sun at Heliopolis, corresponds to the *maṣṣebah* or *ḥammân* of Šamaš or Ba'al, just as the wooden *ḏd* pillar of Osiris is parallel to the Aširat post, as pointed out by Ember. While the pyramidion was originally only a specialized type of *maṣṣebah*, in the course of time it certainly came to represent the mountain of the earth. Though the obelisk had other symbolism also, one can hardly doubt that the two obelisks flanking the *pyla* of some Egyptian temples, reappearing as architectural loans in Phoenician and Syrian temples, represent primarily the mountains of dawn, figuring so often in West-Asiatic and Egyptian literature and art. As is well-known, these obelisks finally appear as *Iakīn* and *Ia'oz*(?) in the temple of Solomon, also facing the east, the *šit šamši*. All this cosmological symbolism is comparatively recent, even though appearing in our oldest monumental sources.