

כִּידוֹן

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Introduction

Grammatical Type: n m.

Occurrences: Total 9x OT, 1x Sir (46.2b), 5x Qum (1QM 5.7, 11, 12, 14, 6.5), 0x inscr.

Text Doubtful:

A.1 [nil]

B.1 Briggs & Briggs (1906:310) propose that for MT סָגַר in Ps 35.3 the original was probably כִּידוֹן. “In unpointed text כָּדָן might have been mistaken for סָגַר, if letters were transposed כָּנָד.” This emendation must be rejected because of the occurrence of סָגַר in 1QM 5.7.

Qere/Ketiv: none.

1. Root and Comparative Material

A.1 The etymology of כִּידוֹן is unknown or disputed. Since the discovery of 1QM, where כִּידָן clearly denotes a type of sword, etymologies that gave it the meaning “javelin” etc. have been rejected. Zorell (354) and *HAL* (450) attempt no etymology, while Ges. (343) is cautious.

A.2 כִּידוֹן occurs in RH (BDB:475, KB:433), e.g. M. Kelim 11.8. Here Blackman (1964:85) understands it as “spear” with the alternatives “javelin” and “lance” (1964:86), whereas Bunte (1972:216-17) breaks with traditional understanding of the Mishnah and, on the basis of 1QM, translates כִּידוֹן as “Krummsäbel”.

A.3 פִּידוֹן may be connected with the prop noun פִּידָן (1Ch 13.9), the parallel of which (2Sm 6.6) has נָבוֹן, LXX (Ms B) Νωδᾶβ (see Marget 1920). Tur-Sinai (1951:284) suggests that פִּידָן is a “metamorphosis” of נָבוֹן by oral or written tradition. *HAL* (450) supports a possible connection between פִּידוֹן and 1Ch 13.9.

B.1 BDB (475) derives פִּידוֹן from the root כִּיד, said possibly to correspond to Arb *kāda* ‘labour, take pains, strive, struggle with’, and Arb *kayd* ‘war’. Levy (317) compares Arb *kayd* and BH כִּיד “Verderben”. KB (433; see also Ges.:343) compares Arb *kadda* and Eth *kēda* meaning “stossen, thrust”.

2. Formal Characteristics

A.1 Since the etymology of פִּידוֹן is unknown, its formal characteristics cannot be stated with certainty. If it has an etymology within Hebrew, the final syllable *ōn* or *ān* may be an affirmative (for this compare the nouns in Joüon & Muraoka 1993, Vol. 1:262-63). In 1QM the word is always spelled בִּידָן, as Jr 50.42 פִּידָן. Elsewhere in MT the final syllable is always plene. The consistent plene spelling of the first syllable may suggest that the root is כִּיד, rather than כִּדָן.

A.2 The form רחבו “its width” (1QM 5.13), referring to בִּידָן, indicates that it is masculine.

B.1 Carmignac (1955:358; cf. Carmignac 1958:81) denies that an /o/ sound could have existed in the final syllable of the word at the time of 1QM, on the grounds of the defective spelling בִּידָן. He suggests that the pronunciation of Hebrew must have varied with time. Nevertheless, variation in spelling is not definitely linked with pronunciation, and variation in pronunciation does not have to be diachronic.

3. Syntagmatics

A.1 כִּידוֹן is obj of חִזַּק hiph (Jr 6.23, 50.42), נוֹף hiph (Sir 46.2). It is governed by בַּנְּטָה (Josh 8.18 (2x), 26). It is part of a multiple subj of רָנָה (Jb 39.23), a verb whose meaning is unclear. BDB (943) suggests that רָנָה ‘rattle’ is onomatopoeic; *HAL* (1162) gives it as “klirren”. 11QtgJob uses יתלה from the verb to “hang up”.

נוֹף hiph in Sir 46.2b explains נְטָה in 46.2a, which itself recalls the verb in Josh 8. נוֹף hiph ‘wave’ is used with the following instruments as logical or grammatical objects: חֶרֶב (Ex 20.25), חֶרְמֵשׁ (Dt 23.26), בְּרִזָּל (Dt 27.5, Josh 8.31), מְשׁוֹר (Is 10.15), שֶׁבֶט (Is 10.15). All but the last are instruments for cutting, שֶׁבֶט is only used for thrusting in 2Sm 18.14 (though Driver 1913:330 emends שְׁבִטִים to שְׁלַחִים), and therefore the use of נוֹף hiph in Sir probably supports the meaning “sword”, and suggests that this meaning in 1QM is not an innovation.

The use of חִזַּק hiph may indicate that the weapon was retained during combat.

A.2 Nomen rectum after רָעַשׁ (Jb 41.21), אֹרֶךְ (1QM 5.12), יָד ‘handle’ (1QM 5.14), חִזַּק hiph participle (1QM 6.5). For this last verb see A.1 above; nomen regens before נְחֹשֶׁת (1Sm 17.6).

A.3 In 1QM 5.11 ברזל is predicate following הכידינים as subj.

A.4 יָד + בַּ is used adverbially to, or as predicate for כִּידוֹן (Josh 8.18 (2x), 1QM 5.6 predicate).

B.1 [nil]

4. Versions

a. LXX:

ἀσπίς (1Sm 17.6, 45);

γαῖσος (Josh 8.18 [2x]);

ἐγγειρίδιον (Jr 50[27].42);

ζιβύνη (Jr 6.23);

μάχαιρα? (Jb 39.23);

πυρφόρον (Jb 41.21);

ρόμφαία (Sir 46.2);

zero (Josh 8.26).

b. The Three:

Aq:

ἀσπίς (Jb 41.21);

γαῖσος (Josh 8.18a);

θυρεός (Jr 6.23, 50.42);

Sym:

ἀσπίς (Josh 8.18a);

ζιβύνη (Josh 8.26);

θυρεός (Jr 6.23, 50.42);

Thd:

ἀσπίς (Jb 39.23);

θυρεός (Jb 41.21).

c. Pesh:

trpns^ʾ (1Sm 17.6);

nyzk^ʾ (Josh 8.18 [2x], 26, Jr 6.23 [pl], 50.42 [pl], Jb 39.23, 41.21, Sir 46.2);

skr^ʾ (1Sm 17.45).

d. Tg:

מסחפא (1Sm 17.6);

גוד (Jb 39.23 11QtgJob);

רומחא (Josh 8.18 [2x], 26, 1Sm 17.45, Jb 39.23, 41.21);

תריסין (Jr 6.23, 50.42).

e. Vg:

clypeus (Josh 8.18a, 26, 1Sm 17.6, 45, Jb 39.23);

hasta (Jb 41.21);

romphea (Sir 46.2);

scutum (Jr 6.23, 50.42);

zero (Josh 8.18b).

A.1 In the LXX there is a confusing number of semantically distinct equivalents for כִּידוֹן. Several point towards a javelin or spear: γαίσος ‘javelin’ (Liddell & Scott 1940:335), ‘spear, javelin’ (Lust et al. 1992:86), ζιβύνη ‘(hunting-)spear’ (Lust et al. 1992:195), πυρφόρον ‘flaming weapon, javelin with combustibles tied to it’ (Lust et al. 1996:413, see also Walters 1973:124-25). Others point to a knife or sword: ἐγχειρίδιον, ῥομφαία, μάχαιρα. The last equivalent is less certain than the others: LXX Jb 39.23 reads ἐπ’ αὐτῷ γαυριᾶ τόξον καὶ μάχαιρα where MT has עָלְיוֹ שֵׁפָה לְהַב הַחַיִּית וְכִידוֹן וְתַרְנֶה אֶ. Moatti-Fine (1996:136) takes μάχαιρα to be the equivalent of כִּידוֹן; Molin (1956:334) agrees, although his incomplete quotation of LXX and MT gives the wrong impression about equivalences. The use of ἄσπίς to refer to an item on Goliath’s back is unlike the other renderings. Galling (1966:165-66) holds that the LXX erroneously translated כִּידוֹן in 1Sm 17.6 as ἄσπίς because a different term is used for “Lanze” in the following verse. Josh 8.26 is absent from LXX. The wide range of equivalents in the LXX points to one of several possibilities: that כִּידוֹן was poorly understood, that it was a general word for some types of arms, or that its meaning was in transition. In this last case it is most probable that it was changing from denoting a “spear” to denoting a “sword”. Molin (1956:334) considers the use of γαίσος and ζιβύνη, Germanic and Thracian words respectively, as an indication that “this foreign weapon could not be described by a genuine Greek word”.

A.2 In a considerable number of places the Three take כִּידוֹן to denote a shield. The Antiochene text also has ἄσπίς in 1Sm 17.6, 45 (Fernández Marcos and Busto Saiz

1989). The reading of γαῖσος in Aq Josh 8.18 is questionable according to Field because of Aq's reading at Jb 41.21, Jr 6.23, 50.42.

A.3 Pesh generally supports the meaning “spear” or “javelin”. ἄρπης ‘lorica e laminis contexta’ (Brockelmann:291) and σκῆπτρον ‘shield’ denote defensive items of armour. Pesh 1Sm 17 may have been influenced by LXX.

A.4 Tg generally supports the meaning “spear”, though both תריס and מסחפא mean shield (Levy 1867-68, Vol. 2:51, 560).

A.5 In 11QtgJob to Jb 39.23 Van der Ploeg & Van der Woude (1971:77) note the word נזך, and give it the meaning “javelot”, comparing Arb nzk “percer quelqu’un avec une lance”, which they say is denominative from nayzak “lance courte”. Jb 41.21 is not extant in 11QtgJob.

A.6 Only in Jb 41.21 does Vg not point towards “shield”. Here *hasta* ‘spear’ is probably used because the context requires an offensive weapon. Vg Josh 8.18b omits כִּידוֹן along with many other words from MT, perhaps by homoioteleuton.

A.7 Josephus (*Antiquities* VI 9.1[171]) represents the כִּידוֹן in 1Sm 17.6 by δόρυ.

A.8 The equivalent “shield” occurs in several versions, including Tg, which is unlikely to be dependent on LXX. It is possible that this understanding arose by independent exegetical attempts to find an item appropriate for Goliath’s back in 1Sm 17.6.

B.1 Molin (1956:334) incorrectly identifies *malleus* in Vg Jb 41.20 as equivalent of כִּידוֹן. It is rather the equivalent of תוֹתָה.

B.2 Molin (1956:337) suggests that ἀσπίς in LXX 1Sm 17 may denote a scimitar, since a scimitar resembles a serpent (or adder), which is also a meaning of ἀσπίς. This rendering may have been misunderstood by Vg, and thus have caused its translation by *clypeus* and *scutum*. Nevertheless, this proposal is improbable since within LXX ἀσπίς serves as an equivalent of מִגֵּן, and, moreover, the meaning “scimitar” is unattested elsewhere for ἀσπίς.

B.3 Galling (1966:166) wrongly gives LXX Josh 8.18 as γαίος.

5. Lexical/Semantic Field(s)

A.1 כִּידוֹן is an offensive weapon. It occurs frequently in the context of other items of armour, as in the following pairs or lists: רֶמַח וְכִידוֹן (1QM 5.6-7), מִגֵּן וְכִידוֹן (1QM 6.5 contrast חֲנִית וּמִגֵּן also in 6.5), קֶשֶׁת וְכִידוֹן (Jr 6.23, and with defective spelling 50.42), בְּחֶרֶב וּבְחֲנִית וּבְכִידוֹן (1Sm 17.45), and אֶשְׁפָּה לְהִב חֲנִית וְכִידוֹן (Jb 39.23). In 1Sm 17.6 כִּידוֹן occurs in a list following כּוֹבַע ‘helmet’, שְׂרִיוֹן ‘body-armour’ (17.5), מְצָחָה ‘greave(s)’ (BDB:595), and preceding חֲנִית ‘spear’ (17.7). In Jb 41.21 כִּידוֹן is the B parallel to תּוֹתָחַ. In 1QM 5.12 there is reference to שְׁנֵי עֲבֵרָיו “its two sides”. It also has סְפוֹת ‘lips’ (thus Duhaime 1995:109, though Kaiser 1982:166 takes them as “Rillen” - sappōt), רֵאוֹשׁ ‘head’ (point?), in 5.13 a בֶּטֶן ‘belly’ (see Exegesis), and in 5.14 a יָד ‘handle’.

B.1 [nil]

6. Exegesis

A.1 1QM 5.11-14 gives a detailed description of the כִּידוֹן. Its length is one and a half cubits, its width four finger-breadths, its בֶּטֶן four thumb-breadths, and up to its בֶּטֶן are four hand-breadths. It is uncertain whether its ivory handle is included in the calculation of length. Kuhn (1956:30) considers its inclusion unlikely. Molin (1956:334-37), Kuhn (1956:28-30), Yadin (1962:124-131), Driver (1965:183-87), and Gmirkin (1996:120) discuss כִּידוֹן in 1QM in detail.

Van der Ploeg (1955:380) and Yadin (1962:126) take בֶּטֶן to denote a sheath or scabbard. Yadin (1962:125) understands the כִּידוֹן of 1QM to be “a straight double-edged sword, not a ‘sickle sword’” (see also Ahituv 1968:974). Yadin’s identification of the כִּידוֹן with the Roman *gladius* ‘Spanish sword’ is accepted by Gmirkin (1996:120) with the

modification that it could be the *gladius* of the second rather than of the first century B.C. Dupont-Sommer (1961:178) denies a connection with the Roman *gladius*.

Driver (1965:183-87), following Kuhn (“die Ausbuchtung” 1956:29) and Molin (“Bogenstück” 1956:337), understands בִּטֶן to be part of the כִּידָן, since a כִּידָן of four finger-breadths in width would not require a scabbard of four thumb-breadths. The בִּטֶן is the “bulge” or “curve” of the blade (thus also Dupont-Sommer 1961:178). Duhaime (1995:109) understands בִּטֶן as “the lower part of the sword” citing Van der Ploeg and Molin, as against Yadin, with approval. Driver (1965:183-87), followed by Kaiser (1982:165), characterises it as a curved dagger, Lat *sica*, Dupont-Sommer (1961:178) as “curved like a scimitar or, better still, like the ‘harpe’”. Whether or not בִּטֶן means “sheath” is connected to whether or not כִּידָן is curved: “Wenn בִּטֶן ‘Scheide’ bedeutet...entfällt die Erklärung des Kidon als Sichelschwert, da dieses niemals eine Scheide hat” (Galling 1966:166). Carmignac (1955:358) identifies certain reliefs as depicting the כִּידָן. Yadin (1962:125) believes that steel was the material used for the כִּידָן in 1QM.

A.2 Since the discovery of 1QM several scholars have suggested that כִּידָן in BH also denotes a type of sword (Carmignac 1955:357-59, Molin 1956:337, *HAL*:450). De Vaux (1960:50) takes the word in the Bible to denote “un cimenterre”, Stoebe (1973:318) holds “Sichelschwert” as the most likely meaning in 1Sm 17.6, and Weippert (1977:61) probably supports the understanding “Krumm-Schw[ert]”. McCarter (1980:292) understands כִּידָן in 1Sm 17.6 as “scimitar”, or more specifically “a heavy, curved, flat-bladed, Oriental sword with a cutting edge on the outer (convex) side of the blade”. Nevertheless, when commenting on הַרְבֵּוֹ in 1Sm 17.51 (1980:294) he sees this as a generic term for “sword” referring to Goliath’s scimitar, which was earlier denoted by כִּידָן, a term specifically for “scimitar”. This theory is perhaps less natural since both terms occur in 1Sm 17.45. Carmignac (1955:358-59) compares 1Sm 17.6 with Iliad xi 29 ἀμφὶ δ’ ἄρ’ ὤμοισιν βάλετο ξίφος, where Agamemnon throws his sword onto his shoulders. This phrase recurs in Iliad ii 45, iii 334, xvi 135 and xix 372. Other Homeric

references to the carrying of swords on shoulders are: Odyssey ii 3, iv 308, viii 416, x 261-62, xiv 528, xx 125, xxi 119, Iliad iii 17-18, xv 714. Bochart (1692, Part 1:138), after citing these instances, asks why a “jaculum” should not likewise be hung on a belt round the shoulders of a giant. The comparison fits even better if כִּידוֹן is no longer understood as a javelin. Beekes (1995:93) finds Homer’s phrase to refer merely to the placing around the shoulders of the carrying-strap of the sword, not of the sword itself. Bochart (1692, Part 1:135-41) discusses כִּידוֹן in the Bible at length.

In the description of Goliath’s equipment in 1Sm 17.5-7 there is no mention of a חֶרֶב. Nevertheless, Goliath’s חֶרֶב is used to behead him in v. 51. In v. 45 David charges the Philistine with coming וּבַחֶרֶב וּבַכִּידוֹן, while in v. 47 he says that God does not save וּבַחֶרֶב וּבַחַיִּית. The absence of כִּידוֹן from Israelite weaponry may have caused the omission of כִּידוֹן in the latter phrase, since it is talking about deliverance for the Israelites. Alternatively, v. 47 may suggest that כִּידוֹן is subsumed under the category of חֶרֶב. It is slightly awkward to understand both terms in verse 45 as referring to swords, unless different types of sword are denoted. If the כִּידוֹן of 17.6 is the חֶרֶב of later in the passage the sudden appearance of the חֶרֶב can be explained.

A.3 Vg 1Sm 17.6 paraphrases *et clypeus aereus tegebat umeros eius* “and a bronze shield was covering his shoulders”. *tegebat* corresponds to MT’s בֵּין “(was) in between”, which could be used with reference to pieces of armour other than a shield.

A.4 With the exception of Josh 8 the weapon is not recorded in the hands of Israelites. This may suggest a foreign weapon.

B.1 Bardtke (1955:407) understood כִּידוֹן in 1QM as “Wurfspeer”, but this was during the early period after the discovery of the scroll, and has not been accepted in later discussion.

B.2 Kaiser (1982:166) inexplicably takes בטן as “Klinge”.

7. Conclusion

A.1 In the light of the meaning “sword” in 1QM the conclusions of some modern lexicons remain doubtful. These include Ben Yehudah (2339) מִין רֶמַח, Zorell (354) “prob. *breve iaculum, hasta*”, Alonso Schökel (330) “*Jabalina, venablo*” (but for Sir 46.2 “*Bastón de mando*”). The meaning “sword” fits all biblical occurrences, though it is not demanded by them. It is still disputed whether 1QM describes a straight sword or a scimitar. HAL (450) and Fohrer (1963:490, 526) “Sichelschwert” adopt the latter meaning for OT occurrences, although this cannot be regarded as certain.

A.2 To judge by the variety of equivalents within the LXX its translators were not all aware of the meaning of כִּידוֹן. An objection to the supposition that 1QM preserves the correct biblical meaning could be that if the meaning of the word could not be remembered at the time of the LXX, *a fortiori* it would be less likely to be remembered at the time of the writing of 1QM. However, if Gmirkin (1996) is correct in assigning a second century B.C. date to the weaponry in 1QM then the *War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness* may be sufficiently early to avoid this objection. If the LXX translators were not native Hebrew speakers, or were less educated than the author of the *War*, or if the word was better known in Palestine than in Egypt, the objection would likewise be avoided.

B.1 Clines (3:271) glosses כִּידוֹן as “javelin” in both 1QM 6.5 and Jb 39.23. This meaning cannot be defended for 1QM 6.5.

B.2 Nunnally (1997:199) says that the use of כִּידוֹן in 1QM to denote a sword is the result of a “confusion”. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that the meaning in 1QM has arisen by misunderstanding of previous texts.

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