פְּלֵיטָה

(For fuller discussion of the lexical field as a whole see the ‘Overview of SAHD entries for “Deliverance” words’ on this site)

Introduction

Grammatical Type: n f.
Occurrences: Total 28x OT, 0x Sir, 6x Qum (1QM 1.6, 1QS 4.14, 4Q280 2.5, 4Q374 fr2 2.4, CD 2.7, 11), 0x inscr.

Occurrences are “concentrated exclusively in narratives and prophets, notably exilic or postexilic ones” (Hubbard 1997:623). The lexeme occurs in 1QIsa in Is 4.2, 10.20, 15.9, 37.31 (written above the line). The first four letters of פְּלֵיטָה in Jl 2.3 survive in 4QXII.

Text Doubtful:
A. פְּלֵיטָה should be restored at 4QpIsa (4Q163) fr4-7 2.10 (= Is 10.20). See DJD (V:19) and Hubbard (1997:625).
A.2 In 1QIsa Is 37.32 פְּלֵיטָה is written with final Aleph instead of He.

B.1 BHS suggests that וֹולּוֹלַקְּמֵם פְּלֵיטָה (Jl 2.3) may be an addition, but this is not semantically relevant.

Qere/Ketiv: none.

1. Root and Comparative Material
A.1 See פלט Qal.
A.2 Ben-Hayyim (1957:559) attests בּלִית in Samaritan Hebrew. The lexeme is also attested in RH, e.g. GenR 28.5 פְּלֵית (4x).

B.1 See פלט Qal.

2. Formal Characteristics
A.1 Hasel (1989:593 = 2001:555) defines קְטִילָה as a קְטִילָה formation. Zorell (650b-51a) lists קְטִילָה and פְּלֵיטָה as separate though related lexemes. Zorell suggests that perhaps for פְּלֵיטָה, פְּלִיטָה should be read. For this Zorell cites Olshausen (1861:§167g) who believed that most probably the word was once pronounced פְּלִיטֶה, and that the present pointing is based on an altered pronunciation at a later stage (§180). Olshausen (§180) also cites as a less probable explanation that originally a Yodh, marking a diminutive, followed a short a in the second syllable. ay then merged to produce ē. Barth (1894:192d) rejects the existence of any diminutive of this form in Hebrew.
A.2 In MT the term is generally spelled plene (24x), and only more rarely defectively (Ex 10.5, Jr 50.29, Ezk 14.22, 1Ch 4.43).

B.1 [nil]

3. Syntagmatics
A.1 Subj הָיָה (2Sm 15.14, Jr 50.29, Jl 2.3, 3.5, Ob 17, 1QM 1.6), יָצָא (2Kg 19.31, Is 37.32), אָבַד (Jr 25.35), יָסַף (Is 37.31par), יָסַף hiph (Is 10.20), יָסַף niph (Ezk 14.22).
A.2 Obj יָצָא (CD 2.11), נָתַן (Ezr 9.13), נָתַן hiph (Ezr 9.8).
A.3 Preceded by nomen regens יְּרֻשַת (Jdg 21.17), יֶתֶר (Ex 10.5), שְּׁאֵרִית (1Ch 4.43).
A.4 Followed by nomen rectum בֵית (2Kg 19.30, Is 10.20, 37.31), יִשְׂרָאֵל (Is 4.2), מוֹאָב (Is 15.9).
A.5 Followed by adj יִרְאֵה (Gn 45.7), יִרְאֵה (Is 37.31, 1Kg 19.30, 2Ch 30.6).

B.1 [nil]

4. Versions

a. LXX:
σωτηρία (2Sm 15.14, Jr 25[32].35, Ob 17, Ezr 9.8 [with εἰς], 13, 2Ch 12.7);
tὸ σώζεσθαι (Gn 32.9);
σωζόμενος (2Ch 20.24);
oi σωζόμενοι (Is 37.32);
oi σωθέντες (Is 10.20, Neh 1.2);
ἀνασῳζόμενος (2Kg 19.31, Jr 50[27].29, Jl 2.3, 3.5[2.32]);
ἀνασεσῳσμένοι (Ezk 14.22 [+ art.], 2Ch 30.6);
διασῳζόμενον (Ezr 9.14);
διασῳζόμενοι (Dn 11.42);
διασῳζόμενοι (Ezr 9.15);
διασεσῳσμένη (Jdg 21.17) agrees with κληρονομία, taking ζήσιν as adj.
tὸ διασεσῳσμένον (2Kg 19.30);
κατάλειψις (Gn 45.7);
tὸ καταλειψθέν (Ex 10.5, Is 4.2);
oi καταλειψθέντες (1Ch 4.43);
oi καταλελειμμένοι (= הַנִשְׁאָרָה ... בִּנְּיִשְׂרָאֵל Is 37.31);
[[τὸ σπέρμα]] (Is 15.9).

b. The Three:
Aq ἀνασωσμὸς (Gn 45.7);
Aq λεῖπον (Ex 10.5);
Sym διάφευγες (Jr 25.35);
Sym ἐκπεφευγότες (Ezk 14.22);
Thd σωτηρία (Is 37.32).

c. Pesh:
mtplт’ (Gn 32.9);
pwlt’ (2Kg 19.31, Jr 25.35);
lmptļw (2Sm 15.14);
ʾnš dpł [peal] mnḥw (2Ch 20.24);
mšwzbwt’ (Gn 45.7, Jl 3.5, Ob 17);
štwb (Is 37.32, Dn 11.42);
dmštwzb (Jl 2.3);
ʾylyn dṃtysyn (Is 10.20, 15.9, Ezk 14.22);
mdm dšb (= הַפְּלֵיטָה הַנִשְׁאֶרֶת Ex 10.5);
mdm dʾštḥr (Is 4.2);
dʾštḥr (1Ch 4.43);
šrkʾ (Jdg 21.17, Ezr 9.8, 13, 15, 2Ch 30.6);
šrkʾ (2Kg 19.30, Is 37.31);
hrtʾ (Jr 50.29);
ʾylyn dytrw (= הַפְּלֵיטָה אֲשֶׁר־נִשְּׁאָר Neh 1.2);
paraphrase (Ezr 9.14);
zero (2Ch 12.7).

d. Tg:
שׁזב (Gn 32.9 [TgO, TgPsJ, מַעָבָה TgNeo], 45.7 [TgO, TgPsJ], 2Sm 15.14, 2Kg 19.31, Is 4.2, 10.20, 37.32, Jr 25.35, 50.29, Jl 2.3, Ob 17);
שׁזב (2Ch 12.7);
שׁזב (Ex 10.5 [TgO], Jdg 21.17, Ezk 14.22, Jl 3.5, 1Ch 4.43);
משׁזב (Is 15.9);
משׁזב (2Kg 19.30, Is 37.31);
משׁזב (2Ch 20.24);
משׁזב (2Ch 30.6);
פִלְטִין (Gn 45.7 TgNeo);
פִלְטִים (Ex 10.5 TgNeo, Samaritan Tg);
פִלְטִים (Gn 32.9[8], 45.7 Samaritan Tg).

e. Vg:
salvor (Gn 32.8);
quod salvetur (2Kg 19.31);
qui salvaremur (Ezr 9.15);
hi qui salvati fuerint (Is 4.2);
id quod salvatum fuerit (Is 37.31);
salvatio (Is 37.32, Jr 25.35, Ezk 14.22, Jl 3.5, Ob 17);
salus (Ezr 9.13, 14);
hi qui fugerint (Is 10.20, 15.9);
qui effugiat (Jl 2.3);
effugiet (פתנִיה תֲלָלָה Tg, Dn 11.42);
effugium (2Sm 15.14);
reliquus (2Kg 19.30);
reliquiae (Ezr 9.8, 2Ch 30.6);
quod residuum fuit (= יֶתֶר הַפְּלֵיטָה Hm 10.5);
quae evadere potuerant (1Ch 4.43);
quae necem potuisset evadere (2Ch 20.24);
auxilium (2Ch 12.7);
paraphrase (Gn 45.7, Jdg 21.17, Jr 42.17).
A.1 For the use in Greek of words such as σωτηρία, or σῴζω and their derivatives see פְּלֵיטָה piel Versions and Conclusion.

A.2 The versions more frequently render פְּלֵיטָה by words connected with “rescue” or “save” than by words connected with “remainder”. Thus LXX σῴζω/σωτηρία and compounds outnumber καταλείπω etc. In Pesh translations supporting these two meanings are more evenly balanced. Tg predominantly uses שֶּּׁׁשּּׁה; Vg uses salvo and cognates most, (effug* ‘flee’ words slightly less, and “remainder” words such as reliquus, residuus, and remaneo even less frequently.

A.3 A number of renderings make explicit the personal nature and plural nature of the group denoted by פְּלֵיטָה, e.g. LXX οἱ σῴζόμενοι; Sym ἐκπεφευγότες; Pesh ʿylyn dmṯpṣyn; Tg שֶּּׁׁשּּׁה; Vg hi qui salvati fuerint. A contrary tendency is to render by an abstract noun, e.g. LXX, Thd σωτηρία; Tg שֶּּׁׁשּּׁה; Vg salvatio.

B.1 The use of τὸ σπέρμα by LXX at Is 15.9 is at first surprising, but it is a word that the translator introduces several times elsewhere when there is no obvious equivalent, e.g. for שָׂרִיד in 1.9. The latter substitution also appears in Dt 3.3, and Muraoka implies that there are several more cases (2002:518). Where σπέρμα is used of human descendants in a context of (non-)preservation, as in these three cases, it can be seen as representing the referent rather than the sense of the ‘survivor’ words.

B.2 Vg auxilium in 2Ch 12.7 occurs in a context where the Heb. already limits the extent of God’s intervention because of Judah’s sin (cf. שָׁם in v. 7 and the explanation in v. 8). ‘Escape’ must have seemed too strong a word to represent this and ‘help’ more appropriate to the outlook of the narrative.

5. Lexical/Semantic Field(s)

A.1 Hasel (1974:336, n. 444) observes the tendency for הַשְּׁאֵרִית to parallel the feminine הַשְּׁאֵר rather than masculine שָׂרִיד, explaining the exception of Is 10.20 as “due to the stereotyped formula מִשְׁרֵי שָׂרִיד. It is parallel with the רְשֵׁי (Gn 45.7, 2Kg 19.31, Is 15.9, 37.32, Ezr 9.14, 1QM 1.6, IQS 4.14, 4Q280 2.5, 4Q374 fr2 2.4, CD 2.7), שְׁאֵר (Is 10.20), שְׁאֲר (Jr 25.35), שְׁאָר (Ezr 9.8). It also has contextual connections with הַשְּׁאִיר hiph (Gn 45.7), מָנוֹס niph (Jr 3.5), מִחְּיָה niph (Gn 32.9, Ezr 9.15, Neh 1.2), שְׁרֵד niph (Jr 3.3).

A.2 For a discussion of the semantic field of lexemes of the root פְּלֵיטָה, and for a contrast of these lexemes with those of the root שֵׁיֶד see Lexical/Semantic Field(s) of piel.

B.1 [nil]

6. Exegesis

A.1 פְּלֵיטָה is a term used for the “remnant” of Israel. This has received considerable attention from a theological rather than a semantic angle (De Vaux 1933, Henrich 1942, Schilling 1942, Warne 1958, Müller & Preuß 1973, Hasel 1976, 1980, Hausmann 1987).

A.2 Generally פְּלֵיטָה denotes a group of people, but in a few cases it seems to be abstract, e.g. “Flight (םַעַבְּדָ) shall fail the shepherds, and there shall be no escape (פְּלֵיטָה) for the lords of the flock” (Jr 25.35 NRSV). 2Sm 15.14 may also be abstract. In Ex 10.5
The potential for the lexeme to be both concrete and abstract is widely recognised. Zorell (650b-51a) understands פְּלֵיטָה as “id quod saluvm evasit”, and פְּלֵיטָה as “evasio, salvatio” and “id quod perniciem evasit”; Alonso Schökel (584b) takes פְּלֵיטָה as “ resto, supervivientes” or “huida, escape, escapatoria, evasión”; Müller (Müller & Preuß 1973:82) as “die Entronnenschaft”.

A.3 From a consideration of Gn 45.7 it is not evident that for there to be a פְּלֵיטָה, there has to be any of the original group who do not survive. This suggests that the terms “remainder”, “remnant” or “survivors” (with their implication of some who did not survive) are not always appropriate equivalents of פְּלֵיטָה, though frequently they do carry appropriate overtones. However, BDB (812b) understands this as abstract “escape, deliverance”.

A.4 In discussing the use of פְּלֵיטָה in Is 4.2 Williamson notes that military defeat is the most frequently attested kind of disaster that generates occurrences of the verb פְּלְט and nouns derived from it, but that in the post-exilic period פְּלֵיטָה became associated with the theological notion of a ‘remnant’ and this is likely to be an element of the meaning in Is 4.2. Moreover, in Jl 3.5 and Ob 17 it refers to ‘those who escape an entirely eschatological judgment of God without reference to human agents’ (Williamson 2006:310; cf. Hausmann 1987:200).

A.5 פְּלֵיטָה is always sing.

B.1 [nil]

7. Conclusion

A.1 As seen from the versions, פְּלֵיטָה was more often understood as “saved thing” than as “remainder”, which was usually represented by נָאוֹרַים. The emphasis on “save” rather than on “remain” also reflects the general meaning of other lexemes from the root פְּלַט. Generally the term is concrete rather than abstract, though some exceptions have been noted (see Exegesis A.2). The term may often be understood as “what escaped”. Implied in words such as “escape” or “save” is the notion of a threat avoided, a notion which is absent from the word “remain”, yet present in פְּלַט. As discussed in Exegesis A.3 “remainder” and “remnant” may be inappropriate renderings due to their implication that some of the original group did not survive.

A.2 The occurrence of פְּלַט (Gn 45.7) as a qualifying adjective, unless an oxymoron, precludes any possibility that a diminutive sense was felt for the word in Hebrew (see Formal Characteristics for discussion of diminutive). A פְּלַט need not be small.

B.1 [nil]

Bibliography


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