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A table of contents for *Journal of Biblical Literature* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_jbl-01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jbl-01.php)

## TWO COMPOUND TECHNICAL TERMS IN BIBLICAL HEBREW

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THE expression **זִבְלָהּ הִוא**, occurring three times in the Bible, in Lev. 25 10, 11 and 12, is, at first glance, syntactically difficult, although this fact has apparently been touched upon by none of the commentators. *Brown-Driver-Briggs* translates **זִבְלָהּ** "a ram's horn-(blowing)." This translation probably results from the fact that **זִבְלָהּ** is masculine (cf. Num. 36 4); the feminine **הִוא**, therefore, necessitates the supplying of a feminine word, assumed to have been **תְּרוּעָה** (cf. v. 9) or **תְּקִיעָה**. The commentators, on the other hand, with practical unanimity supply **שָׁנָה** as the missing element.

LXX renders these three passages as follows:

- v. 10, **זִבְלָהּ הִוא תְּהִיָּה לָכֶם** — *ἐναντὸς ἀφέσεως σημασία αὐτῆ ἔσται ὑμῖν.*
- v. 11, **זִבְלָהּ הִוא שָׁנָה הַחֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה תְּהִיָּה לָכֶם** — *ἀφέσεως σημασία αὐτῆ, τὸ ἔτος τὸ πεντηκοστὸν ἐναντὸς ἔσται ὑμῖν.*
- v. 12, **כִּי זִבְלָהּ הִוא קָדַשׁ תְּהִיָּה לָכֶם** — *ὅτι ἀφέσεως σημασία ἐστίν, ἄγιον ἔσται ὑμῖν.*

It is to be noted in the first place, that in v. 10 LXX has apparently supplied an understood **שָׁנָה** before **זִבְלָהּ**; in the second place, that LXX translates, or rather paraphrases **זִבְלָהּ** by *ἀφέσεως σημασία*, i. e. "a proclamation of release"; and, in the third place, that in v. 11 LXX regards, undoubtedly correctly, **זִבְלָהּ** as the predicate of the sentence, and **שָׁנָה הַחֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה** as the subject. It is, however, compelled to render **הִוא** as *αὐτῆ* mechanically, and entirely without regard to its possible actual

meaning. Presumably, therefore, *αὐτῆ* of v. 10 is similarly nothing but a mechanical and meaningless rendering of the original *למ*. In v. 12 LXX has omitted *αὐτῆ* entirely, and construes *יובל* as the predicate of the sentence, precisely as in vs. 10 and 11, and *למ* as the copulative, pronominal subject, and translates, "Because it is a (year of) proclamation of release, it shall be holy unto you." Obviously the LXX translators thought that here they had found a possible, legitimate explanation of the presence of *למ* in the sentence. They divided the sentence into a principal and subordinate clause, and rendered *כי* ὅτι, "because." In this they have been followed by most modern translators and commentators, with the slight difference, however, that these have, with almost complete unanimity rendered *כי* "for" instead of "because," and translated "For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy unto you."

Careful examination, however, indicates that in each case the construction of *למ יובל* is the same, and that the LXX solution of the problem of *למ* in v. 12 but emphasizes the difficulty of *למ* in vs. 10 and 11. Obviously the only legitimate solution of the problem is one that will hold good for all three passages.

Now it is to be noted that these three passages in which *למ* is used with *יובל* are the only passages in the entire Bible where *יובל* is used without the article. It might be argued that in v. 10, where the word is used for the first time, the article is unnecessary, although it could not be denied that even here the article would not be inappropriate and illogical. It might also be argued, although with much less reason, that v. 11a but repeats the thought of v. 10b, and that, therefore, again the article need not be employed. Still, since *יובל* has already been defined in v. 10, here, too, the use of the article would be far more natural and logical than its omission. And certainly in v. 12 the article is absolutely indispensable, if, with LXX, *יובל* is to be regarded as the predicate of the first clause, and *למ* as the copulative, pronominal subject. The omission of the article here is significant.

Furthermore, in v. 10, while not impossible, *למ* is absolutely redundant and unnecessary. Since the *שנת הרמשים שנה* has

already been referred to in the sentence, the simplest and most natural form for v. 10 b would have been **יובל יהיה לכם** without **הוא**. In v. 11, however, where **שנת החמישים שנה** is the subject, **יובל** the predicate and **תהיה** the copula, **הוא**, as normally interpreted, is syntactically unnecessary and even impossible, as is best proved by the LXX mechanical rendering.

The only possible solution of the problem is to regard **יובל הוא** as an inseparable, compound expression, equivalent in meaning and constructive usage to **היובל**, found elsewhere in this chapter, and in Lev. 27 and in Num. 36 4. These three verses must then be rendered: v. 10, "It (the fiftieth year, mentioned in 10 a) shall be the Jubilee unto you, etc."

v. 11, "The fiftieth year shall be the Jubilee unto you."

v. 12, "For (or "but") the Jubilee shall be holy (literally, "holiness") unto you."

The origin of this compound, technical term, **יובל הוא** can not be determined with certainty. However, an hypothesis may be permitted. Practically all scholars are agreed that those verses of Lev. 25 which refer to the Jubilee year are, at the very earliest, of a secondary stratum of the Holiness Code, while a number of the verses, and also all references to the Jubilee year in Lev. 27 and Num. 36 4, are obviously of a secondary and very late stratum of the Priestly Code (cf. Bertholet, *Leviticus*, 87).

Manifestly vs. 11 and 12, with their application of the ritual of the Sabbatical year to the Jubilee, are secondary to v. 10. This verse, in its original form, alone of all the verses referring to the Jubilee year, can come from H proper. Vs. 11 and 12 are directly dependent upon this verse. All other references to the Jubilee year are manifestly later than these verses. We would therefore suggest, although with considerable reservation, that there were the following stages in the evolution of this otherwise inexplicable term. In the earliest legislation for the Jubilee year, presumably in H proper, the full expression was probably used, **שנת תרועת יובל תהיה לכם** and **שנת תרועת יובל הוא**, "a year of (signalized by) the blowing of a ram's horn shall it be to you." In time this rather long and awkward expression was abbreviated to **יובל** or **יובל הוא**, and used in a technical sense. This is the stage of its usage in Lev. 25 10, 11 and 12.

Later the syntactical incongruity of the expression **יזבל הוא** became apparent, and the term was modified to the more grammatical and expressive term **שנת היזבל**, as in Lev. 25 13, 28, 40, 50, 52, 54; 27 17, 18, 23, 24. Ultimately the expression was simplified still further and quite logically to **היזבל**, as in Lev. 25 15, 28, 30, 33; 27 18, 21; Num. 36 4.

This hypothesis of the origin and evolution of the term, it must be repeated, is advanced with great reservation. This much, however, seems certain, that **יזבל הוא** in Lev. 25 10, 11 and 12 is an inseparable, compound, technical term, and should be recorded as such in all Hebrew lexicographical works.

### מקרא קדש and מקרא

The word **מקרא** occurs twenty-two times in the Bible. In all but four passages it is used in the construct relation with **קדש**.

In Num. 10 2, in the expression **למקרא העדה**, **מקרא** is obviously a verbal noun, and is therefore invariably and correctly rendered, "For the calling of the congregation."

Likewise in Neh. 8 8, **מקרא** is taken by all scholars to connote either "the act of reading" or "that which was read, viz. either the Torah itself, or the particular section thereof read on the occasion referred to."

In the two remaining passages in which it occurs alone, and in all the eighteen passages where it is used with **קדש**, **מקרא** is rendered by all scholars, seemingly without exception, "assembly" or "holy convocation." But this can hardly have been its meaning in the minds of the original authors.

It must be noted that, with the single possible, although, as we shall see, not probable, exception of Is. 1 13, all the passages in which **מקרא** occurs are not only post-exilic, but even late post-exilic, either from secondary strata of the Priestly Code or (Is. 4 5 and Neh. 8 8) from documents presumably quite as late, or even later.

Two of the passages in which **מקרא** is used without **קדש** in a perfectly obvious meaning have already been discussed. It remains to consider first the two remaining, similar passages, before the compound expression, **מקרא קדש**, can be examined.

Is. 4 5 reads: **על כל־מכון ורציון ועל־מקראה**. Here **מקראה** is obviously in parallelism with **מכון ורציון**; a place-noun is therefore required. Now the traditional rendering, "its assemblies," is not a place-noun, nor is **מקרא** actually ever used as a place-noun. Etymologically **מקרא** as a place-noun could mean only "the place of calling" or "summoning," but never "the place of assembly," since **קרא** never has the meaning of "to assemble." The LXX rendering, *πάντα τὰ περικύβη αὐτῆς*, points to an original reading, **מנרשיה**. But the idea connoted by **מנרשיה** is too remote, unexpected and colorless to warrant the belief that it was the original reading.

I venture to suggest that the original was **מקדשיה**, a suggestion made very probable by Jer. 51 51; Ps. 68 38 and 73 17, all late passages, dating from approximately the same period as Is. 4 5, and showing that in this period references to the **היה מקדשי בית יהוה** or, probably, **מקדשי ורציון**, were common. Certainly this reading would offer a far better parallelism to **מכון ורציון** than the **מקראה** of M. T. or the **מנרשיה** of LXX. It is, moreover, easily comprehensible that the **ד** of **מקדשיה** might have been corrupted to a **ר**, with the resultant, meaningless **מקרשיה**, and from this the two variant emendations, **מקראה** of M. T. and **מנרשיה** of LXX would easily and naturally evolve. I believe that we may regard it as fairly certain that the original text did not read **מקראה**, and, therefore, that here, at least, **מקרא** can not have had the meaning, "assemblies" or "assembly-places."

The other passage, Is. 1 13, is more difficult. It reads **חדש מקרא** and **קרא מקרא**. Here **מקרא** is apparently in parallelism with **חדש ושבת**, and can, seemingly, mean only "festal assembly." For this reason undoubtedly LXX has paraphrased it *ἡμέραν μεγάλην*. In this sense it would be synonymous with **עצרה**, which actually occurs later in the verse, or **מועד** which occurs in the plural in the next verse, and the expression **קרא מקרא** would be equivalent to **קרא עצרה** (cf. Joel 1 14), or the more common **קרא מועד** (cf. Num. 16 2; Lam. 1 15 and Lev. 23 1, 4, 37).

But there are certain difficulties inherent in this verse, that make the presence of **קרא מקרא** there questionable. In the first place it is to be noted that the connecting **ו**, uniting **חדש**

and **שבת** is missing before **קרא**. This is, of course, not absolutely indispensable, yet its absence is at least suspicious.

In the second place, not **קרא מקרא** but **מקרא** alone would have offered the natural and logical parallelism to **חדש ושבת**, "new moon and sabbath and festal assembly."

Furthermore v. 14 repeats the thought of v. 13 unnecessarily and weakly, in a manner hardly worthy of a literary genius, such as the prophet was.

And finally, with its present reading, the verse is too full and overloaded, and its meter is in consequence disturbed. I would therefore conclude with Schwally (*ZAW*, 1891, 257) and Marti (*Isaiah*, 12) that the words **קרא מקרא** are an interpolation into the original text, and come from the same late period, from which come, as we have seen, all the other passages in which **מקרא** occurs. In such case it follows that there are absolutely no pre-exilic, nor even exilic or early postexilic instances of the use of **מקרא**, and that the word is undoubtedly a late coinage in Hebrew.

For the original reading of Is. 1 13-14 I would propose, with all the reservation proper in such an undertaking, the following reading; **חדש ושבת שנאה נפשי און ועצה מרה לי נלאיתי נשא**.

Thus far we have established that **מקרא** is in all likelihood a word of late, post-exilic origin, and also that it is used in only one absolutely authenticated connotation, "the act of calling" or "summoning," as in Num. 10 2, and probably also "the act of reading," as in Neh. 8 8, in other words as a verbal noun of the form of the Aramaic Infinitive *P<sup>c</sup> al*.

We must now consider the remaining eighteen passages in which **מקרא** is used in the construct state with **קדש**, unquestionably as a compound, technical term. In three cases the plural, **מקראי קדש**, is used, in passages which either introduce (vs. 2 and 4) or summarize (v. 37) the contents of Lev. 23, or, rather, of the secondary Priestly portions of that composite chapter.

If **מקרא** actually meant "assembly," then **מקרא קדש** could undoubtedly mean syntactically "a holy assembly", although **מקרא קודש** would probably be a more natural and logical expression of this concept. But there is absolutely no evidence that **מקרא** has any meaning other than that of a verbal noun,

as stated above. There is no reason at all why **מקרא** in the expression **קדש מקרא** should not be so construed. The literal meaning of **קדש** is "holiness," or, more exactly, "sacredness to a deity, and therefore taboo for mortals" (cf. Ex. 3 5; 22 30; 29 33f.; Lev. 23 20; 25 12; 27 9f, 14ff., 26, and *passim*). **מקרא קדש** then literally and etymologically would mean "a proclamation of holiness" or "taboo, abstention."

Now it is significant that in every case where **מקרא קדש** is used, without a single exception, the positive prohibition follows, usually immediately, though occasionally (Lev. 23 25 and 28) separated by a few words, that absolutely no work must be done. (Ex. 12 16, **כל מלאכה לא יעשה בהם**; LXX, however, read **כל מלאכת עבודה לא תעשו בהם**, the more common and grammatical expression (but cf. Ex. 31 15); Lev. 23 3, 28; Num. 29 7, **כל מלאכה לא תעשו**; Lev. 23 8, 25, 35, 36; Num. 28 18, 25, 26; 29 1, 12, **כל מלאכת עבודה לא תעשו**). In every case the implication is that these words are an interpretation of **קדש**. And that **קדש** does mean "taboo" in general, and with reference to the holy days and the Sabbath does mean in particular "abstention from work" is to be inferred from Ex. 16 23; 31 15; 35 2; Gen. 2 3; Ex. 20 8, 11; Is. 58 13; Jer. 17 22, 24, 27. In other words, the outstanding feature of the celebration of all these days of "holiness" was the taboo upon work. Hence it follows that **מקרא קדש** can mean only "proclamation of a taboo," or "interdict." In each case then the necessary, supplementary statement follows, that this is a taboo or interdict on work. **מקרא** would then be in every case a regular Aramaic Infinitive *P<sup>al</sup>*, borrowed by the late Hebrew writers and **מקרא קדש** would be in form a late parallel to the older **קרא מעד**, **קרא עצרה** or **קרא צום**. Moreover, in two passages, Lev. 23 3 and 24, **מקרא קדש** seems to be used to explain or intensify the meaning of the technical term, **שבת שבתון**, "a Sabbath of abstention from work."

Our contention is, therefore, that **מקרא** in the Bible never has the meaning "assembly," but is used always as a verbal noun, just as its etymology indicates it to be, in the cognate senses, "a calling, summoning, reading, proclaiming." Even in the most probably late interpolation in Is. 1 13, **מקרא** is undoubtedly an abbreviated form of **מקרא קדש**.



Just when and how this false interpretation of **מקרא קדש** as "holy assembly" arose, it is difficult to determine. LXX already renders **מקרא קדש** invariably *κλητή ἀγία*, and Targum renders it **מערע קדיש**. Certainly in the late post-exilic period the celebration of the sacred days was attended not only by abstention from work, but also by solemn assembly and sacrifice in the Temple and gatherings in the synagogues, largely for the purpose of reading the Law. This was a positive and distinctive holy-day rite, whereas mere abstention from work was altogether negative, and rather colorless in character. Probably the technical term, **מקרא קדש**, came eventually to be applied to the more positive and concrete ceremony of solemn assembly, rather than to only the negative and vague ceremony of abstaining from work. In this connection it is quite significant that all specific Biblical references to the Sabbath enjoin abstention from work alone, whereas not once do they speak of the necessity, or even the propriety, of solemn assembly (cf. Gen. 2 3; Ex. 16 26; 20 8-11; 23 12; 31 12-17; 34 21; 35 3; Num. 15 32-36; Dt. 5 12-15; Is. 58 3; Jer. 17 19-27; Am. 8 5f.; Neh. 10 32; 13 15-22), and that, furthermore, the **שקד**, the "taboo" of the Sabbath, is profaned only by working thereon, and never by failure to hold a solemn assembly. In fact, in only two passages in the Bible are gatherings of the people upon the Sabbath explicitly mentioned (Is. 66 23f. [a late passage] and Ez. 46 3). In both passages the practice is referred to as customary and incidental rather than as mandatory or as essential to the observance of the Sabbath. It would seem that from its very origin and until a quite late post-exilic period the Sabbath was primarily a day of abstention from regular work. Only secondarily and incidentally, because of the free time thus provided, did it, together with the related new-moon day, become the occasion for visiting shrines and holy men (II Ki. 4 23). And only in the late post-exilic period, after the distinctive practice of offering a particular sacrifice in the Temple upon the Sabbath had come to be of paramount importance (Lev. 23 8; Num. 28 9-10; Ez. 46 4; I Chron. 23 31; II Chron. 2 3; 8 13; 31 3), and likewise, of gathering in the synagogues to hear the Torah read, did the custom of holding

a solemn assembly on the Sabbath become a positive, obligatory, religious institution. Only after this time could **מקרא קדש** have acquired the altogether secondary and unetymological meaning, "solemn assembly."

Finally, it is to be noted that occasionally **מקרא קדש** is used alone, as in the sentence **ביום הראשון מקרא קדש** (Lev. 23 35; also Ex. 12 16 a; Lev. 23 3, 8 [M. T.], 24 [M. T.]; Num. 28 18 [M. T.]). More commonly, however, the full expression, **ביום הראשון מקרא קדש יהיה לכם**, is used (Ex. 12 16 b; Lev. 23 7, 27, 36; Num. 28 25, 26; 29 1, 7, 12). In three passages (Lev. 23 8, 24; Num. 28 16), where M. T. reads **מקרא קדש** alone, LXX reads the full expression **מקרא קדש יהיה לכם**. Manifestly **מקרא קדש** is merely a technical abbreviation of the fuller and more original **מקרא קדש יהיה לכם**, and in the ancient manuscripts there seems to have been variation in the use of one or the other. This will best account for these three passages in which LXX varies from M. T.

This is borne out by an analysis of Lev. 23 21. In its present form, apparently at first glance **וקראתם** stands without the requisite object. LXX has sought to overcome this difficulty by separating the otherwise inseparable **מקרא קדש**, and making **מקרא** the object of **וקראתם**, and **קדש** the predicate of an independent clause, of which it is the introductory word. Thus it reads, *καὶ καλέσετε ταύτην τὴν ἡμέραν κλητήν. ἅγια ἔσται ὑμῶν.* However, the impropriety of thus separating **מקרא קדש** has led modern scholars to reject this analysis. For the most part, therefore, they make the entire clause, **מקרא קדש לא תעשו**, the object of **וקראתם** (cf. Baentsch, *Leviticus*, 415).

We would offer an altogether different analysis, and one which is, on the one hand, in full accord with the facts which we have adduced thus far, and which, on the other hand, we believe, rounds out our argument. We have contended that **מקרא קדש** means "proclamation of taboo." The full, official proclamation must have been **קדש יהיה לכם**, probably supplemented by **כל מלאכת עבודה לא תעשו**, "a taboo there shall be unto you; ye shall do no manner of work." In other words, as stated above, **מקרא קדש** is an abbreviation of the original, fuller expression, and **מקרא** must be construed a. in the

appositional, construct state with **קדש** in the abbreviated expression, and with the entire clause in the original expression, **וקראתם מקרא קדש יהיה לכם**. Lev. 23 21 preserves the original, unabbreviated expression. It should, accordingly, be so analysed and interpreted, "And ye shall proclaim upon this day a proclamation of (in English better, "that" or "namely") 'a taboo shall be unto you; ye shall do no work'." Manifestly LXX was partially correct when it made **מקרא** alone the direct object of **וקראתם**. It erred, however, in failing to perceive the construct relation between **מקרא** and the following clause, and also in misinterpreting **מקרא** as *κλητή*.

It is interesting and significant to note that, thus interpreted, **מקרא וקראתם** of Lev. 23 21 presents an exact parallel to **מקרא קרא** of Is. 1 13.