

ARIEL אֵרִיֵּל Ariel is an obscure name for Jerusalem (the city where David encamped) in Isa 29:1-8. While Yahweh fights against Jerusalem in vv. 1-4, punishment from Yahweh is suddenly unleashed against all the nations that make war against Ariel in vv. 5-8. Judging from the use of the word in Ezek 43:15-16 and line 12 of the Mesha inscription (COS 2, 137-138), Ariel means something like "altar hearth" and may designate the altar of burnt offering as a symbolic reference to Jerusalem in Isaiah 29. Yahweh threatens to make Jerusalem like an altar hearth in Isa 29:2, that is, it will become a place for sacrifice or slaughter. In 2 Sam 23:20 (//1 Chr 11:22) Ariel may be a noun referring to a military hero although the LXX, followed by NRSV, states that Benaiah struck down two sons of a person named Ariel. Ariel is one of nine leaders mentioned in Ezra 8:16 although this name is spelled Iduel in the parallel text of 1 Esd 8:43. Ariel as a designation for Jerusalem may be related to the etymology of this word (lion of God) since Judah is called a lion's whelp in Gen 49:9. Others detect an allusion to אֵרֵךְ אֱלֹהִים, that is, Jerusalem as the "mountain of God."

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