

Ḥzq, Kbd, Qšh Lēb, The Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart in Exodus 4-15:21: Seen Negatively in the Bible but Favorably in Egyptian Sources



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Recently there has been vigorous debate among scholars surrounding the origins of the people of Israel. Some of the questions that have arisen in this regard are the following: Did all the Israelites originate in Canaan or did at least some of them come from Egypt? Or did they perhaps originate among the nomadic tribes of the *Shasu* or the *Habiru*? Finally, does the appearance of the name "Israel" on the Merneptah stela attest to the existence of the People of Israel in Canaan at the end of the 13th century BCE?

At the heart of the debate are archeological findings, both material and epigraphic, that were discovered especially in Canaan and in ancient Egypt. However, some details, namely the Egyptian elements recurring throughout the Oppression and Exodus narratives (Exod 4 - 15: 21), which can also serve as tools in resolving the problem, have been neglected and have not received the attention they deserve.¹ Still, it is clear that even this tool does not promise a sure solution to the problem. For even if what we have here is authentic Egyptian background and not just some vague Egyptian colors whose time and place are unknown, then one needs to ask if it can be located within a specific chronological setting. And yet even if we succeed in doing so, we have still not established the historicity of the account in its entirety.

Nevertheless, these Egyptian features constitute an integral part of the Oppression and Exodus narratives and deserve our attention. Indeed, most have already been noted in earlier scholarship, touching upon various aspects of life.² They constitute words and terms: Pharaoh, ḥārtūmmîm, ye'ōr, tēbāh, sūp, gōm'e; first names: Moses, Phinehas, Miriam; toponyms: Rameses, Pithom; daily life customs and activities: forced labor, storage-cities, building with bricks, field work, adoption, circumcision, practicing magic and women's work as wet nurses and midwives.

These same features also include typical Egyptian expressions such as "a strong hand" and "an outstretched arm," "the finger of God," "an abomination to the Egyptians," and "heavy" (kbd), "strong" (ḥzq), "hard" (qšh) "hearted" (lēb). These expressions, however, were so successfully translated

and adapted to Biblical Hebrew that it is now difficult to detect their foreign origins. Yet, while they would seem to be understood in their new context, it is possible to arrive at their true essence only after exposing their Egyptian roots. We can then more fully comprehend what the biblical author meant, when he made use of an Egyptian expression instead of another phrase more commonly used in the Bible.

The discussion which follows takes as its subject three of these expressions, which recur repeatedly in the Oppression and Exodus narratives (Exod. 4-15:21).³ These are "heavy" kbd, "strong" ḥzq, and "hard hearted" qšh lēb, that pertaining to Pharaoh's stubbornness and disobedience. We shall examine, on the one hand, the Egyptian background of these expressions, their meaning and context in the Egyptian sources, and on the other, the evolution of their usage in the Bible. In addition, we shall attempt to answer why the biblical author used expressions originating in Egyptian when he had at his disposal synonymous expressions commonly used in the language of the Bible. Does the usage of the Egyptian signify some special meaning or purpose?

Pharaoh's hard heartedness serves as one of the major motifs in the Oppression and the Exodus narratives (Exod 4-15: 21). In the passage under study, this motif is particularly prevalent in the story of the Ten Plagues (Exod 7:14-12:36), appearing 15 times out of a total of 19 in the whole episode. The account of the Ten Plagues in its complete version is a rigorously written text, consistent in style, and symmetrical in structure as is evident in literary patterns, motifs, and identical vocabulary, which recur in the various plagues.

Pharaoh's response to the demand by the God of the Hebrews to let his people go, that is the hardening of his heart, which is expressed interchangeably in three different ways -- "heavy," "strong" and "hard-hearted"--constitutes an integral part of this story. This motif is interwoven in the text (a) in the uniform structuring of the plagues and (b) in their escalation. (a) Hard heartedness is one of the four elements of the first nine plagues, set forth in the following order: God's command to Moses to appear before Pharaoh; implementation of the

plague by Moses, Aaron or God; Pharaoh's reaction, namely the effectiveness of the plague; and hardening of Pharaoh's heart.⁴ (b) The motif of hardening of the heart can also be seen in the pattern of escalation that makes its mark on the tale, as the plagues escalate in their grievousness, so that Pharaoh now begins to realize the power of God of the Hebrews: with the first five plagues, Pharaoh is the agent of the hardening of the heart (8:11,28; 9:34) or the heart itself is (7:13, 14, 22; 8:15; 9:7, 35). However, from the sixth plague (boils, 9:12) onwards, it is God who hardens Pharaoh's heart (locusts, 10:20; darkness, 10:27: compare the introductory chapters to the cycle of the Ten Plagues where God fulfills a similar role, 4:21; 7:3).

It is thus clear that the hardening of Pharaoh's heart serves as a central motif in the Plagues narrative,⁵ although it is not always clear whether Pharaoh's obstinacy follows as a result of the plague or, whether the plague comes as a consequence of his obstinacy. Whatever the case, this hardening of the heart of the king of Egypt functions as a motivating force that fuels the plot.

In the past, a plenty of studies were published dealing with the hardening of heart motif and its related terminology in the book of Exodus. Most of these studies were dedicated to clarifying these terms in the biblical context,⁶ while some attempted to elucidate them in the light of their Egyptian background.⁷ However, it would seem that only a combination of the two could succeed in shedding light on the use of these expressions in the Bible, as we shall attempt to demonstrate in what follows.

The use of terminology expressing hardening of heart in the book of Exodus gives rise to two main questions: 1. Why are three idioms used-"heavy" (kbd), "strong" (ḥzq), "hardening of heart" (qšh lēb) in order to describe one and the same thing? 2. Why does Pharaoh appear sometimes as the agent of the hardening of the heart (3 times, 8:11,28; 9:34), while other times it is the heart which fulfills this role (6 times, 7:13,14,22; 8:15; 9:7,35), but for the most part, it is God who is responsible for hardening Pharaoh's heart (10 times, 4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:1,20,27;11:10; 14: 4,8,17) (See Table no.2 below.)

The usage of three different roots to describe the same motif of the hardening of Pharaoh's heart is resolved by source criticism still widely accepted today by the majority of scholars working on the book of Exodus.⁸

kbd lēb which appears 6 times in *hiph'il* (8:11,28; 9:34; 10:1) or in *qal* (7:14; 9:7) belongs to J. kbd does not appear in any other source with the exception of the redactional passage, R(d), in Exod.10: 1. The agent of the action is always Pharaoh or his heart. ḥzq lēb recurring 12 times, appears most of the time in *pi'el* with God as the agent, but also 4 times in *qal* when the agent is the heart (7:13, 22; 8:15; 9:35). ḥzq belongs to E where it appears 4 times (4:21; 9:35; 10:20, 27) and to P where it recurs 8 times (7:13,22; 8:15; 9:12; 11:10; 14: 4,8,17). qšh lēb which appears only one time (7:3) in *hiph'il* where the subject is God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart belongs to P.

Source criticism is capable of explaining this usage of different expressions to convey Pharaoh's obstinacy but it is unable to elucidate the appearance of different agents in the action of hardening Pharaoh's heart one of which, the God of the Hebrews, occupies a very special place. Scholars generally find a theological development here:⁹ in the early sources, J and E, Pharaoh is the agent of the hardening of heart while in the later, in P, it is God who hardens Pharaoh's heart. But this theory is open to discussion, for as we can see in Table no.2 above, along with the appearance of God as the agent of action in E and P, there is also mention of the heart hardening itself. Moreover, the heart appears as an agent one time only in the early E source, while in the later P source it appears three times. If, indeed, there were a theological development here, as scholars have assumed, we would expect the situation to be just the opposite. Also the solution offered some time ago by Wilson does not withstand the test of criticism.¹⁰ In his opinion, the appearance of God as the agent who hardens Pharaoh's heart accords with the view of the Priestly source, which regarded the Ten Plagues as the start of a holy war led by God, its climax the parting of the Red Sea. Indeed, a holy war does take place between the messengers of God and Pharaoh, the god-king of the Egyptians. But this motif does not

belong to a later layer of the story, namely, the Priestly source. Rather, it constitutes, from the beginning, one of the components of the plagues narrative, as I shall try to demonstrate, in what follows, by explaining the biblical terminology in the light of Egyptian parallels.¹¹

Two of the idioms kbd lēb and ḥzq lēb are not common to the language of the Bible. The collocation kbd lēb, in which kbd, "heavy," is used metaphorically appears only once outside of the book of Exodus in I Samuel 6:6 and here too in reference to the exodus from Egypt: "Why should you harden your hearts as Egypt and Pharaoh hardened theirs?"¹² the Philistines are asked by their priests and diviners. ḥzq lēb carrying the negative meaning of obstinate and stubborn too appears, once only, outside the book of Exodus in the account of Ezekiel's call. Here, the stubborn and rebellious people of Israel are described as "stiff of face and hard of heart" (Ezek 2:4).¹³

This, however, is not the case with the third idiom, qšh lēb, "hard hearted", which appears only once in Exodus, but more often in other books: The hardness of heart of the Israelites is mentioned in conjunction with an act of rebellion at the time of the exodus from Egypt (Ps 85:8); it also appears in passages that have no connection to Egypt: "Hard of heart" are the people who refuse to hearken to the words of the prophet (Ezek 3: 7); and about the man who "hardens his heart," it is said that misfortune will befall him (Prov 28:14).

From the above analysis, we can conclude that words that carry the meaning of heaviness, strength and hardness, when used in the Bible, in combination with "heart," carry a negative connotation and mean stubbornness and disobedience. Pharaoh, king of Egypt thus characterized, and hence cast in a negative light is clearly represented in the biblical text as a sinner, "And when Pharaoh saw...he sinned yet more; and he hardened his heart, he and his servants" (Exod 9:34).

The picture that emerges from the Egyptian sources is just the opposite. There, the quality of stout heartedness, and consistency of character attributed to someone who practices restraint, who exercises self-control and who shows courage in the hour of need -this quality is highly esteemed. This same quality is conveyed in collocations similar to those of the Bible, and which are also composed of words indicating heaviness, strength, hardness and the term, "heart."

The equivalent of *kbd lēb* is *dns ib* (*Hannig* 982; *Wb* V 468, 13 ;469,4), "level-headed," (lit. heavy hearted) which describes a man who is restrained and is able to hold his tongue.¹⁴ Thus, the high official is "level-headed" (*dns ib*) who "hides his intentions (*hrp shr h.t*)" (*Urk* VII 64,7). The governor takes pride in himself in similar terms: "I am one, who rules out of love, who is level-headed (*dns ib*), who hides his intentions (*hrp shr h.t*)" (*Siut* I, 81).¹⁵ "Keep firm your heart (*dns ib.k*), steady your heart (*smn h3ty.k*), do not steer with your tongue," that is, keep your thoughts to yourself, do not blabber to one and all, the sage, Amenemope, warns his son (*The Instruction of Amenemope* 20,3). And his colleague, the scribe, Any, gives his son similar counsel, "Keep steady your heart (*dns r ib*), when someone speaks, do not answer hastily" (*The Instruction of Any*, 15, 6-7).¹⁶ The antonym of *dns* is *is* light, and *is ib* is the lighthearted, thoughtless man (cf. *The Eloquent Peasant*, B1, 209).

Less frequently, the idiom *dns ib* appears in a negative context: For example, regarding the pupil who steals his heart toward his teacher refusing to heed his words, it is said: "How conceited you are! You do hearken to me when I speak! Your heart is weightier (*dns ib.k*) than a great monument...which has been completed and is ready for loading..." (*Pap. Lansing* 2,4). Heaviness of heart (*dns... m h3ty.f*) is also a negative trait of the hot-tempered man who "does not know the clam of clam-of-heart" (*Ostrakon Deir el Medineh* 1265 II 6-7).

The term equivalent to *hzq lēb* is *sh̄m ib* (*Hannig* 745; *Wb* IV 246, 15-17), "stout hearted." Senmut, one of Hatshepsut's noblemen, takes pride in being "Stout of heart (*sh̄m ib*)" and showing "no weakness (*itwy bgg.f*)" (*Urk* IV 410,5). Thutmosis III is depicted as "Stout of heart in pursuing whoever attacks him" (ibid. 556,1), while Intef is "stout of heart" with those who are "stout of heart" (ibid. 968, 16). *sh̄m ib* also appears as standing for precision and honesty in the description of an 18th Dynasty official who is likened to a pair of balancing scales: "(He is) the scales of the Lord of the Two Lands (Egypt), stout hearted (*sh̄m ib*) of the good god (Pharaoh)" (ibid. 454, 2).

However, like *dns ib*, so too, *sh̄m ib* can function in a negative context when calling for violence and insolence, just the opposite of "fear" and "respect." The nobleman, Ineni, from the time of Thutmosis III, takes pride in being "taciturn (*gr*)," and showing "no insolence (*šw sh̄m ib*)" (ibid. 66, 11-12; cf. ibid. 64,6). *sh̄m ib* is he who is "violent," whose opposite is he who is *sn̄dw*, "timid." "The lord loves the timid more than the violent (*sh̄m ib*)" (*Rekhmire*, ibid. 1082, 17; 1092, 13-14). And in the *Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage*, the god Re is criticized for not discerning, at the time of Creation, between a violent man (*sh̄m ib*) and a timid one (*sn̄dw*) (11,13).

Other expressions that are used less frequently also belong to the Egyptian, semantic field of hardening the heart. *Rwd ib*, firm, persistent (*Hannig* 463; *Wb* II 411, 32) are traits attributed to various kings. About Osorkon and Takeloth II it is said, that they were "firm of heart (*rwd ib*) while serving Thebes." (*Wb* II, *Belegstellen* 411, 32; *Jansen-Winkel*, 2.1.25). Amenophis II adored horses and "was persistent (*rwd ib*) in working them" (*Urk*. IV 1281,11; and see *Wb* II, *Belegstellen* 411,32 for additional examples). The epithet, *nht ib* (lit. strong hearted), carries a similar meaning, that is, "stout-hearted" (*Hannig* 428; *Wb* II 314, 16). See, for example, the inscription of Peppy from the Old Kingdom (*Urk*. I 133,17).¹⁷

The overall picture that emerges, then, from an analysis of the relevant, Egyptian material is as follows: (a) The Egyptian expressions equivalent to "heavy," "strong," and "hard hearted" in the Bible, when used with a positive connotation, represent exemplary, praiseworthy behavior. (b) These expressions were commonly used in the Egyptian sources. They are especially prevalent in the phraseology of the royal court, in the Wisdom Literature and in autobiographies. On the other hand, use of terms meaning "strength" combined with "heart" is not common in the Bible (and to the best of our knowledge, also not in Akkadian either nor in Ugaritic). Rather the use of these expressions in the Bible is generally limited to passages having an Egyptian background. In the light of this, the question arises as to whether the combined form in Hebrew indicates an influence or borrowing from Egyptian terminology. Indeed, two of these *kbd lēb* and *hzq lēb*, apparently reflect use of the Egyptian motif. The first is associated in the Bible always with Egyptian background, and the second appears outside Exodus only in Ezekiel, in whose prophecy Egyptian elements are more evident than in any other prophet.¹⁸ Yet, these two collocations in Hebrew do not indicate a mechanical borrowing of Egyptian terminology but an adoption and adaptation of the Egyptian material to the Hebrew outlook as follows: (1) "Hardness of heart," which in Egypt generally symbolized reserved behavior and self control, was transformed in the Bible into a disagreeable characteristic, standing for obduracy and disobedience. (2) The terms *sh̄m ib* and *dns ib* in the Egyptian sources mostly serve as adjectives. The root *dns* can also act as a verb when combined with "heart," which functions as its object (e.g., *Amenemope* 20,3, "Harden your heart") or its subject (*Lansing* 2,4, "Your heart is heavy."). Both these usages appear also in the Bible, but in the biblical text, God's appearance as he who hardens the heart of Pharaoh is far more frequent, while this appears to be absent from the Egyptian sources.

While the two collocations, *hzq lēb* and *kbd lēb* originate in the adoption and adaptation of the Egyptian motif to its new context in the Bible, it would seem that the third idiom, *qsh lēb*, which appears in this context in Exodus only once, serves as the Hebrew equivalent for the Egyptian terms. For the combination of the root *qsh* with "heart" (*lēb*) or with some other organ is used widely in the Bible to convey stubbornness and is not at all limited to passages with Egyptian background. (See "hard of heart," Ezek 3:7; Ps. 95:8; Prov 28:14; "stiff necked," Deut 10:16; II Kgs 17:14; Jer 7:26; Neh 9:16-17, 29

etc., "hard of face," Ezek 2:4). Qšh lēb is, thus, an independent Hebrew term which bears no relation to the Egyptian terminology.¹⁹

Let us now return to the unique formulation of the Biblical story that presents the God of the Hebrews as hardening Pharaoh's heart. What does this special emphasis signify? This formulation becomes clear, on the one hand, in light of the role reserved for the king in ancient, Egyptian tradition, and on the other, in light of the significance of the heart in Egyptian sources. From ancient times on, the Egyptians regarded their king as god on earth, the flesh and blood son of god of the heavens. Along with this god-king on whom their well-being depended, the Egyptians believed in the existence of the will of god and his inspiration in the human heart.²⁰ Indeed, the heart is the organ that transmit god's will. So, for example, it is said in the texts, as early as the time of the Middle Kingdom, that the heart guides man on the path of life. (*Les.* 72,15). This declaration recurs also in the writings of the 18th Dynasty (*Urk.* IV 119,1; 504,7). From the time of the New Kingdom and on, the heart is depicted as that place where god resides in man, and the heart itself is compared to god (Nebneteru of the 22nd Dynasty etc.). In the Late Period, one speaks of "the way of god" as imprinted in man's heart (Petosiris) and god appears as that which guides and leads the heart (e.g., *Pap. Insinger* 31,11).²¹

Monotheism rejects from the outset, the role of the heart as a kind of personal god. However, in the Bible just as in Egypt, the heart acts as an intermediary in transmitting god's will (e.g., Ezra 7:27; Neh 2:12; 7:5). But at the same time, the heart itself must not be seen as a god: In those verses where the heart is brought into confrontation with God, it is God who emerges triumphant (e.g., Prov 16:9; 19: 21; cf. 16:1). Quite possibly these verses may be reflecting a concealed polemic against the Egyptian concept. Such a controversy is unquestionably present in Prov 21:1, "The king's heart is as channels of water in the hands of Yahweh; He turns it wherever He will." What is abundantly clear is that the background for this verse, conveyed in imagery taken from an agriculture based on irrigation canals, is Egyptian (cf. Deut 11: 10). The biblical text here takes dispute with the Egyptian conventions: Neither is the heart God, nor the king. It is not the heart which guides man, but God alone. Thus, the heart of the Egyptian king is in the hands of God, who directs it according to his will, just as the farmer directs the channels of water in accordance with the needs of the land.

This debate with the Egyptian concept is best formulated in a way that recurs in Exod 4 -15: 21, presenting the God of the Hebrews as hardening Pharaoh's heart. This formulation undercuts the credibility of the Egyptian belief: Not only is Pharaoh not omnipotent; neither is his heart, wherein resides the spark of god in man--it is nothing but a tool in the hands of the God of the Hebrews to do with as he pleases. The divinity of Pharaoh thus becomes an object of derision, reflected in the play on words of the roots "heavy (kbd)" and "strong (ḥzq)" dispersed throughout the episode. Pharaoh's "heavy (kabēd) heart" only serves to bring "honor kābōd) to God (Exod. 14:4.) while his "strength (ḥōzek) of heart" allows God to

demonstrate his "strong hand (yād ḥāzāqāh)" (Exod 3:19; 6:1; 13: 3, 9, 14, 16).²² In the struggle between the God of the Hebrews and the Egyptian god, the former emerges victorious.

Finally, Hermann was the first to seek to relate those expressions in Egyptian denoting "hardness of heart" to the belief in the hereafter and the Egyptian Judgment of the Dead.²³ In this judgment, the heart plays an important role: It pronounces the "Negative Confession," with which the deceased declares his innocence and it is then weighed on the scales against the symbol of the goddess Ma'at. Because of this, in order to ensure that the heart arrives safely in the hereafter, and that it faithfully fulfills its role in the Judgment of the Dead, the Egyptians took several precautions. In addition to making use of oaths and spells--whose purpose was to prevent the heart from being snatched away or from deserting its owner and also to obstruct its negative testimony at the time of judgment--from the time of the New Kingdom, the Egyptians engaged in the practice of placing heart-shaped scarabs in the tomb, on or inside the mummy's wrappers.²⁴ The purpose of this artificial heart, which was made of precious or semi-precious stone, was to assist the true, flesh and blood heart to provide convincing testimony at the Judgment of the Dead. According to Hermann, the motif of the hard heart, the heart of stone, was transferred from the religious sphere to that of daily life becoming a symbol of correct behavior, as is reflected in the Egyptian expressions denoting "hardness of heart."

Yet, however appealing this claim may be, it is difficult to find a basis for it in the Egyptian sources: The use of these expressions, as we have seen above, is for the most part evident in the phraseology of the royal court, in the Wisdom Literature and in the autobiographies and they do not appear in the context of the Judgement of the Dead in the Literature of the Dead.²⁵

Other scholars go still further, explaining the expression kbd lēb "heavy hearted," in the light of the Egyptian *dns ib*, which, they argue, relates to a negative weighing in the Judgment of the Dead; that is, Pharaoh's heart weighed more than a feather, the symbol of Ma'at, so that the God of the Hebrews, who sat in judgement, found him guilty.²⁶ This idea is utterly wrong: The term *dns* does not appear in Egyptian writings in the context of the process of weighing the deceased heart or determining what the judgement is to be. The verdict, whether for better or worse, is expressed by other terms, such as-for better, "the heart weighs the same as Ma'at," "the scales are evenly balanced," his deeds are balanced on the grand scales"; and for worse, "the plummet inclines to one direction."²⁷ Thus, even if the author of the story in the Book of Exodus knew Egyptian and could read the Egyptian Literature of the Dead, as scholars who advocate this theory assume, it is still not possible that the expression "heavy hearted" (kbd lēb) was borrowed from there.

The connection, then, between those expressions denoting "hardness of heart" in the Bible with the Egyptian Judgment of the Dead is thus found to be dubious. This, however, is not the case for the idiom l?b 'eben "a heart of stone" also mentioned by Hermann.²⁸ This particular expression belongs to

Ezekiel, in whose prophecies Egyptian elements are more evident than in any other prophet.²⁹ Here the stubborn and rebellious Israelites, are called "hard of heart," just like Pharaoh (Ezek 2:4). And to express the idea of a new covenant to be sealed, at the End of the Days, between God and his people, the prophet uses the following image: "Then I will ... take the heart of stone from out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh" (Ezek 11:19; 36:26).³⁰ This image was later borrowed by the prophet Zechariah, who uses it in a similar way to describe the obstinacy of the Israelites, "and making their hearts like adamant, they refused to hearken ..." (7:12).³¹ This image probably reflects the Egyptian custom of burying heart-shaped scarabs made of stone in the tombs of the deceased.³² The idiom "heart of stone" is then going back to the Egyptian

sources and the Israelite tradition with Pharaoh seen as the exemplification of human obduracy. Like whoever authored the Oppression and Exodus narratives before him, Ezekiel turned things around, so that whatever was regarded in Egyptian texts as a symbol of exemplary behavior, became, in the words of his prophecy, reprehensible conduct deserving blame and censure. It is not the "heart of stone"-- the artificial heart whose task it is to testify in favor of the deceased even if this testimony is false -- that serves as a symbol of renewal, it is the "heart of flesh." In conclusion, the expressions, "strong (hzq) heart," "heavy (kbd) heart" and "heart of stone," which in the Bible represent hardness of heart as a negative quality, were most likely borrowed from the language, imagery, and custom of ancient Egypt.

TABLES

Table 1: Distribution of Terminology Relating to heart Hardening by Sources

Source	Verb collocated with "heart"	Agents		
		Pharaoh	Pharaoh's heart	God
J	kbd	3	2	
E	hzq		1	3
P	hzq		3	5
	qšh			1
R(d)	kbd			1
Total		3	6	10

Table 2: The Agents of Hardening Pharaoh's Heart of Hardening

Root	Source				Verb Conjugation			Total
	J	E	P	R(d)	Qal	Pi'el	Hiph'il	
kbd	5			1	+		+	6
hzq		4	8		+	+		12
qšh			1				+	1
Total	5	4	9	1				19

NOTES

It is an honor for me to dedicate this essay dealing with one aspect of the comparative research between Israel and Egypt to Prof. Redford, who has made a lasting contribution to this field.

Please note the following abbreviations:

- Hannig R. Hannig, *Die Sprache der Pharaonen: Grosses Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch (2800-950 v. Chr.)* (Mainz, 1995).
- Jansen-Winkel K. Jansen- Winkel, *Ägyptische Biographien der 22 und 23 Dynastie, Teil II: Phraseologie* (ÄAT 8/2; Wiesbaden, 1985).
- Les. K. Sethe, *Ägyptische Lesestücke, Texte des Mittleren Reichs*, (Hildesheim, 1959)

TDOT Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (eds. G. J. Botterweck and H. Riggern; trans. J. T. Willis; Michigan, 1977 ff.).

1 The following is a selective list of studies published in recent years on the Egyptian background of the book of Exodus: R. B. Redford, "An Egyptological Perspective on the Exodus Narrative," *Egypt, Israel, Sinai: Archeological and Historical Relationships in the Biblical Period* (ed. A. F. Rainey; Tel Aviv, 1987) 137-161, who emphasizes the paucity of the Egyptian coloring in the Exodus narratives, and argues that the account of the Oppression and the Exodus may be a remembrance of the Hyksos occupation of Egypt. A different approach is taken by K. A. Kitchen, "Exodus," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (ed. D. N. Freedman; New York, 1992) vol. 2, 700-708; idem, "Egyptians and Hebrews, from Ra'amases to Jeri-

cho," *The Origin of Early Israel - Current Debate, Biblical, historical, and Archeological Perspectives*, (eds. S. Ahituv and E. Oren; Beer Sheva 12; Beer Sheva 1998) 65-131; and J. K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt* (New York - Oxford, 1996). Both these authors assume the existence of authentic Egyptian elements in the narratives and suggest that one should not lightly dismiss the authenticity of the Biblical tradition regarding the origin of Israel as a nation in Egypt.

J. K. Currid, *Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament* (Michigan, 1997); idem, "Why Did God Harden Pharaoh's Heart"? *BR* 9/6(1993) 46-51; idem, "The Egyptian Setting of the Serpent," *BZ* 39 (1995) 203-224, goes too far in assuming that the Biblical author was well versed in the Egyptian culture and tradition. His thesis is accepted by S. B. Noegel, "Moses and Magic: Notes on the Book of Exodus," *JANES* 24(1996) 45-59.

2 I intend to study extensively the complex of the above-listed Egyptian features elsewhere. Most of them have been dealt with in the publications of Hoffmeier and Currid mentioned in n. 1 above.

3 To simplify the discussion in the following, I treat Exod. 4-15:21 as one integral literary unit. But in fact, this unit consists of several sections, diverse in respect of structure, content, and vocabulary. On this issue see the extensive investigation of D. J. McCarthy, "Moses' Dealings with Pharaoh: Ex 7,8-10,27," *CBQ* 27(1965) 336-347; idem, "Plagues and Sea of Reeds: Exodus 5-14," *JBL* 85 (1966) 137-158.

4 The hardening formula does not always come at the conclusion of the plague, i.e., after its removal; at times it comes when the plague is still in effect (Exod. 7:22, 8:15, 9:7,12)

5 I believe that to day it is impossible to reconstruct the history of the development of the hardening motif in the different sources. Therefore, I prefer to relate to the final complete text or version now in our hands. For such an investigation see R. R. Wilson, "the Hardening of Pharaoh's heart," *CBQ* 41 (1979) 18-36.

6 A comprehensive list of Biblical studies published until 1979, devoted to the theological, literary, and terminological aspects of this issue, is to be found in Wilson, "The Hardening," 18-19, nn. 2-6. The following later publications may be added to it: J. I. Durham, *Exodus* (*World Biblical Commentary* 3; Texas, 1987) 99-130; T. E. Frenthim, *Exodus* (Kentucky, 1991) 96-103; D. M. Gunn, "The Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart: Plot, Character and Theology in Exodus 1-14," *Art and Meaning: Rhetoric in Biblical Literature* (ed. D. J. A. Clines et al.; *JSOTSup.* 19, Sheffield, 1982) 72-96; W. H. C. Propp, *Exodus 1-18* (*Anchor Bible*, New York - London - Toronto - Sydney, 1998); N. M. Sarna, *Exploring Exodus* (New York, 1986) 64-65; J.L. Ska, "La sortie d'Égypte (Ex 7-14) dans le récit sacerdotal (Pg) et la tradition prophétique," *Biblica* 60 (1979) 191-215; J. Van Seters, *The Life of Moses* (Kampen, 1994) 87-91.

7 A. S. Yahuda, *The Language of the Pentateuch in Its Relation to Egyptian* (London, 1933) 68-69, was the first to indicate the analogy between the Biblical and the Egyptian terminology. Later, the Egyptian background of the hardening of heart motif was discussed by H. Hermann, "Das steinharte

Herz," *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 4 (1961) 77-107; S. Ben Reuben, "And He Hardened the Heart of Pharaoh," *Beth Mikra* 97/2 (1984) 112-113 (Hebrew); and Currid, "Why Did God," 46-51; idem, "The Egyptian Setting," 216-224; idem, *Ancient Egypt*, 96-103.

8 For a standard form - critical analysis of the hardening formula see R. Driver, *The Book of Exodus* (*The Cambridge Bible*, Cambridge, 1953) 55-57. But during the last twenty years this commonly accepted theory has been refuted by some scholars, who reject the division of Exod. 1-14 into three sources; see Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 107-108, 145.

9 H. Räisänen, *The Idea of Divine Hardening* (Helsinki, 1972) 54-55; F. Hesse, *Das Verstockungsproblem im Alten Testament* (Berlin, 1955) 44-53.

10 Wilson, "The Hardening", 33-34. Another weak point in Wilson's argumentation is the fact that in the verses cited by him to prove the assumption that ḥzq lēb belongs to the context of holy war, ḥzq lēb appears only once (Josh 11:20). Furthermore, the term qšh lēb, which is also used in P to express the hardening motif, may be expected to relate to war too. For a different approach, assuming that the hardening motif is based on the prophetic tradition of the stubbornness and disobedience of the people of Israel, see, e.g., Ska, "La sortie d'Égypte," 198-205, and Van Seters, *The Life of Moses*, 87-91.

11 The following focuses on the analogy between Egyptian and Biblical terminology. An extensive semantic analysis of the Biblical terms falls outside the scope of our discussion; for such an investigation see the extensive study of Ska, "La sortie d'Égypte," 199-202; Hesse, *Das Verstockungsproblem*, esp. 7-14; idem, "chāzaq", *TDOT* (Michigan, 1980) vol.4, 301-308; H. J. Fabry, "lēb, lēbāb," *ibid.* (1995) vol. 7, 427-428.

12 The collocation of kbd with other bodily organs is more common; see mouth and tongue (Exod 4:10), eyes (Gen 48:10), ears (Jes 6: 10; 59:1 etc.).

13 Cf. the collocation of ḥzq with other objects indicating obduracy and stubbornness as well: face (Jer 5:3; Ezek 3:8), forehead (Ezek 3:7,9). A distinction should be made between a negative (in Exod and Ezek) and a positive connotation of ḥzq lēb, the latter meaning "to gain strength," "to take courage" (Ps 27:14; 31:25). In Jos 11:20 the connotation of the term is ambivalent and may be explained negatively (cf. Propp, *Exodus*, 217) or positively (cf. Wilson, "The Hardening," 23).

14 *dns ib* is synonymous with *imn/hrp ib*, meaning one who cancels his thoughts; see J. J. Clère, "L'expression *dns mhwt* des autobiographies égyptiennes," *JEA* 35 (1949) 38-42, who rejects the meaning given to *dns ib* in *Wb* V 468,14, i.e., "erst," grave.

15 The translation is based on the hieroglyphic text given by Yahuda, *The Language of the Pentateuch*, 5*: 69,11.

16 See J. A. Quack, *Die Lehren des Ani* (*OBO* 141; Freiburg- Göttingen, 1994) 86-87,151,281.

17 To this semantic field also belongs *mn ib*, i.e., firm, fixed hearted, which is common in the royal *mnt* phraseology and in the Literature of the Dead. *Mn ib* usually denotes a courageous, brave man, and appears in the context of war or other

aggressive action. See, for example, the application to the bodyguard of Thutmose III at the battle of Meggido *Urk IV* 656,11= 661,9; also cf. the epithet of the winner king, Sethi I (F. Hinze, "Die Felsenstele Sethos' I bei Qasr Ibrim," *Z'S* 87[1962] 34-35), and similarly the title of Thutmose III, *Urk IV* 616, 3; for more references in the Literature of the Dead see n. 25 below. However, *mn ib* is not the semantic equivalent of the three Biblical idioms, so it is not dealt with in this comparative study.

18 See n. 29 below.

19 The following collocations with *lēb*, heart, also belong to the semantic field of stubbornness and obduracy in the Bible: *ʔamaš* (encourage) the heart (Deut 2:30,15:7; Ps 27:14); *šrīrūt* (firmness) of heart (Deut 29:18; Jer 3:17, 7:24, 9:13; Ps 81:13), *ʔabbīr* (stout) heart (Isa 46:12; Ps 76:6), *qašāḥ* (hard) heart (Isa 63:17), and *šaman* (fat) heart (Isa 6:10).

20 For a discussion on the heart concept in the Bible and ancient Egypt see my book *Where Can Wisdom Be Found? The Sage's Language in the Bible and in Ancient Egyptian Literature* (OBO 130; Freiburg-Göttingen, 1993) 297-311 and the bibliography cited there.

21 For a survey of the relationship between heart and god see *ibid.*, 308-311 and additional examples and references there.

22 Cf. Frenthim, *Exodus*, 97.

23 Hermann, "Das Steinharte Herz," esp. 105-106.

24 C. Andrews, *Amulets of Ancient Egypt* (British Museum; London, 1994) esp. 56-59, 72-73; D. Ben Tor, *The Scarab: A Mirror of Ancient Egyptian Culture* (Israel Museum; Jerusalem, 1989) (Hebrew) 17-18, 52-55; E. Feucht "Herzskarabäus," *LÄ* 2 (eds. W. Helck and W. Westendorf; Wiesbaden, 1997) 1168-1170; Currid, "The Egyptian Setting," 219-223.

25 For the terminology relating to the Egyptian Judgement of the Dead, see C. Von Seeber, *Untersuchungen zur Darstellung des Totengerichts im Alten Ägypten* (Munich- Berlin, 1976). To the best of my knowledge, only the collocation of *mn ib* relates to the weighing of the heart in the Literature of the Dead, e.g., "That he (the deceased) may go stout-hearted (*mn ib*) to the sky" (*CT II* 14d, 17g); "He (God) has established my heart (*smn ib.i*) on the great standard" (*ibid.* IV 80e; also see *ibid.* VII 452d). But *mn ib* does not constitute an equivalent to the Hebrew idioms appearing in Exodus; cf. n.17 above. Also *šhm ib/šhm m ib*, which generally indicates in the Coffin Texts a negative characteristic, i.e., the aggressive man (cf., e.g., *CT VI* 3c; 17a-b [*BD* 153a]; 23f; 29b; 37k; 43I; *BD* 27;68), does not appear in the context of weighing the heart, except perhaps one, unique, case. This is *BD* 27,5 where the deceased declares that his heart belongs to him and that "he has power over it (*šhm.f im.f*) and he (the heart) will not say what he (the deceased) has done" (E. A. W. Budge, *The Book of the Dead: The Hieroglyphic Transcript of the Papyrus of Ani* [New York, 1960]) 452. Also see D. Müller, "Die Zeugung durch das Herz in Religion und Medizin der Ägypter," *Orientalia* 35 (1966) esp. 261, 265-266.

26 This theory is maintained by Ben Reuben "And He Hardened"; Currid, "Why Did God Harden," esp.51; *idem*, "The Egyptian Setting," 224; *idem*, *Ancient Egypt*, 102. But it is refuted by J. R. Huddelstun ("Who Is This that Rises like the Nile? Some Egyptian Texts on the Inundation and a Prophetic Trope," *Fortunate the Eyes that See, Essays in Honor of D. N. Freedman in Celebration of His Seventieth Birthday* [ed. A. B. Beck et al.; Michigan - Cambridge, 1995] 347 n. 25), whose arguments differ from mine, above.

27 Seeber, *Untersuchungen*, 77-80.

28 Hermann, "Das steinharte Herz," 104-106.

29 The Egyptian traces in the prophecies of Ezekiel are the following: a. Phrases and terms: "Pharaoh's arm" (*zerôʔa*) (30:21ff.); "a staff of reed" (*mišʔenet qāneh*) (29:6); "rivers" (*yeʔōrim*) (29:5; 30:12); b. Figures and descriptions: the crocodile (29:3ff; 32:2ff.); the destruction of the land (32:7ff.) (cf. the Egyptian Wisdom texts: *The Prophecies of Neferti* and the *Egyptian Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage*); c. Toponyms (29:10,14; 30:6, 14-16).

30 "Heart of stone" appears only once more, in Job 41:16, "His heart is as hard as a stone." There it is applied to the description of the crocodile, a description probably also rooted in the Egyptian environment.

31 On the idea of "heart of stone" as part of the prophecy of a spiritual and physical revival of Israel, and its sources in the Biblical tradition, see M. Weinfeld, "Jeremiah and Spiritual Metamorphosis of Israel," *Zer Li'gevurot, The Zalman Shazar Jubilee Volume* (ed. B. Z. Luria; Jerusalem, 1973) 258-260 (Hebrew).

32 Egyptian beliefs and practices concerning death and posthumous life were apparently known in the Israelite sphere. This is attested by Biblical and extra-Biblical evidence: the idioms *tökēn libbôt* and *bōhēn libbôt* in Proverbs (21:2, 24:12; cf. 16:2, 17:3) and the image of the balance in Job (31:6) have a link with the Judgement of the Dead. The great "Avowal of Integrity", which follows the last image in the same chapter in Job, has an analogy with the Confession of the Dead (see *Atque Pontes, Eine Festgabe für H. Brunner* [ÄAT 5; Wiesbaden, 1983] 186-204; and my article "Egyptian Idioms and Imprints in Biblical Wisdom," *Tarbiz* 54[1985],479-483 [Hebrew]). To these one should add a unique archeological finding, a heart scarab of 18th-19th Dynasties, found by F. Petrie at Tell el Jerisheh. See A. Rowe, *A Catalogue of Egyptian Scarabs, Scaraboids, Seals and Amulets in the Palestine Archeological Museum* (Cairo, 1936) 152-153, no.641, pl.16.