

Yahweh the Donor

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[The Hebrew word *māgēn*, "shield", is used as a divine designation, it is traditionally believed. Doubt about its appropriety has been voiced, however, and counterproposals have been made, based on various understandings of the biblical and external data. It is here proposed that from Biblical Hebrew *mgn*, "to give", was derived a noun *mgn* (vocalization uncertain), "donor", used of divine and human sovereigns. The biblical occurrences of the term are reviewed].

The Hebrew Bible is rich in metaphors and titles for Yahweh. Though these designations have often been studied, certain patterns in this complex of terminology are not entirely clear. It is with one of these patterns that we may begin: when Yahweh is metaphorically or metonymically associated with the inanimate realm, the metaphor or title in question refers to an inhumanly large scale. Yahweh is a fort (*mā'oz*), but not a house; a rock (*šūr*), but hardly a stone that can be held or hefted (despite the ambiguity of usual renderings); and so on. The designation of Yahweh as a *māgēn*, "shield", seems to be an exception.

In implicit recognition of this pattern numerous scholars have hesitated over the apparent exception. They have thought to find among the occurrences of consonantal *mgn* in the biblical texts two homographs, *māgēn*, "shield", and *mgn*, a proper divine (and perhaps human) designation. In this paper I wish to review previous proposals and reconsider the relevant biblical loci¹. Hebrew had a root *mgn*, "to give"², from which derives, I shall argue, a noun *mgn*, "donor"; after considering the negligible external evidence for this noun, we shall look at the internal evidence, the uses referring both to God and to human sovereigns; we shall reflect in conclusion on the fate of the biblical homographs *mgn*, "shield", and *mgn*, "donor", especially in the Septuagint.

1. This paper supplements and revises my much briefer treatment in "*māgēn*", *TWAT* IV, 646-659 (with D. N. Freedman). Add to the references there, J. C. Greenfield, "Early Aramaic Poetry", *JANES* 11 (1979) 48, on *mgn* (with *'sprk*, "buckler", an Iranian loan) in 1QGenApocryphon; and J. B. Curtis, "A Detached Note on *ḥereb*", *Proceedings Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies* 4 (1984) 87-98 (see p. 96 on *mgn*, "donor"). My thanks to Philip Schmitz and an anonymous *AO* reviewer for comments on an earlier draft.

2. The cognate Ugaritic verb *mgn* is variously glossed (1) "to beseech", by, e.g., M. Held, *EI* 9 (1969) 75 or "to importune", by, e.g., J. C. L. Gibson, *Canaanite Myths and Legends* (Edinburgh 1978) 58, 150; (2) "to give", by, e.g., J. Aistleitner, *Wörterbuch der Ugaritischen Sprache* (Berlin 1967), n.º 1513; (3) assuming the underlying identity of these senses, "to beseech with gifts", by, e.g., C. H. Gordon, *UT* 19.1419 (cf. Gibson's gloss on the noun *mgn*, "'bold request,' also 'present' given therewith", *Canaanite Myths*, 150); (4) "agasajar, obsequiar," by, e. g., G. del Olmo Lete, *Mitos y leyendas de Canaan* (Barcelona 1981) 193, 198, 574; (5) "faire un présent", by, e. g., A. Caquot, M. Sznycer, (and A. Herdner), *Textes Ougaritiques I* (Paris 1974) 194, 201-2.

1. Hebrew *mgn*, "to give"

1. *General*. The Massorettes recognize a verb *mgn*, "to give", which they point always in the *Piel*. This pointing may indicate that they regard it as a denominative from *māgēn*, "shield", and many modern dictionaries treat it as such. In fact, it is independent of *māgēn* and is derived from a different root, which is the source of an important honorific title, applied sometimes to human leaders and to Yahweh often. *mgn*, "to give", is attested in Phoenician, Aramaic, Akkadian, and Hebrew.

2. *The Root in Other Semitic Languages*. In Phoenician the root *mgn*, "to give", is attested in the Ur Ivory Box Inscription (*KAI* 29), which records that Amutba'al gave (*mgn*) an ivory box as a gift for her lady Astarte³.

Just as in Phoenician only the verb *mgn* is attested, so in Aramaic and Akkadian only nominal forms of the root occur. In Western Late Aramaic, *maggān* "(undeserved) gift, grace" is attested. More widely known in Middle and Late Aramaic are adverbial uses: Palmyrene *mgn*, "gratis"; Jewish Aram. *maggān/maggānā*, "gratis; in vain"; Syr. *magana*, "gratis"⁴. Akkadian *magannu*, "gift", occurs in Middle Babylonian, and the phrase *ina/ana maganni*, "gratis", is used in first-millennium sources.

3. *Hebrew miggen*, "to give." The Hebrew cognate of Semitic *mgn*, "to give", occurs three times in the Bible⁵. All three texts are poetic. In Genesis 14, Melchizedek blesses Abraham.

Gen 14,19a. Blessed be Abram by El Elyon

19b. Creator of Heaven and Earth

20a. And blessed be El Elyon

20b. Who gave (*miggēn*) your foes into your power.

In Hos 11,8, Yahweh speaks through the prophet of his anguish over his recalcitrant followers.

Hos 11,8a. How can I give you up (*'ettenkā*), Ephraim?

8b. How can I give you up (*'āmaggenkā*), Israel?

The Ugaritic inanimate noun *mgn* (in, most clearly, *CTA* 4 [*UT* 51].I 21) is glossed variously (1) "gift", by, e. g., Aistleitner, *Wörterbuch*, n.º 1514; (2) "agasajo, regalo", del Olmo, *Mitos y leyendas*, 193, 574; (3) "request", (A. Caquot, M. Sznycer, and) A. Herdner, *Textes Ougaritiques I*, 584 and see note *u* for discussion; note also Gibson's gloss quoted above. Taking up the first sense, "gift", with reference to the problematic occurrence in *CTA* 16 [*UT* 125].I 45, Johannes de Moor and Klaas Spronk have tried to refine the sense; they suggest that *k[sp]* (so they restore, with many) is meant in this passage as a *mgn*, "personal gift", as opposed to *hrš*, a gift *lkl*, "for all (of us)". It is difficult to take *-k*, "your", and *kl*, "all (of us)", as "parallel", even in the usual elastic sense of the term, and it is hard to give *lkl* a personal reference—del Olmo's "al completo" seems more apt. See "Problematical Passages in the Legend of Kirtu (1)", *UF* 14 (1982) 183. Some scholars see in the *CTA* 16 lines a personal noun used comparably to *adn*, "lord"; so, e. g., del Olmo, *Mitos y leyendas*, 574 ("soberano, benefactor"). This noun would provide significant support for the proposal discussed in this essay, but the context is difficult.

3. On the text see *DISO*, 142; Z. Harris, *A Grammar of the Phoenician Language* (AOS 8; New Haven 1936) 142; J. Friedrich and W. Rollig, *Phönizisch-Punische Grammatik* (AnOr 46; Rome 1970) 18; W. Kuhnigk, *Hosea* (Roma, 1974), 140; and R. S. Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon of the Phoenician and Punic Languages* (SBLDS 32; Missoula, Montana 1978) 165. The text reads *'rn /jn*; the usual restoration is *'rn /zjn*, "this box", with the demonstrative of the Byblian dialect. On the basis of the material it would be better to read *'rn /šjn*, "a box of ivory"; this restoration was first proposed by H. L. Ginsberg, cf. J. C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions* (Oxford, 1971) III, 72. Von Soden's assertion that *mgn* here could be either a noun or a verb is dubious, "Vedisch magham", *JEOL* 18 (1964) 338-44 at 341.

4. See Jastrow, 729; *DISO*, 142; Tomback, 165. From the late Syriac of Bar Hebraeus, von Soden cites *maggānāyā*, "freely given", and he notes a rendering of *laššaw* in Exod 20,7 with *l'maggānā*. See "Vedisch magham", *JEOL* 18, 342. The Aramaic uses are the source of Arab. *majjān*, "free"; *majjānan*, "gratis"; *majjāniya*, "exemption from fees". H. Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*³ (Ithaca, New York 1971) 894, erroneously lists these with *mjn*, "to mock". E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon* (Beirut 1968) 1.8.3018, lists *majjān*^m, "gift of a thing without price". From Aramaic Modern Hebrew has taken over *maggān*, "gratis". I hope to return elsewhere to the root *mgn*, its supposed Vedic origins, and Akkadian *ana/ina magāni*, "in vain" — See O'Connor, "Semitic" **mgn* and its Supposed Sanskrit Origin", *JAOs* (1989).

5. The emendation of Isa 64,6 to include this verb, suggested by *BHS* and *HALAT*, is not necessary; see M. Dahood, *Or* 45 (1976) 347-48. The emendation of Hos 4,18 to include a *Qal* of this verb, suggested originally by G. L. Bauer in 1786 and repeated recently by Ch. Rabin, *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 8 (1961) 386, is also unnecessary.

8c. How can I treat you (*'ettenkā*) like Admah?

8d. How can I treat you (*'āšimkā*) like Zeboiim?

In 11,8a and c, the verb *ntn* is used in two distinct senses, and the verbs in 8b and d bring out the difference in the senses⁶. In Prov 4,9, the gifts of Wisdom to the person who pursues her are noted.

Prov 4,9a. She will give (*titten*) for your head a graceful wreath.

9b. A beautiful crown she will give you (**magg'nekā*).⁷

The tradition of treating this verb as a denominative of *māgēn* is superfluous, as the sense is not specialized to military deliverance, let alone "de-shielding" or "shielding"⁸; this is shown most clearly by Prov 4,9. The analogy of *sgr*, *Qal* "to shut (in)", *Piel* and *Hip'il* "to deliver up", is remote at best. The verb is also attested in Qumranic Hebrew, in the hymn that concludes 1QM: *lb gbwrym mgnth l'yn m'md*. "You [God] have made (i.e., given; cf. *ntn*) the heart of the mighty so that they cannot stand" (1QM 18:13).⁹

2. Hebrew *mgn*, "donor". The External Evidence.

For nearly a century students of the Hebrew Bible have suspected that at least some of the more than two dozen cases in which the text refers to Yahweh as a *māgēn* involve something more, or other, than *māgēn*, "shield". The great names associated with the suspicion are Hugo Winckler, the elder Jeremias, and Arnold Ehrlich. In our time, M. Kessler and M. Dahood have entertained it, having both brought it forward independently in 1964. The basic hypothesis holds that sometimes a form derived from the root *mgn*, "to give", furnishes a title for Yahweh. Two bodies of evidence have been used to support this contention, one external to the Bible, the other internal¹⁰. Let us examine the former first.

1. *Ugaritic evidence*. M. Dahood has suggested that the supposed occurrence of *mgn*, "to bestow", in Ugaritic is important for the case supporting *mgn* as a divine title in Hebrew¹¹. The Ugaritic evidence is, however, difficult, and since *mgn*, "to give", occurs in Phoenician and Hebrew, it is not crucial to the argument whether the verb occurs in Ugaritic. There may be two Ugaritic personal names in *mgn*: *magani* and *mgn*, perhaps simple verbal names, but open to other interpretations¹². It is worth noting that Ugaritic may furnish a title analogous to *mgn*, "donor", if *ṛ*, "gift", is related to the epithet of King Keret, *krt ṛ*, "Keret the Munificent", as G. R. Driver suggested¹³.

6. See F. I. Andersen and D. N. Freedman, *Hosea* (Garden City, New York 1980) 588.

7. On Saadia Gaon's paytanic treatment of *mgmk* as if from *gmn*, see Y. Tobi, "Saadia's Biblical Exegesis and His Poetic Practice", *HAR* 8 (1984) 250.

8. So most clearly, von Soden, "Vedisch *magham*", *JEOL* 18, 342. Modern Hebrew has two *Piel* uses, one meaning "to protect" (denomination from *māgēn*), the other, "to deliver" (from Gen 14,20).

9. Relying on the root *mgn*, "to give", W. Rudolph, *Hosea* (*KAT* 13/1: Gütersloh 1966), 108, has suggested that **megēn/māgān*, "gift", occurs in Hos 4,18, after a suggestion by Ch. Rabin. W. van der Weiden, *Proverbs*, (Rome 1970), 26-27, proposes that *mgn* in Prov 2:7 means "gift", in parallel to *ṣyḥ*; see below. O. Loretz, "Psalmstudien III", *UF* 6 (1974) 179, cf. 214, has suggested that *mgn*, "gift", occurs in Ps 47,10 (plural) and Gen 15,1 (singular); he insists that *mgn* in Biblical Hebrew as a noun can only mean "shield" or "gift". On Loretz's treatment of Gen 15,1, H. R. Cohen, *Biblical Hapax Legomena*, (Missoula 1978) 139, has ably dealt with the "completely unattested concept of God's declaring that He is a gift to His subject".

10. Only O. Loretz, "Psalmstudien III", *UF* 6, 177-83, has examined all the evidence and returned a negative verdict. He rejects all occurrences of *mgn*, "donor".

11. Dahood, *Mélanges . . . Tisserant*, 94; *Psalms I*, 16-17.

12. *PNU* 50, 156. The Ugaritic script name is read *mgn* by Viroilleaud and Gröndahl and as *mn* in *UT* 2117.1.6.

13. See W. H. Irwin, *Isaiah 28-33* (*BibOr* 30: Rome 1977), 122-23. Also noteworthy is the epithet *ṣp mhbh* (from *w/ḥb*), apparently "Rashap the Munificent", in some Ugaritic rituals (*KTU* 1.105:14; 106:6-7); see P. Xella, *I Testi rituali di Ugarit* (Rome 1981) 41. On *ṣp gn*, "Rashap of Gunnu(?)", "Rashap of the Garden(?)", "Rashap the Protector(?)", see Y. Yadin, "New Gleanings on Resheph from Ugarit", *Biblical and Related Studies Presented to Samuel Iwry*, ed. A. Kort and S. Morschauer (Winona Lake, Indiana 1985) 263-66.

2. *Supposed evidence from Punic administration.* From the mid-6th to the early 4th centuries, the Carthaginian political scene was dominated by the great Barcid family of Magonids, including Magon, Hasdrubaal, Hamilcar, the brothers Hannon and Giscon, and the second cousins Himilcon and Hannibal. Some in this six-generation train aspired beyond their rank of general, Lat. *imperator*, "commander-in-chief (not emperor, before the Roman empire is founded)" or *dux*, "leader". It is doubtful that any was ever actually called *rex*, "king", and the term *basileus*, "king", was applied to them only with qualifications.

In a survey of the Magonid period of North African history, Maurin paused to speculate on the meaning of Magon and, following Février, associated it with the root *gmn*, "to protect". In a note on Maurin's study, Dahood remarked, "The precise meaning of the term *magōn* is disputed, but the consistent Latin qualifiers of the Carthaginian generals, *imperator* and *dux*, suggest that the underlying root is not *gmn* . . . but rather *mgn*, 'to bestow'"¹⁴. Dahood nowhere returned to this argument to defend the implicit contention that the Magonid generals of Carthage were called Magonid for some reason other than eponymy. There needs to be some evidence that there was a term *māgōn* in Punic administration before it need be explained¹⁵.

3. *Evidence of Phoenician-Punic personal names.* Personal names in the Phoenician sphere with the element *mgn* have been plausibly associated with the root *mgn*, "to give", and with a divine epithet in particular. The names attested in consonantal spelling are (1.) *mgn* (4 Phoenician examples, 498 Punic); (2.) *mgnm* (9 Punic); and (3.) *mgnb'l* (1 Punic)¹⁶. The Greek-alphabet names are *magōn*, *magōna*, and *magōnos*; these, along with Latin-alphabet names *mago*, *magonus*, and *magonam*, may attest to a noun form or a *Qal* perfect. The Latin-alphabet form *miggin* reflects a *P'el* perfect. The consonantal spellings could correspond to any of these.

4. *An obscure Punic divine name.* KAI 78 (CIS I 3778) is a Carthaginian dedication, from the Salambo tophet, of a dressed *mṣbt* (Heb. *mšbh*), by Baali, an individual with an impressive sixteen-generation genealogy. The object of the dedication is given thus.

(2) <i>l'dn lb'l šmm</i>	To the Lord, to Baal Šāmēm
<i>wlrbt lnt pn b'l</i>	and to the Lady, to Tinnit-Pane-Baal
(3) <i>wl'dn lb'l ḥmn</i>	and to the Lord, to Baal Hamon
<i>wl'dn lb'l m(4)gnm</i>	and to the Lord, to B ^c L MGNM.

14. L. Maurin, "Himilcon le Magonide. Crises et mutations à Carthage au début du IV^e siècle avant J. C.", *Semitica* 12 (1962) 5-43, esp. 16. For Février's article, see below. M. Dahood, Review *Semitica* 12, *Bib* 45 (1964) 129 – The great Barcid Hannibal son of Giscon is entitled *dictator* in the text of the *columna rostrata* set up in 260 B. E. C. to honor C. Duilius, who commanded the victorious Roman fleet in a naval engagement with Carthage: the text (a later copy) is given by A. E. Gordon, *Illustrated Introduction to Latin Epigraphy* (Berkeley 1983), 124-27, and discussed by W. Huss, *Geschichte der Karthager* (Hb. d. Altw. 3.8; Munich 1985), 228-29. The latest treatment of the monarchy is M. Szyner, "Le Problème de la royauté dans le monde punique", *Bulletin archéologique* 17B (1984) 291-301.

15. This point is made clearly by James Barr, "Philology and Exegesis. Some General Remarks with Illustrations from Job 3", *Questions disputées d'Ancien Testament: méthode et théologie* (Louvain 1972) 39-61, at 44-48. Barr misleadingly writes as if Dahood alone had proposed *mgn* as a divine title – Barr's paper is now reprinted in his *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament*² (Winona Lake, Indiana 1987), 362-87, esp. 369-72.

16. F. Benz, *Personal Names in the Phoenician and Punic Inscriptions* (Studia Pohl 8; Rome 1972) 339 and *ad loc.*; he adds a few possible misspellings – Note also Greek-alphabet *megōnos*, Latin-alphabet *meggenis*, *meggent*, in F. Vattioni, "Per una ricerca sull'antroponimia fenicio-punica", *Studi magrebini* 11 (1979) 92; and Latin-alphabet *Miccina* (¿) and *Miggin* in Z. Ben Abdallah and L. Ladjimi Sebai, *Index onomastique des inscriptions latines de la Tunisie* (Tunis 1983), 37.

The deity *b'l mgnm* is mentioned only here. It is possible that *mgnm* represents a Magonid personal name¹⁷. It could be a word for "gifts"¹⁸ or for "sovereigns"¹⁹. Février, contending that the list of gods here is similar to the list in the prologue of Hannibal's treaty with Philip V of Macedon (215 B. C. E.), preserved in Polybius 7.9.2, has tried to equate *b'l mgnm* with the oath's phrase *daimōn karchēdoniōn*, "daimon of the Carthaginians", and is led to amend the text to (*b'l*) *mgnn*, *Pi'el* participle of *gnn*, "to protect", yielding a reference to the protector lord, i.e., deity of the Carthaginians, which he suggests was a title for Eshmun²⁰. M. L. Barré suggests that *mgnm* here means "shields" and that the "Lord of Shields" may be Reshep (cf. *ršphš*, *KAI* 32:4)²¹.

3. Hebrew *mgn*, "donor". Internal Evidence and Proposal.

The strongest internal evidence for the use of some form of *mgn*, "to give", to describe an important individual is contextual and derives from Genesis 14 and 15, and from several psalms²².

The join between the war narrative in chap. 14 of Genesis and the covenant ceremony in the following chapter is most obviously effected by the jejune connector *'aḥar haddēbārīm hā'elleh*, "After these things . . ." (Gen 15,1). Another feature of the join is a pattern that stretches from Melchizedek's prayer through Abraham's complaints. In eight verses, eight words for giving and taking are used: 3 verbs of giving in the sequence *miggēn/wayyitten/ten* (14,20, 20, 21); 3 verbs of taking, *qah'/eqah/yiq'hū* (14,21, 23, 24); and two verbs of giving, *titten/nātātā* (15,2, 3). A symmetrical set of 3/3/3 and a pattern of 1 *mgn* + 2 *ntn* in the first and third groups results if *mgn* in 15,1 is associated with the root *mgn*, "to give". The motif of giving dominates chap. 15, which culminates in the covenant that specifies *l'zar'ākā nātātī 'et-hā'āreš hazzo't*, "To your children I am going to give this land" (15,18). In contrast, Yahweh's offer of himself as a shield is superfluous in the most obvious sense, in that Abraham has just returned victorious from battle. Further, in a number of psalm texts, *mgn* is used in association with terms like *māšīaḥ* (Ps 84,10), *melek* (Ps 89,19), and *šemeš* (Ps 84,12).

This is a loosely stated report of the evidence used by Kessler and Dahood²³. It is governed by the existence of *mgn*, "to give", in Hebrew, and without that strong base the argumentation would collapse. To continue our report, we must distinguish the two major proposals, which have in common only a pair of trends: there is more of *mgn*, "to give", and less of *mgn*, "shield", than MT allows. Both Dahood and Kessler grant, at least implicitly, that *mgn*, "shield", can be used of Yahweh.

The modest proposal of Kessler and the older scholars he follows (who are also followed by *NEB*) has it that *mgn* in Gen 15,1 is a *Qal* participle: "Fear not, Abram, I am *about to give (mogēn)* you your very great reward", an opening complemented by Abraham's answers, "Yahweh, what will you give me . . .?" and "Look, you have not given me offspring. . . ." The use of the *Qal* participle of a verb otherwise used chiefly in the *Pi'el* is paralleled by *dbr* and *kzb*; the combination of personal pronoun + participle is

17. This possibility is mentioned by J. Teixidor, "Bulletin d'épigraphie sémitique, 1978-1979", *Syria* 56 (1979) 360, in his discussion of P. Bartoloni's *Le stele arcaiche del tofet di Cartagine* (Rome 1976).

18. So Röllig, *KAI* 2:96.

19. This is the possibility preferred by Teixidor, *Syria* 56, 360, citing Dahood.

20. J. Février, "Paralipomena Punica," *Cahiers de Byrsa* 6 (1956) 13-25. For a review of earlier identifications for the gods of the treaty, see F. W. Wallbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius* (Cambridge 1967) 1:42-52, and M. L. Barré, *The God-List in the Treaty Between Hannibal and Philip V of Macedonia* (Baltimore 1983). Barré refutes Février's suggestions, 41-42, 63.

21. Barré, 62-63. He also suggests that three of the *KAI* 78 deities are mentioned in the Hannibal treaty: Zeus = Ba'al Ḥamon, Hera = Tanit, and Apollo = Reshep.

22. M. Kessler, "The 'Shield' of Abraham?" *VT* 14 (1964) 494-97; M. Dahood, *Psalms I*, 16-17.

23. It is worth noting that "there is no transf. or fig. use in secular Gk." of words for shield, Oepke, *TDNT V*, 313, although neither Kessler nor Dahood uses this or any other large-scale negative argument.

well attested, notably in Gen 15,2, *w'ānokî hōlēk 'ārîrî*, "while I go on being childless". On Kessler's reading, the three references to giving in Gen 15,1-3 are all verbal. Kessler does not cite other cases of *mgn*, "to give".

Dahood's more ambitious suggestion has it that there was a title in Hebrew derived from the root *mgn*, "to give" (which he renders "to bestow", partly to avoid confusion with *ntn* and partly in line with the putative Ugaritic evidence). In 1964, he proposed that this title *mgn*, which he then rendered simply "king", occurred in Gen 15,1 and Pss 47,10; 84,10, 12; and 89,19²⁴. He enlarged this group with four more psalm texts and two passages from Proverbs in 1966²⁵ and later added two more occurrences. He voca-

lized the word tentatively, after the Greek- and Latin-alphabet Punic evidence, as *māgān*; he rendered it "suzerain" on the grounds that benefaction is a crucial element in the suzerainty treaties of the ancient Near East, illustrating the connection further with Jesus' reprimand of the disciples: "The kings (*basileis*) of the nations lord it (*kyrieuousin*) over them, and those who have authority (*exousiazontes*) are called their benefactors (*euergetai*; cf. Phoen. *p' l n' m*, *KAI* 19.6)" (Luke 22:25).

A proposal which takes advantage of Kessler's and Dahood's strong points, while filling out points they have not treated, is needed. Therefore we suggest that Biblical Hebrew has a technical use of a form related to the root *mgn*, "to give", which refers to persons of exalted rank and to the deity. The form may well be a *Qal* participle. The use of participles as divine epithets is attested in archaic poetry (there are eight participial titles in the Song of Hannah in 1 Sam 2,6-8) and later, as when Hosea's wife says *'ēlekā 'ahārē m'ahābay nor'nē lahmī umēmay šamrī upišṭī šamnī w'sīqquyay*, "I'll go after my lovers, the ones giving (me) my food and water, wool and flax, oil and strong drink" (Hos 2,7). Further, the participle can be used syntactically either in a verbal frame or as a noun; the range of possibilities appears in the small compass of the Song of Hannah. Some minor advantages of the participial vocalization are that it avoids speculation about a stage of Hebrew not fully attested, and it aids somewhat in explaining the situation in MT, in which all forms in *mgn* have fallen together.

The proposed word should be rendered, in line with verb's basic sense, "the d/Donor". There is no *a priori* reason why it should admit only of divine reference; it is, as Dahood sensed, properly to be tied to the class of notions about God that refer to *aretē* rather than transcendence, e.g., to notions of divine kingship (Exod 15,18) rather than ideas of divine governance over life (1 Sam 2,6). Thus it may be applied to exalted humans at times. Finally, it should be noted that there are cases in which it is impossible to decide clearly between *māgēn*, "shield", and *mgn*, "donor"²⁶.

4. Hebrew *mgn*, "donor". Used of God.

In considering the proposal that Hebrew *mgn* may have the sense "donor", let us begin with eight texts in which that sense is arguably clear.

24. In *Bib* 45(1964)129 and *Mélanges . . . Tisserant*, 94.

25. In *Bib* 47(1966)414 and *Psalms I*, 16-17.

26. One obvious case is the inscriptionally attested name *mgn*, found in 7 Tell-ed-Duweir (Lachish) seal impressions, one impression from Gibeon (n.° 8), and one from Ramat Rahel, all probably from the same seal, which reads *ltnhm/mgn*. The name is also attested on a bronze two-sheqel weight of unknown provenance, inscribed *lmgn*; the script may be Ammonite of the seventh century, according to Gabriel Barkay. D. Diringer glosses the name, "(God is) defense, protection". Barkay suggests that the root has the "gift" sense in names and thus *mgn* is a hypocoristic of such verbal names as *mgnb'el*, *'lmgn*, or of a nominal name like *mtnb'lyhw* (whence *mtn*, cf. *ntn*). See J. Pritchard, *Hebrew Inscriptions and Stamps from Gibeon* (Princeton 1959) 29, and G. Barkay, "A Group of Iron Age Scale Weights", *IEJ* 28(1978)214-16.

In the first revelation of Genesis 15, the word of Yahweh is presented through a vision which is furnished with the text: "Fear not, Abram. I am giving (*mgn*) you your very great reward". The texture of give and take references in Genesis 14-15, and the verbal character of *mgn* here have been discussed above. Yahweh's words are often treated as poetic²⁷, but the passage is too short for us to be sure; it lacks the marked poetic features of the companion passage, Melchizedek's prayer in Gen 14,19-20.

The Pharaoh of Egypt and the great Hittite king were known to their client kinglets as the sun, and this designation is coupled with *mgn*, "Donor", in Ps 84,12: *kî šemeš wmgm 'elohîm*, "Indeed Yahweh is a Sun and a Donor"²⁸. Note the occurrence of *ntn* in the next line. On Ps 84,10, see below.

The poet of Psalm 3 presents himself as one besieged by enemies and calls on God for help; he specifies the kind of intervention he is looking for. It is not passive use of a weapon but a direct contribution to the battle: *kî hikkîṭā 'et-kol-'oy'bay lehî/ šinnê r'ša'im šibbartā*, "You smite all my enemies on the cheek./ The teeth of the wicked you shatter" (3,8b). Although the military context is concrete, the role of a defensive weapon such as a shield would be out of place in the direct action evoked in v. 8; thus it is no contradiction to see in *mgn* here a divine title²⁹. It is used in conjunction with a participial title.

Ps 3,4a. You, Yahweh, are the donor (*mgn*) for me,

4b. My Glory and Exalter of my head (*mērîm ro'sî*).

The second line could also be rendered, "O My Glory, (you are) the Exalter of my head"; on the image of exalting the head, see 1 Sam 2,1b.

A similar situation appears in Psalm 7: God is again called upon to use weaponry, not as warrior so much as executioner. Before this invocation, he is characterized as an executive and judicial officer who must draft the sentence to be carried out; the military activity, as in Psalm 3, follows and is active. Three participial titles are used with *mgn*.

Ps 7,11a. The most High God is my donor (*mgny*)³⁰,

11b. The savior (*môšîa'*) of the upright of heart.

12a. God is a just magistrate (*šōpēṭ*).

12b. El is an indignant (magistrate) (*zō'ēm*) every day.

13a. . . .³¹ he whets his sword.

13b. He sets up his bow and prepares.

13c. He prepares for himself deadly weapons.

13d. He makes his arrows flames.

The latter verses of Psalm 28 situate Yahweh in the context of inheritance, people, and king. The military terminology is restricted to large-scale defense works, hardly to be associated with a shield, and the divine epithet *mgn* is to be read for MT's *māgēn*³².

27. R. Kittel so prints them in *BH³* (cf. *NAB*), but O. Eissfeldt does not in *BHS* (cf. *RS1*).

28. See EA Akk. *šamsu* in *ANET* 483-90; Ugar. *špš mlk rb b'ly*, "O Sun, Great King, my Lord", in *UT* 1018:1-2, 23-24. Dahood, *Bib* 45 (1964) 129; *Mélanges . . . Tisserant*, 94; *Bib* 47 (1966) 414; *Psalms I*, 16-17; *Psalms II* (AB 17; Garden City, New York 1968) 279, 283; *Bib* 54 (1973) 361; Kuhnigk, *Hosea*, 137, 139.

29. So Dahood, *Bib* 45 (1966) 414; *Psalms I*, 16-17, who parses *b'dy* otherwise.

30. Read 'ly, the divine name, for MT 'l, with *BHS*; see Viganò, 41. On *mgn*, see Dahood, *Bib* 47 (1966) 414; *Psalms I*, 40, 45-46.

31. On these difficult words, see Dahood, *Psalms I*, 46, and Viganò, 101.

32. Not so Dahood, *Psalms I*, 171-173 - For Ps 288,8, cf. KAI 42, with Greek *Athēna Sōteira Nikē* set equal to Phoenician *ʿnt m'z hym*.

- Ps 28,7a. Yahweh is my strength (*'uzzi*) and donor (*mgn*).
 7b. In him my heart trusts.
 7c. I am helped and my heart exults.
 7d. In my song I give thanks.
 8a. Yahweh is strength (*'oz*) for him and a fortress (*ma'ôz*).
 8b. He is the salvation of his messiah (*m'sîhō*).
 9a. Save your people.
 9b. Bless your inheritance.
 9c. Feed them and bear them forever.

The structure of vv 7a and 8a is the same and serves to prepare for the dependency relation of the human king to Yahweh depicted in v 8b. People and inheritance are in turn dependent on the king.

The language of cosmic defense works, again on a scale vastly surpassing human weaponry, is used in David's Psalm (2 Samuel 22 = Psalm 18), where it is combined with other divine epithets; the descriptions of God as *mgn* belong among the latter, though there is a reference to God's *mgn*, "shield", and Yahweh uses other weapons in subduing the cosmos (2 Sam 22,15 = Ps 18,15). The references cluster in the beginning and middle of the poem. Note the use of participial titles in vv 2b, 3d, 33ab, 34a, and 35a.

- 2 Sam 22,2a³³. Yahweh is my rock (*sal'î*) and my fortress (*m'sudâî*),
 2b³⁴. My rescuer *m'palî* is my God,
 3a³⁵. My rock (*šûrî*) in whom I take refuge,
 3b³⁶. My donor (*mgn*)³⁷ and the horn of my salvation.
 3c³⁸. My stronghold (*mišgabbî*) and refuge (*m'nûsî*).
 3d. My savior (*mōšî'î*), you save me from violence.

Despite the interlocking syntax of these six lines, each pair of lines is patterned in its use of divine epithets. The first of each pair of lines refers to God as a massive structure, whether natural (*sal'î*, *šûrî*), artificial (*m'sudâî*, *mišgabbî*), or capable of either understanding (*m'nûsî*). The second lines refer to God as an actor, with *mgn* or a participial title. Just as *šûr* in the middle couplet is the most distinctive of the refuge terms (it is used elsewhere virtually as a word for high god), so we may guess that *mgn* was important among the other titles. This balance also occurs within a smaller compass in Ps 119,114a.

- Ps 119,114a. You are my hiding place and my donor (*mgn*)³⁹.
 114b. I am waiting for your word.

The title *mgn* occurs later in the Psalm of David (2 Sam 22 = Ps 18), in a passage on Yahweh's uniqueness.

33. = Ps 18,3a.

34. = Ps 18,3b. Read with the Psalm *wmpty 'ly*.

35. = Ps 18,3c.

36. = Ps 18,3d.

37. Not so Dahood, *Psalms I*, 101.

38. Only *mišgby* is preserved in Ps 18,3; the rest of 3cd is not.

39. So Dahood, *Psalms III*, 168, 186.

- 2 Sam 22,31a. God: his way is perfect.
 31b. Yahweh's word is refined.
 31c. He is donor (*mgn*)⁴⁰ for all who trust him
 32a. For who is god besides Yahweh?
 32b. Who is a rock (*šûr*) besides our God?
 33a. God is the one who girds⁴¹ me with strengtli.

- 33b. The Giver⁴²: his way is perfect.
 34a. The one who makes my feet like hinds',
 34b. He makes me mount up on heights.
 35a. The one who trains my hands for weaponry,
 35b. He stretched the bronze bow to my arms.
 36a. You gave me your victorious shield (*mgn*).

The divine title *mgn* here is complemented by the forms *yotēn*, "Giver", in v 33, and in v 48, a fuller, comparable phrase is used in a pair of participial titles.

- 2 Sam 22,48a. The god who gives (*hannotēn*) me dominion.
 48b. He who brings (*môrîd*)⁴³ people under me.

From recognition of God's uniqueness, the poet goes on to enumerate benefits he has received, first natural abilities (vv 33a, 34), then human, military competence (v 35). In the latter, distinct context, he uses a metonym for the panoply, bow and shield, one offensive and one defensive weapon, neither realistically evoked⁴⁴.

Much of the vocabulary of 2 Samuel 22 = Psalm 18 is taken up in the opening verses of Psalm 144. Four of the seven divine titles here are participles.

- Ps 144,1a. Blessed be Yahweh, my rock (*šûrî*),
 1b. The one who trains (*hamlammēd*) my hands for battle,
 1c. My fingers for weaponry,
 2a. My . . .⁴⁵ and my fortress (*m^ešûdātî*),
 2b. My stronghold (*mišgabbî*) and my rescuer (*m^epalîî*),
 2c. My donor (*mgny*)⁴⁶, in whom I take refuge,
 2d. The one who subdued (*hârôdēd*) my people to me.

40. So Dahood. *Bib* 45 (1966) 414; *Psalms I*. 103, 114.

41. Read with the Psalm text.

42. Read *wym*, as in the Psalm text, against the Samuel text, parsing the form as a *Qal* participle, of *ym/ntn*, "to give", with Freedman apud Dahood. *Psalms I*. 114.

43. Read the Samuel text.

44. The offensive weapon is remarkable whatever it is: see Dahood. *Psalms I*. 115, for the suggestion "miraculous bow".

45. On this word, see Dahood. *Psalms III*. 329.

46. So Dahood. *Psalms III*. 329.

It is unlikely that the one who is a trainer in one verse could become in the next the object of training.

Let us now turn to five texts in which the proposal obtains less clearly.

Metaphors of God as defense works and as warrior are combined in Psalm 59, and neither part of the combination warrants the exclusion of *mgn* "donor"⁴⁷. Though the text is difficult, references to God as *mišgābbī*, "my stronghold" (59,10 and 18), *mišgāb li*, "a stronghold for me" (59,17), and *mānōs . . . li*, "a refuge for me" (59,17), are clear and surround the call to battle against enemies.

Ps 59,12a. O God⁴⁸, slay them, lest my people forget.

12b. Set them shaking in your strength and
bring them down, our donor (*mgnnw*)
and my Lord⁴⁹.

Psalm 33, after illustrating the thesis that military strength is useless in itself (verses 16-17), goes on to describe the saving actions of God (verses 18-19) and in particular to apply to him the title *mgn* (verse 20)⁵⁰. It is conceivable that the poet would allude to God as a substitute panoply, after denouncing reliance on war materiel, but it seems that such reliance is not the only focus, that the conception of the battlefield is as wrong as the odd notions of confidence. The area that warrants concern here is famine (verse 19), and the threat of death is an enemy that cannot be managed with military forces.

The phrase in Ps 33,20 occurs also in Ps 115,9-11, repeated three times in a doxology (verses 9b, 10b, 11b)⁵¹ after an idol polemic (verse 8). The rhetorical force of the ridicule directed at idolaters is not suitably followed by an identification of God as a material object. The logical structure of this section of Psalm 115 parallels that of Psalm 33's conclusion, though the arena of debate has shifted from the foreign policy concerns basic to 8th-c. prophecy to the idolatry focus more important in late 7th and 6th-c. prophecy.

In two passages in Proverbs, *mgn* is applied to God, and in both cases the usage is not clear enough to allow much certainty as to whether "donor" or "shield" is meant⁵². In Prov 2,7, the reference to *mgn* comes after the list of the benefits of wisdom, pointing toward Yahweh as the source, the giver (2,6a) of those benefits, but it comes before a passage in which Yahweh takes care of wisdom seekers (2,8). In Proverbs 30, the *n'um haggeber*, "man's oracle", is supplemented or ends with these lines⁵³.

Prov 30,5a. Every saying of God has been tested.

5b. He is a *mgn* to those who trust him.

6a. Add nothing to his words

6b. Lest he come to a judgment against you and you be shown a liar.

47. Dahood, *Bib 47* (1966) 414; *Psalms II*, 72, reluctantly excludes it. L. Viganò, *Nomi e titoli di Yhwh...* (Rome 1976), 23, accepts *mgn* "donor", here.

48. Read 'el with Dahood, *Psalms II*, 71.

49. It is possible that the last phrase is to be identified as the blasphemous *ḥaṭṭa't-pīmo d'bar-š'pātēmō*, "sin of their mouth, word of their lips", mentioned in the next verse.

50. Not so Dahood, *Psalms I*, 200, a position reversed in *Psalms III* (AB 17A; Garden City, New York 1970) 141. An *AO* reviewer suggests that the phrase in verse 20 is a hendiadys, "our shielding strength".

51. So Dahood, *Psalms III*, 138-39. The *-am* suffixes are difficult but not untenable.

52. Dahood has suggested *mgn*, "donor", for both passages in *Bib 47* (1966) 414; and *Psalms I*, 16-17.

53. On the dramatic setting of this passage, see R. Scott, *Proverbs* (Garden City 1965), 176-177.

The function here of the deity is similar to what it is in Psalms 33 and 115, and this passage, were it not so oddly isolated, would seem likely to contain a clear case of *mgn*, "donor".

5. Hebrew *mgn*, "donor". Used of a Human Sovereign.

The term *mgn*, "donor", is most commonly used in the Bible to describe God, but it is a term drawn from the human order. In many translations and commentaries, the supposed use of *māgēn*, "shield", is glossed as referring to a human leader; the recognition of *mgn*, "to give", and the title allow this usage to be clarified. In the three clearest texts, the term *mgn* is used in association with another word for king.

- Ps 84,10a. Look on our donor (*mgnnw*)⁵⁴, O God.
 10b. Behold the face of your anointed (*m^cšīhekā*).

This reference, together with the later allusion in Ps 84,12 to Yahweh as *šemeš wmggn*, serve to define Yahweh and his anointed: both are called *mgn*, but the Judahite king is a mere *mlk*, "king", while Yahweh is a *šmš*, "sun", and thus a "great king".

A similar association is found in the great psalm of messianic promise.

- Ps 89,19a. Our donor (*mgnnw*) belongs to Yahweh (*lyhwh*)⁵⁵
 19b. And our king (*malkēnū*) belongs to the
 Holy One of Israel (*liqdōš yiśrā'ēl*).

Psalm 47 offers a similar locution in a royal enthronement setting.

- Ps 47,9a. God rules over nations.
 9b. God sits on his glorious throne.
 10a. The nobles of the peoples are gathered,
 10b. The people of Abraham's God.
 10c. The donors (*mgny*)⁵⁶ of the earth are God's.
 10d. He is greatly exalted.

In four remaining texts, the title is less clearly used. The understanding of each, however, would be clarified if *mgn* referred to a person, even if that person were called metaphorically a shield, rather than an actual shield. The reference in David's Lament over Saul and Jonathan to a *mgn* can be interpreted as a plangent symbolic contrast to the bow and sword also mentioned in the poem; however, that is rather a romantic understanding. Further, if Saul fought with a sword, he probably did not carry a shield, though in 2 Sam 1,6, Saul is holding a spear (*ḥānīt*). It is more likely to suppose these lines refer directly to Saul.

54. So Freedman, "The Refrain in David's Lament", *Ex Orbe Religionum: Studia . . . Widengren*, ed. C. H. Bleeker et al. (Supplements to Numen 21; Leiden 1972) 122. Similarly Dahood, *Bib 45* (1964) 129; *Mélanges . . . Tisserant*, 94; *Bib 47* (1966) 414; *Psalms I*, 16-17; *Psalms II*, 278, 282.

55. Similarly Dahood, *Bib 45* (1964) 129; *Mélanges . . . Tisserant*, 94; *Bib 47* (1966) 414; *Psalms I*, 16-17; *Psalms II*, 309, 316. Dahood reads the *lameds* as emphatics, rendering "Truly Yahweh is our Suzerain. / The Holy One of Israel our King!" This is supported in part by the Syriac, which seems not to have read the second *lamed*, but seems unlikely in a psalm full of royal theology. F. M. Cross, following Dahood, renders, "Indeed, Yahweh is our ruler/The holy one of Israel our king". *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge 1973) 161.

56. Similarly Dahood, *Bib 45* (1964) 129; *Mélanges . . . Tisserant*, 94; *Bib 47* (1966) 414; *Psalms I*, 16-17, 283, 287. Again, Dahood reads an emphatic *lamed*, translating, "Truly God is Suzerain [*plurale majestatis*] of the earth". So also Viganò, 67. Loretz, *UF 6*, 78-79, 212-14, renders *mgny*, "gifts". Of the dozen words in v 10, he deletes six and adds one.

- 2 Sam 1,21c. There the warriors' donor (*mgn*)⁵⁷ was disgraced
 21d. Donor (*mgn*) Saul, duly anointed with oil.

In an Isaian oracle against Babylon, the speaker receives a vision of that city's fall in two stages. In the second, a stray horse or camel wanders through the steppe and the watchman cries, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon" (Isa 21,6-9). The first stage balances the second and describes a single crucial moment *before* the destruction, in which the incompetent leadership fails to meet the crisis.

- Isa 21,5a. A setting of tables.
 5b. A spreading of carpets.
 5c. Eating. Drinking.
 5d. "Rise up, officers (*haššārim*).
 5e. Anoint a donor (*mgn*)".

The scene is familiar from Qoh 10,16, Dan 5,1-4, and Esther 1: Oriental monarchs and officers hard at their labors of getting drunk. Indeed, this particular bout of hard drinking is the one reflected in Daniel, Xenophon's *Cyropedia* 7.5, and in Herodotos' story of the last stage of Cyrus' approach to Babylon: "Because of the size of the city, as was said by those who lived there, the fringes of the city were seized and those who lived in the midst of the Babylonians did not know about the seizure, but (for it happened there was a festival—*hortēn*—going on) they danced all the time and got to feeling real good (*eupatheīēsi*), until they had drunk in all the worst", i.e., heard what happened (1.191.6). Herodotos credits Cyrus' canals with the delay, but our author, in the Isaiah book, puts the blame on indulgence, and particularly on the unmet need to choose a commander when word of the invasion reached the banqueting hall. The prophet assumes we do not need to be told that the leaders failed, that the defense of the city collapsed in consequence, or that the empire was lost. The traditional understanding of this verse as referring to the anointing of shields is inadequate to the situation described.

The fall of Babylon left a great Persian provincial capital, but the fall of Nineveh left a ruin. However that ruin was created, Nahum leads us to believe a *mgn* was involved. Although the text is obscure and the passage out of joint with the material directly preceding it, the chances are good that *mgn* designates a person, on structural grounds alone.

- Nah 2,4a. The donor (*mgn*) of her [Nineveh's]
 warriors is ruddled.
 4b. The men of the army are crimsoned.

The verbs are almost inscrutable. The second, *m^ctulla^cim*, is a hapax, and the first, *m^c'āddām*, is not common. Further, the colors they designate are hard to pin down. Ugaritic evidence makes it clear that at least sometimes cosmetic reddening of the skin was associated with battle⁵⁸. In *CTA* 19 [UT 1 Aqht].4.203-8, for example, Pughat, sister of the slain Aqhat, ruddles or camouflages herself after washing, and then puts on armor, over which she puts on women's clothes. Presumably this double drag

57. So Freedman, "The Refrain", 122-23; Dahood, *Bib* 55 (1974) 78; M. O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake, Indiana 1980) 231. For a more traditional approach to the verse, see John Wansbrough, "Hebrew Verse: Scansion and Parallax", *BSOAS* 45 (1982) 10, and Wilfred G. E. Watson, "Chiasmic Patterns in Biblical Hebrew Poetry", *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, ed. J. Welch (Hildesheim 1981) 139.

58. In writing of another use of the Ugaritic verb *'dm*, in the sacrificial scene in *CTA* 14 [UT Krt].II 19, J. de Moor and K. Spronk observe, "In our opinion the poet wants to say that Kirtu should scrub himself vigorously until he glows (*rhsj*)", citing references to washing in ritual texts. See *UF* 14 (1982) 160. Are the ritual and battle senses of the verb *'dm* to be separated?

has something to do with getting her into the camp of her brother's assailant, though the story is not clear enough to allow us to specify what. The preparation may have served to disguise Pughat; at any rate, it seems to make her look more like a soldier⁵⁹. What shade of red or brown she turned out is unknown; 'ādom covers an enormous breadth of shades⁶⁰. In dealing with the Nahum passage one recent commentator alleged that the shields were red and the soldiers wore scarlet⁶¹. Dahood has taken *mgn* as a warrior leader, but connects both lines with the color of clothing⁶². While confessing that the lines are obscure, we judge the parallels for skin-rouging to be more apt, and we associate this passage with that custom.

6. The Fate of the Biblical Homographs in LXX and Ben Sira

When and how the homographs we have discussed fell together we cannot say. The translators of the LXX were not adept at technical vocabulary for objects they had never seen. Thus it is no surprise that ten words are used to translate the twenty occurrences of *snh*, for example; *thyreos* is used eleven times and other acceptable equivalents occur, along with *dory* and *kontos*, both "spear" (1 Kgs 10,16 bis; Ezek 39,9), to stay within the proper word field. The LXX renderings of *mgn* are less diverse, and some patterns can be detected. How these are to be evaluated remains problematic.

In dealing with the cases in which *mgn* clearly means "shield", LXX used *thyreos* nine times, and *aspis* and *peltē*, five times each; other concrete terms occur. Only three times is an abstract rendering preferred: in 2 Sam 22,36 = Ps 18,36, *hyperaspismos*, "covering with a shield; protection"; and in Deut 33,29, a form of *hyperaspizō*, "to hold a shield over, protect". In contrast, abstract renderings are common in passages where we gloss *mgn*, "donor", used of God. *hyperaspistēs*, "one who holds a shield over, protector", is used in 2 Sam 22,3, 31 = Ps 18,3, 31; Pss 28,7; 33,20; 59,12; 115,9-11; 144,2. Forms of *hyperaspizō* are used in Gen 15,1, and Prov 2,7; 30,5. *antilē(m)ptōr*, "helper", occurs in Pss 3,4 and 119,114; and in Ps 7,11, LXX uses *boētheia*, "support". For our cases of *mgn*, "donor", used of a human, LXX is diverse: *thyreos* in 2 Sam 1,21 bis; Isa 21,5; and *hoplon* (not just "weapon", but originally "heavy shield" and so perhaps here) in Nah 2,4, contrast *hyperaspistēs* in Ps 84,10; *antilēpsis*, "defense", in Ps 89,19; and *krataios*, "strong one", in Ps 47,10. No single explanation can approach this mass of data; references to antianthropomorphic pietism do not deal with the case. In most of these instances, LXX reflects either a single gloss, *mgn*, "shield", or a deflection from it motivated by context⁶³. It is impossible to be sure, however, that the derivation of *mgn*, "donor", was entirely opaque to LXX; its root was not lost completely, since *miggēn* is translated with a form of *paradidomi* in Gen 14,20. It remains conceivable that some of LXX's renderings represent a kind of compromise⁶⁴.

59. The primacy of red in color vocabulary seems likely to be related to the status of red ochre as the first sign of symbolic behavior among *Homo sapiens sapiens* in the Upper Paleolithic (40,000 B. P.); presumably the ochre served as body paint. See Ernest E. Wreschner, "Red Ochre in Formative Processes of Color Symbolism and the Question of Language Development", *Glossogenetics*, ed. E. de Grolier (Chur 1983) 355-365.

60. For an overview of the evidence, see Athalya Brenner, *Colour Terms in the Old Testament* (Sheffield 1982) 49-80, 105, 168, 179; on Nahum, 110-12, 143; cf., in general, Pope, *Song*, 531-32. Brenner does not deal with the Ugaritic passage or with the supposed military practice of ruddling or camouflaging the skin. It should be noted that Brenner's fine treatment is marred by her proposal to emend the most difficult 'ādom locus, Lam 4,7; see *Colour Terms*, 230 n. 96.

61. K. Cathcart, *Nahum in the Light of Northwest Semitic* (BibOr 26; Rome 1973) 86-87. He cites Ezek 23,6.

62. Dahood, *Bib* 55 (1974) 78.

63. Included here are factors of grammatical structure, as Kessler noted, 497.

64. Von Soden's proposal that LXX translators who used *hyperaspizō* in translating *mgn* were familiar with a verb *miggēn*, "to protect with a shield", "Vedisch magham," *JEOL* 18, 342, is another approach to the problem.

The text of Ben Sira found in Geniza MS B preserves a psalm at 51,12 (1-14), a psalm modeled on canonical Psalm 136⁶⁵. In it the poet praises the God of Israel, of David, and of Zadoq, and then *mgn 'brhm* (51,12,10), *šwr yšhq*, "The Rock of Isaac" (51,12,11), and *'byr y'qb*, "The Mighty One of Jacob" (51,12,12). Late post-exilic tradition has extracted from Gen 15,1 a name for Abraham's god to match those assigned the other patriarchs⁶⁶; the tradition found *phd yšhq*, "the Fear of Isaac" (Gen 31,42) objectionable enough to rewrite it. The text does not tell us what *mgn 'brhm* was taken to designate; the sequence of *šwr*, a common archaic divine title, and *'byr*, a rare one, is no help. The possibility that *mgn*, "donor", was recognized in this late period remains. What is sure is that sometime later still the title passed from the post-exilic poetic tradition to the early rabbinical liturgical tradition⁶⁷, and the sense "shield of Abraham" came to be associated with the phrase, as it still is in Jewish daily prayer.

65. For the text, see M. S. Segal, *Seper ben-Sira' hašŠalēm* (Jerusalem 1958) 355; this portion of Ben Sira is not found in the Masada fragments. Many commentators believe that, though omitted in Greek and Syriac text traditions, the psalm is authentic. DiLella dates it to Ben Sira's age and suggests a Qumranic origin. *The Hebrew Text of Sirach* (The Hague 1966) 101-5.

66. Alt reluctantly regarded *mgn 'brhm* as the proper extraction; see Kessler, 494, who disagrees, and F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 4 n. 4, who agrees with Alt.

67. Into the Shemoneh Esreh: the phrase is found in all forms of the Amidah, at the end of the first blessing. See L. Finkelstein, *JQR* 16(1925) 1-43, 125-70.

The association of the six-pointed star form of the *māgēn dāwīd* with Jews is not ancient (*pace* H. Lewy, *ArOr* 18 [1950] 330-65) or even medieval, but early modern (see G. Scholem, *EJ* 11:687-97). The six-pointed star was in wide use in ancient times (see *ANEP* 792, for a star with a bird inside, from Gibeon): in medieval times, the hexagram was called the Seal of Solomon in Arabic lore. Conversely, the term *māgēn dāwīd* is applied to symbols other than the hexagram, e.g., the menorah. The Jewish use of the star emerged in seventeenth-century Prague and spread through the Sabbatarian movement.