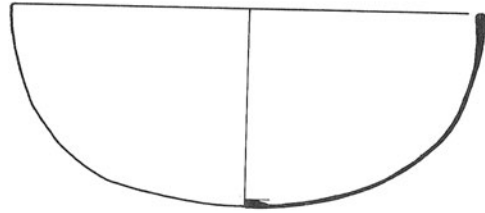
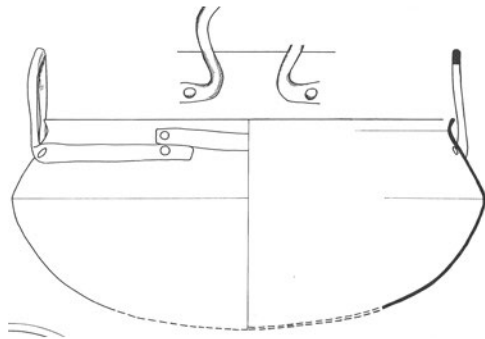
Fig. 12 Bronze basin (*kīyôr*)Fig. 13 Bronze basin (*mizrāq*)

Basin

Several biblical Hebrew words (*kīyôr*, *mizrāq*, and *sīr*) may be translated as “basin.” The following considers these words separately as they probably were used to describe different types of vessels, purposes, or materials.

The Hebrew word *kīyôr* occurs in Priestly (P) texts to describe a basin made of copper placed in a trestle (e.g., Exod 30:18.28; 31:9; 35:16; 38:8; Lev 8:11). Such a basin could be used for washing and/or, as 1 Sam 2:14 suggests, for cooking meat. In 1 Kgs 7:30, 38 and 43 (cf. 2 Chr 4:6, 14), the word refers to the flat basins on top of the bronze chariots used in the temple. We therefore assume that a *kīyôr* is a flat metal basin. Several bronze bowls with a flat or discoid base dating mainly to the Middle and Late Bronze Age periods were found in excavations (Gershuny 1985: pl. 3–7 [see fig. 12]; Stern 2001: 525–527, 626). Other such bowls date to the Iron Age and the Persian period. We have to assume that many items were re-smelted and no longer exist.

A *mizrāq* was a metal vessel which was used in the late preexilic (2 Kgs 25:15; Jer 52:18–19) and postexilic cult in Jerusalem (e.g., Exod 27:3; 38:3; Num 4:14; 7:13, 19, 25; Neh 7:69; 1 Chr 28:17; 2 Chr 4:8, 11, 22; also 1 Kgs 7:40, 45, 50; 2 Kgs 12:14 are of postexilic or late preexilic origin). The vessel may have been made of gold (2 Chr 4:8) or silver (Num 7:13–14), and was used to prepare a flour and oil mixture for grain offerings. Its weight was 70 shekels according to the shekel of the sanctuary, or about 800 g (with a shekel weighing a little bit less than 12g). According to Amos 6:6, such vessels might also be used for drinking; since the root *z r q* means “to pour out,” such vessels were probably also used for pouring libations. It is likely that *mizrāq* refers to a hemispherical bowl (Gershuny 1985: pl. 1–2 [see fig. 13]; Stern 2001: 525–27.626). Such vessels are often depicted as drinking vessels in iconographic sources.

Fig. 14 Bronze basin (*sīr*)

The Hebrew word *sīr* is closely connected to the preparation of meat (Exod 16:3; Ezek 11:3, 7,11; Mic 3:3). In 2 Chr 35:13 a *sīr* is used for cooking the Passover meat. Elsewhere, a *sīr* is used to cook vegetables (2 Kgs 4:38–41), boil water (cf. Jer 1:13), or boil meat (Ezek 24:3–6). The vessel could be placed into fire for boiling the water. Ezekiel 24:6 mentions that this vessel was made of metal.

A *sīr* was also used in cultic contexts, either to transport ashes (cf. Exod 27:3; 38:3) or for other unspecified purposes (cf. 1 Kgs 7:40, 45; 2 Kgs 25:14; 2 Chr 4:11, 16; Jer 52:18–19). The *sīr* could also be used for cleaning (Pss 60:10; 108:10). Considering these different uses, a *sīr* may have been a metal cooking pot, comparable in form and function to cooking pots made of clay – which were similarly multifunctional. These metal cooking pots have rarely been found in excavations because most of them were re-smelted (but cf. Gershuny 1985: pl. 10 no. 109 from Tell es-Sa’idiye [see fig. 14]).

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