

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

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

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

## Biblical Notes.

PROF. GEORGE F. MOORE.

ANDOVER, MASS.

1. *Ashteroth Karnaim*. 2. "The Last Adam": alleged Jewish Parallels. 3. *The Image of Moloch*.

---

1. *Ashteroth Karnaim*, Gen. xiv. 5.

AT the outset it is necessary to say a word about the text, since several recent scholars think that the true reading is *בצשתרת* וקרניו, "in Ashtaroth and Karnaim."<sup>1</sup> In support of this emendation the Greek and Syriac versions are alleged; but in both cases erroneously. The Aldine (1518) and the Roman (1587) editions of the LXX have indeed Ἀστάρωθ, καὶ Καρναῖν, but manuscript support for this reading is found perhaps only in the small group of Venice minuscules on which both editions named are here based.<sup>2</sup> The conjunction is not found in any known uncial: ADM have ἐν Ἀστάρωθ Καρναῖν; E, καὶ Ναυν or Καυναῖν.<sup>3</sup> The cursives which here represent the text of B (16, 77, 131, Cat. Nic.) have Ἀστάρωθ Καρναῖν, as have also those of recensions *L* (Lagarde's 'Lucian') and *M* (inedited). The same reading is attested by all the versions made from the LXX which are extant in this chapter: Coptic (both Memphitic and Sahidic), Old Latin (August.), Armenian, and Arabic. To this array is to be added finally the testimony of the Onomastica (s.v. Ἀστάρωθ Καρναῖν, ed. Lagarde 209<sub>01</sub> 213<sub>38</sub>). In this state of the case, to cite the Roman edition (through Tischendorf or Van Ess) as "Septuagint" is a strange inadvertence.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cautiously suggested by Kuenen, *De Melecheth des Hemels*, p. 37 = *Abhandlungen*, p. 207; see also Stade-Siegfried, s.v.; Wellhausen on Amos 6<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> It is to be noted in this connection that many pre-Sixtine edd. of the Latin Bible had *Astaroth et Carnaim*, though all the older manuscripts, edd. Comp., Reg., and the earlier of Stephanus, as well as the Clementine Vulgate, are without the conjunction.

<sup>3</sup> I follow the notation of Lagarde, *Genesis Graece*.

<sup>4</sup> It is worse, when Spurrell actually says that "LXX, Codex Vat. [which begins in Gen. 46], reads Ἀστάρωθ καὶ Καρναῖν."

The support of the Peshitto is no less a broken reed. The Paris Polyglott and after it the London Polyglott have דבנשתרות וקורנין, but both the codices (Usher and Pococke) collated in the apparatus to the London Polyglott (vol. vi.) have קורנין without the conjunction; this is also the reading of Cod. Ambrosianus and of the Urmia edition, and is properly adopted by Lee.

An objection of some weight to the conjecture וקרנים may fairly be made upon grammatical grounds; we should expect the repetition of the preposition, ויכו את הרסאים בעשתרת ובקרנים. The cases in which the preposition is not thus repeated (*e.g.* Gen. 14<sup>9</sup>; see in general, König, *Syntax*, § 319 *l*) are hardly parallel.

On the other hand, Καρναί, 1 Macc. 5, which, there is no reason to doubt, is the קרנים of our verse, had a temenos to which the people fled for refuge when Judas advanced against the city (1 Macc. 5<sup>48</sup>; Fl. Jos. *Antt.* xii. 8, 4, § 344); and in the parallel passage, 2 Macc. 12<sup>26</sup> (ἐξελθὼν δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ Κάρνιον καὶ τὸ Ἀτεργάτιον [*Ἀτεργατεῖον* var.]), the place is described as a sanctuary of Atargatis.<sup>5</sup> There is therefore no reason for departing from the reading of the Hebrew Text and all the versions, Ashteroth Karnaim.

The name קרנית נשתרת has played no inconsiderable part in modern discussions of the nature of the goddess Astarte. Many scholars have thought that the "two horns" could be nothing else than the lunar crescent, and thus found in the name a welcome confirmation of the theory that Astarte — at least among the Western Semites — was a Moon-goddess.<sup>6</sup> This interpretation seemed to be supported by the representations of Syrian and Phoenician goddesses with two horns upon their heads; *e.g.* the Baalat of Gebal (Byblos) on the stele of Jechaumelek, the goddess of Kadesh on the Orontes, etc. These figures are obviously modelled after Egyptian types of Isis or Hathor, and the horns (with the solar disk between them) had in their original intention nothing to do with the crescent moon; though they may have been so understood in Syria.<sup>7</sup>

Unexpected light is thrown upon the name Ashteroth Karnaim by a series of votive steles and tablets which were unearthed in 1891,

<sup>5</sup> See W. R. Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, p. 292 n.

<sup>6</sup> The reasoning is somewhat illogical; it would be a more natural inference that the "two horns" which give this particular Astarte her name were a distinctive attribute *not* shared by all other Astartes.

<sup>7</sup> See Stade, *ZATW.* vi. 323 f.; E. Meyer in Roscher, *Lex.* 652 f.; cf. Philo Bybl. fr. 2, 24 (*FHG.* ii. 569): ἡ δὲ Ἀστάρτη ἐπέθηκε τῇ ἰδίᾳ κεφαλῇ βασιλείας παράσημον κεφαλῆν ταύρου.

near the site of the ancient Carthage, and have been published by J. Toutain in the *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* of the French School at Rome (xii. 1892, pp. 3-124). The inscriptions are in Latin, and date from the latter half of the second century of our era. The dedications, in various formulas, are to Saturnus Balcaranensis; e.g. Saturno Augusto Balcaranensi (18), Saturno Domino Balcaranensi Augusto (17), Deo Magno Balcaranensi (3), etc. The editor, with the concurrence of M. Philippe Berger, rightly recognizes in this Saturnus Balcaranensis a Punic **בעל קרנין**. The location of the sanctuary leaves no doubt as to the meaning of the name. The summit of the mountain on which the sanctuary stood is formed by two very sharp peaks, separated by a deep gorge. On the top of one of these peaks were discovered the remains of a temenos, the site of an altar, and the votive steles and tablets which have been described. The ancient name of the mountain is still preserved in the Arabic *Jebel bū Qarnain*, "the two-peaked mountain." The god **בעל קרנין** therefore received his designation from the mountain, precisely as in the case of **בעל הרמון**, **בעל לבנון**, etc.; he was the deity of the mountain.

Any lingering suspicion that the name might mean "the two-horned Baal," referring to some such representation of the god as is reproduced by Perrot and Chipiez (*History of Art in Phœnicia and Cyprus*, i. 74), is excluded by the reliefs upon numerous steles in which Saturnus is represented in the usual Alexandrian type, without any trace of horns.<sup>8</sup>

The name **עשתרת קרנין** (read as a sing., rejecting the *bosheth* vowels, 'Ashtereth Qarnaim) corresponds exactly to **בעל קרנין**, of which it is simply the feminine counterpart; and by far the most natural interpretation is, "the goddess of the two-peaked mountain," or of the twin mountain. This is, in fact, the Jewish understanding of the name; the town, we are told, lay between two mountains in a narrow valley.<sup>9</sup> But a stronger support for the interpretation is found in the fact that in the Maccabees<sup>10</sup> the name of the place is simply **Καρναί**; such a shortening of the name is very natural if it was derived from a striking feature in the situation of the city; far less likely if it came from some peculiarity in the representation of its goddess.<sup>11</sup> It is on earth, therefore, not in the sky, that we are to look for the "two horns" of this Batanaean Astarte.

<sup>8</sup> Toutain, *l. c.* p. 103; cf. Plates i-iv.

<sup>9</sup> *Succa*, 2 a, and Rashi *ad loc.*

<sup>10</sup> See also Amos 6<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. **בעל הרמון** 2 Sam. 13<sup>28</sup> and **הרמון** Neh. 11<sup>38</sup>.