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Mark J. Morrise

Simile Curses in the Ancient Near East, Old Testament, and Book of Mormon

Summary:

Mark Morrise defines the "simile curse" and discusses its existence in ancient Near Eastern texts, the Old Testament, and the Book of Mormon. In the Book of Mormon simile curses were associated with treaties, religious covenants, and prophecies. Morrise analyzes the common characteristics of simile curses in the Book of Mormon, as well as the similarities between such curses in ancient Near Eastern, Old Testament, and Book of Mormon texts.

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SIMILE CURSES IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST,

OLD TESTAMENT AND BOOK OF MORMON

Mark J. Morrise

The simile curse is a special form of malediction found in ancient Near Eastern, biblical and Book of Mormon texts. The following example, taken from an Aramaic treaty of approximately 750 B.C., is typical of the form:

Just as₁ this wax is burned by fire, so shall Arpad be burned.

From this example, we see that the simile curse consists of two parts:

- (1) An event ("Just as this wax is burned by fire ..."), and
- (2) An application of that event to the subject of the curse (" ... so shall Arpad be burned").

Ordinarily the simile curse was conditional, invoked only if the subject of the curse did or did not perform a certain action. For example, in Alma 44:14 we find:

Even as this scalp has fallen to the earth, which is the scalp of your chief, so shall ye fall to the earth except ye will deliver up your weapons of war and depart with a covenant of peace.

This paper examines the occurrence of simile curses in ancient Near Eastern, Old Testament and Book of Mormon texts. Similarities in their context and subject matter are compared, and conclusions based on those similarities are then suggested.

I. Other Curse Forms

Before going to a discussion of the simile curse, we should note that it is only one of several curse forms occurring in ancient Near Eastern, Old Testament, and Book of Mormon texts.

In ancient Near Eastern treaties, three other curse forms are found:

(1) The curse by the gods or a single god. These curses are in the form, "May the god(s) do X unto you." For example, the Esarhaddon treaty states: "May Ea, king of the Apsu, the lord of the deep, give you contaminated water to drink; may he fill you with dropsy."² The Baal of Tyre treaty states: "May Astarte in mighty battle break your bow."³ Such curses by deity are common and more numerous than the simile curses.

(2) The simple malediction. In this form the oath breaker is threatened with a curse but there is no simile and no god is invoked. Typical examples include "[May] your days be dark, your years be dim" and "May a foreign enemy divide your spoil."⁴

(3) The futurity curse. These curses warn the oath taker that if he breaks the oath, his efforts will be frustrated or his holdings will come to nought. "[. . . and should seven rams cover] a ewe, may she not conceive; and should seven nur[ses] anoint [their breasts and] nurse a young boy, may he not have his fill; and should seven mares suckle a colt, may it not be sa[ted;] . . . and should his seven daughters go looking for food, may they not seduce (anyone)."⁵

These same types of curses also occur in the Old Testament and Book of Mormon. For example, a curse by God is found in 1 Nephi 2:23, the difference being that it is in first person: "For behold, in that day they shall rebel against me, I will curse them even with a sore curse, and they shall have no power over thy seed except they shall rebel against me also." A simple malediction is found in Deut 27:17: "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's landmark."⁶ And a futurity curse is found in Deut 28:30-31, rendered below in verse:

You'll betroth a wife
But another will bed her.
You'll build a house
But never dwell there.
You'll plant a vineyard
But not use its fruit.
Your ox will be slaughtered before you,
But you won't get to eat it.
Your ass will be stolen as you watch.
And will never come back again.
Your flock will be given to your foes,
And none will be there to save you.

These other curse forms are more direct than the simile curse, stating literally the malediction that will happen to the subject of the curse. In contrast, the simile curse analogizes the malediction of the subject to a similar event. As we shall see, the simile curse often occurs in a ritual ceremony, where the event is actually enacted.

II. Ancient Near Eastern Texts

In the ancient Near East, simile curses are found primarily in suzerain treaties, which are treaties between a ruling king and a neighboring vassal prince.⁸ The vassal promises to obey the king and to perform certain specified duties; if he fails to perform his duties, the simile curse will fall upon him.

D.R. Hillers has made a thorough analysis of these simile curses in his classic work, "Treaty Curses and the Old Testament Prophets."⁹ Hillers draws upon six such treaties for his analysis:¹⁰

- (1) the Sharmshi-Adad treaty, executed approximately 823 B.C. between Sharmshi-Adad V of Assyria and Marduk-zakir-shum I of Babylon;
- (2) the Ashurnirari treaty, executed 754 B.C. between Ashurnirari V of Assyria and Mati'ilu of Arpad;
- (3) the Sefire I and II treaties, executed about 750 B.C. between Mati'el of Arpad and Bir-ga'yah of KTK.
- (4) the Baal of Tyre treaty, executed about 677 B.C. between Esarhaddon of Assyria and Baal of Tyre;
- (5) the Esarhaddon treaty, executed 672 B.C. between Esarhaddon of Assyria and his officials; and
- (6) the Ashurbanipal treaty, executed 669-648 B.C. between Ashurbanipal of Assyria and his officials.

In addition to treaties, other sources of simile curses include magical texts and soldier's oaths.¹¹

According to Hillers, three types of simile curses appear in these treaties:

A. Ritual simile curses

In the ritual simile curse, a demonstrative pronoun such as "this" is used with the object compared, indicating that the object was present and was handled during some sort of ritual. Thus, the Ashurnirari treaty

states, "This head is not the head of the ram, it is the head of Mati'ilu. ... Just as the ram's head is [torn off] ..., so may the head of the aforesaid be torn off [if he breaks the treaty]."¹²

Similarly, the Sefire I treaty contains simile curses which state: "Just as this wax ... this GNB ... these arrows ... this calf, etc."¹³ A third example is found in the Esarhaddon treaty: "Just as this sheep is cut up and the flesh of her young is put in her mouth, etc."¹⁴

These examples are typical of most ritual simile curses in the treaties, in that the action performed is destructive of the object. Other ritual simile curses feature the melting of wax figurines¹⁵ and the breaking of weapons.¹⁶ The action is intended to symbolize what will happen to the vassal if he breaks the treaty.¹⁷ In some cases, the action was performed by the oath taker himself; in those cases, the action may have represented a ratification of the treaty.¹⁸

B. Simile curses which may have been accompanied by a ritual.¹⁹

In this second group of simile curses, there is no demonstrative pronoun with the object compared, e.g., "Like a reed may they break you." The likelihood that a ritual action was involved is indicated by parallels in other texts where a ritual is clearly implied. For example, in the Esarhaddon treaty, 551-554, there is a simile curse with no demonstrative pronoun referring to the slaughter of kids and lambs. In other texts, this simile is commonly a treaty-making ritual.

C. Curses which were apparently not accompanied by a ritual.

This group consists of several simile curses in the Esarhaddon treaty which have no demonstrative pronoun and no indication in other texts that a ritual was performed. Concerning these simile curses, Hillers states:

[In these simile curses], it is difficult to imagine [the] ceremonies which might have accompanied them, unless we are to think of the ancients collecting a snake, mon-goose, stag, chameleon, fly and tortoise, and putting these creatures through the appropriate paces.²⁰

III. The Old Testament

In the Old Testament, the simile curse appears in two contexts:

(A) religious covenants between Yahweh and Israel, and (B) prophecies.

A. Covenant curses

The major covenants between Yahweh and Israel are:

- (1) The Decalogue (Exodus 20:2-17 and Deut. 5:6-21);
- (2) Deuteronomy or the Book of the Law (Deut. 12-28);
- (3) The Law of Holiness (Lev. 17-26); and
- (4) The Ceremony at Shechem (Joshua 24).

Scholars have demonstrated numerous similarities between the ancient Near Eastern treaties and these Old Testament covenants. For example, ancient Hittite treaties have six standard parts:²¹

- (1) Preamble
- (2) The historical prologue
- (3) The stipulations between the parties
- (4) Provision for deposit in the temple and periodic readings
- (5) The list of gods as witnesses
- (6) The curses and blessings formula

As Mendenhall first pointed out, several parts of these Hittite treaties are also found in the Old Testament covenants.²² A short historical prologue introduces the Decalogue (Exodus 20:1, Deut 5:4-5) and a longer historical prologue introduces the Shechem ceremony (Joshua 24:2-13) and Deuteronomy (Deut. 1-3). Provisions for periodic reading of the law are found in Deut. 31:10-13. A blessings and cursings formula concludes Deuteronomy and the Law of Holiness (Deut 28 and Lev. 26:3-41).

There are further similarities between the curses found in the two texts. In both the treaties and the covenants, the blessings formula is ordinarily shorter and more perfunctory than the curses formula.²³ Also, as Hillers amply demonstrates, the content of the curses in both texts is often the same: devouring animals, removal of joyful sounds, the breaking of weapons, dry breasts, contaminated water, etc.²⁴ Finally, scholars have demonstrated similarities in the grammatical construction of the curses in both texts.²⁵

Given the many similarities between ancient Middle Eastern treaties and Old Testament covenants, one would expect to find simile curses occurring frequently in the biblical covenants as they do in the suzerain treaties. But this is not the case. The author is aware of only one occurrence of a simile curse in the four covenants, in Leviticus 26:19: "I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass."

Two explanations can be offered for the absence of simile curses in these covenants:

(1) The curse was actually part of the covenant, but was simply not written down. Mendenhall suggests this in explaining why there are no curses and blessings in the Decalogue:

As the tradition in Deuteronomy indicates, the curses and blessings may not have been regarded as an element in the text of the covenant, but as an action which²⁶ accompanied the ratification of the covenant.

(2) The simile curse may not have been needed in the Old Testament context as it was in the Near Eastern one. Mendenhall suggests that the curse was necessary to the suzerain treaties because it was the only enforcement mechanism short of military measures that was available.²⁷ The graphic symbolism and ritual enactment of the curse may have been necessary to bring home to the oath-taker the consequences of breaking the oath. However, in the Old Testament context the other types of curses may have been sufficient to impress the seriousness of the covenant on the covenant-taker.²⁸ In many of these curses, God is the agent of the curse, thus making the imminence of curse more real. In contrast, non-simile curses in the suzerain treaties have no agent; their power is thought to have come from the words themselves, rather than from some external agent.²⁹

B. Prophetic curses

An example of the simile curse in prophetic writings is found in Isaiah 29:7-8:

And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision.

It shall be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: ... so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against the mount Zion.

Because the simile is such a common literary device, no attempt is made here to catalogue all its occurrences in prophetic writings. This author agrees with Hiller that:

[Because] the simile is such an extremely common feature of style ... [c]ollection of a large number of similes from the prophets would hardly prove anything about the prophets' use of the language of treaty-curses. The simile may be of such a nature that one could plausibly assume that it originated in a ritual curse, but it is impossible to prove any relation on formal grounds alone.³⁰

In a footnote to the above passage, Hillers gives two examples of prophetic curses which may have been simile but are not provably so. An oracle of Ahijah the Shilonite contains a simile which gives the impression of having originated in symbolic action (1 Kings 14:10): "I . . . will [burn] the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man [burns] dung, till it all be gone." Burning is a ritual action commonly connected with curses, though there is no example of burning this particular substance in a ritual. In 2 Kings 21:13, a ritual ceremony was also possible: "And I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down." In neither of these two examples is the ritual action more than a possibility.

Hillers does find one example of a prophetic simile curse that refers to a ritual. Jeremiah 34:18, refers back to a ritual performed by the men of Israel and curses them for not living up to their covenants:

And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof.

IV. Book of Mormon

The simile curse appears in the same contexts in the Book of Mormon as it does in ancient Near Eastern and Old Testament texts, namely: (A) treaties (B) religious covenants, and (C) prophecies.

A. Treaty curses

A simile curse appears in the context of treaty negotiations in Alma 44:14. In self-defense, a Nephite soldier has just struck off a piece of scalp from the Lamanite leader Zerahemnah. The soldier picks up the scalp by the hair, lays it on the point of his sword, stretches forth the sword, and states:

Even as this scalp has fallen to the earth,
which is the scalp of your chief, so shall ye fall
to the earth except ye will deliver up your weapons
of war and depart with a covenant of peace.

The curse is clearly not ritual, having been devised on the spot to meet the needs of the moment. Nevertheless, like a ritual simile curse it refers to an actual object, the scalp of Zerahemnah, and an action performed on the object, that of falling to the earth.

B. Curses in Religious Covenants

Three simile curses occur in the context of religious covenants:

(1) Casting out of the flock

During a speech by King Benjamin at the coronation of his son, the king reminds the people of their duty and indebtedness toward God. In response, the people covenant to follow God and to keep his commandments. King Benjamin then concludes his speech with a reminder for the people to always remember God's name:

And again, doth a man take an ass which
belongeth to his neighbor, and keep him? I say
unto you, Nay; he will not even suffer that he
shall feed among his flocks, but will drive him
away, and cast him out. I say unto you, that even
so shall it be among you if ye know not the name
by which ye are called. (Mosiah 5:14)

The lack of a demonstrative pronoun here suggests that no ritual or ceremony accompanied this curse. This is reasonable, although a ceremony or ritual would have been very appropriate in this context--a religious covenant coupled with the coronation of a new king. Arguably, the need for the ritual is obviated by the previous voice ratification of the covenant with God (Mosiah 5:5) and by the subsequent enforcement

mechanism which is adopted in Mosiah 26:36, i.e., the blotting of the name from the records.

Although no ritual is indicated here, the curse may have been based on a previous ritual simile curse. The ritual may have been dropped and the wording of the curse retained. This theory is suggested by Mendenhall, who states:

Originally, . . . [Biblical curses] must also have been accompanied by some specific symbolic action such as killing an animal, but in early times the words have become abstracted from the action and generalized, perhaps in practice accompanied by some gesture.³¹

Here we have evidence of a predecessor. In the Ashurnirari treaty we find a similar curse clearly accompanied by a ritual:

Just this ram is [taken] away from his fold, will not return to his fold, . . . so may . . . Mati'ilu, with his sons, [his nobles], the people of his land, [be taken away] from his land, not return to his land, he shall no [longer stand] at the head of his land.³²

And in Lev. 16:21-22 we find the ritual of the scape goat which was let out of the camp into the wilderness to atone for the sins of the people.

Parallels also exist between Mosiah 2-5 in general and the suzerain treaty form. We note that, similar to suzerain treaties, King Benjamin's speech has a historical prologue, stipulations of obedience, and a ratification of the covenant. The historical prologue is particularly striking, in which Benjamin describes both the benevolence of the king (himself) and the Heavenly King (God) towards the people. This is very similar to the historical prologue in the suzerain treaties, in which the king describes his past benevolence to the vassal.³³

(2) The rending of garments

This simile curse occurs when the first general Moroni has gone forth to find army recruits to defend the Nephite country against imminent invasion. Moroni reminds the people of their religious duty to defend their families; in response,

[T]he people came running together with their armor girded about their loins, rending their garments in token, or as a covenant, that they would not forsake the Lord their God; or, in other words, if they should transgress the commandments of God, or fall into transgression, and be ashamed to take upon them the name of Christ, the Lord should rend them even as they had rent their garments.

Now this was the covenant they had made, and they cast their garments at the feet of Moroni, saying: We covenant with God, that we shall be destroyed, even as our brethren in the land northward, if we shall fall into transgression; yea, he may cast us at the feet of our enemies, even as we have cast our garments at thy feet to be trodden under foot, if we shall fall into transgression. (Alma 46:21-22)

The passage in which these curses occur also has parallels with the suzerain treaty form. Similar to a suzerain historical prologue, Moroni recites an account which tells of their ancestor, Joseph, whose garment was rent by his brethren when he was sold into Egypt. Before he died, Jacob prophesied to Joseph that even as a part of Joseph's coat had been preserved and not decayed, even so would a remnant of his seed be preserved by the hand of God. (See Alma 46:24.) A parallel to the suzerain provisions for reading of the treaty exists in the raising of replica's of Moroni's rent coat as a standard in all cities. Apparently, the coat served as a reminder of the covenant as the periodic public reading did in the suzerain treaties.

(3) Felling of a tree

The third of these religious simile curses in the Book of Mormon is spoken by the Nephite people at a public hanging. After the leader of an opposing army had been caught and hanged, the tree by which he was hung is felled to the earth. The people then state this ritual curse:

May the Lord preserve his people in righteousness and in holiness of heart, that they may cause to be felled to the earth all who shall seek to slay them because of power and secret combinations, even as this man hath been felled to the earth. (3 Ne. 4:29)

We note that in the second and third examples above, a ritual is performed and a curse is pronounced by an entire group. Another example of a group ritual occurs when the Anti-Nephi-Lehies bury their weapons of war as a token of their decision to never again take up arms against their brethren:

And now it came to pass that . . . [the people] took their swords, and all their weapons of war which were used for the shedding of man's blood, and they did bury them up deep in the earth. And this they did, it being in their view a testimony to God, and also to men, that they never would use weapons again for the shedding of man's blood. (Alma 24:17-18)

C. Prophetic curses

An example of a prophetic curse is uttered by Abinadi in prophesy about the life of King Noah:

And it shall come to pass that the life of king Noah shall be valued even as a garment in a hot furnace; for he shall know that I am the Lord.

.

And he also prophesieth evil concerning thy life, . . . [saying] that thou shalt be as a stalk, even as a dry stalk of the field, which is run over by the beasts and trodden under foot.

And again, he saith thou shalt be as the blossoms of a thistle, which, when it is fully ripe, if the wind bloweth, it is driven forth upon the face of the land. (Mosiah 12:3, 10-12)

For the same reason that we did not examine all the occurrences of prophetic curses in the Old Testament, we will not do so for the Book of Mormon. The simile is such a universal literary form that its mere existence in Book of Mormon prophetic writings does not formally demonstrate any parallels.

V. Analysis

The foregoing discussion shows that simile curses in the Book of Mormon appear in contexts very similar to simile curses

in the suzerain treaties. In fact, the Book of Mormon simile curses occur even more frequently in these contents than do Old Testament simile curses. Book of Mormon and suzerain treaty simile curses usually share a number of common characteristics, including one or more of the following:

- (1) The curse is found in the context of a treaty or covenant;
- (2) The curse is uttered by the oath taker;
- (3) The curse appears with other elements of a suzerain treaty format, such as historical prologue or provision for public reading
- (4) a ritual action is performed with the curse;
- (5) the ritual action is destructive or harmful in nature, such as casting out, dismembering, ripping, causing to fall to the earth, etc.

For example, the simile curse in Mosiah 5:14 has three of these five characteristics: it is uttered in the context of a covenant, it comes at the end of a speech containing an historical prologue and provisions for obedience to the Lord, and involves a harmful action (the casting out of an animal from the fold). As previously pointed out, this simile curse almost exactly parallels a suzerain treaty curse in Ashurnirari treaty.

Hillers has thoroughly analyzed parallels between both simile curses in Near Eastern and Old Testament texts. Concerning simile curses in the suzerain treaty texts alone, he concludes that:

To judge from available sources, simile curses ... were handed down from generation to generation. Such curses were not in most cases composed afresh for each new treaty-making ceremony³⁴ but were copied and adapted from older models.

The same was also true for Old Testament curses. Hillers points out that the simile curse in Lev. 26:19 is paralleled by curses in both Deut 28:23 and the Esarhaddon treaty, 528-532. These curses were, as many others, written in lines of parallel poetic metre, which lends itself to being passed down as an oral tradition. Because of these and other similarities, Hillers concludes:

We cannot explain both the resemblances and differences by naively supposing that an Israelite writer got this curse from an Assyrian treaty. The point to be grasped is that both in Israel and elsewhere there were living and primarily oral traditions of curses on which writers and speakers might draw for various purposes, either leaving the material as³⁵ they found it or recasting it into their own style.

The Book of Mormon simile curses suggest the same conclusion. In the situations such as Alma 46:21 or 3 Ne 4:29, how were the people able to utter a curse in such a spontaneous fashion and yet speak together with one voice? The answer might be that the people were uttering a curse that was part of a tradition and thus well known to all. If Hiller's conclusion is accepted, this answer becomes even more reasonable. Because the Nephites hailed from the region of Old Testament and Near Eastern culture, we can assume that oral tradition was also a part of their culture, and thus simile curses would have been handed down among the Nephites through oral tradition.

If an historical connection between the suzerain and Old Testament texts and the Book of Mormon text is assumed, then simile curses in the earlier texts can be used to explain those curses in the later texts. For example, the curse in Mosiah 5:14 is invoked if the people "know not the name by which ye are called." As Hillers has pointed out, the verb "to know," which has several senses in the Bible, is used in ancient Near Eastern treaties in the same sense as "to acknowledge," or "to be loyal to."³⁶ In those treaties, when the vassal princes covenanted to "know" their king, it meant that in the event of war against the king, the prince would give him military aid, etc. This sense of "to know" seems to also fit in the religious context: the covenant-taker will "know" the name by which he is called by acknowledging his God as Lord and being loyal to him. This is but one example of how the suzerain curses can be used to aid in interpreting the later curses; hopefully, further research will uncover other examples.

VI. Conclusion

The similarity of contexts in which the simile curse occurs in the ancient Near Eastern, Old Testament and Book of Mormon texts suggests

that the simile curse was part of an oral tradition in these cultures. It was perhaps as easy for them to utter these curses on appropriate occasions as it would be for us to recite the pledge of allegiance today. The simile curse was most commonly used to ratify treaties or covenants; the symbols which were used graphically suggested the destruction of the oath-taker if he broke the treaty.

If an historical connection between these texts is assumed, the earlier texts can be used to help interpret the later texts. More research needs to be done in this area.

FOOTNOTES

1. Sefire I treaty A 35, quoted in D.R. Hillers, Treaty Curses and the Old Testament Prophets 18 (Rome, 1964) (Ph.D. dissertation).
2. Esarhaddon treaty 521-522, quoted in Hillers, supra note 1, at 13.
3. Baal of Tyre treaty rev. iv 18, quoted in Hillers, supra note 1, at 13.
4. Esarhaddon treaty 485, Baal of Tyre treaty rev. iv 19, quoted in Hillers, supra note 1, at 26.
5. Sefire I treaty, quoted in Hillers, supra note 1, at 28.
6. See also 2 Nephi 9:27-38.
7. Hillers, supra note 1, at 29. See also Helaman 13:18-20, 34-36.
8. A less common treaty form, called a parity treaty, also existed, in which two kings of equal power exchanged promises of mutual cooperation.
9. Hillers, supra note 1.
10. Id. at 8-11.
11. Id. at 20-21.
12. Ashurnirari treaty obv, i 21-27, quoted in Hillers, supra note 1 at 19.
13. Sefire I treaty A 35-42, quoted in Hillers, supra note 1, at 19.
14. Esarhaddon treaty 547, quoted in Hillers, supra note 1, at 19.
15. Hillers, supra note 1, at 20-21.
16. Id. at 21.
17. K. Baltzer, The Covenant Formulary 14-15 (Philadelphia, 1971).
18. Mendenhall, "Covenant Forms in Israelite Traditions," 17 Biblical Archaeologist 66 (1954).
19. See Hillers, supra note 1, at 21-24.
20. Id. at 24.

21. V. Korosec, Hethitische Staatsvertrage: Ein Beitrag zu ihrer juristischen Wertrung (Lepzig, 1931), cited in Hillers, supra note 1, at 1.

22. Mendenhall, supra note 18, at 61-70. See also R. deVaux, 1 Ancient Israel 148 (Toronto, 1961).

23. Hillers, supra note 1, at 6. Cf. Deut. 28.

24. Hillers, supra note 1, at 43-79.

25. See H.C. Brichto, The Problem of the "Curse" in the Hebrew Bible, (Philadelphia, 1963); Gevirtz, "West-Semitic Curses and the Problem of the Origins of Hebrew Law," 11 Vetus Testamentum 137 (1961); Blank, "The Curse, Blasphemy, The Spell, and the Oath,"--Hebrew Union College Annual 73 (1980).

26. Mendenhall, supra note 18, at 66.

27. Id. at 50, 52.

28. See, e.g., the curses in Deut. 27:14-26.

29. Concerning passive curses, Blank states: "Apparently, then, no external agent was assumed and, apparently, the spoken curse was itself and alone conceived to be the effective agent. . . . The curse was automatic or self-fulfilling, having the nature of a spell, the very words of which were thought to possess reality and power to effect the desired results." (Emphasis in original). Blank, supra note 25, at 78.

30. Hillers supra note 1, at 25 (footnote omitted).

31. Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, 133, p. 30, quoted in id. at 24 n. 37.

32. Ashurnirari treaty, Obv. I 16-20, quoted in Hillers, supra note 1, at 34.

33. See Mendenhall, supra note 18, at 58.

34. Hillers, at supra note 1, at 26.

35. Id. at 42.

36. D.R. Hillers, Covenant, The History of a Biblical Idea 120-122 (Baltimore, 1969).