

ritzpah, a pavement, and *ritzpah*, a coal, derived from entirely differently roots, spelt with the same letters, but having different etymological affinities.

Why this view should be ignored without notice by a modern scholar, I cannot understand. So far as the requirements of the passages under discussion are concerned, it seems clear that for Elijah's "cake" and Isaiah's lips we need *fire*. The pavement in the other passages may do very well with *stones*. Now there is a word *resheph* compared by FÜRST with *ratsaph* (the root of *ritzpah* in Isaiah vi.), that unquestionably bears the required meaning (see Cant. viii. 6). Why should there not be (as FÜRST says) a word *ritzpah* with the same meaning as *rispah*, i.e., a live coal; and another word *ritzpah*, meaning a *pavement*? What is the real value of the criticism that insists on giving to two words identical in sound or spelling, the same meaning, in the face of common sense? I have heard a foreigner pronounce *use* and *juice* so that one could not distinguish useless from juiceless; and the two meanings of the Latin *jus* are familiar to every schoolboy. Why, then, are we bound to suppose that the seraph brought to Isaiah's lips a cold paving-stone from the golden altar? Or was it a *calculus* after all?

But is there any reason to suppose the said altar was the *altar of incense*? Is it correct to speak of "the never-extinguished fire" of that altar, in the exposition of the Old Testament? "The fire shall ever be burning," was said of *the altar of burnt offering*, not the altar of incense (Levit. vi. 13). No such thing is said of the *incense altar*. There was no provision for it. Incense was burnt there for a few moments in the morning and evening, a sort of memorial *within* the temple of the burnt offering then offered *without*. But there is nothing whatever to show that the fire was kept up during the interval; in fact, it could not be.

And so far as Isaiah is concerned, he could not have seen the seraph take a stone, or anything else, from the incense altar, for "*the house was*" at that time "*filled with smoke*." Moreover, Isaiah was not, like **Ezekiel**, a *priest*, to be brought within the temple. It is morally certain that he never saw the altar of incense during his whole life.