

”ניר דויד” או ”נזר דויד”?

אבנר רמו

The shape of the seventh letter (z) of the ancient Hebrew alphabet is: **ז**, while that of the tenth letter (i) is: **י**. Therefore, if for one reason or another a scribe overlooked writing the short horizontal line in the middle of the letter i, it might be read a z letter.

We propose that the following is an example of such an event.

We read in the Book of Samuel That God orders Samuel:

מלא קרנך שמן, ולך אשלחך אל-ישי בית-הלחמי-כי-ראיתי בבניו לי מלך.

“fill your horn with oil, and go, I will send you to Jesse the Beth-lehemite; for I have saw among his sons a king for ne” (1 Sam 16:1).

After the appearance of David we hear God telling Samuel:

ויאמר יהוה קום משחהו, כי-זה הוא.

ויקה שמואל את-קרן השמן, וימשח אתו בקרב אחיו,

“And YHWH said: Arise, anoint him; for this is he.

And Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren” (1 Sam 12:13).

Similarly, we read about David’s son:

ויקה צדוק הכהן את-קרן השמן מן-האהל וימשח את-שלמה; ויתקעו בשופר ויאמרו כל-העם, יחי המלך שלמה.

“And Zadok the priest took the horn of oil out of the Tent, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the ram's horn; and all the people said: Long live king Solomon” (1 Ki 1:39).

In the Book of Kings we read about Joash:

ויוצא את-בן-המלך, ויתן עליו את-הנזר ואת-העדוֹת, וימלכו אתו וימשחהו; ויכו-כף-ויאמרו, יחי המלך.

“And he brought out the king's son, and put upon him the crown and the insignia; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said: Long live the king” (2 Ki 11:12; see also: 2 Ch 23:11).

We learn from this verse (and from verse 2 Sam 1:10) that in addition to anointing, kings were crowned with a **נזר** (*nezer*).

In the Book of Psalms we read:

כרתי ברית לבחירי; נשבעתי לדוד עבדי.

עד-עולם אכין זרעך; ובניתי לדר-ודור כסאך סלה.

“I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to David My servant:

Forever will I establish your seed, and build up your throne to all generations. Selah” (Ps 89:4-5).

אז דברת בחזון לחסידך-ותאמר, שויתי עזר על-גבור; הרימותי בחור מעם.
מצאתי דוד עבדי; בשמן קדשי משחתיו.

“Then You spoke in a vision to Your followers, and You said: I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people.
I have found David My servant; with My holy oil I anointed him” (Ps 89:20-21).

וכתותי מפניו צריו; ומשנאיו אגוף.
ואמונתי וחסדי עמו; ובשמי תרום קרנו.

“And I will beat to pieces his adversaries before him, and smite them that hate him.
And My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with him; and through My name shall his horn be exalted” (Ps 89:24-25).

לעולם אשמור- (אשמר-) לו חסדי; ובריתי נאמנת לו.
ושמתי לעד זרעו; וכסאו כימי שמים.

“I will I keep forever My mercy to him, and My covenant shall stand fast with him.
And I will establish his seed forever, and his throne as the days of heaven” (Ps 89:29-30).

וחסדי, לא-אפיר מעמו; ולא-אשקר באמונתי.
לא-אחלל בריתי; ומוצא שפתי לא אשנה.
אחת נשבעתי בקדשי: אם-לדוד אכזב.
זרעו לעולם יהיה; וכסאו כשמש נגדי.
כירח יכון עולם; ועד בשחק נאמן סלה.

“And My mercy will I not break off from him, nor will I be false to My faithfulness.
I will not profane My covenant, nor alter that which is gone out of My lips.
Once I swore by My holiness: Surely I will not be false to David;
His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me.
It shall be established forever as the moon; and be steadfast as the witness in sky. Selah” (Ps 89:34-38).

In spite of all that we read till now in this chapter we now continue to read:

ואתה זנחת ותמאס; התעברת עם-משיחך.
נארתה ברית עבדך; חללת לארץ נזרו.
פרצת כל-גדרתיו; שמת מבצריו מחתה.
שסוהו כל-עברי דרך; היה חרפה לשכניו.
הרימות ימין צריו; השמחת כל-אויביו.

“And You cast off and rejected, You were wroth with Your anointed.
You abhorred the covenant of Your servant; You profaned to the ground his crown.
You broke down all his fences; You brought his strongholds to ruin.
All that pass by the way spoil him; he became a taunt to his neighbors.
You exalted the right hand of his adversaries; You made all his enemies to rejoice” (Ps 89:39-43).

We learn from this verses that like other kings, in addition to being anointed David was also crowned with a נזר (*nezzer*).

In the Book of Psalms we also read:

בעבור דוד עבדך-אל-תשב פני משיחך.
נשבע-יהוה לדוד אמת-לא-ישוב ממנה: מפרי בטנדך-אשית לכסא-לך.

“For Your servant David, do not turn away the face of Your anointed.
YHWH swore truly to David; He will not turn back from it: Of the fruit of your belly I will
I set upon your throne” (Ps 132:9-10).

כי-בחר יהוה בציון; אוה למושב לו.

“For *YHWH* chose Zion; He desired [it] for His habitation” (Ps 132:13).

שם אצמיח קרן לדוד; ערכתי נר למשיחי.
אויביו אלביש בשת; ועליו יציץ נזרו.

“There I will I grow a horn to David, [there] I ordered a lamp for My anointed.
His enemies I will clothe with shame; and upon him shall his crown shine” (Ps 132:17-18).

The logic of this verse and the understanding of the English (but not the Greek) translators suggest that here יציץ is a letter-substitution and order-type error of ינצץ - “will shine” (e.g. Eze 1:7).

Yet a surprising element appears in these verses. In addition to being anointed and crowned with a נזר (*nezer*), we read here: ערכתי נר למשיחי which was translated to Greek (and to English) as: “I ordered (or prepared) a lamp for My anointed.” However, it is suggested that here נר (*ner*) is a letter-deletion error of נזר (*nezer*) - ‘a crown.’

In the Book of Kings we read:

כי למען דוד נתן יהוה אלהיו לו ניר בירושלם, להקים את-בנו אחריו ולהעמיד את-ירושלם.
אשר עשה דוד את-הישר בעיני יהוה; ולא-סר מכל אשר-צוהו כל ימי חייו

“For David's sake *YHWH* his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem;
For David did that which was right in the eyes of *YHWH*, and did not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life” (1 Ki 15:4; see also: 1 Ki 11:36; 2 Ki 8:19; 2 Ch 21:7).

However, due to similarity in form of the letters ז (z) and י (i) in the ancient Hebrew script it is suggested that here the words נתן יהוה אלהיו לו ניר בירושלם is a letter-substitution error of: נתן יהוה אלהיו לו נזר בירושלם - “God gave him a crown in Jerusalem.”

