

## מזבחות התופת

אבנר רמו



Depiction of the Moloch idol in *Oedipus aegyptiacus* of Athanasius Kircher (1652)

We read in the Book of Jeremiah:

ובנו [] במות התפת אשר בגיא בן-הנס, לשרף את-בניהם ואת-בנותיהם באש []  
“And they built [the] high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters with fire []” (Jer 7:31).

The Greeks translated here the words: **ובנו במות התפת** to: “and they built the altars of Tapheth” which indicates that they believed that these words are a letter and a word deletion and order type error of: **ובנו את מזבחות התפת**. In addition, the comparison to verses 2 Ki 23:10; Jer 32:35 suggests that the last word of this verse: **למלך** - “for Molech” is also erroneously missing.

We also read in the Book of Jeremiah:

ויבנו את-במות הבעל אשר בגיא בן-הנס, להעביר את-בניהם ואת-בנותיהם [] למלך,  
“And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to pass their sons and their daughters [] for Molech” (Jer 32:35).

The Greeks translated here again the word: **במות** to "altars" which indicates that they believed that this word is a letter and order type error of: **מזבחות**. In addition, the comparison to verse 2 Ki 23:10 suggests that here the word: **באש** - "with fire" is erroneously missing. The comparison of this verse to verse: Jer 7:3 suggests that here the word: **להעביר** is an order type error of: **להבעיר** - “to burn.”

In the Book of Leviticus we read: **ומזרעך לא-תתן להעביר [] למלך** - “and of your seed you shall not give to pass [] to Molech” (Lev 18:21).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that here again the word: **באש** - "with fire" is erroneously missing, and the word **להעביר** is an order type error of: **להבעיר** - "to burn."

In the Book of Deuteronomy we read: [] **לא-ימצא בך מעביר בנו-ובתו באש** [] - "There shall not be found among you anyone that passes his son and his daughter with fire []" (Deu 18:10).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that here again the word: **מעביר** is an order type error of: **מבעיר** - "one who burns", and that the word: **למלך** - "to Molech" is erroneously missing.

We read in the Book of Kings:

**וטמא את []-התפת אשר בגי בני- (בן-) הנם : לבלתי להעביר איש את-בנו ואת-בתו באש למלך.**

"And he defiled the [] Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, so no man will be able to pass his son and his daughter with fire for Molech" (2 Ki 23:10).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that here the word: **מזבחות** - "altars" is erroneously missing, and that the word: **להעביר** is a letter insertion and an order type error of: **הבעיר** - "to burn."

In the Book of Chronicles we read about King Manasseh:

[] **והוא העביר את-בניו באש בגי בן-הנם** [] - "And he passed his sons with fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom []" (2 Ch 33:6; see also: 2 Ki 21:6).

It is suggested that here again the words: **העביר את-בניו באש** are an order type error of: **הבעיר את-בניו באש** - "he burned his sons with fire", and that the word: **למלך** - "to Molech" is erroneously missing here.

In the book of Isaiah we find:

**כי-ערוך מאתמול תפתה, גם-הוא (היא) למלך הוכן העמיק הרחב; מדרתה, אש ועצים הרבה**  
"**For a hearth is ordered of old; for the king it is also prepared, deepened [and] to enlarge; the pile [is] fire and much wood**" (Is 30:33).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that here the words:

**כי-ערוך מאתמול תפתה, גם-הוא (היא) למלך** are a letter and a word insertion, and a word disorder of: **כי גם מזבחי תפתה ערוכים למלך** - "For also its Topheth's altars are prepared for Molech." It is also suggested that the words: **אש ועצים הרבה; מדרתה, אש ועצים הרבה** are a letter deletion, a letter substitution, and a word disorder of:

**הרבה עצים הכינו, הרחיבו ערמת אש מדרתה** - "They prepared much wood, they enlarged the pile of its fire."