לקט - קבץ

אבנר רמו

Words from the Hebrew root **לקט** (lqt) - "to gather", appear in the Bible multiple times mostly in regard to the gathering of agricultural products and foodstuff (Ex 16:4, 5, 16, 17,18, 21, 22, 26, 27; Lev 19:9, 10; 23:22; Num 11:8; Jud 1:7; 2 Ki 4:39; Is 17:5; Jer 7:18; Ps 104:28; Cant 6:2; Ruth 2:2, 3, 7, 8, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23). In most of these verses (as well as verses Gen 31:46; 1 Sam 20:38; Is 27:12) these words could be replaced with words from the root **לקח** (lqkh) - "to take", but we cannot determine whether these are true synonyms, or the result of a letter-substitution error.

There are also two verses (Gen 47:14; Jud 11:3) where words from the root **לקט** (lqt) appear in association with silver and men.

In the Book of Genesis we read:
ויקבצו את-כל-אכל השנים הטבות הבאת האלה; ויצברו-בר תחת יד-פרעה, אכל בערים-ושמרו.
"And let them <u>gather</u> all the food of these good years that come, and <u>lay up</u> corn under the hand of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it" (Gen 41:35).

ויקבץ את-כל-אכל שבע שנים אשר היו בארץ מצרים, ויתן-אכל בערים: אכל שדה-העיר אשר סביבתיה, נתן בתוכה.
ויצבר יוסף בר כחול הים,
"And <u>he gathered up</u> all the food of the seven years which were in the land of Egypt, and <u>laid up</u> the food in the cities; the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same.
And Joseph <u>laid up</u> corn as the sand of the sea" (Gen 41:48-49).

Now we read about silver: **וקבצו מכל-ישראל כסף** - "and <u>gather</u> of all Israel silver" (2 Ch 24:5; see also: Eze 22:20).

In the Book of Zechariah we read about Tyre: **ותצבר-כסף, כעפר** - "and <u>piled up</u> silver as dirt" (Zec 9:3; see also: Job 27:16).

Yet in the Book of Genesis we find:
וילקט יוסף את-כל-הכסף הנמצא בארץ-מצרים ובארץ כנען, בשבר אשר-הם שברים; ויבא יוסף את-הכסף ביתה פרעה.
ויתם הכסף מארץ מצרים ומארץ כנען,
"And Joseph <u>gathered</u> up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.
And the money was all spent in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan" (Gen 47:14-15).

These verses suggest that in regard to gathering silver, the use of the roots **קבץ** (qbts) and **צבר** (tsbr) are more common than that that of the root **לקט** (lqt).

In the Book of Kings we read: **והאיש ירבעם, גבור חיל** - "**And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valor**" (1 Ki 11:28). The Chronicler tells us about him: **ויקבצו עליו, אנשים רקים בני בליעל** - "**And there <u>were gathered</u> to him vain men, base fellows**" (2 Ch 13:7; see also: 1 Ki 11:24).

Similarly we read about Jephthah: **ויפתח הגלעדי, היה גבור חיל** - "**And Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor**" (Jud 11:1). Two verses later we read: **ויתלקטו אל-יפתח אנשים ריקים** - "**and there <u>were gathered</u> vain fellows to Jephthah**" (Jud 11:3; see also: Jud 9:4).).

One chapter later we read: **ויקבץ יפתח את-כל-אנשי גלעד** - "**And Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead**" (Jud 12:4; see also: Jud 9:47).

The comparison between these verses and the understanding of the Greek (and English) translators suggest that here **ויתלקטו** (*vaithlaqtu*) has the same meaning as **ויתקבצו** (*vaithqabtsu*).

These verses may also indicate that the use of the root **קבץ** (qbts) for gathering people was more common than that of the root **לקט** (lqt).

However, it is not certain whether these words are synonyms, or whether **ויתל<u>קט</u>ו** (*vaith<u>laq</u>tu*) is a letter-substitution and order-type error of **ויתק<u>בצ</u>ו** (*vaith<u>qabts</u>u*).