

חילך ואוצרותיך לבז אתן

אבנר רמו



Vandals plundering. Unknown artist. In 1880 book of Charlotte M. Yonge: Folk history of Rome.

We read in the Book of Jeremiah:

חילך ואוצרותיך לבז אתן, לא במחיר; ובכל-חטאותיך ובכל-גבוליך.
והעברתי את-איביך בארץ לא ידעת:

“Your property and your treasures I will give for plunder without price, and [that] for all your sins, (and) in all your borders.

And I will transfer [you to with] your enemies into a land which you do not know” (Jer 15:13-14).

The words inserted by the English translator indicate that he believed that the faulty syntax of these verses made them incomprehensible. The changes made by the Greek translator are dissimilar to those of the English translator, but they indicate that he also believed that the syntax of these verses is faulty. It is suggested that the most significant errors in these verses are word insertion and word disorder, and that we should read here:

במחיר חטאותיך בכל-גבוליך, חילך ואוצרותיך אתן לבז.
והעברתיים אל-איביך בארץ לא ידעת:

“For the cost of your sins throughout all your borders, I will give your property and your treasures for plunder.

And I will transfer them to your enemies in a land which you do not know.”

Two chapters later we find:

כזכר בניהם מזבחותם, ואשריהם על-עץ רענן, על גבעות הגבהות.
הררי בשדה-חילך כל-אוצרותיך לבז אתן; במתיך בחטאת בכל-גבוליך.

“Like the symbols of their sons [are] their altars, and their Asherim [are] by the leafy trees, upon the high hills.

[You that sit upon the] **mountains in the field, I will give your property [and] all your treasures for plunder, [and] your high places, [because] of sin, throughout all your borders**” (Jer 17:2-3).

These verses are lacking in the Greek version of the Book of Jeremiah, but the comparison between these verses suggests that that verse Jer 17:2 and the first two words of verse Jer 17:3 are letter-substitution, word deletion and word disorder of:

כשכר לבנותכם מזבחות ואשרים על הגבעות הגבהות ועל הרי השדה ותחת כל עץ רענן.
“**As a salary for your building altars and Asherim on the high hills and on the field’s mountains, and under every leafy tree**” (e.g. Deu 12:2; 1 Ki 14:23; 2 Ki 16:4; 17:10; Is 57:5; Jer 2:20; 3:6, 13; Eze 6:13; 2 Ch 28:4).

The comparison between these verses also suggests that the rest of verse Jer 17:3 should be read as:

ובמחיר חטאתיך בכל-גבוליך ; חילך וכל-אוצרותיך אתן לבז.
“**And for the cost of your sins throughout all your borders I will give your property and all your treasures for plunder.**”