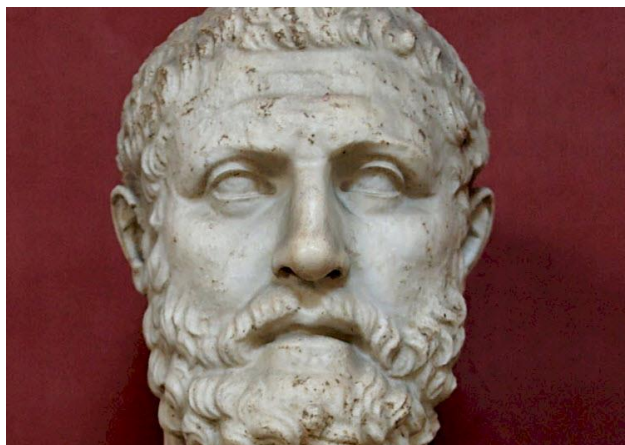


## והוא במלכים יתקלס ורזנים משחק לו

אבנר רמו



Cypselus, the first tyrant of Corinth. 7th century BC

The common translation of the Hebrew **סרנים** (*seranim*) - “**lords**” in Codex Vaticanus is “satraps” and in codex Alexandrinus it appears as “rulers” (see: Jos 13:3; Jud 3:3; 15:5, 8, 18, 23, 27, 30; 1 Sam 5:8, 11; 6:4, 12, 16, 18; 7:7; 29:2, 6, 7).

In the Greek translation of the Book of Judges **רזנים** (*roznim*) appear as “satraps” (Jud 5:3), while in the Greek version of the Books of Isaiah, Psalms, and Proverbs it was translated to “rulers” (Is 40:23; Ps 2:2; Pro 8:15). This suggests that the Greek translators believed that **רזנים** (*roznim*) is the result of **ס** (s) - **ז** (z) sibilant exchange and a metathesis error of **סרנים** (*seranim*). It should also be noted that both terms appear in the Bible only in the plural form.

The Greek term: “satrap” is a word borrowed from the Avastan language, and in the Achemenid Empire it meant: “governor.” It was the French Etienne Fourmont (1683-1745) who suggested that the biblical Hebrew **סרנים** (*seranim*) relates to the Greek “tyrannos” a loanword from the Luvian or Lydian languages. If this assumption is correct then we have here another case of a **ט** (t) - **ס** (s) exchange.

In the Greek translation of the Book of Habakkuk (Hab 1:10) **רזנים** (*roznim*) - “**princes**” appear as “tyrants.” Now if the Greek translators believed that **רזנים** (*roznim*) is a misspelled **סרנים** (*seranim*), then it is likely that already some of them made the connection between these terms and the word tyrannos.

Several biblical words from the root **רדה** (rdh) mean “rule “ (e.g. Gen 1:26, 28; Lev 25:43, 46, 53; 1 Ki 5:4, 30; 9:23; Is 14:2; Eze 34:4; Ps 72:8, 110:2; Neh 9:28; 2 Ch 8:10). This suggests the possibility that the Greek translator of the Book of Habakkuk assumed that here **רזנים** (*roznim*) is a **ד** (d) - **ז** (z) exchange error of **רדנים** (*rodanim*). Although such a word does not appear in the Bible, it became the term for “tyrants” in Modern Hebrew.