

主の民イスラエルの無比性 (2 サムエル 7:23)

津村俊夫

ABSTRACT D.T. TSUMURA, “The Incomparability of Israel the People of Yahweh”. The incomparability of Israel among nations as Yahweh's covenant people is described in 2 Samuel 7:23. Some claimed it to be grammatically one of the strangest passage in the Bible, and R.H. Pfeiffer even calls it “the worst instance of illiterate inanity”. However, when the interpretation seems extremely difficult, the best method of exegesis is to pursue the plain meaning of the text.

- (1) The phrase הָלְכוּ אֱלֹהִים means literally “gods went”.
- (2) The relative clause אֲשֶׁר הָלְכוּ אֱלֹהִים לְפִדּוֹתָיו לְעַם means most naturally “for whom ‘gods’ went to pay ransom [to let it be] as a people”.
- (3) - לְפִדּוֹתָיו = “to pay ransom to . . .”
- (4) מִן־ מְנִי ... מִן־ = “to redeem (i.e. release) ... from ...”
- (5) The phrase מִמִּצְרַיִם גּוֹיִם וְאֱלֹהֵיהֶם can be translated as “from Egypt, that is, the nation and its gods”, by taking the ׀- of גּוֹיִם as an enclitic *mem*.

In the light of the above, I would like to translate the verse as follows:

“And who is like your people, like Israel, the only nation on the earth for whom ‘gods’ went to pay ransom to make (it) a people and to put a name to it and to do for you (pl.?) a great thing and awesome things for your land in the sight of your people whom you would redeem for yourself from Egypt, namely from the nation and its gods?”