**הים-אני אם-תנין?**

**אבנר רמו**

In the Book of Isaiah we read: **כי השלכת אחרי גוך כל-חטאי** - “**for You had cast all my sins behind Your back**” (Is 38:17; see also: 1 Ki 14:9; Is 50:6; Eze 23:35; Pro 10:13; 19:29; Neh 9:26).

Similar to the English, the Greeks sometimes translated the word **גו** (*gev*)to: “back”, yet in some other verses to: “body.”

In the Book of Job we read:

**יברח מנשק ברזל; תחלפהו קשת נחושה.  
שלף ויצא מגוה:**

“**If he flee from the iron weapon, the bow of brass shall strike him through.****He draws it forth, and it comes out of his body**” (Job 20:24-25).

However, the logic of this text suggests that **שלף ויצא מגוה** is a letter-substitution error of:

**תלף ויצא מגוה** - “passed and came out of his back.” If this understanding is correct then here the word for “his back” is **גוה** (*gevoh*)

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Pangil_Crocodile_Park_Davao_City.jpg)

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Nile_croc_couple_690V1510_-_Flickr_-_Lip_Kee.jpg)

In the Book of Job we also find a detailed portrayal of a crocodile-like creature (Job 40:15- 41:26). This description includes:

**דלתי פניו מי פתח; סביבות שניו אימה.  
גאוה אפיקי מגנים; סגור חותם צר.  
אחד באחד יגשו; ורוח לא-יבא ביניהם.  
איש-באחיהו ידבקו; יתלכדו ולא יתפרדו.**

“**Who can open the doors of his face? Round about his teeth is terror.****His scales** [are his] **pride, closed up** [together as with] **a narrow seal.****One is so near to another, that wind cannot come between them.****They are joined one to another; they stick together, that they cannot be sundered**” (Job 41:6-9).

The understanding of **גאוה אפיקי מגנים** as: “**His scales** [are his] **pride**” by the English translator disregards the Hebrew syntax and is not supported by the Greek translation. However, the comparison with verse Job 20:25 suggests that here **גאוה** (*gaavah*) is a letter-insertion error of **גוה** (*gevoh*) - “**his back** (or his body)”.

The Greek translation of the word **אפיקי** in verse Joel 1:20 (see also: Joel 4:18) is: “courses of”’ and this understanding suggests that **גוה אפיקי מגנים** means: “his back (is) rows of shields.” These biological “shields” cling to each other and there is no space between them. The Hebrew word for “space” is **רוח** (*revakh*; e.g. Gen 32:17). Therefore in verse Job 41:8 the word **רוח** should be read as *revakh* and not as the Massoretic *ruakh* which means: “wind.”