**The letter ע (y’) - an unrecognized vowel letter?**

In the Book of Isaiah we read: **שקמים גדעו, וארזים נחליף** - “**the sycamores are cut down, but cedars will we put in their place**” (Is 9:9).

In the Aramaic portion of the Book of Daniel we find: **גדו אילנא** - “**Hew down the tree**” (Dan 4:11; see also Dan 4:11).

The understanding of the Greek Theodotion (and the English translator) of the Aramaic **גדו** (*godu*) as “cut down” suggests that he assumed that is the same as the Hebrew **גדעו** (*gidu’*). This understanding suggests that the Hebrew **עו** (u’) was turned to the Aramaic **ו** (u).

We also find in Dan 4:9 the phrase: **ובדרו אנבה** - “**and scatter its fruit**” (Dan 4:11; see also: Dan 4:9, 18).

The understanding of the Greek Theodotion (and the English translator) of the Aramaic **אנבה** (*inbeh*) as “fruit” suggests that he assumed that it is the same as the Hebrew **ענביה** (*a’inveah*) which usually means “grapes” but on some occasions is a general term for fruits.

If this assumption is correct then it appears that the move of a word from Hebrew to Aramaic (or vice versa) may be associated with an exchange between the letters **ע** (a’) and **א** (a).

The English word “Hebrews” was derived from the Latin “*Hebraeus*” that originated from the Greek Ἑβραῖος (*Hebraios*). The Greek name appears in the Septuagint where it translates the Hebrew word **עברים** (*I’vrim*) as “Hebrews” (Gen 40:15; Ex 2:13; 1 Sam 14:11).

In the Book of Genesis we read about: **אמרפל מלך-שנער** - “**Amraphel king of Shinar**” (Gen 14:1; see also: Gen 10:10; 11:2; 14: 9; and Theodotion of Dan 1:2) and about: **שנאב מלך אדמה** - “**Shinab king of Admah**” (Gen 14:2).

The Greek translator wrote “Sennaar” for both **שנער** (*shina’r*) and **שנאב** (*shinav*), which suggests that he believed that here in addition to **ר** (r) - **ב** (v) substitution error, the letters **ע** (a’) and **א** (a) are interchangeable.

In the Book of Joshua we read about **הוהם מלך-חברון** - “**Hoham king of Hebron**” (Jos 10:3). The Greek translator wrote: “Ailam king of Chebron.” However, the Greeks usually used the name “Ailam” for the translation of the name **עילם** (*e’ilam*)- “**Elam**” (Gen 10:22; 14:1; Is 11:11; 21:2; Jer 25:25; 49:33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38; Eze 32:24; Dan 8:2; Ezr 2:7; Neh 7:12; 12:42; 1 Ch 1:17; 8:24). This suggests that they believed that **הוהם** (*hoham*) is a misspelled **עילם** (*e’ilam*) - “**Elam**”, implying that they assumed that in addition to a **ל** (l) - **ה** (h) substitution error, we have here also a **ע** (a’) - **ה** (h) letter exchange.

In the Book of Hosea we read about **מלך ירב** - “**King Contentious**” (Hos 5:13; 10:6). The Greek Translator wrote here: “King Iarim.” However, in the Book of Joshua, the Greeks translated **קרית יערים** -“**Kiriath-jearim**” (Jos 15:9, 60; see also:1 Ch 13:5) and **הר-יערים** - “**mount Jearim**” (Jos 15:10) as “the city of Iarim” which suggests that the believed that

**מלך ירב** (*melech yarev*) is a misspelled **מלך יערים** (*melech yea’rim*) - “King of Jearim.”

In the Book of Genesis we read the names of two Egyptians. One is:

פוטיפר סריס פרעה, שר הטבחים - “**Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard**” (Gen 37:36; see also:Gen 39:1), and the other: פוטי פרע כהן אן - “**Poti-phera priest of On**” (Gen 41:45, 50). The Greeks translated both names as: “Petephres” and it appears that they assumed that פוטיפר (*Potiphar*) is the same as פוטי פרע (*poti phera’*). It is possible that they assumed that the terminal ע (a’) here is a vowel letter, and this Hebrew name is a single word.

In the Book of Numbers we read: **ואמרו הגוים אשר-שמעו את-שמעך, לאמר** - “**then the nations which have heard the fame of You will speak, saying**” (Num 14:15; see also: Deu 2:25).

The Greek translator wrote here: “have heard your name” and it appears that they believed that **שמעך** (*shime’cha*) is the same as **שמך** (*sheme’cha*) - “Your name.”

In the Book of Samuel we read: **למה תבעטו בזבחי ובמנחתי, אשר צויתי** - “**Wherefore kick you at My sacrifice and at My offering, which I have commanded**” (1 Sam 2:29).

The Greek translator wrote here: “why did you look” and it appears that he believed that **תבעטו** (*thiva’tu*) is the same as **תב**י**טו** (*thabi’tu*) - “did you look.” This understanding assumes that the letters ע (a’) and י (i) are interchangeable. However, the content of the second chapter of the 1st Book of Samuel suggests that it is also possible that **תבעטו** (*thiva’tu*) is a letter-substitution error of **תמעטו** (*thami’tu*) - “did you make smaller.”

The transformation of the Hebrew letter **ע** (i’, or a’, or e’, or o,’ or y’) to “a” “u” or “h” is not limited to the translations to other languages.

In the list of the towns in the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah we find:

**וענב ואשתמה, וענים.**

“**And Anab, and Eshtemoh, and Anim**” (Jos 15:50).

Later we are told that Eshtemoh was transferred to the children of Aaron the Priest:

**ואת-יתר ואת-מגרשה, ואת-אשתמע ואת-מגרשה.**

“**And Jattir with the open land about it, and Eshtemoa with the open land about it**” (Jos 21:14; see also: 1 Sam 30:28; 1 Ch 6:42).

We should note that the name of this town is spelled as**אשתמה** (*eshtemoh*) as well as **אשתמע** (*eshtemoa’*). This example suggests that exchange between **ה** (h) and **ע** (a’) had occurred here, but it is not certain whether this is a spelling error or whether at that time these letters were considered equivalent.

In the Book of Samuel we are told that the name of David’s brother, the third son of Jesse, was **שמה** (*shamh*) - “**Shammah**” (1 Sam 16:10; 17:13). However, in the 2nd Book of Samuel his name appears as: **שמעה** (*shima'h*) - " **Shimeah**” (2 Sam 13:3, 32). In this book he also appears as: **שמעי** (*shime'i*) - " **Shimea**” (2 Sam 21:21). The Chronicler refers to him as: **שמעא** (*sima'a*) - "**Shimea**” (1 Ch 2:13).

In the Book of Hosea we read about: **בית ארבאל** - “**Beth-arbeal**” (Hos 10:14). The Greek translator wrote here: “house of Ierobaal” and that is also the Greek translation of **בית ירבעל** - “**house of Jerubbaal**” (Jud 8:35; see also: Jud 9:16, 19). The understanding of the Greek translator suggests that he believed that **בית ארבאל** (*beith arbeal*) is a **י** (i) - **א** (a) vowel exchange and a **ע** (a’) - **א** (a) exchange error of **בית ירבעל** (*beith yerubaa’l*) - “**house of Jerubaal**.”

However, the reading of the Book of Kings suggests another explanation for **בית ארבאל** - “**Beth-arbeal**”of the Prophet Hosea. In the Book of Kings we read about King Zechariah who was the great-grandson of Jehu king of Israel:

**ויקשר עליו שלם בן-יבש, ויכהו קבל-עם וימיתהו; וימלך תחתיו.**

**ויתר דברי זכריה הנם כתובים על-ספר דברי הימים--למלכי ישראל**

**הוא דבר-יהוה, אשר דבר אל-יהוא לאמר, בני רביעים ישבו לך על-כסא ישראל; ויהי-כן**.

“**And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him before the people, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.**

**Now the rest of the acts of Zechariah, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.**

**This was the word of *YHWH* which He spoke unto Jehu, saying: Your sons to the fourth generation shall sit upon the throne of Israel. And so it came to pass**” (2 Ki 15:10-12).

The Prophet Hosea wrote about the murder of King Joram, the son of Ahab, by Jehu, and the casing out of his body in Jezreel: **כי-עוד מעט, ופקדתי את-דמי יזרעאל על-בית יהוא** - “**for yet a little while, and I will visit the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu**” (Hos 1:4).

In the Book of Kings we also read that Jehu had ordered the eunuchs of Jezebel, the mother of King Joram to throw her out of the window:

**ויאמר שמטהו (שמטוה), וישמטוה; ויז מדמה אל-הקיר ואל-הסוסים, וירמסנה.**

“**And he said: 'Throw her down.' So they threw her down; and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses; and she was trodden under foot**” (2 Ki 9:33).

Now when we read in the Book of Hosea:

 **ביום מלחמה: אם על-בנים רטשה. כשד שלמן בית ארבאל**

“**As Shalman spoiled Beth-arbel in the day of battle; the mother was dashed in pieces with her children**” (Hos 10:14).

These verses suggest the here the Prophet Hosea was referring to the annihilation of house of Jehu by Shallum the son of Jabesh, similarly to the killing of King Joram, the son of Ahab and his mother Jezebel. Even the word **רטשה** (*rutshah*) - “dashed to pieces” sound similar to

**וישמטוה** (*vishmetuhah*) - “and (they) dropped her off.”

It is therefore suggested that instead of **כשד שלמן בית ארבאל** (*keshod shalman beith arbeal*) we should read:**שלם שמד את בית יהוא כשמד יהוא את בית אחאב** (*shalum shamad eth beith yehu kshmad yehu eth beith akhav*) - “Sallum smote the house of Jehu as Jehu smote the house of Ahab.”

In the Book of Amos we read: **כי הנה יוצר הרים וברא רוח** - “**For** [He] **that forms the mountains, and creates the wind**” (Am 4:13).

The Greek translator wrote here: “thunder” which suggests that he believed that here **הרים** (*harim*) is a **ע** (a’) - **י** (i) exchange error of **הרעם** (*haraa’m*) - “thunder” (e.g.Is 29:6).

In the Book of Proverbs we read: **טוב-רש הולך בתמו- מעקש דרכים, והוא עשיר** - “**Better is the poor that walks in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich**” (Pro 28:6; see also: Pro 2:15; 10:9; 28:18). The Greek translator wrote here: “crooked way.”

Yet in the Book of Judges we find:

**והיה במות השופט, ישבו והשחיתו מאבותם, ללכת אחרי אלהים אחרים, לעבדם ולהשתחות להם: לא הפילו ממעלליהם, ומדרכם הקשה**.

“**But it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they turned back, and dealt more corruptly than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to worship them; they left nothing undone of their practices, nor of their stubborn way**” (Jud 2:19).

The understanding of the Greek (and English) translator of the unique expression:

**מדרכם הקשה** (*midarkam haqashah*) as: “**their stubborn way**” suggests that the translators believed that these words are a letter-deletion error of **מדרכם העקשה** (*midarkam hai’qshah*) - “their stubborn way.”

In the Book of Samuel we read:

**ויאמר הנה הנשאר שים-לפניך אכל--כי למועד שמור-לך לאמר, העם קראתי;**

“**And [Samuel] said: Behold that which had been reserved! Set it before you and eat; because to the appointed time had it been kept for you, for I said: I have invited the people**” (1 Sam 9:24).

The Greek translator wrote here: “tear off” and it appears that he believed that here **קראתי** (*qaraathi*) is a misspelled **קרעתי** (*qaraa’thi*) - “I tore off.”

In the Book of Samuel we read: **ויפל פחד-יהוה על-העם, ויצאו כאיש אחד** - “**And the dread of *YHWH* fell on the people, and they came out as one man**” (1 Sam 11:7).

The Greek translator wrote here: “and they cried out” and it appears that he believed that **ויצאו** (*vayetsu*) is a misspelled **ויצעקו** (*vaitsa’qu*) - “and they cried out” (e.g. Ex 5:15; 14:10; Jos 24:7; Jud 4:3; Ps 107:6, 28; 2 Ch 13:14). If the Greeks’ assumption is correct than we have here a **ק** (q) letter deletion and an **ע** (a’) - **א** (a) exchange.

In the Book of Job we read: **ואיחלה לאור, ויבא אפל** - “**I waited for light, there came darkness**” (Job 30:26; see also: Is 29:18; Am 5:20; Ps 11:2; 91:6; Job 3:6; 10:22; 23:17; 28:3).

Now we read in the Book of Kings: **ויבא אל-העפל** - “**And when he came to the hill**” (2 Ki 5:24). It is not clear how the English translator determined that here **עפל** (*o’phel*) means “hill.” The Greek translator wrote “darkness” and we may assume that he believed that here **עפל** (*o’phel*) is the same as **אפל** (*ophel*) - “darkness.”

In the Book of Isaiah we read: **ישפילה עד-ארץ, יגיענה עד-עפר** - “**laying it low even to the ground, bringing it even to the dust**” (Is 26:5).

However, the understanding of the Greek (and English) translators suggests that they believed that here **יגיענה** (*yagie’nah*) is a misspelled **יביאנה** (*yavienah*) - “will bring her.” If appears that this “correction” assumes that here a **ב** (v) letter was erroneously been substituted by a **ג** (g) letter, and a **א** (a) letter was erroneously been substituted by a **ע** (a’) letter.

In the Book of Proverbs we read: **ותקות רשעים תאבד** - “**but the expectation of the wicked shall perish**” (Pro 10:28).

Yet in the next chapter we find: **תקות רשעים עברה** - “**the expectation of the wicked is wrath**” (Pro 11:23). The Greek translator wrote here: “hope of the impious will perish” which suggests that he believed that here **עברה** (*e’vrah*) is a misspelled **אבדה** (*avdah*). It appears that such an understanding is based on the assumption that here in addition to a **ד** (d) - **ר** (r) exchange a **ע** (a’) letter erroneously was replaced a **א** (a) letter.

In Modern Hebrew only the letters: **י, ו, ה, א** (a, h, v, i) are considered vowel letters, but we will soon see that it appears that in Biblical Hebrew the letter **ע**  (a’) occasionally does substitute these vowel letters. The letter **ע** (a’) appears 45,037 times in the Hebrew Bible (3.7% of all the letters).

Reading of the Septuagint also suggests that the Greek translators assumed that in several other biblical verses the letter **ע** (a’) substituted **י, ו, ה, א** (a, h, v, i) letters, or vice-versa.

In the Book of Samuel we read:

**ויאמר דוד אל-אכיש, לכן אתה תדע את אשר-יעשה עבדך;**

“**And David said to Achish: 'Therefore you shall know what your servant will do**” (1 Sam 28:2).

However, the Greek translators wrote here: “And Dauid said to Anchous: thus now you shall know what your slave will do.” This translation suggests that the Greeks believed that the Hebrew word **אתה** (*atah*) in this verse had replaced **עתה** (*a’tah*), meaning “now” (1 Sam 25:17).

In the Book of Samuel we hear the people telling King David who was preparing to join them in battle:

**ויאמר העם לא תצא, כי אם-נס ננוס לא-ישימו אלינו לב ואם-ימתו חצינו לא-ישימו אלינו לב--כי-עתה כמנו עשרה אלפים**

“**But the people said: You shall not go forth; for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us; but you are worth ten thousand of us**” (2 Sam 18:3).

The understanding of the Greek (and English) translators suggests that they assumed that here **עתה** (*a’tah*) is the same as **אתה** (*atah*) - “you.”

In the book of Jeremiah we read the phrase: **ועת-צרה** - “**and it is a time of trouble**” (Jer 30:7). In the Book of Ecclesiastes we find the terms: **ועת שלום** - “**and a time for peace**” (Ecc 3:8), and **ועת רקוד** - “**and a time to dance**” (Ecc 3:4).

Yet in the Book of Jeremiah we also find:

**ואתי (ואת) שדוד מה-תעשי, כי-תלבשי שני כי-תעדי עדי-זהב כי-תקרעי בפוך עיניך--לשוא תתיפי:  מאסו-בך עגבים, נפשך יבקשו.**

“**And you, that are spoiled, what do you, that you clothes yourself with scarlet, that you decks you with ornaments of gold, that you enlarges your eyes with paint? In vain do you make yourself fair; your lovers despise you, they seek your life**” (Jer 4:30).

The English translation does not explain how the one that was already subjected to spoiling could yet have such expensive garments. In addition, the translator assumed that **שדוד** (*shadud*) is a misspelled **שדודה** (*shedudah*). The Greek translator just ignored this word. However, the comparison between these verses suggests that **ואתי (ואת) שדוד** (*veath shadud*) is a misspelled **ועת שדוד** (*vee’th shedod*) - “and in time of thieving.”

This suggestion assumes that a **ע** (e’) - **א** (a) exchange had occurred here.

In the Book of Kings we read:

**וירא כל-ישראל כי לא-שמע המלך אלהם, וישבו העם את-המלך דבר לאמר מה-לנו חלק בדוד ולא-נחלה בבן-ישי לאהליך ישראל, עתה ראה ביתך דוד; וילך ישראל לאהליו.**

“**And when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not to them, the people answered the king, saying: What portion have we in David? Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse; to your tents, O Israel; now see to your own house, David. So Israel departed to their tents**” (1 Ki 12:16)

The Greek translator wrote here: “now feed your own house” and it therefore appears that the translator assumed that **ראה** (*reah*) here is a misspelled **רעה** (*rea’h*).

In the Book of Micah we read about the future governor of Israel:

**ועמד, ורעה בעז יהוה--בגאון שם יהוה אלהיו; וישבו כי-עתה יגדל עד-אפסי-ארץ.**

“**And he shall stand, and shall feed** [**his flock**] **in the strength of *YHWH*, in the majesty of the name of *YHWH* his God; and they shall abide, for then shall he be great to the ends of the earth**” (Mic 5:3).

In the Septuagint it is written here: “and see and tend his flock.” This expression could be the result of a “correction” by more than one Greek scribe, one of whom assumed that the Hebrew **ורעה** (ve*raa’h*) is a misspelled **וראה** (ve*raah*) - “and see.”

Similarly, we read in the Book of Isaiah the phrase: **ונער בשן וכרמל** “**and Bashan and Carmel are clean bare**” (Is 33:9). The Greek translator wrote here: “Galilee and Carmel became visible” and it seems that he assumed that **ונער** (*venoe’r*) is an order-type error of **ונראה** (*venirah*) - “became visible.”

The Psalmist wrote: **כי-השביע, נפש שקקה; ונפש רעבה, מלא-טוב** - “**For He had satisfied the longing soul, and the hungry soul He had filled with good**” (Ps 107:9).

Yet in the Book of Jeremiah we read: **כי הרויתי, נפש עיפה; וכל-נפש דאבה, מלאתי** - “**For I have satiated the weary soul, and every pining soul have I replenished**” (Jer 31:25).

The Greek translator wrote here “hungry” and it appears that he believed that **דאבה** (*daavah*) is a misspelled **רעבה** (*ree’vah*) - “hungry.” If the Greek translator’s assumption is correct then we have here, in addition to a **ר** (r) - **ד** (d) exchange, a **ע** (a’) - **א** (a) switch.

The Psalmist wrote: **רצון-יראיו יעשה; ואת-שועתם ישמע ויושיעם** - “**He will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him; He also will hear their cry, and will save them**” (Ps 145:19).

Yet in the Book of Micah we read: **קול יהוה לעיר יקרא, ותושיה יראה שמך** - “**Hark! *YHWH* cry to the city--and it is wisdom to have regard for Your name**” (Mic 6:9).

The Greek translator wrote here: “And he shall save those who fear his name” and it appears that he believed that **ותושיה יראה שמך** (*vethushiah irah shmecha*) is a letter-substitution error of **ותושיע יראי שמך** (*vethoshia’ irai shmecha*) - “and You will deliver those that fear Your name.” The understanding of **תושיה** (*thushiah*) as **תושיע** (*thoshia’*) by the Greek translator applies also to several other verses (Pro 2:7; Job 6:13; 30:22).

In the Book of Isaiah we read:

**כאשר יהגה האריה והכפיר על-טרפו, אשר יקרא עליו מלא רעים מקולם לא יחת, ומהמונם לא יענה;**

“**Like as the lion, or the young lion, growling over his prey, though a multitude of shepherds be called forth against him**, **will not be dismayed at their voice”** (Is 31:4).

The Greek translator wrote here: “the mountains are filled with his voice” and it appears that he believed that here **רעים** (*roi’m*) is a letter-substitution error and metathesis of **הרים** (*harim*) - “mountains.”

In the Book of Kings we read:

**ויאמר, אל-בדקר שלשה, שא השלכהו בחלקת שדה נבות היזרעאלי: כי-זכר אני ואתה, את רכבים צמדים אחרי אחאב אביו, ויהוה נשא עליו את-המשא הזה.**

“**Then said [Jehu] to Bidkar his captain: Take up, and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite; for remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, *YHWH* pronounced this burden against him**” (2 Ki 9:25).

The understanding of the Greek (and English) translator that here **את** (*et*) means “when” indicates that they assumed that this word is a misspelled **עת** (*e’t*). If the translators’ assumption is correct we have here a case of **ע** (y’) - **א** (a) exchange.

In the Book of Ezekiel we read:

**עת נשברת מימים, במעמקי-מים; מערבך וכל-קהלך, בתוכך נפלו.**

“**Now that you are broken by the seas in the depths of the waters, and your merchandise and all your company are fallen in the midst of you**” (Eze 27:34).

The fact that the Greek (and English) translators did not interpret **עת** (*e’t*) here as “when” indicates that they assumed that this word is a misspelled **את** (*at*) - “you.” If this interpretation is correct then the letter **א** (a) here was replaced by **ע** (y’).

In the Book of Numbers we find the Expression: **ועל כל-העדה תקצף** - “**and will You be wroth with all the congregation**” (Num 16:22; see also: Jos 22:20).

The verb **יקצף** - “be angry” is almost always associated with **על** - "on” (Gen 40:2; 41:10; Ex 16:20; Lev 10:6, 16; Num 1:53; 16:22; 18:5; 31:14; Deu 9:19; Jos 9:20; 1 Sam 29:4; 2 Ki 13:19; Is 34:2; 47:6; 54:9; Jer 37:15; Zec 1:2, 15; Ecc 5:5, 22; 1 Ch 27:24; 2 Ch 19:2, 10; 24:18; 29:8; 32:25, 26).

Therefore, when we read in the Book of Joshua the unique expression:

**אל-כל-עדת ישראל יקצף** - “**He will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel**” (Jos 22:18).

The comparison between these phrases and the translation suggest that it was assumed that here **אל** (*el*) is the same as **על** (*u’l*) - “on.”

The Chronicler wrote: **ויען חלקיהו ויאמר אל-שפן הסופר, ספר התורה מצאתי בבית יהוה** - “**And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe: I have found the book of the Law in the house of *YHWH***” (2 Ch 34:15).

When this information appears in the Book of Kings we find:

**ויאמר חלקיהו הכהן הגדול על-שפן הספר, ספר התורה מצאתי בבית יהוה** - “**And Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe: I have found the book of the Law in the house of *YHWH***” (2 Ki 22:8).

The comparison between these verses and the understanding of the Greek (and English) translators indicate that here **על** (*u’l*) is the same as **אל** (*el*) - “to.”

In the Book of Deuteronomy we read:

**ואתנפל לפני יהוה כראשנה, ארבעים יום וארבעים לילה--לחם לא אכלתי, ומים לא שתיתי: על כל-חטאתכם אשר חטאתם, לעשות הרע בעיני יהוה להכעיסו.**

“**And I fell down before *YHWH*, as at the first, forty days and forty nights; I did neither eat bread nor drink water; because of all your sin which you sinned, in doing that which was evil in the sight of *YHWH*, to provoke Him**” (Deu 9:18).

Yet in the Book of Kings we find:

**אל כל-חטאות בעשא, וחטאות אלה בנו--אשר חטאו, ואשר החטיאו את-ישראל, להכעיס את-יהוה אלהי ישראל**,

“**For all the sins of Baasa, and the sins of Elah his son, which they sinned, and wherewith they made Israel to sin, to provoke *YHWH*, the God of Israel**” (1 Ki 16:13).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that here **אל כל-חטאות** (*el kol-khatoth*) is a **ע** (a’) - **א** (a) substitution error of **על כל-חטאות** (*u’l kol-khatoth*) - “on all the sins.”

In the Book of Job we read:

**ויאמר יהוה אל השטן, השמת לבך על עבדי איוב: כי אין כמהו בארץ איש תם וישר ירא אלהים וסר מרע.**

“**And *YHWH* said to Satan: Has you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a whole-hearted and an upright man, one that fears God, and shuns evil?**” (Job 1:8).

**ויאמר יהוה אל השטן, השמת לבך אל עבדי איוב--כי אין כמהו בארץ איש תם וישר ירא אלהים וסר מרע;**

“**And *YHWH* said to Satan: Has you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a whole-hearted and an upright man, one that fears God, and shuns evil?**” (Job 2:3).

The comparison between these verses and the translation indicate that it was assumed that **על** (*a’l*) is the same as **אל** (*el*) - “to.”

In the Book of Ezekiel we read:

**והתגדלתי והתקדשתי, ונודעתי לעיני גוים רבים; וידעו כי-אני יהוה.**

“**Thus will I magnify Myself, and sanctify Myself, and I will make Myself known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am *YHWH***” (Eze 38:23; see also: Is 19:21; 61:9; Eze 20:9; 35:11).

Yet in the Book of Malachi we find:

**כי מלך גדול אני אמר יהוה צבאות, ושמי נורא בגוים.**

“**For I am a great King, said *YHWH* of hosts, and My name is feared among the nations**” (Mal 1:14).

However, the Greek translator wrote here: “is notable” and it appears that he assumed that **נורא** (*nora*) is a misspelled **נודע** (*noda’*) - “known.” If the assumption of the Greek translator is correct then we have here, in addition to the common **ד** (d) - **ר** (r) exchange, a substitution of the letter **ע** (a’) by the letter **א** (a).

The Psalmist wrote: **יודוך עמים אלהים: יודוך עמים כלם** - “**Let the peoples give thanks to You, O God; let the peoples give thanks to You, all of them**” (Ps 67:4, 6).

Yet he also wrote: **הללו את-יהוה כל-גוים; שבחוהו כל-האמים** - “**O praise *YHWH*, all you nations; laud Him, all you peoples**” (Ps 117:1).

However, the comparison between these verses and the understanding of the Greek (and English) translators suggest that the Hapax legomenon **אמים** (*umim*) is the result of a **ע** (a’) - **א** (a) letter-exchange of **עמים** (*a’mim*) - “peoples.” Alternatively, **אמים** (*umim*) is a letter-deletion error of **לאמים** (*leumim*) - “nations” (e.g. Gen 25:23; 27:29; Is 34:1; 43:9; 49:1; 55:4; Ps 2:1; 9:9; 44:3; 47:4; 67:5; 105:44; 108:4; 148:11; 149:7; Pro 24:24).

In the Book of Job we read:

**והנה רוח גדולה באה מעבר המדבר, ויגע בארבע פנות הבית, ויפל על הנערים, וימותו;**

“**And, behold, there came a great wind from across the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead**” (Job 1:19).

However, the understanding of **ויגע** (*vaiga’*) by the Greek (and English) translators suggests that they believed that **ויגע** (*vaiga’*) is a letter-substitution error of **ויכה** (*vayakeh*) - “and he smote” (Jos 10:40; 1 Ki 22:24, 34; 2 Ki 2:8, 14; 8:21; Is 37:36; Jer 20:2; 52:27). If this understanding is correct then in addition to **כ** (k) - **ג** (g) velar letter exchange, we have here a **ה** (h) - **ע** (a’) letter exchange.

Similarly we find in the Book of Samuel: **ויאמר דוד ביום ההוא, כל-מכה יבסי ויגע בצנור** - “**And David said on that day: Whosoever smites the Jebusites, and gets up to the gutter**” (2 Sam 5:8).

Here the Greeks translated again: “attack” which suggests that he believed that here **ויגע** (*vaiga’*) is also misspelled **ויכה** (*vayakeh*) - “and he smote.”

In the Book of Lamentations we read: **זנח אדני מזבחו, נאר מקדשו** - “**The Lord had cast off His altar, He had abhorred His sanctuary**” (Thr 2:7). The Greek translator wrote here: “He shook off” and it appears that he assumed that **נאר** (*nier*) is the same as **נער** (*nie’r*) - “shook off” (see also: Jud 16:20; Is 33:15; 52:2; Job 38:13)

In the Book of Genesis we find the expression: **והאיש משתאה לה** “**And the man looked steadfastly on her**” (Gen 24:21).

It is not clear why the translators believed that the Hapax legomenon **משתאה** (*mishtaeh*) means “looked steadfastly.” A similar sounding word appears in the Book of Isaiah:

**ונשתעה ונרא (ונראה) יחדו.**

“**We may be dismayed, and behold it together**” (Is 41:23; see also Is 41:10).

As the context of verse Gen 24:21 complies with “being dismayed,” we may wonder whether **משתאה** (*mishtaeh*) is the same as **משתעה** (*mishtaa’eh*).

In the Book of Genesis we read: **ויאמר יעקב לאחיו לקטו אבנים, ויקחו אבנים ויעשו-גל** - “**And Jacob said to his brethren: Gather stones; and they took stones, and made a heap**” (Gen 31:46).

Yet in the Book of Kings we find: **ותהי להשות גלים נצים, ערים בצרות** - “**it is done; that fortified cities should be laid waste into ruinous heaps**” (2 Ki 19:25).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that **להשות גלים** (*laheshoth galim*) is a **ע** (a’) - **ה** (h) exchange error of **לעשות גלים** (*laa’soth galim*) - “to make heaps.” Although it appears that the expression **להשות גלים** (*laheshoth galim*) is corrupt, it appears also in the Book of Isaiah (Is 37:26) as **להשאות גלים** (*laheshaoth galim*), probably the result of a scribal effort to give a meaning to an enigmatic expression.

The comparison between these verses suggests that exchange between **א** (a) and **ע** (a’) and **ה** (h) were not uncommon.

The Chronicler wrote:

**ויתפלל אליו, ויעתר לו וישמע תחנתו וישיבהו ירושלם למלכותו; וידע מנשה כי יהוה הוא האלהים.**

“**And he prayed to Him; and** [He] **was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that *YHWH* is the God**” (2 Ch 33:13).

Yet he also wrote:

**בימים ההם חלה יחזקיהו עד-למות; ויתפלל אל-יהוה, ויאמר לו ומופת נתן לו.**

“**In those days Hezekiah was sick even to death; and he prayed to *YHWH*; and** [He] **spoke to him, and gave him a sign**” (2 Ch 32:24).

However, the comparison between these verses and the understanding of the Greek translator suggest that here **ויאמר לו** (*vayomer lo*) is a misspelled **ויעתר לו** (*vaya’ther lo*) - “and [He] responded favorably to him.”

The Massoretic editors’ marginal notes indicate that they also recognized that such exchanges had occurred.

**וַיֵּשֶׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ על- (אֶל-) הַלֶּחֶם לֶאֱכוֹל.**

“**The king sat him down to the meal to eat**” (1 Sam 20:24; see also Eze 9:5).

In the Book of Amos we read:

**ואדני יהוה הצבאות, הנוגע בארץ ותמוג, ואבלו כל-יושבי בה; ועלתה כיאר כלה, ושקעה כיאר מצרים.**

“**For my Lord, *YHWH* of hosts, is He that touches the land and it melts, and all that dwell therein mourn; and it rises up wholly like the River, and sinks again, like the River of Egypt**” (Am 9:5).

Yet in the previous chapter we find:

**הַעַל זֹאת לֹא-תִרְגַּז הָאָרֶץ, וְאָבַל כָּל-יוֹשֵׁב בָּהּ; וְעָלְתָה כָאֹר כֻּלָּהּ, וְנִגְרְשָׁה ונשקה (וְנִשְׁקְעָה) כִּיאוֹר מִצְרָיִם**.

 “**It shall rise up wholly like the River; and it shall be troubled and sink again, like the River of Egypt**” (Am 8:8).

The comparison between these verses, as well as the understanding of the Massoretic editors indicate that **ונשקה** (*venashqah*)is an **ע** (a’) letter-deletion error of **ונשקעה** (*venishqea’h*) - “and sunk.”

However, there are several other cases of substitutions between Hebrew the letter **ע** (y’) the vowel letters.

In the Book of Joshua we read:

**ויאמר יהושע, גלו אבנים גדלות אל-פי המערה,**

“**And Joshua said: 'Roll great stones to the mouth of the cave**” (Jos 10:18).

**וישמו אבנים גדלות על-פי המערה,**

“**And they laid great stones on the mouth of the cave**” (Jos 10:27).

In the Book of Joshua we also read:

**ויתנו בני-ישראל ללוים מנחלתם, אל-פי יהוה, את-הערים האלה ואת-מגרשיהן.**

“**And the children of Israel gave to the Levites out of their inheritance, according to the commandment of *YHWH*, these cities with the open land about them**” (Jos 21:3; see also: Jos 15:13; 17:4).

Yet in the same book we also find:

**על-פי יהוה נתנו לו את-העיר אשר שאל--את-תמנת-סרח בהר אפרים;**

“**According to the commandment of *YHWH* they gave him the city which he asked, even Timnath-serah in the hill-country of Ephraim**” (Jos 19:50; see also: Ex 17:1; Lev 24:12; Num 3:16, 39, 51; 4:37, 41, 45, 49; 9:18, 20, 23; 10:13; 13:3; 33:2, 38; 36:5; Deu 34:5; Jos 22:9; 2 Ki 24:3).

In the Book of Samuel we read: **ויהי שאול איב את-דוד, כל-הימים.**  - “**and Saul was David's enemy continually**” (1 Sam 18:29).

Yet twenty verses earlier we find:

**ויהי שאול עון (עוין) את-דוד, מהיום ההוא והלאה** - “**And Saul eyed David from that day and forward**” (1 Sam 18:9).

However, the comparison between these expressions suggests that the hapax legomenon: **עון** (*o’ven*) is the same as **איב** (*oyev*) - “be hostile.” This suggestion assumes that in addition to an exchange between the letter **ן** (n) and **ב** (v), we have here a **א** (a) - **ע** (a’) substitution.

In the Book of Nahum we read about God: **לפני זעמו מי יעמוד, ומי יקום בחרון אפו** - “**Who can stand before His indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of His anger?**” (Nah 1:6).

Word from the root **זעמ** (z,a’,m) appear also in the Book of Numbers in Balaam words:

**וישא משלו ויאמר: מן-ארם ינחני בלק מלך-מואב, מהררי-קדם--לכה ארה-לי יעקב, ולכה זעמה ישראל**

**מה אקב, לא קבה אל; ומה אזעם, לא זעם יהוה.**

“**And he took up his parable, and said: From Aram Balak brings me, the king of Moab from the mountains of the East: Come, curse me Jacob, and come, execrate Israel.**

**How shall I curse, whom God had not cursed? And how shall I execrate, whom *YHWH* had not execrated?**” (Num 23:7-8).

However, one chapter later we again hear Balaam: **וישא משלו ויאמר: אוי, מי יחיה משמו אל** - “**And he took up his parable, and said: Alas, who shall live after God had appointed him?**” (Num 24:23).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that **משמו** (*misumo*) is a misspelled **מזעמו** (*mizaa’mo*) - “His indignation.” If this suggestion is correct than here in addition to a **ז** (z) - **ש** (s) sibilant-letter exchange, we have also a **ע** (a’) letter deletion error.

In the Book of Samuel we read:

**ויעבר בכל-שבטי ישראל, אבלה ובית מעכה--וכל-הברים;  ויקלהו (ויקהלו), ויבאו אף-אחריו.**

“**And he went through all the tribes of Israel to Abel, and to Beth-maacah, and all the Berites; And they were gathered together, and went in also after him**” (2 Sam 20:14).

The word **הברים** (*haberim*) is not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible. The Greek translator wrote here the enigmatic: “*Charri*.” However, the content of this verse suggests that **הברים** (*haberim*) is a letter-deletion error of **העברים** (*haoverim*) - “[all those] who crossed [to his side].”

In the Book of Samuel we read:

**ישעו ואין משיע; אל-יהוה ולא ענם.**

“**They looked, but there was none to save; even to *YHWH*, but He answered them not**” (2 Sam 22:42).

When the Psalmist reiterates this verse he writes:

**ישועו ואין-מושיע; על-יהוה ולא ענם.**

“**They cried, but there was none to save; even to *YHWH*, but He answered them not**” (Ps 18:42).

In the Book of Kings we read:

**את-מי חרפת וגדפת ועל-מי הרימות קול; ותשא מרום עיניך על-קדוש ישראל.**

“**Whom has you taunted and blasphemed? And against whom has you exalted your voice? Yea, you have lifted up your eyes on high, even against the Holy One of Israel!**” (2 Ki 19:22).

When this verse is repeated in the Book of Isaiah we find:

**את-מי חרפת וגדפת ועל-מי הרימותה קול; ותשא מרום עיניך אל-קדוש ישראל.**

“**Whom has you taunted and blasphemed? And against whom has you exalted your voice? Yea, you has lifted up your eyes on high, even against the Holy One of Israel**!” (Is 37:23).

In the Book of Ezekiel we read:

**בן-אדם, שים פניך אל-הרי ישראל; והנבא אליהם.**

“**Son of man, set your face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them**” (Eze 6:2).

**בן-אדם, שים פניך על-הר שעיר; והנבא עליו.**

“**Son of man, set your face against mount Seir, and prophesy against it**” (Eze 35:2).

**בן-אדם, שים פניך אל-גוג ארץ המגוג--נשיא ראש משך ותבל; והנבא עליו.**

“**'Son of man, set your face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him**” (Eze 38:2).

**בן-אדם--שים פניך על-פרעה מלך מצרים; והנבא עליו**

“**Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh King of Egypt, and prophesy against him**” (Eze 29:2).

**ואתה שא קינה, אל-נשיאי ישראל.**

“**Moreover, take you up a lamentation for the princes of Israel**” (Eze 19:1).

**בן-אדם, שא קינה על-פרעה מלך-מצרים,**

“**'Son of man, take up a lamentation for Pharaoh King of Egypt**” (Eze 32:2).

The exchange between **אל** and **על** is also evident from other parallel biblical texts (Ex 28:24 ver. Ex 39:17; Ex 28:7 ver. Ex 39:4; 2 Sam 6:3 ver. 1 Ch 13:7; 2 Ki 19:22 ver. Is 37:23; 2 Ki 19:34 ver. Is 37:35).

In the Book of Ezekiel we also find:

**בן-אדם, האנשים האלה העלו גלוליהם על-לבם,**

“**'Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their mind, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face**” (Eze 14:3; see also: 2 Ki 12:5; Is 65:17; Jer 3:16, 7:31; 19:5; 32:35; 44:21; 51:50; Eze 38:10).

Yet in the next verse we find:

**לכן דבר-אותם ואמרת אליהם כה-אמר אדני יהוה, איש איש מבית ישראל אשר יעלה את-גלוליו אל-לבו ומכשול עונו ישים נכח פניו,**

“**Therefore speak to them, and say to them: Thus said the Lord *YHWH*: Every man of the house of Israel that sets up his idols in his mind, and puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face**” (Eze 14:4; see also: Eze 14:7).

In the Book of Isaiah we read:

**והיה באחרית הימים, נכון יהיה הר בית-יהוה בראש ההרים ונשא מגבעות; ונהרו אליו כל-הגוים.**

“**And it shall come to pass in the end of days, that the mountain of *YHWH’s* house shall be established as the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it**” (Is 2:2).

This verse appears also in the Book of Micah:

**והיה באחרית הימים, יהיה הר בית-יהוה נכון בראש ההרים, ונשא הוא מגבעות; ונהרו עליו עמים.**

“**But in the end of days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of *YHWH’s* house shall be established as the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it**” (Mic 4:1).

The comparison between these verses and the English (but not the Greek) translation suggest that **עליו** (*a’lav*) is the same as **אליו** (*elav*) - “to it.”

In the Book of Job we read: **והוא כרקב יבלה; כבגד אכלו עש** - “**Though I am like a wine-skin that consumes, like a garment that is moth-eaten**” (Job 13:28; see also: Is 50:9). It is not clear how the Greek (and English) translators determined that **עש** (*a’sh*) is “moth.” This Hebrew word appears also in chapter 51 of the Book of Isaiah:

**כי כבגד יאכלם עש, וכצמר יאכלם סס**

“**For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool**” (Is 51:8).

It is not clear how the English translator determined that the Hapax legomenon **סס** (*sas*) is “worm.” The Greek translator wrote here: “moth” and the word **עש** (*a’sh*) of this verse was translated by the Greeks as “time” apparently assuming that this word is a misspelled **עת** (*e’th*) - “time” (e.g. Gen 29:7). The fact that the Greeks did not translate here the word **עש** (*a’sh*) as “moth” indicates that they were not sure about the meaning of thi word.

In the Book of Isaiah we read the expression: **אש תאכלכם** “**a fire that shall devour you**” (Is 33:11; see also: Lev 6:3; Num 26:10; Deu 5:22; Eze 15:4, 7; Zec 9:4; 11:1; Ps 21:10). In the Book of Leviticus we read: **ושרף את-הבגד** - “**And he shall burn the garment**’ (Lev 13:52; see also: Pro 6:27). These expressions suggest that **כבגד אכלו עש** (*kebeged achalo a’sh*) of verse Job 13:28 could be a letter-substitution error of **כבגד אכלו אש** (*kebeged achalo esh*) - “like a garment devoured by fire.”

In the Book of Genesis we read:

**וכמו השחר עלה ויאיצו המלאכים בלוט לאמר: קום קח את-אשתך ואת-שתי בנתיך, הנמצאת--פן-תספה בעון העיר.**

**ויתמהמה--ויחזיקו האנשים בידו וביד-אשתו וביד שתי בנתיו, בחמלת יהוה עליו; ויצאהו וינחהו מחוץ לעיר.**

**ויהי כהוציאם אתם החוצה ויאמר המלט על-נפשך--אל-תביט אחריך, ואל-תעמד בכל-הככר: ההרה המלט פן-תספה.**

“**And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying: Arise; take your wife, and your two daughters that are here; lest you be swept away in the iniquity of the city.**

**But he lingered; and the men laid hold upon his hand and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; *YHWH* being merciful to him. And they brought him forth, and set him without the city.**

**And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said: Escape for your life; look not behind thee, neither stay you in all the Plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be swept away**”(Gen 19:15-17).

Now we hear the Prophet Jeremiah telling the people of Judah and Jerusalem:

**העיזו אל-תעמדו: כי רעה אנכי מביא מצפון--ושבר גדול.**

“**Put yourselves under covert, stay not; for I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction**” (Jer 4:6). The Greek translator wrote here: “harry, do not stop.”

We also find in the Book of Exodus: **ועתה שלח העז את-מקנך, ואת כל-אשר לך בשדה** - “**Now therefore send, hasten in your cattle and all that you have in the field**” (Ex 9:19). The Greek translator wrote here: “harry.”

It seems that the Greek translator believed that **העיזו** (*hai’zu*) is the same as: **האיצו** (*haitsu*) and that **העז** (*hae’z*) is the same as **האץ** (*haets*) meaning “harry.” This suggestion assumes that that in addition to the exchange between the sibilant letters **צ** (ts) and **ז** (z), there was another exchange, between the letters **א** (a) and **ע** (a’). It is also possible that the Hapax legomenon **עושו** (*a’ushu*) - “**haste you**” (Joel 4:11) was an intermediary in this process. We will soon show that this word relates to another Hebrew word **חושו** (*khushu*) that has the same meaning, and we should note that in the Book of Samuel we find a similar expression:

**מהרה חושה אל-תעמד**

“**Make speed, hasten, stay not**” (1 Sam 20:38; see also: Is 5:19; Ps 90:10).

These series of transformations may explain the fact that both **חש** (*khash*) and **אץ** (*ats*) are understood as “hasty” (Hab 1:8; Pro 29:20).

In the Book of Micah we read:

**והיה שארית יעקב בגוים, בקרב עמים רבים, כאריה בבהמות יער, ככפיר בעדרי-צאן--אשר אם-עבר ורמס וטרף ואין מציל.**

“**And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through, treaded down and tears in pieces, and there is none to deliver**” (Mic 5:7; see also: Gen 29:2; Joel 1:18).

Yet in the Book of Jeremiah we find:

**קול צעקת הרעים, ויללת אדירי הצאן**

“**Hark! The cry of the shepherds, and the wailing of the leaders of the flock!**” (Jer 25:36; see also: Jer 25:34, 35).

The Greek translator wrote here: “rams of the sheep” but it is possible that **אדירי הצאן**

(*adirei hatson*) is the same as **עדרי-צאן** (*e’drei hatson*) – “flocks of the sheep.”

In the Book of Ezekiel we read:

**וכל אשר סביבתיו עזרה וכל-אגפיו אזרה לכל-רוח; וחרב אריק אחריהם.**

**וידעו כי-אני יהוה בהפיצי אותם בגוים, וזריתי אותם בארצות.**

“**And I will disperse toward every wind all that are round about him to help him, and all his troops; and I will draw out the sword after them.**

**And they shall know that I am *YHWH*, when I shall scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries**” (Eze 12:14-15).

The translation of **וכל אשר סביבתיו עזרה** to:”**and all that are round about him to help him**” must have been based on the assumption that that the grammar of this Hebrew expression is erroneous. However, it is also possible that the word **עזרה** (*e’zreh*) is a misspelled **אזרה** (*azareh*) - “I will disperse (all that are around him)” and this word appears in the same verse. If this interpretation is correct then we have here another **א** (a) - **ע** (e’) letter exchange.

In the Book of Leviticus we read: **ואתכם אזרה בגוים** - “**And you will I scatter among the nations**” (Lev 26:33; see also: Jer 15:7; Eze 6:8; 12:15; 20:23; 22:15; 29:12; 30:23, 26; 36:19; Ps 44:12).

Yet in the Book of Zechariah we find: **ואזרעם בעמים, ובמרחקים יזכרוני** - “**And I will sow them among the peoples, and they shall remember Me in far countries**” (Zec 10:9).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that **ואזרעם** (*veezra’em*) is the same as **ואזרם** (*veezraem*) - “and I scattered them.”

In the Book of Samuel we read: **ויצא ישראל לקראת פלשתים למלחמה, ויחנו על-האבן העזר** - “**Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside Eben-ezer**” (1 Sam 4:1; see also: 1 Sam 5:1; 7:12).

Yet we find in the same book:

**ובאת אל-המקום אשר-נסתרת שם ביום המעשה; וישבת אצל האבן האזל**

“**and come to the place where thou didst hide thyself in the day of work, and shalt remain by the stone Ezel**” (1 Sam 20:19).

The Greek translator wrote here: “ergab” but the comparison between these verses suggests that

**האבן האזל** (*heaven haazel*) is a misspelled **האבן העזר** (*heaven hae’zer*) - “The help stone.” If this suggestion is correct then we have here in addition to a (frequently occurring) **ר** (r) - **ל** (l) switch, a **ע** (a’) - **א** (a) exchange.

In the Book of Numbers we read:

**ויאמר יהוה פתאם אל-משה ואל-אהרן ואל-מרים, צאו שלשתכם אל-אהל מועד; ויצאו שלשתם.**

“**And *YHWH* spoke suddenly to Moses, and to Aaron, and to Miriam: Come out you three to the tent of meeting. And they three came out**” (Num 12:4; see also: Jos 10:9; 11:7; Is 47:11; 48:3; Jer 4:20; 6:26; 15:8; 18:22; 51:8; Mal 3:1; Ps 64:5, 8; Pro 3:25; 24:22; Job 5:3; 9:23; 22:10; Ecc 9:12; 2 Ch 29:36).

Yet in the Book of Numbers we also find:

**ואם-בפתע בלא-איבה הדפו, או-השליך עליו כל-כלי בלא צדיה.**

“**But if he thrust him suddenly without enmity, or hurled upon him any thing without lying in wait**” (Num 35:22; see also: Hab 2:7; Pro 29:1).

As the words **פתאם** (*pitom*) and **פתע** (*peta’*) have the same meaning we may also assume that they are variant spellings of the same term. Both words also appear in two parts of one verse:

**על-כן--פתאם יבוא אידו; פתע ישבר ואין מרפא**

 “**Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; on a sudden shall he be broken, and that without remedy**” (Pro 6:15).

In the Book of Isaiah we find the phrases: **פתע פתאם** - “**instant suddenly**” or “**very suddenly**” (Is 29:5; see also: Num 6:9) and **פתאם לפתע** - “**suddenly at an instant**.” I suggest that these “phrases” could be the result of “explanatory” efforts of later scribes who tried to explain to the reader the meaning of **פתאם** (*pitom*) or of **פתע** (*peta’*).

In the Book of Joshua we read:

**ויקרע יהושע שמלתיו, ויפל על-פניו ארצה לפני ארון יהוה עד-הערב--הוא וזקני ישראל; ויעלו עפר על-ראשם.**

“**And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of *YHWH* until the evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust upon their heads**” (Jos 7:6; see also: Eze 27:30; Job 2:12; Thr 2:10).

Yet in the Book of Samuel we find:

**ותקח תמר אפר על-ראשה, וכתנת הפסים אשר עליה קרעה; ותשם ידה על-ראשה, ותלך הלוך וזעקה.**

“**And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of many colors that was on her; and she laid her hand on her head, and went her way, crying aloud as she went**” (2 Sam 13:19).

As this is the only case where **אפר** (*efer*) was put on the head, while in all other instances it is **עפר** (*a’far*), we may assume that a spelling error had occurred here and the letter **א** (a) had replaced the letter **ע** (a’). There are several other examples where **אפר** (*efer*) and **עפר** (*a’far*) replace each other.

While in the Book of Micah we find: **עפר התפלשתי (התפלשי**) - “**roll yourself in the dust**” (Mic 1:10), in the Book of Jeremiah we find: **והתפלשי באפר** - “**and wallow yourself in ashes**” (Jer 6:26; see also: Eze 27:30).

In the Book of Malachi we read: **כי-יהיו אפר תחת כפות רגליכם** - “**for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet**” (Mal 3:21). Yet in the Book of Isaiah we find:

**ועפר רגליך ילחכו** - “**and they will lick the dust of your feet**” (Is 49:23; see also 2 Ki 20:10).

While in the Book of Isaiah we read: **שבי על-עפר** - “**sit in the dust**” (Is 47:1; see also Is 52:2), we find in the Book of Jonah: **וישב על-האפר** - “**and sat in ashes**” (Jon 3:6; see also: Job 2:8).

These examples indicate on the frequent exchanges between **אפר** (*efer*) and **עפר** (*a’far*). Therefore, it is no wonder that we also find the expression: **עפר ואפר** (*a’far vaefer*) - “**dust and ashes**” (Gen 18:27; Job 30:19; 42:6).

From verse Gen 48:16 on, there are multiple biblical words of the root **גאל** (*gal*) that are correctly translated as: “rescue” or “redeem.” However in the Book of Isaiah we find:

**כי כפיכם נגאלו בדם, ואצבעותיכם בעון; שפתותיכם דברו-שקר--לשונכם עולה תהגה.**

**“For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue muttereth wickedness**” (Is 59:3; see also: Is 63:3; Mal 1:7, 12; Thr 4:14; Dan 1:8).

The interpretation of these words from the root **גאל** (*gal*) as: defile” is akin to the phrase:  **געל נפש** (*goa’l nefesh*) - “digust” (Lev 26:11, 15, 30, 43, 44; Jer 14:19; Eze 16:5) as in:

**כי שם נגעל מגן גבורים** “**for there the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away**” (2 Sam 1:21).

We may conclude that in Is 59:3 **נגאלו** (*nigalu*) is a misspelled **נגעלו** (*niga’lu*).

In the Book of Isaiah we read about the shoot that will come out of the stock of Jesse:

**ולא-למראה עיניו ישפוט, ולא-למשמע אזניו יוכיח.**

**ושפט בצדק דלים, והוכיח במישור לענוי-ארץ; והכה-ארץ בשבט פיו, וברוח שפתיו ימית רשע**

**והיה צדק, אזור מתניו; והאמונה, אזור חלציו.**

“**And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears;**

**But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the land; and he shall smite the land with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.**

**And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins**” (Is 11:3-5).

The comparison here between **ארץ** - “the land” and **רשע** - “wicked” is odd, if not illogical. The Psalmist wrote about: **רשע עריץ** (*rasha a’rits*) - “**oppressing wicked**” (Ps 37:35), and therefore we should consider the possibility that the word **ארץ** (*aretz*) here is a misspelled **ערץ** (*a’rits*) - “oppressor.” If this assumption is correct then it appears that the letter **ע** (a’) here was replaced by **א** (a).

In the Book of Isaiah we read the expression: **וארץ רפאים תפיל** - “**and the earth shall bring to life the shades**” (Is 26:19).

The English translation here does not adhere closely to the Hebrew words and is not supported by the Greek translator. The Greek translator wrote here: “but the land of the impious shall fall” and it appears that he believed that here **רפאים** (*rephaim*) is a misspelled **רשעים** (*reshai’m*) - “impious.”

In the Book of Isaiah we read: **אתיו אקחה-יין, ונסבאה שכר** - “**Come you, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink**” (is 56:12).

Yet in the book of Amos we find:

**ונעו שתים שלש ערים אל-עיר אחת, לשתות מים--ולא ישבעו;**

“**So two or three cities wandered to one city to drink water, and were not satisfied**” (Am 4:8).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that **ישבעו** (*isbau’*) is the same as **יסבאו** (*isbau*) - “drink to fullness.” This suggestion assumes that in addition to the exchange between the sibilant **ס** (s) and **ש** (s), the letter **א** (a) was replaced by the letter **ע** (a’).

In the Book of Amos we read:

**נשבע אדני יהוה בנפשו, נאם-יהוה אלהי צבאות, מתאב אנכי את-גאון יעקב,**

“**The Lord GOD has sworn by Himself, said *YHWH*, the God of hosts: I abhor the pride of Jacob**” (Am 6:8).

However, the Psalmist wrote:

**ויחר-אף יהוה בעמו; ויתעב את-נחלתו.**

“**Therefore was the wrath of *YHWH* kindled against His people, and He abhorred His inheritance**” (Ps 106:40; see also: Is 49:7; Am 5:10; Mic 3:9).

The comparison between **תאב** (*taev*) and **תעב** (*ta’ev*), indicates that sometimes **ע** (a’) could indeed substitute **א** (a).

In the Book of Job we read:

**אם-לא בכיתי לקשה-יום; עגמה נפשי לאביון.**

“**If I have not wept for him that was in trouble, and if my soul grieved not for the needy**” (Job 30:25.

It is not certain how the English translators determined that the Hapax legomenon **עגמה**

(*a’gmah*) means “grieved.” The Greeks wrote here: “groaned” but this interpretation is also not certain. In the Book of Isaiah there is an enigmatic verse that contains a similar phrase:

**והיו שתתיה מדכאים; כל-עשי שכר אגמי-נפש.**

“**And her foundations shall be crushed, all they that make dams shall be grieved in soul**” (Is 19:10).

The Greeks wrote here: “and all who make beer will be grieved.” If the understanding of the translators is correct then **אגמי** (*agmai*) appears as a misspelled **עגמי** (*a’gumai*) or vice-versa, resulting from an exchange between the letters **ע** (y’) and **א** (a).

The Psalmist wrote: **איש-בער לא ידע; וכסיל לא-יבין את-זאת** - “**A brutish man knows not, neither does a fool understand this**” (Ps 92:7; see also: Ps 49:11; 73:22; Pro 12:1; 30:2).

Yet in the Book of Isaiah we find: **ולבב נמהרים, יבין לדעת; ולשון עלגים, תמהר לדבר צחות** - “**The heart of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammers shall be ready to speak plainly**” (Is 32:4).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that here **ולבב נמהרים** (*ulevav nimharim*) is a misspelled **ולבב בערים** (*ulevav boa’rim*) - “and the heart of the brutish.”

If this suggestion is correct then part of the letter-substitution error is a **ע** (a’) - **ה** (h) erroneous exchange.

In the Book of Isaiah we read:

**חרש עצים נטה קו יתארהו בשרד, יעשהו במקצעות ובמחוגה יתארהו; ויעשהו כתבנית איש, כתפארת אדם לשבת בית**

**לכרת-לו ארזים--ויקח תרזה ואלון, ויאמץ-לו בעצי-יער; נטע ארן, וגשם יגדל**.

“**The carpenter stretches out a line; he marks it out with a pencil; he fits it with planes, and he marks it out with the compasses, and makes it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man, to dwell in the house.**

**He hews him down cedars, and takes the ilex and the oak, and strengthens for himself one among the trees of the forest; he planted a bay-tree, and the rain doth nourish it**” (Is 44:13-14).

The understanding of **ויאמץ** (*vayeamets*) as “**and strengthens**” by the English (but not the Greek) translator suggests that he believed that this word is a letter-substitution, and an order-type errors of **ויעצם** (*vayaa’tsem*) - “and [he] strengthened” (e.g. Ex 1:7, 20). If this suggestion is correct then in addition to metathesis we have here an exchange between **ע** (a’) and **א** (a). Alternatively, **ויאמץ** (*vayeamets*) is a misspelled **ויעמס** (*vayaa’mes*) - “and [he] laded” (e.g. Gen 44:13; Neh 13:15).

In the Book of Isaiah we read: **שמעו שמים והאזיני ארץ** - “**Hear O heavens, and give ear O earth**” (Is 1:2), while in the Book of Samuel we find:

**והמלך דוד--שמע את כל-הדברים האלה; ויחר לו מאד** - “**And when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth**” (2 Sam 13:21).

Now we read in the Book of Jeremiah: **שמו שמים על-זאת; ושערו חרבו מאד** - “**Be astonished, O you heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be you exceeding amazed**” (Jer 2:12).

The understanding of the unique words **שמו** (*shomu*) as “be astonished” and of **חרבו** (*kharvu*) as “exceeding amazed” appear as a pure speculation and is not supported by the Greek translator. However, the comparison between these verses suggests that **שמו** (*shomu*) is a letter-deletion error of **שמעו** (*shamu’u*) - “(the heavens) heard.” This comparison also suggests that **חרבו** (*kharvu*) is a letter-insertion error of **חרו** (*kharu*) - “were vey wroth.”

The Psalmist wrote: **ויתפלל בעדו תמיד** - “**that they may pray for him continually**” (Ps 72:15).

Yet in the Book of Jeremiah we find:

**ויאמר להם ברוך, מפיו יקרא אלי את כל-הדברים האלה; ואני כתב על-הספר, בדיו.**

“**Then Baruch answered them: He pronounced all these words to me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in the book**” (Jer 36:18).

It is not clear how the Greek (and English) translator determined that the Hapax legomenon **בדיו** (*badio*) means: “with ink.” However, the content of this verse and the comparison to verse Ps 72:15, suggest that **בדיו** (*badio*) is a misspelled **בעדו** (*baa’do*) - “for him.”

In the Book of Ezekiel we read:

**והיה יעמדו (עמדו) עליו דוגים, מעין גדי ועד-עין עגלים-**

“**And it shall come to pass, that fishers shall stand by it from En-gedi even to En-eglaim**” (Eze 47:10).

This place may be identical with Eglaim of the Book of Isaiah:

**כי-הקיפה הזעקה את-גבול מואב, עד-אגלים יללתה, ובאר אילים יללתה.**

“**For the cry is gone round about the borders of Moab; the howling thereof to Eglaim, and the howling thereof to Beer-elim**” (Is 15:8).

If indeed this is the same place than this is another case of exchange between the letters **ע** (y’) and **א** (a).

In the Book of Samuel we read:

**ושמואל טרם ידע את-יהוה; וטרם יגלה אליו דבר-יהוה.**

“**Now Samuel did not yet know *YHWH*, neither was the word of *YHWH* yet revealed to him**” (1 Sam 3:7).

Yet in the Book of Proverbs we find:

**ולפני התגלע הריב נטוש.**

“**Leave off contention, before the quarrel break out**” (Pro 17:14).

The comparison between this verses suggests that **התגלע** (*hitgala’*) is the same as **התגלה** (*hitgalah*) - “reveal, or uncover, or expose.”

The Psalmist wrote: **אשרי אדם--לא יחשב יהוה לו עון** - “**Happy is the man to whom *YHWH* count not iniquity**” (Ps 32:2).

In the Book of Jeremiah we read:

**כבסי מרעה לבך ירושלם למען תושעי: עד-מתי תלין בקרבך מחשבות אונך.**

“**O Jerusalem, wash your heart from wickedness, that you may be saved. How long shall your baleful thoughts lodge within you?**” (Jer 4:14).

The comparison between these verses suggests that **מחשבות אונך** (*makhshevot onecha*) is a letter-substitution error of **מחשבות עונך** (*makhshevot a’vonecha*) - “your sinful thoughts.”

In the Book of Psalms the Hebrew word **און** (*avon*) - “**iniqvity**” is mentioned 28 times, and 22 of them they were translated by the Greeks as “lawlessness.” We also find in this book eleven times the word **עון** or **עוון** (*a'von*) - “**iniquity**” and eight of them were translated by the Greeks as “lawlessness.” While in the biblical texts there are also multiple mentions of the plural forms of **עון** (*a'von*), there is no such plural form of **און** (*avon*) in the Bible. While there are 127 mentions of the genitive construction of **עון** (*a'von*), there are very few such constructs of **און** (*avon*). Fore example while **עונם** (*a'vonam*) - “their **iniquity**” appears 31 times, the word **אונם** (*avonam*) - “their **iniquity**” appears only once (Ps 94:23).

In the Book of Jeremiah we read:

**עשה חסד לאלפים, ומשלם עון אבות אל-חיק בניהם אחריהם:**

“**Who shows mercy to thousands, and recompenses the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them**” (Jer 32:18).

Yet in the Book of Job we read about God’s treatment of the children of the wicked:

**אלוה יצפן-לבניו אונו ישלם אליו וידע.**

“**God lays up his iniquity for his children!--let Him recompense it to himself, that he may know it**” (Job 21:19).

The comparison between these verses and the Greek (and English) translations suggests that **עון** (*a’von*) is the same as **און** (*avon*).

In the Book of Proverbs we find the expression: **ואמרה, לא-פעלתי און** - “**and** [she] **said: I have done no wickedness**” (Pro 30:20).

Yet in the Book of Job we find: **אם-עול פעלתי, לא אסיף -** “**If I have done iniquity, I will do it no more**” (Job 34:32; see also: Ps 119:3; Job 36:23).

However, the content of these verses suggests that here **עול** (*a’vel*) has the same meaning as **און** (*aven*) - “iniquity.” If this suggestion is correct then here in addition to the substitution of the letter **ן** (n) by the letter **ל** (l) we have also an exchange between the letters **ע** (y’) and **א** (a).

The Psalmist wrote:

**זו שמעתי: כי עז לאלהים.**

“**I heard this: that strength belongs to God**” (Ps 62:12).

**מי-יודע עז אפך; וכיראתך, עברתך**.

“**Who knows the power of Your anger, and Your wrath according to the fear that is due to You?”** (Ps 90:11).

Yet in the Book of Psalms we also find:

**אתה נורא אתה--ומי-יעמד לפניך; מאז אפך.**

“**You, even You, are terrible; and who may stand in Your sight when once You are angry?**” (Ps 76:8).

Alternatively to “when once,” the Greek translator wrote: “From then.” However, it seems that **מאז אפך** (*meaz apcha*) is a misspelled **מעז אפך** (*meo’z apcha*) meaning “from the strength of your anger.”

In the first Book of Samuel we read: **ונכשלים, אזרו חיל** - “**and they that stumbled are girded with strength**“ (1 Sam 2:4).

Yet in the second Book of Samuel we find:

**האל מ**ע**וזי חיל; ויתר תמים דרכו (דרכי)**.

“**The God who is my strong fortress, and who lets my way go forth straight**” (2 Sam 22:33).

**ותזרני חיל למלחמה; תכריע קמי תחתני.**

“**For You had girded me with strength to the battle; You had subdued under me those that rose up against me**” (2 Sam 22:40).

The Psalmist rewrote these verses:

**האל המאזרני חיל; ויתן תמים דרכי.**

“**The God that girds me with strength, and makes my way straight**” (Ps 18:33).

**ותאזרני חיל למלחמה; תכריע קמי תחתי.**

“**For You had girded me with strength to the battle; You had subdued under me those that rose up against me**” (Ps 18:40).

The comparison between these verses suggests that a scribe of the Book of Psalms who read the Book of Samuel believed that **מ**ע**וזי** (*mau’zi*) is a misspelled **מאזרני** (*meazreni*) - “girded me.”

This correction apparently assumes that in addition to the deletion here of the letter **ר** (r), there was an erroneous exchange between **א** (a) and **ע** (a’).

The Psalmist also wrote:

**יהוה--עז לעמו יתן; יהוה יברך את-עמו בשלום.**

“***YHWH* will give strength to His people; *YHWH* will bless his people with peace**” (Ps 29:11).

Yet one chapter earlier we find:

**יהוה עז-למו; ומעוז ישועות משיחו הוא.
הושיעה את-עמך-- וברך את-נחלתך;**

“***YHWH* is a strength to them; and He is a stronghold of salvation to His anointed.
Save Your people, and bless Your inheritance**” (Ps 28:8-9).

Unlike the English, the Greek translator did not write “to them” but “for his people.” It is therefore likely that he assumed that **למו** (*lamo*) is a letter-deletion error of **לעמו** (*lea’mo*) meaning: “to his people.”

In the Book of Proverbs we read: **יהוה--קנני, ראשית דרכו: קדם מפעליו מאז** - “***YHWH* made me as the beginning of His way, the first of His works of old**” (Pro 8:22).

In the Book of Isaiah we read:

**עתה נבראו ולא מאז, ולפני-יום ולא שמעתם--פן-תאמר, הנה ידעתין.**

**גם לא-שמעת, גם לא ידעת--גם מאז לא-פתחה אזנך:**

“**They are created now, and not from of old, and before this day you heard them not; lest you should say: Behold, I knew them.**

**Yea, you heard not; yea, you knew not; yea, from of old your ear was not opened**” (Is 48:7-8).

A similar idea appears in the Book of Job: **הזאת ידעת, מני-עד; מני שים אדם עלי-ארץ** - “**Know you not this of old time, since man was placed upon earth**” (Job 20:4).

The comparison between these verses and the understanding of the English (but not the Greek) translator suggest that **מני-עד** (*mini-u’d*) is a letter-substitution error of **מן-אז** (*min-az*) - “since then” (e.g. Jer 44:18). In addition to **ע** (u’) - **א** (a) exchange, a **ד** (d) letter replaced here the sibilant **ז** (z) letter. In one of following chapters it will be shown that such a replacement occurs more than a few times in the Hebrew texts of the Bible.

In the Book of Judges we read:

**ויעזבו, את-יהוה; ויעבדו לבעל ולעשתרות.**

“**And they forsook *YHWH*, and served Baal and the Ashtaroth**” (Jud 2:13; see also: Jud 10:6; 1 Sam 7:4; 12:10).

One chapter later we find:

**ויעשו בני-ישראל את-הרע בעיני יהוה, וישכחו את-יהוה אלהיהם; ויעבדו את-הבעלים ואת-האשרות.**

“**And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of *YHWH*, and forgot *YHWH* their God, and served the Baalim and the Asheroth**” (Jud 3:7; 2 Ch 33:3).

As the Phoenicians worshiped both Baal and Astarte (but had no god named Ashera), it is likely that the Hebrew scribe of the Book of Judges wrote here **אשרות** (*asherot*) instead of **עשתרות** (*a’shterot*). That the similarity in these names was prone to cause errors is witnessed in the Greek translation of the Book of Samuel:

**ויסירו בני ישראל את-הבעלים ואת-העשתרת; ויעבדו את-יהוה לבדו.**

“**Then the children of Israel did put away the Baalim and the Ashtaroth, and served *YHWH* only**” (1 Sam 7:4).

However, the Greek translators wrote here: “the Baalim and the groves (their standard word for **אשרות**) of Astaroth.”

We read in the Book of Kings:

**וילך שלמה--אחרי עשתרת אלהי צדנים;**

“**For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians**” (1 Ki 11:5; see also: 2 Ki 23:13).

We also are told about Ahab king of Israel:

**ויקח אשה את-איזבל, בת-אתבעל מלך צידנים, וילך ויעבד את-הבעל וישתחו לו.  ויקם מזבח לבעל, בית הבעל אשר בנה בשמרון.**

**ויעש אחאב את-האשרה;**

“**He took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made the Asherah**” (1 Ki 16:31-33; see also 2 Ki 17:16).

It is rather odd that although the writer of the Book of Kings appears to be familiar with Baal and Astarte, the gods of the Phoenicians, we read that after marrying the Sidonian Jezebel, her husband “makes an Asherah” rather than making a effigy of **עשתרת** (*a’shtoret*) – “Astarte.” Furthermore, as indicated previously **אשרה** (*ashera*) is a type of tree to be planted and not to be “made.”

We also read about:

**נביאי הבעל ארבע מאות וחמשים, ונביאי האשרה ארבע מאות, אכלי שלחן איזבל.**

“**The prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the Asherah four hundred, that eat at Jezebel's table**” (1 Ki 18:19).

While we would expect that Jezebel would support the prophets of her Phoenician gods Baal and Astarte, it is surprising that instead of the goddess Astarte we find here the sanctified tree **אשרה** (*ashera*). As the following narrative relates only to the fate of the “Four hundreds and fifty prophets of the Baal,” we may suspect that the remark about the “Four hundreds prophets of the Asherah” was made by a late scribe who was not aware of the differences between the Phoenician goddess Astarte and the sacred tree of Asherah. The scribe’s error could have been due to the similarity of sound between the Hebrew **אשרה** (*ashera*) and **עשתרת** (*a’shtoret*), suggesting again that **א** (a) and **ע** (y’) were interchangeable.

In the Book of Zechariah we find the referral to God as: **נטה שמים ויסד ארץ** - “**who stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth**” (Zec 12:1; see also: Is 44:24; Jer 10:12; 51:15; Job 9:8).

Yet in the Book of Isaiah we read: **לנטע שמים וליסד ארץ** - “That **I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth**” (Is 51:16).

The Greek translator wrote here: “established” but it is more likely that **לנטע** (*lintoa’*) is the same as **לנטה** (*lintoh*) - “to stretch.”

In the Book of Genesis we read:

**ויקן את-חלקת השדה אשר נטה-שם אהלו, מיד בני-חמור אבי שכם-- במאה קשיטה.**

“**And he bought the parcel of ground, where he had pitched his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred pieces of money**” (Gen 33:19; See also: 2 Sam 6:17; Jer 10:20; 2 Ch 1:4).

Yet in the Book of Numbers we read:

**כאהלים נטע יהוה,**

“**As aloes planted of *YHWH***” (Num 24:6).

The Greek translators wrote here: “Like tents that the Lord pitched.”

Similarly in the Book of Daniel we find:

**ויטע אהלי אפדנו,**

“**And he shall plant the tents of his palace**” (Dan 11:45).

The Greek translators wrote here again: “And he will pitch his tent.”

It seems that the Greek translators assumed that **נטע** (*nata’*) is a misspelled **נטה** (*natah*). Therefore, it appears that sometimes **ע** (a’) could substitute also the vowel letter **ה** (h).

In the Book of Genesis we find: **ויעקב תקע את-אהלו בהר** - “**Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mountain**” (Gen 31:25; see also: Jer 6:3).

However, the understanding of the Greek (and English) translators suggests that they believed that here **תקע** (*thaqa’*) is also a misspelled **נטה** (*natah*) - “pitched.”

The Psalmist wrote:

**אהבתי כי-ישמע יהוה-- את-קולי, תחנוני.
כי-הטה אזנו לי**

“**I love that *YHWH* should hear my voice and my supplications.****Because He had inclined His ear to me**” (Ps 116:1-2; see also: 2 Ki 19:16; Is 37:17; 55:3; Jer 7:24, 26; 11:8; 17:23; 25:4; 34:14; 35:15; 44:5; Ps 17:6; 31:3; 45:11; 49:5; 71:2; 78:1; 86:1; 88:3; 102:3; Pro 4:20; 5:1, 13; 22:17; Dan 9:18).

Yet the Psalmist also wrote: **הנטע אזן, הלא ישמע** - “**He that planted the ear, shall He not hear?**” (Ps 94:9).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that **הנטע** (*hanotea’*) is a misspelled **הנטה** (*hanoteh*) - “He who inclines [his ear].”

The Psalmist wrote:

**אתה דכאת כחלל רהב; בזרוע עזך פזרת אויביך.**

“**You did crush Rahab, as one that is slain; You did scatter Your enemies with the arm of Your strength**” (Ps 89:11).

The Greek translator wrote here “proud one.”

Yet in the Book of Proverbs we find: **חכם ירא, וסר מרע; וכסיל, מתעבר ובוטח** - “**A wise man fears, and departs from evil; but the fool behaves overbearingly, and is confident**” (Pro 14:16).

However the comparison between these verses and the understanding of the English (but not the Greek) translator suggests that **מתעבר** (*mitha’ber*) is a misspelled **מתרהב** (*mithrahev*) - “behaves haughtily.” Alternatively, **מתעבר** (*mitha’ber*) is a misspelled **מתיהר** (*mithyaher*) - “behaves haughtily” (e.g. Hab 2:5; Pro 21:24). If one of these suggestions is correct than we have here a **ה** (h) - **ע** (a’) or a **י** (i) - **ע** (a’) erroneous exchange.

In the Book of Jeremiah we read:

**גדל העצה, ורב העליליה--אשר-עיניך פקחות, על-כל-דרכי בני אדם, לתת לאיש כדרכיו וכפרי מעלליו.**

“**Great in counsel, and mighty in work; whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings**” (Jer 32:19; see also: Is 3:10; Jer 21:14; 32:19; Hos 4:9; 12:3; Mic 7:13; Ps 28:4).

Now we find in the Book of Proverbs:

**מצרף לכסף, וכור לזהב; ואיש, לפי מהללו.**

“**The** **refining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold, and a man is tried by his praise**” (Pro 27:21).

However, the content of these verses suggest that **מהללו** (*mahalalo*) is a misspelled **מעללו** (*maa’lalo*) - “his doings.”

In the Book of Exodus we read:

**אם-כפר יושת עליו--ונתן פדין נפשו, ככל אשר-יושת עליו.**

“**If there be laid on him a ransom, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatsoever is laid upon him**” (Ex 21:30).

The Psalmist wrote:

**אח--לא פדה יפדה איש; לא-יתן לאלהים כפרו.**

“**No man can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him**” (Ps 49:8).

**ואני בתמי אלך; פדני וחנני.**

“**But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity; redeem me, and be gracious to me**” (Ps 26:11).

**אך-אלהים--יפדה נפשי, מיד-שאול:**

“**But God will redeem my soul from the power of the nether-world**” (Ps 49:16; see also: Hos 13:14).

In the Book of Job we read:

**פדה נפשי (נפשו) מעבר בשחת; וחיתי (וחיתו) באור תראה.**

“**So He redeems his soul from going into the pit, and his life beholds the light**” (Job 33:28).

However four verses earlier we find:

**ויחננו--ויאמר, פדעהו מרדת שחת; מצאתי כפר.**

“**Then He is gracious to him, and said: 'Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom**” (Job 33:24).

While the Greeks did not relate to the word **פדעהו** (*pdae’hau*), the English translator correctly assumed that this word is a letter-insertion error of **פדהו** (*padahu*).

In the Book of Isaiah we read:

**נשבע יהוה צבאות לאמר: אם-לא כאשר דמיתי כן היתה, וכאשר יעצתי היא תקום.**

“***YHWH* of hosts had sworn, saying: Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand**” (Is 14:24).

**זאת העצה היעוצה על-כל-הארץ; וזאת היד הנטויה על-כל-הגוים.**

**כי-יהוה צבאות יעץ, ומי יפר; וידו הנטויה, ומי ישיבנה.**

“**This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations.**

**For *YHWH* of hosts had purposed, and who shall disannul it? And His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?**” (Is 14:26-27; see also: 2 Sam 15:34; 17:14; Is 8:10; Ps 33:10; Ezr 4:5; Neh 4:9).

Yet in the Book of Proverbs we find:

**ותפרעו כל-עצתי; ותוכחתי לא אביתם.**

“**But you have set at naught all My counsel, and would none of My reproof**” (Pro 1:25).

The understanding of **תפרעו** (*tifreu’*) as “set to naught” indicates that the translators believed that this word is a letter-insertion error of **תפרו** (*taferu*).

Similarly we read in the Book of Judges: **ואמר, לא-אפר** “**I said: I will never break**” (Jud 2:1).

Therefore, when we read in the Book of Ezekiel:

**אני יהוה דברתי באה ועשיתי, לא-אפרע**

“I *YHWH* have spoken it; it shall come to pass, and I will do it; I will not go back” (Eze 24:14),

We may assume that: **לא-אפרע** (*lo efra’*) is a letter-insertion error of **לא-אפר** (*lo-afer*) - “I shall disannul.”

In the Book of Job we read:

**דעו-אפו, כי-אלוה עותני;**

“**Know now that God had subverted my cause**” (Job 19:6).

In the Book of Jeremiah we find:

**ויאמרו השרים אל-ברוך, לך הסתר אתה וירמיהו; ואיש אל-ידע איפה אתם.**

“**Then said the princes to Baruch: 'Go, hide you, you and Jeremiah, and let no man know where you are**” (Jer 36:19; see also Is 49:21).

In the Book of Isaiah we read:

**אים אפוא חכמיך ויגידו נא לך; וידעו מה-יעץ יהוה צבאות על-מצרים.**

“Where are they, then, your wise men? And let them tell you now; and let them know what *YHWH* of hosts has purposed concerning Egypt” (Is 19:12; See also 22:1).

However, we also find in this book:

**הן-אתם מאין, ופעלכם מאפע; תועבה יבחר בכם.**

“**Behold, you are nothing, and your work a thing of naught; an abomination is he that chooses you**” (Is 41:24).

The English “**of naught**” indicates that the translators believed that **מאפע** (*meafa’*) is misspelled **מאפס** (*meefes*), but the Greeks translated this Hapax legomenon as “whence,” indicating that they believed that **מאפע** (*meafa’*) is a the same as **מאפה** (*meefoh*) and **מאפא (***meefoa*).

These examples indicate that some of the biblical writers used the letter **ע** (y’) and the vowel letters **ו** (v), **ה** (h), and **א** (a) interchangeably.

In the Book of Isaiah we read:

**עצו עצה ותפר; דברו דבר ולא יקום, כי עמנו אל.**

“**Take counsel together, and it shall be brought to naught; speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God is with us**” (Is 8:10; see also: 2 Sam 15:34; 17:14; Ps 33:10; Ezr 4:5; Neh 4:9).

Yet in the Book of Proverbs we find:

**ותפרעו כל-עצתי; ותוכחתי לא אביתם.**

“**But you have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof**” (Pro 1:25).

The fact that the translators believed that the Hebrew **תפרעו** (*tifreu’*) means “you have set at naught” indicates that they believed that this word was the same as **תפרו** (*taferu*).

In the Book of Judges we read:

**ותקח דלילה עבתים חדשים ותאסרהו בהם, ותאמר אליו פלשתים עליך שמשון, והארב ישב בחדר; וינתקם מעל זרעתיו כחוט.**

“**So Delilah took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said to him: ‘The Philistines are upon you, Samson.' And the liers-in-wait were abiding in the inner chamber. And he broke them from off his arms like a thread**” (Jud 16:12; see also 16:9; Jer 5:5).

In the Book of Joshua we read:

**ויצאו אחרינו עד התיקנו אותם מן-העיר**

“**And they will come out after us, till we have drawn them away from the city**” (Jos 8:6; see also Jud 20:31).

However, in the Book of Isaiah we find:

**גמולי מחלב, עתיקי משדים.**

“**Them that are weaned from the milk, them that are drawn from the breasts?**” (Is 28:9).

As the Greek and the English translators believed that the Hapax legomenon**עתיקי** (*a’tiqay*) means: “drown from,” it appears that they thought that **עתיקי** (*a’tiqay*) is equivalent to **יתיקי** (*yetiqqay*), or that the letter **ע** (a’) can replace the letter **י** (i).

If **ע** (a’) and **י** (i) are indeed interchangeable, then we could look for other such examples.

In the book of Deuteronomy we read:

**כי-ימצא איש גנב נפש מאחיו מבני ישראל, והתעמר-בו ומכרו--ומת הגנב ההוא, ובערת הרע מקרבך.**

“**If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and he deal with him as a slave, and sell him; then that thief shall die; so shall you put away the evil from the midst of you**” (Deu 24:7).

Now in the Book of Isaiah we find:

**ואתם כהני יהוה תקראו--משרתי אלהינו יאמר לכם; חיל גוים תאכלו, ובכבודם תתימרו.**

“**But you shall be named the priests of *YHWH*, men shall call you the ministers of our God; you shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their splendor shall you revel**” (Is 61:6).

It is not known why the English translators believed that the Hapax legomenon **תתימרו** (*tityamru*) means “shall you revel.” The Greek translator wrote here: “shall be admired.” However, the comparison between these verses suggests that this word is the same as **תתעמרו** (*tita’amru*) - “you shall ill-treat.”

In the Book of Leviticus we read:

**ושמתי אני את-פני באיש ההוא, ובמשפחתו; והכרתי אתו ואת כל-הזנים אחריו**

“**And I will set My face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go astray after him**” (Lev 20:5).

Yet in the Book of Jeremiah we find:

**והחתתי את-עילם לפני איביהם ולפני מבקשי נפשם, והבאתי עליהם רעה את-חרון אפי--נאם-יהוה; ושלחתי אחריהם את-החרב, עד כלותי אותם.**

 **ושמתי כסאי בעילם; והאבדתי משם מלך ושרים, נאם-יהוה.**

“**And I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies, and before them that seek their life; and I will bring evil upon them, even My fierce anger, said *YHWH*; and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them;**

**And I will set My throne in Elam, and will destroy from thence king and princes, said *YHWH***” (Jer 49:37-38).

In view of the general content of these verses the words “**And I will set My throne in Elam**” are quite surprising and raise the possibility that they were created by a scribal error. It is therefore suggested that here **ושמתי כסאי בעילם** (*vesamthi kisii bea’ilam*) is a **ע** (a’) - **א** (a) letter exchange and an order-type error of **ושמתי כעסי בעילם** (*vesamthi kaa’si bea’ilam*) - “and I will set my anger in Elam” (e.g. 1 Sam 1:16).

In the Book of Kings we read: **והערים יהרסו** - “**And the cities shall be destroyed**” (2 Ki 3:25; see also: 2 Sam 11:25).

Yet in the Book of Ezekiel we find: **ונהרסו ההרים, ונפלו המדרגות, וכל-חומה לארץ תפול** - “**And the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steps shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground**” (Eze 38:20).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that here: **ונהרסו ההרים** (*venehersu heharim*) is a **ע** (a’) - **ה** (h) letter exchange error of **ונהרסו הערים** (*venehersu hea’rim*) - “and the cities shall be destroyed.”

In the Book of Isaiah we read: **הוי המעמיקים מיהוה לסתר עצה; והיה במחשך מעשיהם** - “**Woe to them that seek deep to hide their counsel from *YHWH*, and their works are in the dark**” (Is 29:15).

Yet the Psalmist wrote: **ימיקו וידברו ברע עשק ממרום ידברו** - “**They scoff, and in wickedness utter oppression; they speak as** [if there were none] **on high**” (Ps 73:8).

It is not clear how the English translator determined that **ימיקו** (*yamiqu*) mean “they scoff” and such an understanding is not supported by the Greek translator. However, the comparison between these verses suggests that **ימיקו** (*yamiqu*) is a letter-deletion error of **יעמיקו** (*yaa’miqu*) - “[they] did in secrecy.”

In the Book of Psalms we read:

**משכיל לאסף: למה אלהים זנחת לנצח; יעשן אפך בצאן מרעיתך.**

“**Maschil of Asaph. Why, O God has You cast us off for ever? Why does Your anger smoke against the flock of Your pasture?**” (Ps 74:1).

God’s **עשן אף** (*ashan af*), literally: “nose’s smoke” is mentioned in the Bible several more times (Deu 29:19; 2 Sam 22:9; Is 65:5; Ps 18:9). However, in another “Psalm of Asaph” God’s smoke is mentioned without the nose:

**יהוה אלהים צבאות-- עד-מתי עשנת בתפלת עמך.**

“**O *YHWH* God of hosts, how long will You be angry against the prayer of Your people?**” (Ps 80:5).

In a verse similar to Ps 74:1 the Psalmist wrote:

**עורה, למה תישן אדני; הקיצה, אל-תזנח לנצח.**

“**Awake, why You sleep, my Lord? Arouse Yourself, cast not off for ever**” (Ps 44:24).

This verse suggests that in Ps 80:5 we may comprehend **עשנת** (*a’shanta*) as a transformed **ישנת** (*yashanta*) meaning “slept.” This supposition is supported by the words of the Prophet Zechariah:

**הס כל-בשר מפני יהוה--כי נעור ממעון קדשו.**

“**Be** **silent, all flesh, before *YHWH*; for He is aroused out of His holy habitation**” (Zec 2:17).

In the Book of Isaiah we read: **התעוררי התעוררי, קומי ירושלם** - “**Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem**” (Is 51:17).

Yet nine chapters later we find: **קומי אורי כי בא אורך; וכבוד יהוה עליך זרח** - “**Arise, shine, for your light is come, and the glory of *YHWH* is shining upon you**” (Is 60:1).

The Greek translator wrote here: “Shine, shine O’ Ierousalem” and it appears that he was aware of the content of verse Is 51:17. However, the comparison between these verses suggest that the Hapax legomenon **אורי** (*uri*) is a misspelled **עורי** (*u’ri*) - “wake up” (e.g. Jud 5:12; Is 51:9; 52:1; Hab 2:19).

In the Book of Micah we read: **והיה שארית יעקב, בקרב עמים רבים** - “**And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples**” (Mic 5:6; see also: Is 2:3, 4; 17:12; Eze 3:6; 27:33; 32:3, 9. 10; 38:6, 8, 9, 15, 22; Mic 4:3, 13; 5:7; Hab 2:10; Zec 8:22).

Yet the Psalmist wrote:

**שלח ידיך ממרום: פצני והצילני ממים רבים; מיד בני נכר.**

“**Stretch forth Your hands from on high; rescue me, and deliver me out of many waters, out of the hand of strangers**” (Ps 144:7).

However, the content of this verse and the comparison between these verses suggests that

**ממים רבים** (*mimaim rabim*) is a letter-deletion error of **מעמים רבים** (*mea’mim rabim*) - “out of many nations.”

A similar theme is found in the Book of Samuel:

**ישלח ממרום, יקחני; ימשני ממים רבים.**

**יצילני מאיבי עז; משנאי, כי אמצו ממני.**

“**He sent from on high, He took me; He drew me out of many waters;**

**He delivered me from my enemy most strong, from them that hated me, for they were too mighty for me**” (2 Sam 22:17-18; see also: Ps 18:17-18).

The content of these verses suggests again that here **ממים רבים** (*mimaim rabim*) is also a letter-deletion error of **מעמים רבים** (*mea’mim rabim*) - “out of many nations.”

If this suggestion is correct then it is possible that here **ימשני ממים רבים** (*imsheni mimaim rabim*) is a misspelled **ישעני מעמים רבים** (*yoshie’ni mea’mim rabim*) - “He will deliver me out of many nations.” Alternatively, it may a letter-deletion error of **ימשכני מעמים רבים** (*imshecheni mea’mim rabim*) - “He will draw me out of many nations.”

After these suggested correction we are left with only one verb of the root **משה** (*mshh*). In the Book of Exodus we read about the daughter of Pharaoh who found a baby in an ark of bulrushes that was floating on the waters: **ותקרא שמו משה ותאמר, כי מן-המים משיתהו** - “**And she called his name Moses, and said: Because I drew him out of the water**” (Ex 2:10). However, I am not the first person to realize that it is unlikely that Pharaoh’s daughter was well-versed in Hebrew. Furthermore, the reading in the Book of Job: **תמשך לויתן בחכה** - “**Can you draw out leviathan with a fish-hook**” (Job 40:25), suggests that **משיתהו** (*meshithihu*) is a letter-substitution error of **משכתהו** (*meshachthihu*) - “I drew him.”

In the Book of Proverbs we read: **גבר-רש, ועשק דלים** - “**A poor man that oppresses the weak**” (Pro 28:3). The Greek translator wrote here “bold” but it appears more likely that here **רש** (*rash*) is a letter-deletion error of **רשע** (*rasha’*) - “wicked.”

A somewhat similar subject appears in the Book of Ezekiel:

**שחד לקחו-בך למען שפך-דם; נשך ותרבית לקחת, ותבצעי רעיך בעשק**

“**In you have they taken gifts to shed blood; you had taken interest and increase, and you had greedily gained of your neighbors by oppression**” (Eze 22:12).

In difference to the English translation of **רעיך** (*rea’ich*) as “your neigbors” the Greek translator wrote here “your evil” which suggests that he may have assumed that this word is a letter-deletion error of **רשעיך** (*reshaa’ich*) - “your evil [actions].”

In the Book of Proverbs we read:

**תוחלת צדיקים שמחה; ותקות רשעים תאבד**.

“**The hope of the righteous is gladness; but the expectation of the wicked shall perish**” (Pro 10:28).

Yet one chapter later we find:

**תאות צדיקים אך-טוב; תקות רשעים עברה**.

“**The desire of the righteous is only good; but the expectation of the wicked is wrath**” (Pro 11:23).

The Greek translator wrote here: “perished” and it appears that he believed that **עברה** (*e’vrah*) is a misspelled **אבדה** (*avdah*) - “perished.” This understanding of the Greek translator indicates that he assumed that here in addition to a **ד** (d) - **ר** (r) exchange, the letter **א** (a) was replaced by the letter **ע** (e’). The comparison between these verses tends to support the understanding of the Greek translator.

In the Book of Jeremiah we read:

**כי כה אמר יהוה אלהי ישראל אלי, קח את-כוס היין החמה הזאת מידי;**

“**Take this cup of the wine of fury at My hand**” (Jer 25:15; see also 35:5; Ps 75:9).

However, we read in the Book of Proverbs the unique idiom:

**אל-תרא יין כי יתאדם: כי-יתן בכיס (בכוס) עינו; יתהלך במישרים**.

“**Look not you upon the wine when it is red, when it gives its color in the cup, when it glides down smoothly**” (Pro 23:31).

 

The Greek translators believed that this idiom means; “For if you give your eye to the saucers and goblets.” Furthermore, instead of the English: “when it glides down smoothly,” they wrote: “you will afterwards walk around more naked than pestle.” However, we should notice that in the Book of Canticles we read:

**וחכך כיין הטוב הולך לדודי למישרים**

“**We will find your love more fragrant than wine! Sincerely do they love you**” (S.S 7:10).

Alternatively, we may comprehend **הולך לדודי למישרים** (*holech ledodi lemaysharim*) as **שרים הולך לדודי למי** (*holech ledodi lmay sarim*) meaning: “my beloved goes for *sarim’s* waters.” We read in another verse of the Book of Canticles (1:4):

**מיין מישרים אהבוך.**

and if instead of the English: “**beyond wine uprightness’ has loved you**,” we will comprehend it as:

**אהבוך שרים מי מיין** (*myein may sarim ahavucha*), as: “they loved you more than wine of *sari’s* waters,” then verse 23:31 of the Book of Proverbs gets a totally different meaning. The validity of replacing **מישרים** with **מי שרים** (*may sarim*) is supported by the information about the vow of a Nazi rite.

**וכל-משרת ענבים לא ישתה,**

“**Neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes**” (Num 6:3).

Therefore, the Proverb: **כי-יתן בכיס (בכוס) עינו; יתהלך במישרים**. could be read as:

**שרים כי-יתן בכוס יינו; יתהלך במי**

“When he puts his wine in his cup, as he uses liquor waters of grapes.”

If this interpretation is correct, then we have here another **ע** (y’) - **י** (i) interchange.

In the Book of Job we read:

**ויען אליהוא בן ברכאל הבוזי-- ויאמר: צעיר אני לימים, ואתם ישישים;**

“**And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said: I am young, and you are very old**” (Job 32:6; see also: 12:12; 15:10; 29:8; 2 Ch 36:17).

It is clear that **ישיש** or **ישש** (*yashish*), means “very old man.” Now we hear the Psalmist:

**כי כלו ביגון חיי ושנותי באנחה: כשל בעוני כחי ועצמי עששו.**

“**For my life is spent in sorrow, and my years in sighing; my strength failed because of mine iniquity, and my bones are wasted away**” (Ps 31:11),

However, as the Psalmist speaks here about the end of his life, it is possible that he is referring also to his “old bones,” and in that case **עששו** (*a’shashu*) may be a transformed **יששו** (*yashashu*). The Bible tells us that several “old men” suffered from deterioration of their eyesight, as in:

**ויהי כי-זקן יצחק, ותכהין עיניו מראת**

“**And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see**” (Gen 27:1; see also: 48:10; 1 Sam 4:15; 1 Ki 14:4).

Presbyopia (literally: old man sightedness) is a condition where the eye exhibits a progressively diminished ability to focus on near objects with age. Its onset is in persons in their forties and in 1995 this condition affected 106 million Americans. According to the World Health Organization, Senilecataract account for 48% of world blindness, or about 18 million people,.The development of cataracts is gradual and one of its most common symptoms is an increased difficulty seeing in dim light. In the language of the Bible:

**ויהי ביום ההוא ועלי שכב במקומו; ועינו החלו כהות,**

“**And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place--now his eyes had begun to wax dim**” (1 Sam 2:3).

In the Book of Job we read:

**ותכה מכעש עיני;**

“**My eye is dimmed by reason of vexation**” (Job 17:7).

As the deterioration of eyesight is so common among old men, it is possible that in biblical times other conditions of reduced eyesight were perceived as the “old man’s syndrome.” Therefore, when we read in the Book of Psalms:

**עששה מכעס עיני;**

“**My eye is dimmed because of vexation**” (Ps 6:8; see also 31:10),

We may view **עששה** (*a’shesha*) as a transformed **יששה** (*yashesha*), meaning “aged.”

In the Book of Isaiah we read:

**נגששה כעורים קיר, וכאין עינים נגששה; כשלנו בצהרים כנשף,**

“**We grope for the wall like the blind, yea, as they that have no eyes do we grope; we stumble at noonday as in the twilight**” (Is 59:19).

We should notice that the Hapax legomenon **נגששה** (*negashesha*) appears as a misspelled **נעששה** (*nea’shesha*), or even **ניששה** (*neyashesha*), another feature of a blind man and in particular the “aged blind man.”

In the Hebrew Bible there are very few verbs from the root **קצע** (*qtsa’*). We read in the Book of Leviticus:

**ואם-ישוב הנגע ופרח בבית, אחר חלץ את-האבנים, ואחרי הקצות את-הבית, ואחרי הטוח.**

“**And if the plague come again, and break out in the house, after that the stones have been taken out, and after the house had been scraped, and after it is plastered**” (Lev 14:43).

Yet two verses earlier we find:

**ואת-הבית יקצע מבית סביב; ושפכו את-העפר אשר הקצו אל-מחוץ לעיר, אל-מקום טמא.**

“**And he shall cause the house to be scraped within round about, and they shall pour out the mortar that they scrape off without the city into an unclean place**” (Lev 14:41).

The understanding of the unique word **יקצע** (*yaqtsia’*) as “scrap” indicates that the translators assumed that is the same as **יקצו** (*yaqtsu*). If this is the case then we have here an interchange between the letters **ע** (a’) and **ו** (o).

In the Book of Ezekiel we read: **ולקחת משם מעט במספר; וצרת אותם בכנפיך** - “**You shall also take thereof a few by number, and bind them in thy skirts**” (Eze 5:3).

However, in the Book of Genesis we read:

**ויאמר יעקב אל-שמעון ואל-לוי, עכרתם אתי להבאישני בישב הארץ, בכנעני ובפרזי; ואני מתי מספר, ונאספו עלי והכוני ונשמדתי אני וביתי.**

“**And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi: You have troubled me, to make me odious to the inhabitants of the land, even to the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and, I being few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and smite me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house**” (Gen 34:30).

The phrase **מתי מספר** (*methei mispar*) appears also in a couple of other biblical verses (Deu 4:27; Jer 44:28). The understanding of **מתי** (*methei*) as “few” by the Greek (and English) translators suggests that this word sounded to them similar to the more common Hebrew word for few: **מעט** (*mea’t*) as in: **כי מעט המה** - “**for they are but few**” (Jos 7:3). This understanding suggests that the translators believed that **מתי** (*methei*) is a misspelled **מעטי** (*mea’tei*) - “few.” If the translator’s suggestion is correct than in addition to the deletion of the letter **ע** (a’) we have here a substitution between the similar sounding dentals **ט** (t) and **ת** (th).

The Psalmist wrote (and it appears also in 1 Ch 16:19): **בהיותם מתי מספר; כמעט, וגרים בה** -“**When they were but a few men in number. Yea, very few, and sojourners in it**” (Ps 105:12).

However, the word **כמעט** (*kimea’t*) appears as a fused form of **מעט  כמו** (*kemo mea’t*) - “like few” (e.g. Ex 15:5, 8). It is therefore suggested that here **כמעט** (*kimea’t*) - “like few” is an explanatory insertion of a late scribe who was concerned that the reader would not understand the unusual phrase **מתי מספר** (*methei mispar*).

In the Book of Deuteronomy we also read:

**וירד מצרימה, ויגר שם במתי מעט; ויהי-שם, לגוי גדול עצום ורב**

“**And he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there, few in number; and he became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous**” (Deu 26:3; see also: Deu 28:62).

However, it is possible that **במתי מעט** (*bemethei mea’t*) is a misspelled **במעטי מעט** (*bemea’tei mea’t*) - “with very few.”

In the Book of Isaiah we read: **ושאר מעט מזער, לוא כביר** - “**and the remnant shall be very small and without strength**” (Is 16:14).

Yet in the Book of Job we find: **הן-אל כביר, ולא ימאס** - “**Behold, God is mighty, and He despises not**” (Job 36:15).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that **ולא ימאס** (*velo imas*) is a misspelled **ולא ימעט** (*velo ima’t*) - “and is not slight.” If this suggestion is correct then we have here a **ט** (t) - **ס** (s) substitution and a **ע** (a’) - **א** (a) exchange.

In the Book of Ezra we read:

**ואחרי כל-הבא עלינו, במעשינו הרעים, ובאשמתנו הגדלה: כי אתה אלהינו חשכת למטה מעוננו, ונתתה לנו פליטה כזאת.**

“**And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great guilt, seeing that You our God had punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and had given us such a remnant**” (Ezr 9:13).

The understanding of the English (but not the Greek) translator of **למטה** (*lematah*) as “less” suggests that he believed that **למטה** (*lematah*) is a **ע** (a’) - **ה** (h) exchange and metathesis error of **למעט** (*lime’t*) - “to lessen.” Furthermore, the understanding here of the word **חשכת** (*khashachtha*) as “punished” is without precedence and it is suggested that this word is a misspelled **חשבת** (*khishavtha*) - “calculated”(e.g. Lev 25:27, 50, 52; 27:23; Ps 77:6).

In the Book of Numbers we read: **והאספסף אשר בקרבו, התאוו תאוה** - “**And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting**” (Num 11:4)

Now in the Book of Exodus we read about the exit of the Israelites from Egypt:

**וגם-ערב רב עלה אתם** - “**And a mixed multitude went up also with them**” (Ex 12:38).

The understanding of the English (but not the Greek) of these Hapax legomena as having the same meaning, suggests that it was believed that **אספסף** (*asaphsuph*) is a misspelled **ערב רב** (*e’rev rav*) - “mixed multitude.” If this understanding is correct than we have here, in addition to a double bilabial **ב** (b) - **פ** (p) exchange, and a **ר** (r) - **ס** (s) substitution, a **ע** (e’) - **א** (a) vowel exchange.

Northwestern Africa is named in Arabic: **المغرب** (*al-Maghrib*)- “the west” or in Hebrew: **המערב** (ha*maa’rav*). It appears that in the transfer of this term between Hebrew and Arabic the Hebrew **ע** (a’) letter was replaced by a gh sound.

The largest Palestinian city on the eastern Mediterranean shore is named in Arabic **غزة‎** “Raza.” Its English name - Gaza follows the Septuagint name Γάζα for the Hebrew: **עזה** (*a’za*). It is not certain why the Greek translators substituted here “g” for the Hebrew **ע** (a’), while they translated **עזקה** (*a’zeqa*) as Αζηκα (*Azeka*). Similarly, the Greeks translated **עי**(*a’i*) as Γαι (Gai and once as Haggai), **עמרה** (*a’mora*) as Γομορρας(Gomorrah), and **צער** (*tsoa’r*) as ΣηγωρorΖογορ (segor or zogor), while **עמון** (*a’mon*) appears as: Αμμανιτῶν (Ammon).

The Hebrew name **רעואל** (*reu’el*) - “**Reuel**” appears in Greek as: Ραγουηλ (Raguel) and **פעור** (*peo'r*) - “**Peor**” appears in Greek as: φεγωρ (Phegor) while **בעור** (*beo'r*) - “**Beor**” appears as: Βεωρ(Beor). The Hebrew names **עתליה** (*a’thaliah*) - “**Athaliah**” and **עתניאל** (*a’thniel*) - “**Othniel**” were translated to the Greek Γοθολια (Gotholiah) and Γοθονιηλ (Gothoniel), respectively, while the names **עדה** (*a'adah*) - “**Adah**” and **עטרה** (*a’tarah*) - “**Atarah**” were translated asΑδα (Ada) and Αταρα (Atara) respectively.

In the Book of Chronicles we find the name **יעבץ** (*ya’avets*) - “**Jabez**” (1 Ch 2:55), and this name was translated to Greek as: “Iabes. However, two chapters later the same Hebrew name was translated to Greek as “Igabes” (1 Ch 4:9, 10).

A place named **מגדל-עדר** (*migdal-e’der*) - “**Migdal-eder**” appears in the Bible twice. When it appears in the Book of Micah (4:8) the Greek translated it as “tower of the flock” which is the exact meaning of these Hebrew words. However, when this place-name appears in the Book of Genesis (35:21) they wrote: “tower from Γαδερ (Gader).

There are some instances in the Hebrew version of the Bible, where the letter **ע** (a’) as well as vowel letter **ה** (h), exchanges with the letter **ג** (g), (e.g. the roots **גרש** and **הרש**) .

In the Book of Deuteronomy we read: **ארור משגה עור בדרך** - “**Cursed be he that makes the blind to go astray in the way**” (Deu 27:18).

Yet in the Book of Isaiah we read: **ולא תשעינה עיני ראים; ואזני שמעים, תקשבנה** - “**And the eyes of them that see shall not be closed, and the ears of them that hear shall attend**” (Is 32:3).

It is not clear how the English translator determined that **תשעינה** (*thishe’nah*) means “be closed” and such an understanding is not supported by the Greek translator. However, the comparison between these verses suggests that **תשעינה** (*thishe’nah*) is a **ג** (g) - **ע** (e’) letter exchange error of **תשגנה** (*thishgenah*) - “go astray.”

The Psalmist wrote: **כי עונתי עברו ראשי; כמשא כבד יכבדו ממני** - “**For my iniquities are gone over my head; as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me**”(Ps 38:5).

Yet he also wrote: **דברי עונת גברו מני; פשעינו, אתה תכפרם** - “**The tale of iniquities is too heavy for me; as for our transgressions, You will pardon them**” (Ps 65:4).

The Greek translator wrote here “overpowered” and it appears that he believed that **עברו** (*a’vru*) is the same as **גברו** (*gavru*) - “overpowered.” This may be related to the fact that many Hebrew names that contain the letter **ע** (a’) were translated to Greek as containing the letter **ג** (g) instead.

Similarly, we read in the Book of Genesis: **והמים גברו מאד מאד--על-הארץ** - “**And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth**” (Gen 7:19; see also: Gen 7:18, 20, 24).

Yet the Psalmist wrote: **כל-משבריך וגליך עלי עברו** - “**all Your waves and Your billows are gone over me**” (Ps 42:8; see also: Jon 2:4).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests again that **עברו** (*a’vru*) is the same as **גברו** (*gavru*) - “overpowered.”