**חרון אף**

**אבנר רמו**

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In the Book of Nahum we read:

**לפני זעמו מי יעמוד, ומי יקום בחרון אפו; חמתו נתכה כאש, והצרים נתצו ממנו.**

“**Who can stand before His indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken asunder before Him**” (Nah 1:6; see also: Jer 4:26; 25:38; Jon 3:9; Ps 78:49; Job 20:23; Thr 4:11; 2 Ch 29:10; 30:8).

Yet in the Book of Deuteronomy we find:

**כמהפכת סדם ועמרה, אדמה וצביים, אשר הפך יהוה ב**[]**אפו ובחמתו.**

“**Like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which *YHWH* overthrew in His anger, and in His wrath**” (Deu 29:22; see also: Ps 21:10; Job 9:5; 21:17).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that here the word **חרון** (*kharon*) is missing and therefore instead of **באפו** we should read: **בחרון אפו** - “in the fierceness of His anger.”

Similarly, in the Book of Lamentations we read:

**כל-עברי דרך-הביטו וראו, אם-יש מכאוב כמכאבי אשר עולל לי: אשר הוגה יהוה ביום חרון אפו.**

“**All you that pass by! Behold, and see if there be any pain like my pain, which is done to me, wherewith *YHWH* had afflicted me in the day of His fierce anger**” (Thr 1:12; see also: Is 13:13).

Yet we also find in this book: **בתולתי ובחורי נפלו בחרב; הרגת ביום** [] **אפך, טבחת לא חמלת** - “**My virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword; You had slain them in the day of Your** [] **anger; You had slaughtered unsparingly**” (Thr 2:21; see also: Zep 2:2, 3; Job 20:28; Thr 2:22).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that here the word **חרון** is missing, and therefore instead of reading: **ביום אפך** we should read: **ביום חרון אפך** - “in the day of Your fierce anger.”

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In the Book of Job we find: **אפו טרף וישטמני-חרק עלי בשניו** - “**He had torn** [me] **in His wrath, and hated me; He had gnashed upon me with His teeth**” (Job 16:9).

However, the comparison between these verses, and in particular with the corrected verse Thr 2:21 suggests that here again the word **בחרון** is missing, and therefore instead of reading:

**אפו טרף** we should read: **אפו טרף בחרון** - “In his fierce anger he had torn.”

Similarly, the words: **טרף נפשו באפו** - “[You that] **teares Yourself in Your anger**” should be replaced with: **טרף נפש בחרון אפו** - “(He who) devours a soul in his fierce anger.”

In the Book of Psalms we read: **ישלח-בם חרון אפו-עברה וזעם וצרה** - “**He will send forth upon them the fierceness of His anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble**” (Ps 78:49).

Yet we also find in this book: **אז ידבר אלימו באפו; ובחרונו יבהלמו** - “**Then He will speak to them in His wrath and affright them in His sore displeasure**” (Ps 2:5).

The Greek translator wrote here “anger”, but the comparison between these verses suggests that here **באפו ובחרונו** is a letter-insertion and word disorder of: **ובחרון אפו**- “and in the fierceness of His anger” (e.g. Nah 1:6).

In the Book of Chronicles we read:

**ויחר-אף יהוה בעזא ויכהו על אשר-שלח ידו על-הארון; וימת שם לפני אלהים.**

“**And the anger of *YHWH* was kindled against Uzza, and He smote him, because he put forth his hand to the ark; and there he died before God**” (1 Ch 13:10; See also: 2 Sam 6:7).

In the Book of Chronicles we also read:

**כי לאשמת יהוה עלינו אתם אמרים להסיף על-חטאתנו ועל-אשמתנו: כי-רבה אשמה לנו, וחרון אף על-ישראל.**

“**For you purpose that which will bring upon us guilt against *YHWH*, to add to our sins and to our guilt; for our guilt is great, and there is fierce wrath upon Israel**” (2 Ch 28:13).

Yet in the Book of Nehemiah we find:

**הלוא כה עשו אבתיכם-ויבא אלהינו עלינו את כל-הרעה הזאת ועל העיר הזאת; ואתם מוסיפים חרון** [] **על-ישראל,**

“**Did not your fathers did so, and our God brought all this evil upon us, and upon this city? And you bring are adding [] wrath upon Israel**” (Neh 13:18).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that the word **אף** (aa*ph*) is missing here and therefore instead of **חרון על-ישראל** we should read: **חרון אף על-ישראל** - “**fierce wrath upon Israel**” (e.g. Num 25:4; 32:14; Jer 4:8; 12:13; 25:37; 30:24; 51:45; Zep 2:2; Ezr 10: 2 Ch 28:11).