

## הבן יקיר לי אפרים

אבנר רמו



The Psalmist wrote: **יבשו ויסגו אחור-כל שנאי ציון** - “All those that hate Zion be ashamed and turned backward” (Ps 129:5).

Yet in the Book of Amos we find: **הוי השאננים בציון, והבטחים בהר שמרון** - “Woe to **them that are at ease in Zion**, and to them that trust in the mountain of Samaria” (Am 6:1).

The Greek translator wrote here: “those who count Zion as nothing”, but the comparison between these verses suggests that here **השאננים בציון** is a letter-insertion, a word deletion, and order-type error of: **השנאים את ציון** - “those that hate Zion.”

The mountain of Samaria was in the area belonging to the tribe of Ephraim. In the Book of Judges we are told: **מני אפרים שרשם בעמלק** - “Out of Ephraim whose root is in Amalek” (Jud 5:14).

About Amalek we read in the Book of Numbers:

**וירא את-עמלק וישא משלו ויאמר: ראשית גוים עמלק,**

“And he saw Amalek, and took up his parable, and said: **Amalek was the first of the nations**” (Num 24:20).

Now we read about Ephraim in the last part of verse Am 6:1:

**נקבי ראשית הגוים, ובאו להם בית ישראל.**

“**The notable men of the first of the nations**, and who came to the house of Israel!” (Am 6:1).

It is not clear how the English translator determined that the Hapax legomenon **נקבי** means: “The notable men of” and this understanding is not shared by the Greek translator. However, if **נקבי** (*nequvai*) is a bilabial exchange, a letter-deletion, and order-type error of **נפקדי** (*niphqadei*) or of **פקדי** (*pequdai*) - “those that were counted as” (e.g. Num 1:47; 2:33; 26:62), then we are told in verse Am 6:1 that Ephraim indeed is counted as coming of Amalek (the first of the nations) and had joined the House of Israel (**ובאו להם לבית ישראל**).