Divine Name Texts

There is evidence that the scribes altered passages in which the Divine name occured in what seemed to them to be compromising or contradictory situations. This could involve either the name itself or the terms used with it. Of the name itself, 134 altered passages are listed in Appendix 32 of the Companion Bible. Job 1 offers a study of the change of terms with the expression "bless God" as a means of condemnation...and the suggestion is that the original wording was "curse God". The difficult text of 2 Samuel 12:14 is probably best understood this way as is also that of Psalm 10:3. These may have all been part of the Tiqqune Sopherim versions but, not being certain, I have placed them in this paragraph.

Qere/Kethuib

These terms seek to resolve the difficulty in the text when the passage read is not the passage written! An example is seen in Genesis 24:14 in the second term "youth". It is obvious that a young woman is intended but the term for young man is used in the consonants. The reader of the passage saw the consonants "man" but read the word "woman." In such passages one could do one of two things:

alter the vowels to suit the consonants

or   alter the consonants to suit the vowels.

The former variation is the kethuib and the latter is the qere. When the Masoretes added the vowel signs to the text this became a major problem so they simply printed the text as they knew it and wrote the vowels as they knew them. In some cases it will be plain that Kethuib is better and in others the Qere obviously has the right sense.
There are better than 1300 of them in the Old Testament and that is really a low number if one considers the potential for this sort of problem. Wurthwein, THE TEXT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, has a pointed discussion of the matter on page 14.

(3)   Text Arrangement

Paragraphing: This, as with the earlier note on phrasing, is not of certain origin but