

Ancient Hebrew Research Center

Biblical Hebrew E-Magazine

May, 2007

Issue #036

[E-Zine Home Page](#)

Issue Index

[Biblical Word of the Month](#) – Ancient

[Name of the Month](#) – Reuben

[Question of the Month](#) – You will die?

[Verse of the Month](#) – Exodus 20:10

[MT Excerpt](#) – Genesis 2:20-25

[AHRC Excerpt](#) – Pictographs

[Copyright](#)

Biblical Word of the Month - Ancient

By: Jeff A. Benner

As I have pointed out many times, the Hebrew language and thought works very differently from our own Western language and thought and this word is a good example. In the Hebrew mind space and time are seen as the same, they both have the present such as the present place you are sitting and the present time you at now and they both have distance, as a distant place or a distant time (past or future). For this reason the same Hebrew words are used for space and time. The Hebrew word **קדם** *qedem* can mean “East” or it can mean the “ancient past.”

He drove out the man; and at the east (קדם) of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim. (Genesis 3:24)

I consider the days of old, I remember the years long ago (קדם). (Psalm 77:5)

One of my favorite Hebrew words is עולם *olam* because of its unique ability to demonstrate how the Hebrew language works. While this word is frequently translated as everlasting or eternal (concepts which are foreign to Hebrew thought) it means a “distant time,” either in the past or future such as seen in the following verses.

I consider the days of old (עולם), I remember the years long ago. (Psalm 77:5)

This is the sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future (עולם) generations. (Genesis 9:12)

The word *olam* comes from the root *alam* meaning "to be hidden" and is often used in the sense of hiding to a place where one cannot be seen. Because Hebrew words for time are also used for space we can say that *olam* literally means “a place hidden beyond the horizon” or “a time hidden beyond the distant time.”

Name of the Month - Reuben

By: Jeff A. Benner

Note: At the request of one subscriber we will be doing a series on the sons of Jacob. In the past two issues we examined Issachar and Zebulun. Judah was discussed in issue #009.

The name Reuben means “behold a son” and is given to the first born of Jacob through Leah who gave his name “*Because the Yahweh has looked upon my affliction*” (Genesis 29:32).

The name is a combination of two Hebrew words ראו and בן. ראו is the imperative form of the verb ראה meaning “to see,” whereas the imperative means look, see or behold. The word בן means “son.”

Question of the Month – You will die?

By: Jeff A. Benner

Q: In Bible debates I have had with friends, one sticking point is that my friend's belief is that the word "die" in genesis doesn't really mean "die" in the physical sense. This is how she explains that God did not lie (or state an untruth) when he said to Eve "the day you eat of [the fruit] you will surely die." If the word "die" means die as we know it, in the physical sense, then the statement was false and God does not always tell the truth (or doesn't know the future). If "die" means "die spiritually but not physically", as the my friend claims, then God's statement is arguably true. If the latter were the case, I believe

that there will be foundation for this claim in a closer examination of the language itself.
-- Ed Ober

A: An excellent question, let me see if I can help with this issue. First of all, in Hebrew thought there is no separation of spiritual and physical, this is a Greek dualistic approach. In the Hebrew mind the spiritual and the physical are one and the same thing. There are different ways to interpret the Genesis account of Adam and Eve's eating of the fruit and their death. The Hebrew verb *mot* means death, in the literal definition of death. The conflict comes from the normal translation of Genesis 2:7 which says, "for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." It is assumed from this translation that when they eat it, they will die that day, which of course they did not do. But the Hebrew text is a little more specific. It literally states, "For in the day you eat from it a dying you will die." The Hebrew verb is actually used twice, once in the infinitive - dying and one in the simple - die. I believe that what this is saying is that you will "begin" to die, not just die. This fits with the concept that if they did not eat from it they would live forever but because of eating of it they are now mortal. Hope this helps.

Verse of the Month – Exodus 20:10

By: Jeff A. Benner

וְיִוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת | לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא־תַעֲשֶׂה כָל־מְלָאכָה
אָתָּה | וּבְנֶךָ־וּבִתֶּךָ עֲבָדֶךָ וְאִמָּתֶךָ וּבְהֵמָתֶךָ וְגֵרְךָ אֲשֶׁר
בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ :

but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: (ASV)

וְיִוֹם (ve-yom)

The base word יום *yom* means “day” and the prefix ו *ve* means “and.”

הַשְּׁבִיעִי (hash-viy-iy)

The base word שביעי *sheviyiy* means “seventh” and the prefix ה *ha* means “the.”

שַׁבָּת (sha-bat)

This is the Hebrew word שבת *shabbat* literally meaning a “ceasing” or “stopping.” This word is always used in the Hebrew Bible for the seventh day, the Shabbat, the day work ceases for the purpose of rest.

לַיהוָה (la-YHWH)

This is the name of God, יהוה, with the prefix ל *la* meaning “to” or “for.”

אֱלֹהֵיךָ (eh-lo-hey-kha)

The base word is אלוה *elo'ah* which is usually translated as “God” or “god” but more literally means “power.” It is written with the plural suffix ים *ym* and the possessive pronoun ך *kha* meaning “of you.” Whenever a word is written with the masculine plural suffix ים *ym* is in construct state, in this case “God/Powers of you,” the ם *m* is dropped.

לֹא (lo)

This is the Hebrew word meaning “no” or “not.” This word is often placed before a verb to place the action of that verb in the negative.

תַּעֲשֶׂה (ta-a-seh)

This is the verb עשה *asah* meaning “to do.” The prefix ת *ta* identifies the subject of the verb as second person, masculine, singular - you and the tense of the verb as imperfect - “you do” or “you will do.”

כֹּל (kol)

This Hebrew word means “all.”

מְלַאכָּה (me-la-khah)

This Hebrew word means “work” or more literally “business.”

אַתָּה (a-tah)

This Hebrew word means “you” (masculine, singular).

וּבְנֵיךָ (u-viyn-kha)

The base word is בן *ben* meaning “son” with the prefix ו *u* meaning “and” and the suffix ך *kha* meaning “of you.”

וּבְתֵיכָהּ (u-vi-teh-kha)

The base word is בת *bat* meaning “daughter” with the prefix ו *u* meaning “and” and the suffix ך *kha* meaning “of you.”

עֲבָדֶיךָ (av-deh-kha)

The base word is עבד *eved* meaning “servant” with the suffix ך *kha* meaning “of you.”

וְאִמָּתֶיךָ (va-a-mat-kha)

The base word is אמה *amah* meaning “maidservant.” The prefix ו *va* means “and” and the suffix ך *kha* means “of you.” Whenever a word ending with ה *h* is in construct state, in this case “maidservant of you,” the ה *h* is converted to a ת *t*.

וְבִהְמֹתֶיךָ (uv-hem-te-kha)

The base word is בהמה *behmah* meaning “livestock.” The prefix ו *u* means “and” and the suffix ך *kha* means “of you.” Again, whenever a word ending with ה *h* is in construct state, in this case “maidservant *of* you,” the ה *h* is converted to a ת *t*.

וְגֵרְךָ (ve-ger-kha)

The base word is גֵר *ger* meaning “sojourner,” one who dwells and lives with the natives. The prefix ו *ve* means “and” and the suffix ך *kha* means “of you.”

אֲשֶׁר (a-sher)

This Hebrew word means “which,” “who,” or “what.”

בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ (bish-a-rey-kha)

The base word is שַׁעַר *sha'ar* meaning “gate.” The prefix ב *b* means “in.” It is also written with the plural suffix ים *ym* and the possessive pronoun ך *kha* meaning “of you.” Whenever a word is written with the masculine plural suffix ים *ym* is in construct state, in this case “Gates *of* you,” the ם *m* is dropped.

The following is a literal rendering of this verse from its Hebraic meaning.

And the seventh day is a time of ceasing for YHWH your Power, you will not do any business, you and your son and your daughter, your servant and your maidservant and your livestock and your sojourner who is in your gates.

In following issues we will continue with this chapter.

Mechanical Translation Excerpt - Genesis 2:20-25

20 and the human called out the titles to all of the beasts and for the flyers of the sky and for all of the living ones of the field and for the human he did not find a helper such as opposite him, **21** and “YHWH [He exists]” of “Elohiym [Powers]” made a trance fall upon the human and he slept and he took a unit from his ribs and he shut the flesh under her, **22** and “YHWH [He exists]” of “Elohiym [Powers]” built the rib which he took from the human for a woman and he made her come to the human, **23** and the human said this time is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh for this she will be called out woman given that from man this was taken, **24** therefore a man will leave his father and his mother and he will adhere with his woman and they will exist a flesh unit, **25** and the two of them, the human and his woman, existed nude and they were not ashamed of themselves,

For details on this new translation see the web site at
<http://www.mechanical-translation.org>

AHRC Website Excerpt – Pictographs

Words are formed by linking Hebrew letters together. As each letter has a meaning, the meaning of these letters will provide a Hebraic meaning to the word. By examining the titles of family members through the pictographic letters that form the words, we can better understand the Hebraic definition of these words.



The first letter is the א (aleph), a picture of an ox. As the ox is strong, the letter also has the meaning of strong. The second letter, ב (bet), is the picture of the tent or house where the family resides. When combined these letters mean "the strength of the house" and represents the "father."



The first letter is the א (aleph), a picture of an ox. As the ox is strong, the letter also has the meaning of strong. The second letter, מ (mem) represents water. The two letters give us the meaning of "strong water." The Hebrews made glue by boiling animal skins in water. As the skin broke down a sticky thick liquid formed at the surface of the water. This thick liquid was removed and used as a binding agent - "strong water". This is the Hebrew word for "mother", the one who "binds" the family together.



The first letter is the ב (bet), a picture of a tent or house. The second letter, נ (nun) is the picture of a seed. The seed is a new generation of life that will grow and produce a new generation therefore, this letter can mean "to continue." When combined these two letters mean "to continue the house" and is the Hebrew word for a "son."



The first letter is the א (aleph), a picture of an ox. As the ox is strong, the letter also has the meaning of strong. The second letter, ח (hhet), is the picture of a tent wall. The wall is a wall of protection which protects what is inside from what is outside. When combined these letters mean "the strong wall" and represents the "brother" as the protector of the family.

This article is located on the web site at
http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/4_words.html

Biblical Hebrew E-Magazine

Please feel free to use, copy or distribute any material within the "Biblical Hebrew E-Magazine" for non-profit educational purposes only.
