Ancient Hebrew Research Center

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Word of the Month -   Come

By: Jeff A. Benner

The verb בוא (bo, Strong's #935) is a good example to demonstrate the vast difference between Hebrew and English. In the examples below are two different English words with opposite meanings.

> As for yourself, you shall <u>go</u> to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. (RSV, *Genesis 15:15*)

> Isaac said to them, "Why have you <u>come</u> to me, seeing that you hate me and have sent me away from you?" (RSV, *Genesis 26:27*)

The English verb "go" generally means, to move from a position nearby to a position far away, while the verb "come" means, to move from a far position to a position nearby. An example would be, "I will <u>go</u> to the store then I will <u>come</u> home." The context of this

phrase implies that I am making the statement from home about leaving home for the store and then returning home.

In the two verses above, the one Hebrew verb `awb` is being translated into two different English words in order to translate the context of its use.

The verb `awb` does not mean "come" or "go" in the sense of direction but to "enter a void in order to fill it" in the sense of purpose. Because there is no English word with this meaning the words "go" and "come" are used instead, but unfortunately this erases the more Hebraic meaning behind the word.

Name of the Month - Issachar

By: Jeff A. Benner

> *And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name Issachar.* (KJV, Genesis 30:18)

The name יִשָּׂשכָר (yis-sakhar, Strong's #3485) is one of the more difficult names from an etymological perspective. This name is written as יִשָּׂשכָר in the Masoretic Hebrew text. The first שׂ (the letter shin) in this name includes the dot on the top left, indicating that it is pronounced with an "s" (if the dot were on the right it would be pronounced with a "sh"). There is also a dot inside this letter (called a dagesh) which doubles its sound. Therefore, the first two letters in this name is pronounced "yis-sa…" The second שׁ is a little problematic as it does not have a dot on top (The letter shin always carries the dot, either on the left or the right to indicate its pronunciation as "s" or "sh"). This unusual use of the letter shin is a mystery with no etymological answer. The standard pronunciation of the name is yis-sa-khar, and the second shin is simply ignored as if it was spelled יִשָּׂכָר.

The next problem with this name is its meaning. It may be a form of the Hebrew word יִשָּׂכָר (yis-kor) meaning "he will hire." However, this meaning ignores the second shin found in the name יִשָּׂשכָר. We must also remember that the dots and dashes added above, below and inside Hebrew letters (called nikkud in the singular and nikkudot in the plural) are of fairly recent invention and were not included in the original spelling of Hebrew words. Therefore, if we take the name as it was written - יששכר, other possible interpretations are possible. The first is the combination of two words, יש and שכר. The word יש (yeysh, Strong's #3426) means "there is." There are two possible translations of the word שכר. One is "liquor" (sha-khar, Strong's #7941) giving us the meaning of יששכר as "there is liquor." The other possibility is "wage" (sa-khar, Strong's #7939) giving us the meaning "there is a wage."

We know have three possible meanings for the name Issachar – "he will hire", "there is liquor" and "there is a wage." If we look at the context of how this name was formed in

Genesis 30:18 we can determine the most likely intended meaning of the word. In Genesis 30:18 Leah says (literally from the Hebrew), "Elohiym gave my wage." The best meaning of Issachar would then be "there is a wage." This then provides us with a possible original pronunciation of this word – yeysh-sa-khar.

Question of the Month – One Language?

By: Jeff A. Benner

Q:. Genesis 10 is the genealogy of No'ahh's sons and says that they were divided into their perspective lands and tongues. However, Genesis 11:1 says that the whole earth was with one language and speech. This sounds like a contradiction. How can they be speaking different languages before Babel in chapter 10?

A: One of the problems we encounter when we read the Bible is that we are not aware that the Ancient Hebrews wrote differently than we do. When we write an accounting of events, we always write the events in the order they occurred. However, the Ancient Hebrews did not. They were not as concerned about keeping events in chronological order but instead they used what is called "block logic," which means that events can be listed in order of significance or relationship rather than by chronology. While the account of the genealogies of No'ahh are found "before" the events at Babel, they occurred both before "and after" the events at Babel. As an example, Genesis 10:2 lists the sons of Japheth which were born prior to the events at Babel. But in verse 3 we have the sons of Gomer (the son of Japheth) which were most likely born after the events of Babel.

We know that Noahh's sons were born prior to Babel because all of their names are of Semitic (Hebrew) origin while some of Noahh's grandchildren have names that are non-Semitic showing, a change in the languages.

Verse of the Month – Genesis 2:2

By: Jeff A. Benner

וַיְכַל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּשְׁבֹּת
בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִכָּל-מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה:

And on the seventh day God finished his work
which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his
work which he had made. (ASV)

וַיְכַל **(vai-khal)**

The base word is כלה (kalah) meaning "to finish." The prefix י identifies the verb tense as imperfect - will finish - and the subject of the verb as third person, masculine, singular -

he will finish. The prefix וֹ means "and," but also reverses the tense of the verb – and he finished.

אֱלֹהִים (e-lo-heem)
This is the word/name of God – Elohiym, and is the subject of the previous verb.

בַּיּוֹם (ba-yom)
This is the word יום (yom) meaning "day" with the prefix ב (ba) meaning "in." Combined these mean "in the day."

הַשְּׁבִיעִי (hash-vee-ee)
This is the word שביעי (she-vee-ee) meaning "seventh" with the prefix ה (ha) meaning "the." This word and the previous one, are in the construct state and would then be translated as "in the seventh day."

מְלַאכְתּוֹ (me-lakh-to)
The base word is מלאכה (melakhah) meaning "business. The suffix וֹ is the third person, masculine, singular, possessive pronoun – "of him." This word means "business of him" or "his business." When a pronoun suffix is added to the end of a noun that ends with the letter ה, the ה is replaced by the ת.

אֲשֶׁר (a-sher)
This word means "which" or "who."

עָשָׂה (a-sah)
This verb means "to do." This form of the verb does not include any prefixes or suffixes, which always identifies the subject of the verb as third person, masculine, singular and the tense of the verb as perfect – he did.

וַיִּשְׁבֹּת (vai-yish-bot)
The base word is שבת (shavat – the root of the noun shabbat/sabbath) meaning "to cease." The prefix י identifies the verb tense as imperfect - will cease - and the subject of the verb as third person, masculine, singular - he will cease. The prefix וֹ means "and," but also reverses the tense of the verb – and he ceased.

בַּיּוֹם (ba-yom)
This is the word יום (yom) meaning "day" with the prefix ב (ba) meaning "in." Combined these mean "in the day."

הַשְּׁבִיעִי (hash-vee-ee)
This is the word שביעי (she-vee-ee) meaning "seventh" with the prefix ה (ha) mean "the." This word and the previous one are in the construct state and would then be translated as "the seventh day."

מִכָּל (mi-kol)

This base word is כל (kol) meaning "all." The prefix מ (mi) means "from." Combined, this word means "from all."

מְלַאכְתּוֹ (me-lakh-to)

The base word is מלאכה (melakhah) meaning "business. The suffix ו is the third person, masculine, singular, possessive pronoun – "of him." This word means "business of him" or "his business." When a pronoun suffix is added to the end of a noun that ends with the letter ה, the ה is replaced by the ת.

אֲשֶׁר (a-sher)

This word means "which" or "who."

עָשָׂה (a-sah)

This verb means "to do." The form of the verb (no prefixes or suffixes) identifies the subject of the verb as third person, masculine, singular and the tense as perfect – he did.

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

> And Elohiym finished his business which he did in the seventh day, and he ceased from all his business which he did in the seventh day.

This verse is an example Hebrew poetry where two different words, finished and ceased, are being used to convey one idea.

In following issues we will continue with this chapter.

Mechanical Translation Excerpt - Genesis 4:18-24

18 and "Irad [*Wild donkey*]" was brought forth to "Hhanokh [*Dedicated*]" and "Irad [*Wild donkey*]" had brought forth "Mehhuya'el [*Who proclaims El*]" and "Mehhuya'el [*Who proclaims El*]" had brought forth "Metusha'el [*His death asks*]" and "Metusha'el [*His death asks*]" had brought forth "Lamekh [*Powerful*]", **19** and "Lamekh [*Powerful*]" took to him two women, the title of the one is "Adah [*Ornament*]" and the title of the second is "Tsilah [*Shadow*]", **20** and "Adah [*Ornament*]" brought forth "Yaval [*Watercourse*]", he existed as father of tent and livestock settlers, **21** and the title of his brother is "Yuval [*Creek*]", he existed as father of all of the ones seizing hold of the harp and reed-pipe, **22** and "Tsilah [*Shadow*]" also had brought forth "Tuval-Qayin [*Flow of acquiring*]" a sharpener of all of the ones scratching of bronze and iron and the sister of "Tuval-Qayin [*Flow of acquiring*]" is "Na'amah [*Sweet*]", **23** and "Lamekh [*Powerful*]" said to his women, "Adah [*Ornament*]" and "Tsilah [*Shadow*]", listen to my voice, women of "Lamekh [*Powerful*]", give an ear to my speech, given that I killed a man for

my bruise and a boy for my striped bruise, **24** given that "Qayin [*Acquired*]" will be avenged sevenfold then "Lamekh [*Powerful*]" seventy and seven,

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For details on this new translation see the web site at
http://mthb.ancient-hebrew.org

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AHRC Website Excerpt – About the AHRC

When I first began studying the Bible I loved to do word studies. I would select a word and study its uses and contexts in as many verses as I could find them. One of these studies was with the word "heart" and I would look up verses such as these below.

1. **Genesis 6:5** *And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his **heart** was only evil continually.*
2. **Exodus 7:3** *And I will harden Pharaoh's **heart**, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.*
3. **Exodus 23:9** *And a sojourner shalt thou not oppress: for ye know the **heart** of a sojourner, seeing ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt*
4. **Proverbs 2:2** *So as to incline thine ear unto wisdom, And apply thy **heart** to understanding;*
5. **Psalm 40:8** *I delight to do thy will, O my God; Yea, thy law is within my **heart**.*
6. **Psalm 55:4** *My **heart** is sore pained within me: And the terrors of death are fallen upon me.*

However, I was soon to discover that there was a flaw in this type of word study. I purchased a Concordance, a book with a complete list of all the words in a particular translation, which would cross reference any word in the translation with Strong's Dictionary. This would give you the Hebrew word behind the English translation as well as a definition of that word.

With this tool I discovered that the English translation was not very consistent on how it translated Hebrew words. For instance, in the examples I gave above, the word heart is a translation of three different Hebrew words. The Hebrew word Lev, which is the Hebrew word for "heart," is translated as "heart" in verse #1, #2, #4 and #6 above. The word nephesh, which is usually translated as soul, is translated as "heart" in verse #3. Me'ah, which is literally the intestines, is translated as "heart" in verse #5. Each of these Hebrew words has a specific meaning but the translators chose to ignore this and just translate all three as "heart."

The use of the concordance also revealed that the Hebrew word lev (heart), was translated with other English words as you can see in the verses below.

1. **Genesis 31:20** *And Jacob stole away* **<u>unawares</u>** *to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled.* (A literal translation of the Hebrew is "And Jacob stole the heart of Laban the Aramean because he did not tell him that he fled.")
2. **Exodus 9:21** *And he that* **<u>regarded</u>** *not the word of Jehovah left his servants and his cattle in the field.*
3. **Numbers 16:28** *And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that Jehovah hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own* **<u>mind</u>**.
4. **Job 36:5** *Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: He is mighty in strength of* **<u>understanding</u>**.
5. **Psalm 83:5** *For they have consulted together with one* **<u>consent</u>**; *Against thee do they make a covenant:*
6. **Proverbs 19:8** *He that getteth* **<u>wisdom</u>** *loveth his own soul: He that keepeth understanding shall find good.*

All of this playing with words in the English translations did not settle well with me. How was a person to properly interpret the Bible if there was no consistency in how the Hebrew was translated? If one is given the proper translations and definitions some interesting revelations appear.

> **Jeremiah 17:9** *The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly corrupt: who can know it?*

I had previously thought, based on the above verse, that the heart (in the sense of emotion) was deceitful but the mind was logical and trustworthy. After discovering that the heart to the Hebrews was the mind, I realized that Jeremiah was saying that the "mind" was deceitful. In other studies I discovered that emotion, which we consider to be the heart, is actually the kidneys to the Hebrews.

I should point out that this is not an isolated case by any means, in fact, I have seen this same scenario played out time after time with many different words and in all translations. Anyone desiring to do a serious word study can never rely on an English translation alone, at a minimum a concordance and dictionary are going to be essential.

This excerpt from the entire article is located on the web site at
http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/1_about.html

Editorials

Do you have a comment or personal insight into the articles in this issue of the E-Zine? If so, let us know.

From Izzy Cohen;

hello –

Your article about the aleph did not mention its ancient consonantal equivalence with CHS or X in Greek and Latin and with CHT/GHT in Germanic languages. It seems that I wrote about this topic as early as 1999 on the PsyArt list.

http://lists.ufl.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A2=ind9907c&L=psyart&P=9671

In so-called Rashi script, the Aleph looks like a Het + chupchik. This is evidence that the aleph previously had a het-like sound.

The letter shin in Rashi script looks like a tet turned 90 deg clockwise. This indicates that the shin previously had a dental D/T-sound. That's why TEKEL in Daniel 5:25 MENE MENE TEKEL UPHARSIN means "shekel" to be weighed.

From this we see that the shapes of Rashi-script letters actually elicit **older** sounds of the Hebrew letters.

At a time when the aleph had a het-like sound, the het probably had a W-sound, equivalent to AncGreek digamma and Germanic Wynn.

Other sound changes include:
Heh from dalet+heh DH/TH to H.   Bithynia = BoHeN (thumb, big toe).
Vav from F/PH to V. Compare Greek phasis (of the moon) borrowed into Hebrew as vav-samekh-sof (Israeli VeSeT) = regular menstruation.
Yod from a velar G/K to a partial velar Y or Latin I (but CR in early Latin, as in YaD => credit and YaH => creator)

These three sound changes explain why YHVH is equivalent to noun God/Gott/Cath + adjective Father/Vater, that is a father-god or creator.

Ciao,
Izzy

Corrections

Did you find any errors needing correction in the articles in this issue of the E-Zine? If so, let us know.

In the "Verse of the Month," the definition of the word "vai'khu'lu read as, "…and the subject of the verb as third person, masculine, singular - they will finish." However, this should have read, "…and the subject of the verb as third person, masculine, plural - they will finish." (Thank you Alanna and LoraLee)

The "Question of the Month" referenced Psalm 22:18 for the phrase "like a lion." The correct reference is Psalm 22:17 in the Hebrew Bible and Psalm 22:16 in Christian Bibles. (Thank you Celia)

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