

Ancient Hebrew Research Center

Biblical Hebrew E-Magazine

July, 2008

Issue #044

Issue Index

[Word of the Month](#) – Pardes
[Name of the Month](#) – Zebulun
[Question of the Month](#) – Help meet?
[Verse of the Month](#) – Genesis 2:3
[MT Excerpt](#) – Genesis 4:25-26
[AHRC Excerpt](#) – Translations
[Editorials](#)
[Corrections](#)
[Advertisement](#)
[Copyright](#)

Word of the Month - Pardes

By: Jeff A. Benner

The Hebrew word פָּרְדֵּס (pardes, Strong's #6508) only appears three times in the Hebrew Bible. In the *Young's Literal Translation* (YLT - I like the YLT but it is not as “literal” as it could be) this Hebrew word is translated as “paradise.”

and a letter unto Asaph, keeper of the paradise that the king... (YLT, Nehemiah 2:8)

I made for me gardens and paradises, and I planted in them trees of every fruit. (YLT, Ecclesiastes 2:5)

Thy shoots a paradise of pomegranates, With precious fruits, (YLT, Song of Solomon 4:13)

What is a paradise? The *American Heritage Dictionary* provides the following definition, “A place of ideal beauty or loveliness.” While this is an appropriate definition for the English word “paradise,” let’s not forget that the Hebrews thought in concrete terms rather than in abstract ones like “beauty” and “loveliness.” A more Hebraic definition would be, “A place of ideal rest and sustenance.” Imagine yourself walking through the desert; you’re hot, tired and hungry. Then you come over a rise and see before you an orchard of fruit trees. You have just entered a “paradise,” a place where you can lay in the cool shade of the trees and eat the wet and sweet fruit from the trees. Most other translations translate the word *pardes* as an “orchard.” While this is the meaning of the word, the idea of a paradise (from a Hebraic perspective) better illustrates the true meaning of the word.

The word *pardes* is also an acronym for a very ancient form of Biblical interpretation. The word *pardes* is written with four letters, פ (P), ר (R), ד (D) and ס (S). We could then write this word as PaRDeS. Each of these letters represents one word, P’shat, Remez, D’rash and Sod. The word p’shat means “plain” and represents the plain simple meaning of the text. The word remez means “hint” and represents an implied meaning of the text which usually has a deeper meaning. The word d’rash means “searching” and represents the meaning of the text that must be found buried in the text. The word sod means “hidden” and represents a hidden meaning that is drawn out from the text. When using these four methods of Biblical interpretation it is important to remember that the first method, the p’shat, can never be removed or changed with one of the other methods.

When these methods of Biblical interpretation are applied to the Hebrew text, the text becomes a “paradise,” a place of rest and sustenance.

Name of the Month - Zebulun

By: Jeff A. Benner

The next son of Jacob in our series is Zebulun.

And Leah said, God hath endowed me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun. (ASV, Genesis 30:20)

The Hebrew word זבולון, pronounced zeh-voo-loon, means a “resident” and comes from the root זבל (*zaval*, Strong’s #2082) meaning “to reside” and is translated as “dwell” in the passage above. Hebrew nouns are commonly formed by adding letters to the root. In this instance, the suffix ון is added to the root זבל. Nouns with the ון ending generally mean “one who does the action of the root” and in this case, “one who dwells.”

Question of the Month – Help Meet?

By: Jeff A. Benner

Q: What does Genesis 2:18 mean when it says, “I will make him a help meet for him?”

A: The Hebrew phrasing for “help meet” is "ezer kenegedo." The word "ezer" means "helper." The word "neged" comes from the verbal root "nagad" meaning "to be face to face." This verb is always used in the causative form where it would literally be translated as "to make to be face to face" and means "to tell." The noun form, "neged" is often used for something that is face to face with something else such as in Genesis 21:16 where Hagar went and sat down "opposite" her son but a distance away. The prefix "ke" in the word “kenegedo" means "like" and the suffix "o" means "of him." Putting all of this together, ezer kenegedo literally means "a helper like one opposite of him." In my opinion this means that Eve was to be his other half, like him, but with the opposite attributes. Interestingly, Gen 1:27 says “And Elohiym filled the man with his shadow” (meaning he placed a representation of himself in the man), “Elohiym filled him male and female” (meaning he placed within "him" his male and female representations), “he filled them” (the male representation went to Adam and the female representation went to Eve). We do not normally think of Elohiym as being male and female but it is pretty clear from the Hebrew text that he has both masculine and feminine qualities.

Verse of the Month – Genesis 2:3

By: Jeff A. Benner

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת
מִכָּל-מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר-בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת:

And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it;
because that in it he rested from all his work which God had created and
made. (ASV)

וַיְבָרֶךְ (vai-va-rekh)

The base word is the verb בָּרַךְ (B-R-K). This verb literally means “kneel down to show respect to another.” The prefix ם identifies the verb tense as imperfect - will respect - and the subject of the verb as third person, masculine, singular - he will respect. The prefix ן means “and” but also reverses the tense of the verb – and he respected.

אֱלֹהִים (e-lo-hiym)

This word literally means powerful ones (plural) but is often used in a singular sense as a name (usually translated as God). This is the subject (the “he”) of the previous verb.

אֶת (et)

This word precedes the direct object of a verb.

יוֹם (yom)

This word means “day.”

הַשְּׁבִיעִי (hash-viy-iy)

The base word is the noun שְׁבִיעִי (sheviyiy) meaning seventh. The prefix הַ means “the.” This word is combined with the previous word to form the phrase “the seventh day” which is the direct object of the previous verb.

וַיִּקְדַּשׁ (vai-qa-deysh)

The base word is the verb קִדַּשׁ (Q-D-Sh). This verb literally means “set apart for a special purpose.” The prefix וַ identifies the verb tense as imperfect - will set apart - and the subject of the verb as third person, masculine, singular - he will set apart. The prefix וַ means “and” but also reverses the tense of the verb – and he set apart.

אֹתוֹ (o-to)

The base word is the word אֶת (et) which precedes the direct object of the verb which, in this case is the suffix וֹ meaning “him.”

כִּי (kiy)

This word means “for” or “because.”

בּוֹ (vo)

This is the prefix בּ meaning “in” and the suffix וֹ meaning “him.” Combined, these mean “in him.”

שָׁבַת (sha-vat)

This verb means “cease an activity.” Because of the lack of any prefixes or suffixes the subject of the verb is third person, masculine singular, and the tense of the verb as perfect – he ceased.

מִכֹּל (mi-kol)

The base word is כֹּל (kol) meaning “all.” The prefix מִ means “from.” Combined, this means “from all.”

מְלֶאכֶתוֹ (me-lakh-to)

This is the word מְלֶאכֶה (me-la-khah) meaning “business.” The suffix וֹ means “of him.” Combined, this word means “his business.” When a suffix is added to a feminine noun ending with the letter הַ, the הַ is changed to a תַּ.

אֲשֶׁר (a-sher)

This word means “which” or “who.”

בָּרָא (ba-ra)

This verb means “fatten up” or “fill up.” Because of the lack of any prefixes or suffixes the subject of the verb is third person, masculine singular, and the tense of the verb as perfect – he filled.

אֱלֹהִים (e-lo-hiym)

This word literally means powerful ones (plural) but is often used in the singular as a name (usually translated as God). This is the subject (the “he”) of the previous verb.

לַעֲשׂוֹת (la-a-sot)

The base word is the verb עָשָׂה (‘-S-H) meaning “do.” It is written in the infinitive form which simply describes the action without identifying the subject or the tense of the verb. The prefix ל means “to.” Combined, this word means “to do.”

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

And Elohiym respected the seventh day and he set him apart because in him he
ceased from all his business which Elohiym filled up to do.

In following issues we will continue with this chapter.

Mechanical Translation Excerpt - Genesis 4:25-26

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

25 and the human knew yet again his woman and she brought forth a son and she called out his title “Shet [Buttocks]” given that “Elohiym [Powers]” set down for me another seed in place of “Hevel [Empty]” given that “Qayin [Acquired]” killed him, **26** and “Shet [Buttocks]” also had been brought forth a son and he called out his title “Enosh [Man]”, at that time they pierced to call out in the title of “YHWH [He exists]”,

AHRC Website Excerpt – Translational Comparisons

The major advantage to the *Mechanical Translation* for the student of the Bible is that it consistently translates each Hebrew word in the exact same way each time it occurs in the text. This allows the reader to see the Hebrew text, without even

knowing Hebrew, in its pure form void from any personal interpretation being interjected into the text. Below are a few examples from the book of Genesis comparing the Mechanical Translation (MT) and the Revised Mechanical Translation (RMT) with Young's Literal Translation (YLT), King James Version (KJV), the Revised Standard Version (RSV) and the Stone's Edition Tenach (SET).

Genesis 1:1

MT: in~Summit he~did~Fatten "Elohiym ^[Powers]" At the~Sky~s2 and~At the~Land

RMT: in the summit "Elohiym ^[Powers]" fattened the sky and the land,

YLT: In the beginning of God's preparing the heavens and the earth

KJV: In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

RSV: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

SET: In the beginning of God's creating the heavens and the earth.

Hebrew words related to "time" are also used for "space." Therefore, the Hebrew word *reshiyt*, derived from the word *rosh*, can mean the head, top or beginning of space or time. The MT uses the word "summit to translate this word as it better describes the original meaning of the Hebrew. In Psalm 111:10 reads "The fear of YHWH is the *reshiyt* of wisdom." The more Hebraic meaning of this is that "the fear of YHWH" is the summit, or height, of wisdom.

The Hebrew verb *bara* is usually translated as "create." However, the idea of "creation" is an abstract word which would be a foreign concept to the Ancient Hebrews. This very same verb is used in 1 Samuel 2:29 where it is translated correctly as "fat." The Hebrew concrete meaning of this word is to make something fat or to fill it up. The context of this verse is Elohiym's "filling" up of the skies with the sun, moon, stars and birds, the water with fish and taniyn (an unknown serpent like creature) and the earth with plants, animals and man. We also read in verse two that Elohiym "filled" the skies and the land because "the land was empty." Only the Young's Literal Translation uses the word "preparing," closer to the Hebraic meaning of this word, to translate the word *bara*.

The YLT and SET translate the verb *bara* as a participle (...ing) where the Hebrew is not.

Genesis 2:7

- MT:** and~he~will~Mold "YHWH ^[He exists]" "Elohiym ^[Powers]" At the~Human Powder
From the~Ground and~he~will~Exhale in~Nose~s2~him Breath Life~s
and~he~will~Exist the~Human to~Being Life
- RMT:** and "YHWH ^[He exists]" of "Elohiym ^[Powers]" molded the human of powder from the
ground and he exhaled in his nostrils a breath of life and the human existed for a
being of life,
- YLT:** And Jehovah God formeth the man -- dust from the ground, and breatheth into his
nostrils breath of life, and the man becometh a living creature.
- KJV:** And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his
nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.
- RSV:** then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his
nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.
- SET:** And HASHEM God formed the man of dust from the ground, and He blew into
his nostrils the soul of life; and man became a living being.

The name YHWH literally means "he exists" and is derived from the Hebrew verb *hawah* meaning to "exist." However, the KJV and RSV translate the name YHWH as "the LORD" when the Hebrew word has no connection to the meaning of the word "lord." The SET also replaces the name YHWH with the word HASHEM (a Hebrew word meaning "the name").

The Hebrew *YHWH Elohiym* is always translated as "LORD God" (KJV, RSV), "Jehovah God" (YLT) or "HASHEM God" (SET) in the standard translations. In Hebrew grammar, two nouns placed together are in the construct state. For instance, in Psalm 24:10 the Hebrew phrase *YHWH tseva'ot* (the same structure as *YHWH Elohiym*) is correctly translated in its construct state-"LORD of Hosts." The MT chooses to translate *YHWH Elohiym* in the same manner-"YHWH of Elohiym."

The KJV and RSV translate the Hebrew *nephesh hhayah* as "living soul" in this verse while in Genesis 1:24 they translate this very same phrase as "living creature." The SET translates this phrase as "living being" here but as also translates it as "living creature" in Genesis 1:24. Only the YLT remains consistent in how this phrase is translated in these two verses.

Genesis 2:17

- MT:** and~from~Tree the~Discernment Functional and~Dysfunctional Not
you(ms)~will~Eat From~him Given.that in~Day you(ms)~>~Eat From~him
>~Die you(ms)~will~Die

- RMT:** and from the tree of the discernment of function and dysfunction you will not eat from him given that in the day you eat from him a dying you will die,
- YLT:** and of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou dost not eat of it, for in the day of thine eating of it -- dying thou dost die.'
- KJV:** But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.
- RSV:** but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.
- SET:** but of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad, you must not eat thereof; for on the day you eat of it, you shall surely die.

The English words "good" and "evil" (or bad) do not completely convey the Hebraic meaning of the word *tov* and *ra* which are more related to the function of a person, place or thing rather than their appearance or morality as implied in the English.

This remainder of this article is located on the web site at
http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/9_comparison.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 Carroll Page;

A different approach to the "Question of the Month – One Language?"

Quoting from one of my works in progress COLOPHONS In Scripture Rev 9-17-2006, Rev 6-17-2008 by Carroll L. Page (Me)

The usage of the Hebrew word TOL'DohT (Capital letters indicate the explicit Hebrew characters) is used to indicate not only the Generational accounts of families but also the historical happenings, as seen by its usage at Genesis 2:4 concerning the creation of the heavens and the earth. Also, in the Gen 5:1 reference, it is called a scroll or book i.e. a written account (Hebrew sayfer)-Adam could write! The Hebrew expression "TOL'DohT" literally means "Generations of" and indicates "Generational Annuals of" SOMEONE OR SOMETHING.

Moses writes about events that happened before his birth, so he used a number of other documents or sources in his composition. He identified these accounts by the use of the colophon in the form of the Hebrew "TOL'Doht" meaning "Account of." A colophon is like a title page in our books, but in ancient times was usually placed at the end of a document. A modern definition of a colophon follows:

Colophon noun; 1. An inscription placed usually at the end of a book, giving facts about its publication. 2. A publisher's emblem or trademark placed usually on the title page of a book. [Late Latin colophon, from Greek kolophon, summit, finishing touch.] The American Heritage; Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition copyright 1992.

NOTE! ANCIENT BIBLICAL COLOPHONS ARE USUALLY AT THE END of a document. The colophon usually concludes the previous text! There is also a possibility that later copyists could have moved some of these colophons, such as in the accounts of Ishmael and Isaac.

The Genesis quoted documents that I could find, as indicated by the use of colophons are:

1) Yahuah's/YHWH's Account of how Adam and their home came to be here. Genesis 1:1 to 2:4 - This is the Generational Annual (TOL'DohT) of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

2) Adam & Sons account of how they came to be here. Genesis 2:4 - In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. Genesis 5:1 - This is the book of the generations (TOL'DohT) of Adam (KJV).

3) Noah's Account of how he came to be here - Genesis 5:1 to 6:9. Genesis 5:1 - In the day that God created man (KJV). Genesis 6:9 - This is the Generational Records (TOL'DohT) of Noah.

4) Noah's son's account of things - Genesis 6:9 to 10:1. Genesis 6:9 - Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God. Genesis 10:1 - This is the Generational account (TOL'DohT) of Shem, Ham and Japheth, Noah's sons (NIV).

5) Account of the families of Noah's sons - Genesis 10:2 to 10:32. Genesis 10:2 - The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. Genesis 10:32 - These are the FAMILIES of the sons of Noah, according to their Generational Annuals (TOL'DohT) in their nations.

6) Account of Shem - Genesis 11:1 to 11:10. Genesis 11:1 - Now the whole earth had one language and few words. Genesis 11:10 - This is the Generational Annuals (TOL'DohT) of Shem.

(The rest is largely done but still considered a work in progress, as I am trying to figure out some parts as it seems that one colophon is missing and two others might possibly have been moved by the Scribes.)

As you can see, the accounts in Gen 10 and Gen 11 are from two different accounts or documents. This explains the problem you were given in the "Question of the Month – One Language?" It was simple two different writers making reference to the same event.

Be Blessed, Carroll

Thank you Carroll for your excellent discussion into colophons and their use in the Hebrew Bible.

From Ruchamah:

One thing I noticed in your translation of Gen 2:2 you say: This is the word Mwy (yom) meaning “day” with the prefix ב (ba) meaning “in.” Combined these mean “in the day.”

I just wanted to point out that BA means “in the” in normal Hebrew grammar. In, of course, would [be the letter] Bet with shewa: B'yom בְּיוֹם (in a day, see Isaiah 49:8) instead of Ba'yom בַּיּוֹם (in the day), as in Gen 2:2.

Blessings! Ruchamah

Thank you very much Ruchamah, your comments are much appreciated.

Corrections

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

Advertisements



The Living Words - Volume 1 by Jeff A. Benner

Reading a translation of any book is just not the same as reading it in its original language and is adequately stated in the phrase "lost in the translation." When-ever a text is translated from one language to another it loses some of its flavor and substance. The problem is compounded by the fact that a language is tied to the culture that uses that language. When the text is read by a culture different from the one it is written in, it loses its cultural context. A Biblical example of this can be found in the Hebrew

word tsur which is translated as a rock - "He only is my rock and my salvation, he is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved" (Psalm 62:2, KJV). What is a rock and how does it apply to God? To us it may mean solid, heavy or hard but the cultural meaning of the word tsur is a high place in the rocks where one runs to for refuge and defense, a place of salvation. "The Living Words" is an in-depth study into the Ancient Hebrew vocabulary and culture of the Bible replacing the flavor and substance that has been removed from us.

Additional information and ordering details are available through the bookstore.

(<http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/bookstore>)

Copyright © 2008

Jeff A. Benner

Ancient Hebrew Research Center

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