# Ancient Hebrew Research Center

# Biblical Hebrew E-Magazine

September, 2008                                    Issue #046

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## Biblical Word of the Month -  Eleph

By: Jeff A. Benner

> *The oxen likewise and the young asses that till the ground shall eat savory provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fork.* (ASV, Isaiah 30:24)

In the verse above is the Hebrew noun אלף (eleph, Strong's #504) meanint oxen. Oxen are the largest of the Ancient Hebrews' livestock and were most frequently used for plowing the fields, usually in pairs. An older ox would be yoked to a younger one in order for the older one to teach the younger through association. This same noun is also found in Judges 6:15 where it is translated as "family." In a family, the children learn from the parents, in the same manner as the oxen, through association.

The verbal root of this word is אלף (A.L.Ph, Strong's #502) and means "learn," but more literally, to learn through association, as can be seen in the following verse.

> *Make no friendship with a man that is given to anger; And with a wrathful man thou shalt not go: Lest thou <u>learn</u> this ways, And get a snare to thy soul.* (ASV, Proverbs 22:25)

As oxen are "very large" animals, the word אלף (eleph) is also used for a "thousand," a "very large" number. (While this is the same word discussed previously, Strong's dictionary has assigned this word the number 505 when used for a "thousand.") From this aspect of the noun, a second verb is formed. Normaly, Hebrew nouns are derived out of verbs, however on occasion, a verb is derived out of a noun, this verb is called a demonstrative verb. The demonstrative verb formed out of אלף (eleph) is אלף (A.L.Ph, Strong's #503) meaning to "give a thousand."

In summary, the Hebrew word אלף can be;
1. A verb meaning to learn by association.
2. A noun meaning oxen, a large beast, which learns through association.
3. A noun meaning family, through the idea of association.
4. A noun meaning a thousand, a large number.
5. A verb meaning to give a thousand.

One other note about the word eleph, it may be the origin of the word elephant, a "very large" beast.

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## Modern Word of the Month - Slihhah

By: Jeff A. Benner

You're walking down the street in Jerusalem and you accidently bump into another person. What do you say? Sleehhah! (the "hh" is pronounced hard like the "ch" in the name Bach). The Hebrew "slihhah" is equivelent to the English "sorry" or "pardon." It is derived from the verb סלח (S.L.Hh, Strong's #5545) meaning "forgive" or "pardon."

> *For thy name's sake, O Jehovah, Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.* (ASV, Psalm 25:11)

While the word sleehhah is a modern Hebrew word for "sorry" it is also a Biblical Hebrew word meaning "forgivenss" and is found in three passages; Nehemiah 9:17, Psalm 130:4 and Daniel 9:9.

### Name of the Month - Benjamin

By: Jeff A. Benner

> *And it came to pass, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin.* (ASV, Genesis 35:18)

The twelfth son of Ya'akov was first named בן אוני (ben oni, Strong's #1126) by his mother Rahheyl (Rachel). The name Ben-Oni is the word בן (ben, Strong's #1121) meaning son and the word אוני which is the word און (ohn or avon, Strong's #205) meaning vanity, or more literally, effort that is put out with no results, with the suffix י (i) meaning "of me" or "my." The name בן אוני then means "son of my vanity" and appears to be Rahheyl's final words which imply that her son, who is brought forth through much effort, would bring her life to an end.

Ya'akov gave a different name to his son - בנימין (binyamin, Strong's #1144). This is again, the word בן (ben, Strong's #1121) meaning son but combined with the word ימין (yamin, Strong's #3225) meaning "right hand." The name בנימין then means "son of the right hand." When a father blessed the eldest son, he would place his right hand upon his head when giving him his blessing (see Genesis 48:18). As Binyamin is Ya'akov's youngest son, it would seem strange to call him the "son of the right hand," unless he is to be treated as the firstborn son. When it came to time to divide up the family estate among the sons, the father would give a "double portion" to the firstborn. In Genesis 43:34 we see Yoseph giving Binyamin a portion "five" times as much as his brothers.

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### Question of the Month – Transliteration vs. Translation?

By: Jeff A. Benner

**Q:** What is the difference between a transliteration and a translation?

**A:** A translation is taking a word from one language and changing it to a word from another language with the same, or in most cases a similar, meaning. As an example, the translation of the Hebrew word ארץ (erets) into English is "land." In reverse, the translation of the English word "heaven" into Hebrew is שמים (shamayim).

A transliteration is taking a word from one language and writing the sounds of that word using a different alphabet. As an example, the transliteration of the Hebrew word ארץ (erests) into Roman characters is "erets." In reverse, the transliteration of the English word "heaven" into Hebrew characters is הוון (heven).

In the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, which was originally written in Hebrew, we find that Hebrew words are both translated and transliterated into Greek. In Hebrews 10:5 the Greek word προσφορα (prosphora, meaning offering) is the translation of the Hebrew word קרבן (korban, meaning offering). In Mark 7:11 the Greek word κορβαν (korban) is the transliteration of the Hebrew word קרבן (korban, meaning offering).

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### *Verse of the Month – Genesis 2:5*

By: Jeff A. Benner

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וְכֹל שִׂיחַ הַשָּׂדֶה טֶרֶם יִהְיֶה בָאָרֶץ וְכָל עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה טֶרֶם יִצְמָח כִּי לֹא הִמְטִיר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל הָאָרֶץ וְאָדָם אַיִן לַעֲבֹד אֶת הָאֲדָמָה

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And no plant of the field was yet
in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet sprung
up; for Jehovah God had not caused it to rain upon
the earth: and there was not a man to till the ground; (ASV)

**וְכֹל (ve-khol)**
This is the word כל (kol) meaning "all" with the prefix ו meaning "and" – and all.

**שִׂיחַ (see-ahh)**
This is a noun meaning shrub.

**הַשָּׂדֶה (ha-sa-deh)**
This is the noun שדה (sadey) meaning "field" with the prefix ה meaning "the" – the field.

**טֶרֶם (te-rem)**
This word means "before" or "not yet."

**יִהְיֶה (yeeh-yeh)**
This is the verb היה (H.Y.H) meaning to "exist." The prefix י identifies the verb tense as imperfect - will exist - and the subject of the verb as third person, masculine, singular - he will exist.

## בָאָרֶץ (va-a-rets)

This is the noun ארץ (erets) meaning "land" with the prefix ב (ba) meaning "in the" – in the land.

## וְכָל (ve-khol)

This is the word כל (kol) meaning "all" with the prefix ו meaning "and" – and all.

## עֵשֶׂב (ey-sev)

This is a noun meaning herb.

## הַשָּׂדֶה (ha-sa-deh)

This is the noun שדה (sadey) meaning "field" with the prefix ה meaning "the" – the field.

## טֶרֶם (te-rem)

This word means "before" or "not yet."

## יִצְמָח (yeets-mahh)

This is the verb צמח (Ts.M.Hh) meaning to "sprout." The prefix י identifies the verb tense as imperfect - will sprout - and the subject of the verb as third person, masculine, singular - he will sprout (the "he" being the "field").

## כִּי (kee)

This word is a preposition meaning "because," "that," or "so."

## לֹא (lo)

This word means "no" and is usually used to negate the proceeding verb.

## הִמְטִיר (hee-teer)

This is the verb מטר (M.Th.R) meaning to "rain." The structure of the verb also identifies the verb tense as perfect – he rained. The prefix ה (hee) along with the י (ee) infix, identifies the verb as a hiphil (causative) verb – he made rain, or he caused to rain. But, the preceding word לֹא negates this verb – he did not cause it to rain.

## יְהוָה (YHWH)

This is the four letter name often pronounced as "Yahweh."

## אֱלֹהִים (e-lo-heem)

This word, which includes the masculine plural suffix (iym), can literally mean gods, judges or mighty ones, but it is used for "God." (Note: when two nouns are placed together, such as with the names YHWH and Elohiym, they are in the construct state which, in English, would have the word "of" placed between them.

## עַל (al)

This word means "over" or "upon."

## הָאָרֶץ (ha-a-rets)

This is the noun ארץ (erets) meaning "land." The prefix ה means "the" – the land.

## וְאָדָם (ve-a-dam)

This noun אדם (adam) means "human." The prefix ו means "and" – and a human.

## אַיִן (a-yeen)

This word means "without."

## לַעֲבֹד (la-a-vod)

This is the verb עבד (Ah.B.D) meaning "serve" and is written in the infinitive form. The prefix ל means "to" – to serve.

## אֶת (et)

This word precedes the direct object of a verb.

## הָאֲדָמָה (ha-a-da-mah)

This is the noun אדמה (adamah) meaning "ground." The prefix ה means "the." Combined, this word means "the ground."

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

And all the shrubs of the field, not yet existed in the land, and all the herbs of the field, not yet sprouted, because YHWH Elohiym did not cause it to rain upon the land, and was without a human to serve the ground.

## Mechanical Translation Excerpt - Genesis 5:9 - 20

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

**9** and "Enosh [*Man*]" lived ninety years and he caused to bring forth "Qeynan [*Possession*]", **10** and "Enosh [*Man*]" lived after causing to bring forth "Qeynan [*Possession*]" eight hundred and fifteen years and he caused to bring forth sons and daughters, **11** and all of the days of "Enosh [*Man*]" existed nine hundred and five years and he died, **12** and "Qeynan [*Possession*]" lived seventy years and he caused to bring forth "Mahalalel [*Praise of El*]", **13** and "Qeynan [*Possession*]" lived after his causing to bring forth "Mahalalel [*Praise of El*]" eight hundred and forty years and he caused to bring forth sons and daughters, **14** and all of the days of "Qeynan [*Possession*]" existed nine hundred and ten years and he died, **15** and "Mahalalel [*Praise of El*]" lived sixty-five years and he caused to bring forth "Yared [*Descend*]", **16** and "Mahalalel [*Praise of El*]" lived after his causing to bring forth "Yared [*Descend*]" eight hundred and thirty years and he caused to bring forth sons and daughters, **17** and all of the days of "Mahalalel [*Praise of El*]" existed eight hundred and ninety-five years and he died, **18** and "Yared [*Descend*]" lived a hundred and sixty-two years and he caused to bring forth "Hhanokh [*Dedicated*]", **19** and "Yared [*Descend*]" lived after his causing to bring forth "Hhanokh [*Dedicated*]" eight hundred years and he caused to bring forth sons and daughters, **20** and all of the days of "Yared [*Descend*]" existed nine hundred and sixty-two years and he died,

## AHRC Website Excerpt – Update on the Hebrew Letter Tsade

Reconstructing the original Semitic/Hebrew alphabet is not an exact science and is always in need of updating when new evidence is found or discovered. When I first began the task of reconstructing this ancient alphabet, I found that in the past, most scholars agreed that the original form of the letter tsade was ⟨pictograph⟩ and believed to be a "hook." However, the problem I had with this was that the Hebrew word for a hook was חח (hhahh) and has no relationship to the Hebrew word צדי (tsade, the name of this letter). What I did discover was that the ancient pictograph ⟨pictograph⟩ looks like a picture of a man lying on his side and the Hebrew word "side" is צד (tsad), a clear connection between the pictograph and the name of this letter.

About a year ago, I received an email from an individual who proposed the idea that the pictograph ⟨pictograph⟩ was an image of a trail or path, which was very similar to the Ancient Hebrew meaning of the word צדיק (tsadiq, which begins with the letter tsade) meaning, "to walk the correct path. After looking into this, I discovered that there was much evidence to support this view of the letter.

Let's first start with the pictograph itself - ◐᷈. The squiggly line is the trail while the circle is the destination. The Hebrew verb ציד (Ts.Y.D) means "to hunt" as in following a trail to the game (the destination). The word "tsiyd" may be the original name for this letter, which then later evolved to "tsade." Each of the words that are derived from the parent root צד (tsad) are related to the idea of hunting. צדה means to lay in wait in ambush alongside a trail. צוד is a snare that is set in the trail. ציד means game, the goal or destination of the hunt.

Below is a list of Child roots which begin with the letter tsiyd.

צא   to go out, as in to follow a trail or path.
צב   a wagon, as following a trail or path.
צג   to leave behind.
צד   a stronghold.
צו   directions, as in to point out the way.
צח   dry, in the sense of the desert, the place of the nomads who follow the trails.
צי   a desert, the place of the nomads who follow the trails.
צך   a burden, as carried when traveling.
צל   a shadow, as an outline/path of the original.
צם   thirst, in the sense of searching for water.
צן   a flock, as herded by the nomad.
צע   wander, as one searching for the trail.
צף   keep watch, as in keeping an eye on the destination.
צץ   a blossom, whose purpose (destination) is to produce a fruit.
צר   narrow, in the sense of following a canyon trail with high sides.
צת   to set on fire (uncertain connection to tsiyd).

Based on this evidence, the meaning of this can be a trail, hunt or journey. The word צם (tsam) appears as ᗯᗯ◐᷈ in the ancient pictographic script, a picture of a trail and of water (the letter mem). When combined these letters mean "trail of water" and this word means "thirst." The word צע (tsey) appears as ⬭◐᷈ in the ancient pictographic script, a picture of a trail and the eye. When combined these letters mean "trail of the eye" and this word means "wander" in the sense of looking for a trail.

Over the next few months I will be updating the pages of this website to reflect this new understanding of the Hebrew letter "tsayid."

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## Editorials

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

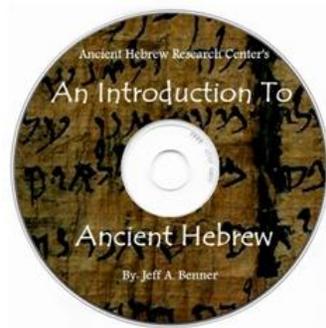Alison Brown writes, concerning the "Verse of the Month" in the August Issue;

> I was reading the interpretation of Gen 2:4 in the E magazine you sent, and I also have the book of Genesis in Hebrew with English underneath from ArtScroll.com. I am aware of the textual oddity's, there in both the book of genesis and the Tanakh. I [found] in this verse one (in my [Hebrew] text) small hey in the word be-hi-bar-am* (when they were created) and following your Hebrew word unpacking (which I thank you for, its great), I am reading it as "with 'small hey' they [are] being filled." So, [this means] to me that the Lord filled the sky's and the land with the "hey," like He did [with the names] Abra**H**am and Sara**H**  he breathed Himself in to the sky and land.... it's another sort of *water mark* in the scriptures of our Creator!
>
> * Editor's Note: Alison is referring to the unique way this word appears in the
>
> Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible – בהבראם.

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## Corrections

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

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