

# Ancient Hebrew Research Center

## Biblical Hebrew E-Magazine

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### ***Biblical Word of the Month - Iniquity***

By: Jeff A. Benner

In Genesis 19:15 we find the word “iniquity.”

*And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters that are here, lest thou be consumed in the **iniquity** of the city. (ASV, Genesis 19:15)*

Our modern Greco-Roman languages commonly use abstract terms, like iniquity. But as Hebrew is a concrete language, rarely using abstracts, we must understand the word “iniquity” from its Hebraic concrete meaning. The Hebrew word for “iniquity” is **און**

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(*ah-von*, Strong's #5771), which is derived from the verbal root עוה (*Ah.W.H*, Strong's #5753). This verbal root is found in the following passages.

*He hath walled up my ways with hewn stone; he hath made my paths **crooked**.* (ASV, Lamentations 3:9)

*Behold, the LORD will lay waste the earth and make it desolate, and he will **twist** its surface and scatter its inhabitants.* (RSV, Isaiah 24:1)

Already we are beginning to see the “concrete” meaning in the Hebrew word that lies behind the English word “iniquity,” it is something crooked or twisted. The first letter in this word is the letter ע (*ayin*). This single letter was originally two different letters when Hebrew was written with a pictographic alphabet; the ע (ayin) and the ע (ghayin). The *ghayin* is a picture of a twisted cord and is clearly the original letter in this word (for more on this subject of the *ayin* and *ghayin* see the AHRC article titled [Letters missing from the Hebrew Alphabet](#)).

As we have demonstrated, the verb עוה (*Ah.W.H*) means “to be crooked” or “to be twisted,” therefore the noun עוון (*ah-von*), derived from this verb, then means “crookedness” or “twistedness.” Let’s return to our original passage and read this from a more concrete perspective.

*And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters that are here, lest thou be consumed in the **twistedness** of the city.* (ASV, Genesis 19:15)

This same noun is also found in the following passage.

*And Cain said unto the LORD, My **punishment** is greater than I can bear.* (KJV, Genesis 4:13)

Why the translators chose the word “punishment” for this word is a mystery because this translation implies that Cain was saddened by the punishment. The truth is, this word means twistedness, and he was instead saddened by his “actions.”

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### **Modern Word of the Month - Verb**

By: Jeff A. Benner

The Modern Hebrew word for a verb is פועל (*po'al*). This word is derived from the Biblical Hebrew word פעל (*P.Ah.L*, Strong's #6466), a verb meaning “to work.” The noun פועל (*po'al*), meaning “working” or “action,” is used for verbs because “verbs” are words describing “action.”

An adverb is a word that modifies the verb. For instance, in the sentence, “John ran quickly,” the word “quickly” is an adverb because it modifies how John ran. In Modern Hebrew, the word for an adverb is תואר הפועל (*to'ar hapo'al*). The word תואר comes from the Biblical Hebrew verb תאר (*T.A.R*, Strong's #8388) meaning to “mark out” or “shape.” Therefore, the Hebrew phrase תואר הפועל (*to'ar hapo'al*) means “to shape the action.”

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### ***Name of the Month - Andrew***

By: Jeff A. Benner

*Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and **Andrew** his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; (ASV, Matthew 10:2)*

In our previous issue, we found that Peter (a Greek name), had three names: Shimon (a Hebrew name), Kepha (an Aramaic name) and Petros (a Greek name). It is not known for certain if he went by all three names, or just the Hebrew and Aramaic names and the Greek name Petros (meaning rock) was a translation of the Aramaic Kepha (also meaning rock) that was added when the original Hebrew (or Aramaic) New Testament was translated into Greek.

This is an important issue for when it comes to his brother Andrew, which is a Greek name (Ἀνδρέας/Andreas). If Peter's names were originally Hebrew and Aramaic, then it would be safe to assume that Andrew also had a Hebrew and Aramaic name. The New Testament does not give us any clues to his original Hebrew and Aramaic names as it does with his brother Peter, except that the Aramaic name must have meant “brave” as this is the meaning of the Greek name Andreas.

While the 4<sup>th</sup> Century Aramaic Peshitta provided us Peter's Aramaic name Kepha in Matthew 10:2, it simply transliterates the Greek name as Andraus, which means that, unlike Peter who used his Hebrew and Aramaic name, Andraus may have used his Greek name.

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### ***Question of the Month – Names of other gods?***

By: Jeff A. Benner

**Q:** According to Exodus 23:13 we are not to speak the names of other gods. How do we observe this when the names of the days of the week are names of other gods?

**A:** While many are not aware of this, each day of the week is named for a god: Sun's day, Moon's day, Teu's day, Woden's day, Thor's day, Frea's day, Saturn's day. It would appear from Exodus 23:13, that we should not use these names of the week, as we would be "speaking" the names of other gods. The problem with taking Exodus 23:13 very literally, is that this would mean that YHWH is in violation of his own command as he often speaks the names of foreign gods. However, when we look at this verse from a Hebraic perspective it does not say "do not speak" or "do not mention" their names, it actually says "do not remember" their names. In Hebrew thought "remembering" is not just a mental exercise, but an action of response. In addition, the word for "name" is "shem" which more literally means "character." Therefore, this verse is not saying "do not speak the names of other gods," but instead, "do not respond to the character of the other gods."

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### **Verse of the Month – Genesis 2:15**

By: Jeff A. Benner

וַיִּקַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּגַן־עֵדֶן לְעִבְדָּהּ  
וּלְשָׁמְרָהּ:

And Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. (ASV)

#### **וַיִּקַּח (vai-yi-qahh)**

The base word is the verb לקח (L.Q.Hh) meaning "to take." The prefix י (yud) identifies the verb tense as imperfect – will take, and also identifies the subject of the verb as third person, masculine, singular – he will take. The prefix ו (vav) means "and" but also reverses the tense of the verb from imperfect to perfect – and he took. Also note that the letter ל (lamed) is dropped once the verb is conjugated, but this is the only verb that drops this letter.

#### **יְהוָה (YHWH)**

This is the Tetragramaton, the four letter name of God.

#### **אֱלֹהִים (eh-lo-heem)**

The base word is אלוה (e-lo-ah), which is commonly translated as "God" or "god," but more literally means "one of power and authority." The suffix ם (eem) is the masculine plural, so this word means "gods" or "ones of power and authority." However, this plural noun is often used as a name for YHWH. Because this is being used as a name, it should be transliterated as "Elohiym" rather than translating it with the English word "God."

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This name/word is the subject of the verb וַיִּקַּח (vai-yi-qahh) – and YHWH Elohiym took.

### אֶת (et)

This word precedes the definite object of the verb.

### אָדָם (ha-a-dam)

The base word is אָדָם (adam) meaning “human.” The prefix ה (he) means “the” – the human. This noun is the definite object of the verb וַיִּקַּח (vai-yi-qahh).

### וַיִּנְחֵהוּ (vai-ya-nee-hhey-hu)

The base word is the verb נָח (N.W.Hh) meaning “to rest” or “settle down.” The prefix י (yud) identifies the verb tense as imperfect – will rest, and also identifies the subject of the verb as third person, masculine, singular – he will rest. The prefix ו (vav) means “and” but also reverses the tense of the verb from imperfect to perfect – and he rested. This verb is also written in the hiphil (causative) form (identified by the “ee” vowel sound after the letter nun) – and he caused to rest. The suffix ה (hu) identifies the object of the verb as masculine singular – and he caused him to rest.

### וַיִּגַּן (ve-gan)

The word גַּן (gan) is a garden, meaning a “river,” and the prefix ו (ve) means “and” – and a river.

### עֵדֶן (ey-den)

This is the name of the garden (Eden).

### לְעַבְדָּהּ (le-av-dah)

The base word is the verb עָבַד (Ah.B.D) meaning “to serve” and is written in the infinitive – serve. The prefix ל (L) means “to” – to serve. The suffix ה (ah) identifies the object of the verb as feminine – to serve her (the “her” is the garden, a feminine word).

### וּלְשָׂמְרָהּ (ul-sham-rah)

The base word is the verb שָׁמַר (Sh.M.R) meaning “to guard” and is written in the infinitive – guard. The prefix ל (L) means “to” – to guard. The prefix ו (u) means “and” – and to guard. The suffix ה (ah) identifies the object of the verb as feminine – and to guard her (again, the “her” is the garden, a feminine word).

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

And YHWH Elohiym took the man and he caused him to rest in the garden of Eden to serve her and to guard her.

In following issues we will continue with this chapter.

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### ***Mechanical Translation Excerpt - Genesis 9:1-6***

**1** and “Elohiym [Powers]” respected “No'ahh [Rest]” and his sons and said to them reproduce and increase and fill the land, **2** and a fearing of you and a trembling in fear of you will exist upon all of the living ones of the land and upon all of the flyers of the sky, in all of the ones which the ground will tread and in all of the fish of the sea, in your hand, they have been given, **3** all treaders which is living, he will exist for you for food like the green herbs I gave all to you, **4** surely the flesh is in his being, you will not eat his blood, **5** and surely your blood for your being I will seek, from the hand of all of the living ones I will seek him and from the hand of the human, from the hand of the man of his brother I will seek the being of the human, **6** pouring out the blood of the human, in the human is his blood, he will be poured out given that in the image of “Elohiym [Powers]” he made the human,

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

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### ***AHRC Website Excerpt – Love***

In our modern Western culture, love is an abstract thought of emotion, how one feels toward another, but the Hebrew word **אהב** *ahav* <sup>[H:157]</sup> goes much deeper than simple emotion.

The parent root of this word is **הב** *hav*. While this root is not found in the Biblical text, a couple of other derivatives are. The word **הבהב** *havhav* <sup>[H:1890]</sup>, a noun meaning “gift” and **יהב** *yahav* <sup>[H:3051]</sup>, a verb meaning “to provide,” help to supply the fuller Hebraic understanding of **אהב** *ahav* <sup>[H:157]</sup>.

We do not choose our parents or siblings, but they are instead given to us as a gift from above, a privileged gift. Even in the Ancient Hebrew culture, one’s wife was chosen for him. It is our responsibility to provide and protect those privileged gifts. As a verb, the Hebrew word **אהב** *ahav* <sup>[H:157]</sup> means “to provide and protect what is given as a privileged gift.” We are to love God, neighbors, and family, not in an emotional sense, but in the sense of our actions.

This article is located on the web site at  
<http://thelivingwords.ancient-hebrew.org/>

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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, [let us know](#).

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## **Corrections**

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

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### *Ancient Hebrew Torah*

by Jeff A. Benner

The first five books of the Hebrew Bible, called the Torah (a Hebrew word meaning “teachings”), are the foundation to the rest of the Bible. While there are many Torah books available, most of them use the square Aramaic script that is only about two thousand years old, but now, with the Ancient Hebrew Torah, the Torah can be read and studied through the original pictographic script from the time of Abraham and Moses. Each letter in this ancient script is a picture, where each picture represents a concrete idea. The Hebrew word *ל**ב*, often translated as “God,” is a picture of an ox head, representing power, and a shepherd staff, representing authority. These two letters, when combined into a word, mean “one of power and authority.” When the Torah is read from this perspective, the text comes to life.

This book is currently available in E-Book form, but will be available in softcover soon.

<http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/bookstore/aht.html>

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