Ancient Hebrew Research Center

Biblical Hebrew E-Magazine

January, 2012   Issue #063

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Biblical Word of the Month - Psalm

By: Jeff A. Benner

The Biblical Hebrew word for the word "psalm" is מזמור (mizmor, Strong's #4210). This noun comes from the root זמר (*Z-M-R*), which is identified in Strong's dictionary with two different entries, #2167 and #2168. Strong's #2167 is identified as meaning sing, praise and music. Strong's #2168 is identified as trim or prune. Both of these concepts, music and pruning, are related to the idea of "plucking," plucking a stringed instrument to make music, and plucking twigs from a tree to prune it.

From this, we may conclude that מזמור (mizmor) is more literally the "music and song made from a stringed instrument," such as a harp, a favorite instrument of David, the

author of many of the Psalms. The book of Psalms is a collection of poetical passages that were sung to music, as we read in the following verse.

> *Give thanks to YHWH with the harp (kinor), with the lute (neyvel) make music (ZMR) for him.* (Psalm 33:2)

Modern Word of the Month - Army

By: Jeff A. Benner

The Biblical and modern Hebrew word for "army" is צבא (*tsava*, Strong's #6635) and is derived from the verbal root צבא (*Ts-B-A*, Strong's #6633) meaning "to fight" or "wage war." The Israeli Defense Force (IDF) is the English translation of the Hebrew צבא ההגנה לישראל (*tsava hahaganah l'yisrael*), which literally means "Army for the defense of Israel," which is usually written with its acronym צה"ל (when the " is placed before the last letter in a word, it indicates that the word is an acronym).

Name of the Month - Thaddeus

By: Jeff A. Benner

The next apostle in our series is James, the son of Alphaeus. We have already looked at the name "James" in issue #57, so we will move onto the next Apostle, Thaddeus.

> *Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and <u>Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus</u>;* (KJV, Matthew 10:3)

Some Greek manuscripts simply identify this Apostle as Thaddeus, while others refer to him as "Labbeus who is called Thaddeus," such as seen in the King James Version. It has been proposed that Thaddeus is a Hellenized (Greek) form of an Aramaic or Hebrew name תדי (Taddai), but the actual meaning of this name is uncertain. The name Labbeus is a Hellenized form of the Hebrew word לבב (levav, Strong's #3824) meaning "heart" and the Hebrew name may have been לבבי (levaviy) meaning "my heart" or לבביה (levaviyah) meaning "heart of Yah."

The Gospel of Luke omits the name Thaddeus, but instead has "Judas" (not Judas Iscariot) and most scholars agree that Thaddeus is this Judas. We will discuss the name Judas when we come to Judas Iscariot.

Question of the Month – Writing on the cross?

By: Jeff A. Benner

Q: Do the first letters of each of the words on the sign of Yeshua's (Jesus') cross spell out יהוה (YHWH) when it was written in Hebrew?

A: All four Gospels recount what was written on the sign that is placed on the cross of Yeshua, but there are differences in that wording.

Matthew 27:37 – This is Jesus the king of the Jews
Mark 15:26 – King of the Jews
Luke 23:38 – This is the king of the Jews
John 19:19 – Jesus of Nazareth* the king of the Jews
* Most translations have this phrase, but the Greek has "Jesus the Nazarene."

If we take a compilation of all of these, which is most likely what the sign actually read, we have "This is Jesus of Nazareth the king of the Jews." In Hebrew this would be written as; זה ישוע הנצרי מלך היהודים (zeh yeshua natsriy melekh ha'yehudiym). The acronym for this would be; זיהמה (ZYHMH).

Now let's look at each verse individually;

Matthew 27:37
זה ישוע מלך יהודים
zeh yeshua melekh yehudiym
Acronym: זימי (ZYMY)

Mark 15:26
מלך יהודים
melekh yehudiym
Acronym: מי (MY)

Luke 23:38
זה מלך יהודים
zeh melekh yehudiym
Acronym: זמי (ZMY)

John 19:19
ישוע הנצרי מלך יהודים
yeshua hanatsriy melekh yehuiym
Acronym: יהמי (YHMY)

The closest that any of these come to the name יהוה (YHWH) is John 19:19, but if we add the word "and" between the two phrases (which is not found in any of the Gospels) and "the" before יהודים (yehudiym/Jews, which Biblical Hebrew would rarely do, but does on occasion), we now have; ישוע הנצרי ומלך היהודים (yeshua hanatsriy umelekh hayehudiym) and the acronym is יהוה (YHWH).

In conclusion, from a purely textual criticism of the phrase found in the Greek text, the acronym does not spell out the name יהוה (YHWH). However, if a slight modification is made to the Greek texts, it is possible that the acronym of the words on the cross could spell out the name יהוה (YHWH).

Verse of the Month – Genesis 2:22

By: Jeff A. Benner

$$\text{וַיִּבֶן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַצֵּלָע אֲשֶׁר לָקַח מִן הָאָדָם לְאִשָּׁה וַיְבִאֶהָ אֶל הָאָדָם׃}$$

And the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. (ASV)

וַיִּבֶן (vai-yi-ven)
This verb root is בנה (B.N.H) meaning "build." When a verb ending with the letter ה (h) is conjugated, the ה (h) is dropped. The prefix י (y) identifies the subject of the verb as third person, masculine singular and the tense of the verb as imperfect - he will build. The prefix ו (v) means "and," but also reverses the tense of the verb – and he built.

יְהוָה (YHWH)
This is the Tetragrammaton, the four letter name of the God of the Hebrews, usually pronounced Yahweh. There are many theories as to the origin and meaning of this name but most likely comes from the verb הוה (hawah) meaning to exist. The yud added to the beginning identifies the object of the verb as first person, masculine, singular, imperfect tense or "he exists".

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 ים (iym) 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." The phrase "Yhwh Elohiym" may be translated as "Yahweh the Elohiym" or "Yahweh of the Elohiym" (Compare this phrase with "Yahweh Tseva'ot" in Psalms 24:10, where it is

translated as "Yahweh of hosts"). Yhwh Elohiym is the subject of the previous verb, the one doing the building.

אֶת (et)

This word precedes the definite object of a verb telling us that the next word is what is receiving the action of the previous verb, the object of the verb. This word is a grammatical tool used in Biblical Hebrew and has no equivalent in English and is therefore never translated.

הַצֵּלָע (ha-tsey-la)

The base word is צלע (tsela), which is a rib or ribbed shaped object such as the ridge of a hill. The prefix ה means "the" – the rib. This is the object of the previous verb, what was built.

אֲשֶׁר (a-sher)

This is a common Hebrew word meaning "which" or "who".

לָקַח (la-qahh)

This verb means "to take," and as it is written without any prefixes or suffixes, it identifies the subject of the verb as masculine singular and the tense of the verb as perfect - he took.

מִן (meen)

This word means "from."

הָאָדָם (ha-a-dam)

The base word is אדם (adam) meaning "human." The prefix ה means "the" – the human.

לְאִשָּׁה (le-ee-shah)

The word אשה (ishah) means "woman." The prefix ל (le) means "to" or "for" - to the woman.

וַיְבִאֶהָ (vai-vi-e-ah)

This verb root is בוא (B.O.A) meaning "come," but the letter ו (o) is dropped when conjugated. The prefix י (y) identifies the subject of the verb as third person, masculine singular and the tense of the verb as imperfect - he will come. The prefix ו (v) means "and," but also reverses the tense of the verb – and he came. The "i" vowel between the beyt and aleph identifies the form of this verb as hiphil, or causative - and he made come (or "and he brought"). The suffix ה (ah) identifies the object of the verb as third person feminine singular - and he brought her.

אֶל (el)

This word is a preposition meaning "to" or "toward".

הָאָדָם (ha-a-dam)

The base word is אדם (adam) meaning "human." The prefix ה means "the" – the human.

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

And Yahweh Elohiym built the rib, which he took from the human, for a woman, and he brought her to the human.

In following issues we will continue with this chapter.

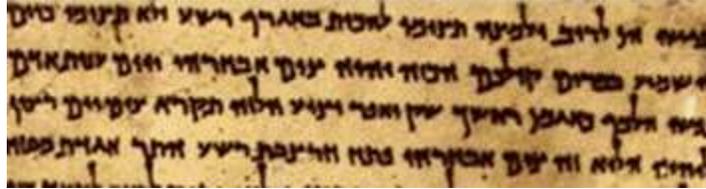## *Mechanical Translation Excerpt - Genesis 11:1-9*

1 and all of the land existed as one lip and units of words, **2** and it came to pass in their journey from the east that they found a level valley in the land of Shinar [*Country of two rivers*] and they settled there, **3** and they said each to his companion, provide, we will make bricks and we will greatly cremate and the brick existed to them for stone and the tar was to them for mortar, **4** and they said, provide, we will build for us a city and a tower and his head will be in the sky and we will make for us a title otherwise we will scatter abroad upon the face of all of the land, **5** and YHWH [*he exists*] went down to see the city and the tower which the sons of the human built, **6** and YHWH [*he exists*] said, though the people are a unit and one lip for all of them and this is what they will begin to do and now nothing will be fenced in from them, all which they will plot to do, **7** provide, we will go down and we will mix there their lip that they will not hear each lip of his companion, **8** and YHWH [*he exists*] scattered them abroad from there upon the face of all of the land and they terminated to build the city, **9** therefore he called out her title Bavel [*Confusion*] given that there YHWH [*he exists*] mixed the lip of all of the land and from there YHWH [*he exists*] made them scatter abroad upon the face of all of the land,

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

AHRC Website Excerpt – A History of Hebrew

The Hebrew Bible, called the Old Testament by Christians and the Tanakh by Jews, is an Ancient Near Eastern text, which was written millennia ago within a time and culture that is vastly different from our own. The author's perspectives on life and the world around

them are steeped with their own traditions, lifestyles, manners and thoughts. When reading and studying this text we cannot interject our own cultural perspectives into the text, to do so would bring about interpretations and conclusions that are far removed from the authors intended meaning.

A portion of the Great Isaiah Scroll from the Dead Sea Caves

We will be examining the Hebrew alphabet, language, philosophy and culture to uncover the evidence that supports a perspective of these ancient Near Eastern texts that is very different from the way they are normally perceived and we will dig into the deeper meanings of these texts from an ancient perspective.

An Ancient Hebrew Inscription

Contents:

- The discovery and decipherment of the Hebrew alphabet.
- The Hebrew alphabet's origins and evolution and its relationship to Greek and Aramaic.
- Ancient texts, scrolls and inscriptions and their relationship to the Biblical text.
- The root system of the Hebrew language and its importance to Biblical interpretation.
- The philosophy of the Hebrew people and its impact on the Hebrew language.
- The agricultural connection to the Hebrew alphabet, language and philosophy.
- The history of ancient Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic manuscripts of the Bible.
- The process and importance of Biblical Textual Criticism.

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

AHRC Update

New web content, articles, books, videos and DVDs produced by AHRC as well as any new events.

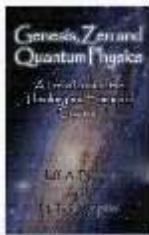AHRC is now on Facebook, come and join us there for updates and special content.

We have been working a lot to make more material available for mobile devices (ie: iPad, iPhone, Android, etc). If you go to the AHRC home page with your mobile device, you will automatically be redirected to the new mobile site (http://m.ancient-hebrew.org). The AHRC bookstore is also available on mobile devices (http://m.ancient-hebrew.org/bookstore) and features all of Mr. Benner's books in the PDF and ePub format. ePub is becoming the standard for eBooks today and reads much better on mobile devices than the PDF format. If you have previously purchased any of Mr. Benner's books in the PDF format and would like that book in the new ePub format, please feel free to download a copy (**without** clicking on the "add to cart" button) from the bookstore. Each new issue of the Biblical Hebrew E-zine is also available through the mobile site.

AHRC is offering two of its eBooks for free, *A Mechanical Translation of Genesis,* and *A History of Hebrew*. Please help yourself and enjoy.

Mr. Benner's latest book, *Learn to Read Biblical Hebrew, Volume 2*, is now available in book and eBook format.

A lot of people have been asking Mr. Benner if he will be making more videos on YouTube. Yes, he will, but because of his work schedule he will not be able to until about March or April. At which time he will make new videos and be continuing the Alphabet series and the "Heaven and Hell" series.

Advertisements

Genesis, Zen and Quantum Physics:
A fresh look at the theology and science of Creation.
by Jeff A. Benner and Michael Calpino
(NEW)

Since ancient times man has sought to understand the origins of the universe around him, and his place within it. Such speculations were once the sole purview of religion, but since the Enlightenment, science and rationality have also attempted to explain these mysteries, but from an opposing perspective. Conflict resulted and both sides dug in, clinging to dogmas that precluded any consideration of the other side.

Genesis, Zen and Quantum Physics enters the fray with a very unique approach. Believing that harmony, rather than conflict, defines the relationship between the Genesis account and modern science; the authors have retranslated the creation story according to the ancient Hebrew pictographic language and in the context of the nomadic culture from which the language and narratives arose.

The resulting translation and its accompanying commentary challenge the common understanding of God, science, and the very reason for man's existence. By harmonizing an accurate biblical

account with cutting edge scientific understanding, the authors present a mature religious ideal and an appreciation for the understanding of the ancients for modern scientific concepts. This is a book that will redefine your understanding of God, the world around you and your role within it.

Additional information and ordering details are available through the bookstore.
(http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/bookstore)

Editorials

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

Alison sent me the following message after reading the last issue of the eZine.

> I am currently reading Romans 11 which is all about the tree and the branches, and this just stood out. Also, John 15:6 says "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned." What I saw was "alone" is being a branch/stick separated from its root, the root being [as in Romans 11] God in Christ Jesus/Yahshua. We are very alone when we are not in relationship with our Creator. The Hebrew idiom is so very appropriate!
>   --Alison

Forrest made the following observation:

> Under Word of the Month the sixth word you show in the list, you have listed as "tevunah", but you show it as "BWN". If it is tevunah shouldn't the first character be the Hebrew Tau not Beyit? Thanks for the monthly update.
>   --Forrest

That is a good observation Forrest, but let me explain as how I have written it is a little confusing. I state in the article that these are the roots "and the words derived out of them." In other words, "B-W-N" is the root and "tevunah" is the word derived out of B-W-N.

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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