

## ~MOTHER (414)

[Hebrew, *em*, Greek, *me'ter*]

### .. Figurative Use

- Like the Hebrew word, *av*, father, the word, *em*, mother, is probably a mimetic word, one of the first lip sounds of a baby. It is used to designate the immediate mother of an individual, possibly a stepmother
- Then he related it to his father as well as his brothers, and his father began to rebuke him and say to him; What does this dream that you have dreamed mean? Am I and also your **mother** and your brothers for certain going to come and bow down to the earth to you? (**Genesis 37:10**)
- Finally God remembered Rachel, and God heard and answered her in that he opened her womb. (**Genesis 30:22**)
- And she became pregnant and brought a son to birth. Then she said; God has taken away my reproach! (**Genesis 30:23**)
- So she called his name Joseph, saying; Yehowah is adding another son to me. (**Genesis 30:24**)
- Then they pulled away from Bethel. And while there was yet a good stretch of land before coming to Ephrath, Rachel proceeded to give birth, and it was going hard with her in making the delivery. (**Genesis 35:16**)
- But so it was that while she had difficulty in making the delivery the midwife said to her; Do not be afraid, for you will have this son also. (**Genesis 35:17**)
- And the result was that as her soul was going out, because she died, she called his name Benoni, but his father called him Benjamin. (**Genesis 35:18**)
- Thus Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath, that is to say; Bethlehem. (**Genesis 35:19**)
- And also an ancestress, since Adam's wife Eve was the **mother** of everyone living.

- After this Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she had to become the **mother** of everyone living. (**Genesis 3:20**)
- And forty-one years he reigned in Jerusalem, and his grand**mother's name** was Maacah the granddaughter of Abishalom. (**1 Kings 15:10**)
- The **Greek** word for **mother** is *me'ter*. In both **Hebrew** and **Greek**, the word for mother is used in a number of figurative ways.
- The desire to have a large family was especially strong in the heart of Hebrew women because of God's promise to make Israel a populous nation and the people through whom the seed of promise would come.
- Why, Abraham is surely going to become a nation great and mighty, and all the nations of the earth must bless themselves by means of him. (**Genesis 18:18**)
- And by means of your seed all nations of the earth will certainly bless themselves due to the fact that you have listened to my voice. (**Genesis 22:18**)
- And now if you will strictly obey my voice and will indeed keep my covenant, then you will certainly become my special property out of all **other** peoples, because the whole earth belongs to me. (**Exodus 19:5**)
- And you yourselves will become to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you are to say to the sons of Israel. (**Exodus 19:6**)
- For one to be childless was considered to be one of the greatest of misfortunes.
- When Rachel came to see that she had borne nothing to Jacob, Rachel got jealous of her sister and began to say to Jacob; Give me children or otherwise I shall be a dead woman. (**Genesis 30:1**)
- Under the Law covenant a woman was religiously unclean after the birth of a male child for 40 days (7 plus 33), and after the birth of a female child for double this amount of time, or 80 days (14 plus 66).

- **Speak to the sons of Israel, saying; In case a woman conceives seed and does bear a male, she must be unclean seven days, as in the days of the impurity when she is menstruating she will be unclean. (Leviticus 12:2)**
- **And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin will be circumcised. (Leviticus 12:3)**
- **For thirty-three days more she will stay in the blood of purification. She should not touch any holy thing, and she should not come into the holy place until the fulfilling of the days of her purification. (Leviticus 12:4)**
- **Now if she should bear a female, she must then be unclean fourteen days, as during her menstruation. For sixty-six days more she will stay with the blood of purification. (Leviticus 12:5)**
- **For the 7 and the 14 days respectively she was unclean to all persons, including her husband, but for the 33 and 66 days respectively she was unclean only as to holy things and things connected with religious services at the sanctuary.**
- **Hebrew **mothers** breast-fed their children till they were three years old and sometimes up until the age of five years or longer, in the belief that the longer the child was suckled the stronger it would grow. Where the mother died or could not provide a sufficient supply of milk, a nurse was employed.**
- **Hence, babes and sucklings of the Bible could include those old enough to be weaned, old enough to have some knowledge to be able to praise Yehowah and to be trained at the sanctuary.**
- **When the chief priests and the scribes saw the marvelous things he did and the boys that were crying out in the temple and saying; Save, we pray, the Son of David! They became indignant (Matthew 21:15)**
- **And said to him; Do you hear what these are saying? Jesus said to them; Yes. Did you never read this: Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings you have furnished praise? (Matthew 21:16)**
- **At this Elkanah her husband said to her; Do what is good in your eyes. Stay at home until you wean him. Only may Yehowah**

carry out his word. So the woman stayed at home and kept nursing her son until she weaned him. (1 Samuel 1:23)

- Accordingly just as soon as she had weaned him, she brought him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull and one ephah of flour and a large jar of wine, and she proceeded to enter the house of Yehowah in Shiloh. And the boy was with her. (1 Samuel 1:24)
- Then Elkanah went to Ramah to his house, and as for the boy, he became a minister of Yehowah before Eli the priest. (1 Samuel 2:11)

### See Also WEANING

- There was a special closeness between the **mother** and the children because the **mother** took immediate care of the children until the time after weaning when the father would begin to guide the child's education more personally.
- The **mothers** position in the household was one of recognized importance. She was to be respected even in her very old age.
- Honor your father and your **mother** in order, that your days may prove long upon the ground that Yehowah your God is giving you. (Exodus 20:12)
- And one who strikes his father and his **mother** is to be put to death without fail. (Exodus 21:15)
- And one who calls down evil upon his father and his **mother** is to be put to death without fail. (Exodus 21:17)
- Listen to your father who caused your birth, and do not despise your **mother** just because she has grown old. (Proverbs 23:22)
- Honor your father and your **mother**, just as Yehowah your God has commanded you, in order, that your days may prove long and it may go well with you on the ground that Yehowah your God is giving you. (Deuteronomy 5:16)
- In case a man happens to have a son who is stubborn and rebellious, he not listening to the voice of his father or the voice of his **mother**, and they have corrected him but he will not listen

to them. (**Deuteronomy 21:18**)

- His father and his **mother** must also take hold of him and bring him out to the older men of his city and to the gate of his place. (**Deuteronomy 21:19**)
- And they must say to the older men of his city, This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he is not listening to our voice, being a glutton and a drunkard. (**Deuteronomy 21:20**)
- Then all the men of his city must pelt him with stones, and he must die. So you must clear away what is bad from your midst, and all Israel will hear and indeed become afraid. (**Deuteronomy 21:21**)
- Cursed is the one who treats his father or his **mother** with contempt. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:16**)
- Of course, her position was always secondary to that of her husband, whom she was to respect and obey. As a child, Jesus kept in subjection to his adoptive father Joseph and his **mother** Mary.
- And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and he continued subject to them. Also, his **mother** carefully kept all these sayings in her heart. (**Luke 2:51**)
- And Jesus went on progressing in wisdom and in physical growth and in favor with God and men. (**Luke 2:52**)
- Where the father had more than one wife, the sons would distinguish their real **mother** from their fathers other wives by using the designation mother. Full brothers were distinguished from half brothers by the expression sons of my **mother**.
- At that he said; They were my brothers, the sons of my **mother**. As Yehowah lives, if you had preserved them alive, I would not have to kill you. (**Judges 8:19**)
- When he raised his eyes and saw Benjamin his brother, the son of his **mother**, he went on to say; Is this your brother, the youngest one of whom you have spoken to me? And he added; May God show you his favor, my son. (**Genesis 43:29**)

- The **mother** was required to transmit the instructions and commands of the father to the children and see that these were carried out.
- Listen, my son, to the discipline of your father, and do not forsake the Law of your **mother**. (**Proverbs 1:8**)
- Observe, O my son, the commandment of your father, and do not forsake the Law of your **mother**. (**Proverbs 6:20**)
- The words of Lemuel the king, the weighty message that his **mother** gave to him in correction. (**Proverbs 31:1**)
- The **mother** was the manager of her household under her husband's headship. Bearing and rearing children in a right way kept her busy and protected her to a great extent from becoming a gossip or a meddler in other peoples affairs. As long as she continued in the faith, this proved to be a very great safeguard for her.
- Let a widow be put on the list who has become not less than sixty years old, a wife of one husband. (**1 Timothy 5:9**)
- Having a witness borne to her for fine works, if she reared children, if she entertained strangers, if she washed the feet of holy ones, if she relieved those in tribulation, if she diligently followed every good work. (**1 Timothy 5:10**)
- On the other hand, turn down younger widows, for when their sexual impulses have come between them and the Christ, they want to marry. (**1 Timothy 5:11**)
- Having a judgment because they have disregarded their first expression of faith. (**1 Timothy 5:12**)
- At the same time they also learn to be unoccupied, gadding about to the houses, yes, not only unoccupied, but also gossipers and meddlers in other peoples affairs, talking of things they ought not. (**1 Timothy 5:13**)
- Therefore I desire the younger widows to marry, to bear children, to manage a household, to give no inducement to the opposer to revile. (**1 Timothy 5:14**)
- However, she will be kept safe through childbearing, provided

they continue in faith and love and sanctification along with soundness of mind. (**1 Timothy 2:15**)

- A good **mother** had to prepare food and make cloth as well as articles of clothing for her children and other members of the household, and her husband as well as her sons could well commend and praise such a woman before others.
- She also gets up while it is still night, and gives food to her household and the prescribed portion to her young women. (**Proverbs 31:15**)
- Her hands she has thrust out to the distaff, and her own hands take hold of the spindle. (**Proverbs 31:19**)
- She does not fear for her household because of the snow, for all her household are clothed with double garments. (**Proverbs 31:21**)
- Her sons have risen up and proceeded to pronounce her happy, her owner rises up, and he praises her. (**Proverbs 31:28**)

#### •• **Figurative Use**

- The word **mother** is applied at;
- The dwellers in open country ceased, in Israel they ceased, until I, Deborah, rose up, until I rose up as a **mother** in Israel. (**Judges 5:7**)
- In the sense of a woman who assists and cares for others. Paul referred to his gentleness toward those to whom he brought God's truth, his spiritual children, as that of a nursing **mother**.
- To the contrary, we became gentle in the midst of you, as when a **nursing mother** cherishes her own children. (**1 Thessalonians 2:7**)

#### **See Also GENTLENESS**

- Because of the close spiritual relationship, Christian women are likened to **mothers** and **sisters** of their fellow Christians and are to be treated with the same respect and chastity.

- **Whoever does the will of God, this one is my brother and sister and **mother**. (Mark 3:35)**
- **Do not severely criticize an older man. To the contrary, entreat him as a father, younger men as brothers. (1 Timothy 5:1)**
- **Older women as **mothers**, younger women as **sisters** with all chasteness. (1 Timothy 5:2)**
- **Christian wives who follow the good example of Abraham's wife Sarah are termed her children.**
- **As Sarah used to obey Abraham, calling him lord. And you have become her children, provided you keep on doing good and not fearing any cause for terror. (1 Peter 3:6)**
- **Since man's body was made out of dust from the ground, the earth may figuratively be likened to his **mother**.**
- **And Yehowah God proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul. (Genesis 2:7)**
- **And say; Naked I came out of my **mother's** belly, And naked shall I return there. Yehowah himself has given, and Yehowah himself has taken away. Let the name of Yehowah continue to be blessed. (Job 1:21)**
- **A city is depicted as a **mother**, the inhabitants of which are considered her children. In the case of Jerusalem, the city as the seat of government stood for the entire nation, and the people of Israel as individuals were considered her children.**
- **Now this Hagar means Sinai, a mountain in Arabia, and she corresponds with the Jerusalem today, for she is in slavery with her children. (Galatians 4:25)**
- **But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our **mother**. (Galatians 4:26)**
- **And their names were Oholah the older one and Oholibah her sister, and they came to be mine and began to give birth to sons and daughters. And as for their names, Oholah is Samaria, and Oholibah is Jerusalem. (Ezekiel 23:4)**



- **And I will express my ardor against you, and they must take action against you in rage. Your nose and your ears they will remove, and the remainder of you will fall even by the sword. Your sons and your daughters they themselves will take, and the remainder of you will be devoured by the fire. (Ezekiel 23:25)**
- **O daughter of Babylon, who are to be despoiled, happy will he be that rewards you with your own treatment with which you treated us. (Psalms 137:8)**
- **Happy will he be that grabs ahold and does dash to pieces your children against the crag. (Psalms 137:9)**
- **Also, a large city was considered as a **mother** to her surrounding dependent towns, or, literally translated, her **daughters**.**
- **And your older sister is Samaria herself with her dependent towns, who is dwelling on your left, and your sister younger than you, who is dwelling on your right, is Sodom with her dependent towns. (Ezekiel 16:46)**
- **As I am alive, is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Yehowah, Sodom your sister, she with her dependent towns, has not done according to what you did, you and your dependent towns. (Ezekiel 16:48)**
- **And I will gather their captive ones, the captive ones of Sodom and of her dependent towns, and the captive ones of Samaria and of her dependent towns, I will also gather your captive ones in the midst of them. (Ezekiel 16:53)**
- **And your own sisters, Sodom and her dependent towns, will return to their former state, and Samaria and her dependent towns will return to their former state, and you yourself and your own dependent towns will return to your former state. (Ezekiel 16:55)**
- **And your older sister is Samaria herself with her dependent towns, who is dwelling on your left, and your sister younger than you, who is dwelling on your right, is Sodom with her dependent towns. (Ezekiel 16:46)**

- **Babylon the Great, the great city, is called the mother of the harlots and of the disgusting things of the earth.**
- **And upon her forehead was written a name, a mystery. Babylon the Great, the mother of the harlots and of the disgusting things of the earth. (Revelation 17:5)**
- **And the woman whom you saw means the great city that has a kingdom over the kings of the earth. (Revelation 17:18)**