

~**HEBREW 2 (1455)**

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· The **Hebrew** language was used for the writing of the major part of the inspired Scriptures 39 books in all, according to the division of material as found in many translations, composing some three quarters of the total content of the Bible. A small portion of these books, however, was written in **Aramaic**.

See Also ARAMAIC

- In the **Hebrew** Scriptures, the name **Hebrew** is not applied to the language, the name there being applied only to individuals or to the people of Israel as a whole. Reference is made to **the Jew's language**
- At this Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah and Shebnaah and Joah said to Rabshakeh; **Speak with your servants, please, in the Syrian language, for we can listen, and do not speak with us in the Jews language in the ears of the people that are on the wall. (2 Kings 18:26)**
- And Rabshakeh continued to stand and call out in a loud voice in the Jews language, and he went on to speak and say; **Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria. (2 Kings 18:28)**

- **Jewish**
- **And as for their sons, half were speaking Ashdodite, and there were none of them knowing how to **speak Jewish**, but in the tongue of the different peoples. (**Nehemiah 13:24**)**
- **And the language of Canaan**
- **In that day there will prove to be five cities in the land of Egypt speaking the **language of Canaan** and swearing to Yehowah of armies. The City of Tearing Down will one city be called. (**Isaiah 19:18**)**
- **Which, at that time the **Eighth Century B.C.E**, was primarily **Hebrew**. In the **Christian Greek Scriptures**, however, the name **Hebrew** is regularly applied to the language spoken by the Jews.**

See Also HEBREW 1

·· **Origin Of The Hebrew Language**

- **Secular history does not reveal the origin of the **Hebrew** language or, for that matter, of any of the most ancient languages known, such as Sumerian, Akkadian, Assyro-Babylonian, Aramaean, and Egyptian.**
- **This is because these tongues appear already fully developed in the earliest written records men have found. The various views advanced by scholars concerning the origin and development of Hebrew such as those claiming that **Hebrew** derived from Aramaic or from some Canaanite dialect are therefore conjectural.**
- **The same may be said for attempts at explaining the derivation of many words found in the **Hebrew** Scriptures. Scholars frequently assign an Akkadian or an Aramaic source for many of these words. However, as **Dr. Edward Horowitz** comments:**
- **In the field of etymology, the study of word origins, there are wide differences of opinion among scholars, even among the very best of them. He then cites examples of explanations by renowned scholars of the etymology of certain Hebrew words, in each case showing that other prominent scholars disagree, and then adds:**

· **And so we have these never ending differences between equally highly respected authorities.** [How the Hebrew Language Grew, 1960, pp. xix, xx.]

See Also LANGUAGE

· **The Bible is the only historical source giving reliable evidence of the origin of the language that we know as Hebrew.** It was, of course, spoken by the Israelite descendants of Abram the **Hebrew**

· **After that a man who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew.** He was then tabernacling among the big trees of Mamre the Amorite, the brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner, and they were confederates of Abram. (**Genesis 14:13**)

· **Who, in turn, was descended from Noah's son Shem.**

· **This is the history of Shem. Shem was a hundred years old when he became father to Arpachshad two years after the deluge.** (**Genesis 11:10**)

· **And after his fathering Arpachshad Shem continued to live five hundred years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters.** (**Genesis 11:11**)

· **And Arpachshad lived thirty-five years. Then he became father to Shelah.** (**Genesis 11:12**)

· **And after his fathering Shelah Arpachshad continued to live four hundred and three years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters.** (**Genesis 11:13**)

· **And Shelah lived thirty years. Then he became father to Eber.** (**Genesis 11:14**)

· **And after his fathering Eber Shelah continued to live four hundred and three years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters.** (**Genesis 11:15**)

· **And Eber lived on for thirty-four years. Then he became father to Peleg.** (**Genesis 11:16**)

· **And after his fathering Peleg Eber continued to live four hundred and thirty years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters.** (**Genesis 11:17**)

- **And Peleg lived on for thirty years. Then he became father to Reu. (Genesis 11:18)**
- **And after his fathering Reu Peleg continued to live two hundred and nine years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters. (Genesis 11:19)**
- **And Reu lived on for thirty-two years. Then he became father to Serug. (Genesis 11:20)**
- **And after his fathering Serug Reu continued to live two hundred and seven years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters. (Genesis 11:21)**
- **And Serug lived on for thirty years. Then he became father to Nahor. (Genesis 11:22)**
- **And after his fathering Nahor Serug continued to live two hundred years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters. (Genesis 11:23)**
- **And Nahor lived on for twenty-nine years. Then he became father to Terah. (Genesis 11:24)**
- **And after his fathering Terah Nahor continued to live a hundred and nineteen years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters. (Genesis 11:25)**
- **And Terah lived on for seventy years, after which he became father to Abram, Nahor and Haran. (Genesis 11:26)**
- **In view of God's prophetic blessing on Shem**
- **And he added; Blessed be Yehowah, Shem's God, and let Canaan become a slave to him. (Genesis 9:26)**
- **It is reasonable to believe that Shem's language was not affected when God confused the language of the disapproved people at Babel.**
- **And Yehowah proceeded to go down to see the city and the tower that the sons of men had built. (Genesis 11:5)**
- **After that Yehowah said; Look! They are one people and there is**

one language for them all, and this is what they start to do. Why, now there is nothing that they may have in mind to do that will be unattainable for them. (**Genesis 11:6**)

- Come now! Let us go down and there confuse their language that they may not listen to one another's language. (**Genesis 11:7**)
- Accordingly Yehowah scattered them from there over all the surface of the earth, and they gradually left off building the city. (**Genesis 11:8**)
- That is why its name was called Babel, because there Yehowah had confused the language of all the earth, and Yehowah had scattered them from there over all the surface of the earth. (**Genesis 11:9**)
- Shem's language would remain the same as it had been previously, the **one language** that had existed from Adam onward.
- Now all the earth continued to be of one language and of one set of words. (**Genesis 11:1**)
- This would mean that the language that eventually came to be called **Hebrew** was the **one original tongue of mankind**. As stated, secular history knows no other.

·· **Question Of The Language's Stability**

- History is replete with examples of languages changing over long periods of time. The English spoken in the time of Alfred the Great of the **Ninth Century C.E.**, would seem like a foreign tongue to most English-speaking people of today.
- It might, therefore, seem likely that the language originally spoken by Adam would have changed substantially by the time the writing of the **Hebrew** Scriptures began with Moses.
- The long life spans enjoyed in that 2,500-year period, however, would be a definite factor operating against such change. Thus, there was only one human link, namely, Methuselah, needed to connect Adam with the Flood survivors.

- Additionally, Shem, who was evidently a pre-Flood contemporary of Methuselah for a number of years, lived well into the lifetime of Isaac. And less than 150 years elapsed from the death of Isaac, **1738 B.C.E.**, until the birth of Moses **1593 B.C.E.**

- This overlapping of the lives of individuals several generations apart would serve to maintain uniformity of speech. Of course, the extent to which these human links, such as Shem and Abraham, lived in geographic proximity is not always known. Regular communication is an important factor in language stability.

- That not all of Shem's descendants continued to speak the one language of pre-Flood times in its pure form is evident from the differences that developed among the Semitic languages, including **Hebrew**, Aramaic, Akkadian, and the various Arabic dialects.

- In the **18th Century B.C.E.**, about the year **1761 B.C.E.**, Abraham's grandson and grandnephew used different terms in naming the heap of stones they had set up as a memorial or witness between them. Jacob, the father of the Israelites, called it Galeed, while Laban, a resident in Syria or Aram, though not himself a descendant of Aram, used the Aramaean term Jegar-sahadutha.

- And Laban began calling it Jegarsahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. (**Genesis 31:47**)

- The dissimilarity of these two terms, however, does not necessarily indicate a major difference between Aramaean and **Hebrew** at this point, inasmuch as Jacob seems to have faced no particular problem in communication there in Syria.

- Undoubtedly, as new circumstances and situations arose and new artifacts were produced, certain words would be coined to describe such developments.

- Such terms might differ from place to place among geographically separated groups of the same language family, even while the actual structure of their language remained very much the same.

- Among the Israelites themselves, some small variation in pronunciation developed, as is evident by the different pronunciation given the word Shibboleth by the Ephraimites during the period of the Judges, **1473 to 1117 B.C.E.**

- **Immediately Jephthah collected all the men of Gilead together and fought Ephraim, and the men of Gilead went striking Ephraim down, for they had said; Men escaped from Ephraim is what you are, O Gilead, inside of Ephraim, inside of Manasseh. (Judges 12:4)**
- **And Gilead got to capture the fords of the Jordan ahead of Ephraim, and it occurred that when the escaping men of Ephraim would say; Let me pass over, then the men of Gilead would say to each one; Are you an Ephraimite? When he would say; No! (Judges 12:5)**
- **Then they would say to him; Please say Shibboleth. And he would say; Sibboleth, as he was unable to say the word correctly. And they would lay hold of him and slay him at the fords of the Jordan. So there fell at that time forty-two thousand out of Ephraim. (Judges 12:6)**
- **This, however, is no basis for claiming, as some have, that the Israelites then spoke separate dialects.**
- **In the Eighth Century B.C.E, the difference between Hebrew and Aramaic had become wide enough to mark them as separate languages.**
- **This is seen when King Hezekiah's representatives requested the spokesmen of Assyrian King Sennacherib to, speak with your servants, please, in the Syrian, Aramaic, language, for we can listen, and do not speak with us in the Jews language in the ears of the people that are on the wall.**
- **And the king of Assyria proceeded to send Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah with a heavy military force to Jerusalem, that they might go up and come to Jerusalem. So they went up and came and stood still by the conduit of the upper pool, which is at the highway of the laundryman's field. (2 Kings 18:17)**
- **And they began to call out to the king, but there came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder. (2 Kings 18:18)**

- At this Eliakim the son of Hilkiah and Shebnah and Joah said to Rabshakeh; Speak with your servants, please, in the Syrian language, for we can listen, and do not speak with us in the Jews language in the ears of the people that are on the wall. (**2 Kings 18:26**)
- Although **Aramaic** was then the lingua franca of the Middle East and was used in international diplomatic communication, it was not understood by the majority of the Judeans.
- The earliest known non-Biblical written documents in Aramaic are from about the same period, and these confirm the distinction between the two languages.
- Had both **Hebrew** and Aramaic diverged from the original, one language, or did one of them preserve the purity of that primary language?
- While the Bible does not specifically say; the implication is that the language in which Moses began the writing of the inspired Sacred Record was the same as that spoken by the first man.
- If history was put in written form before the Flood, such history would contribute notably to the preservation of the purity of the original tongue.
- Even if that history were passed on by oral tradition, it would still serve to maintain the stability of the original speech. The extreme care that the Jews of later times showed in endeavoring to conserve the true form of the Sacred Record illustrates the concern that would surely have been shown in patriarchal times to transmit accurately the earliest record of God's dealings with men.
- Further reason for believing that the **Hebrew** of the Bible accurately represents the, one language, of pre-Babel times is the remarkable stability of the **Hebrew** language during the thousand-year period in which the **Hebrew** Scriptures were written.
- As **The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia** states: **One of the most remarkable facts connected with the Hebrew of the Old Testament is that, although its literature covers a period of over a thousand years, the language, grammar and vocabulary, of the oldest parts differs little from that of the latest. [Edited by G. W. Bromiley, 1982, Vol. 2, p. 659]**

· Knowledge Of The Language Incomplete

- In reality, knowledge of ancient **Hebrew** is by no means complete. As **Professor Burton L. Goddard** says; **In large measure, the Old Testament Hebrew must be self explanatory.** [The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, edited by M. Tenney, 1963, p. 345]
- This is because so few other contemporaneous writings in the **Hebrew** language have been found that could contribute to an understanding of the word usage.
- Among those of any importance are the Gezer calendar a simple list of agricultural operations thought to date from the **Tenth Century B.C.E**, some ostraca, inscribed pieces of broken pottery, from Samaria, mainly orders and receipts for wine, oil, and barley and generally assigned to the early part of the **Eighth Century B.C.E**, the Siloam inscription, found in a water tunnel of Jerusalem and believed to date from the reign of King Hezekiah, **745-717 B.C.E**, and the Lachish ostraca, probably from the latter part of the **Seventh Century B.C.E**.
- Additionally, there is a Phoenician inscription on the sarcophagus of King Ahiem in Byblos, Gebal, its language closely resembling **Hebrew** and thought to be from the start of the **First Millennium B.C.E**, also the Moabite Stone, apparently from the late tenth or early **Ninth Century B.C.E**. The language on the Moabite Stone is very similar to Hebrew, as might be expected in view of the Moabites descent from Abraham's nephew Lot.
- Later Lot went up from Zoar and began dwelling in the mountainous region, and his two daughters along with him, because he got afraid of dwelling in Zoar. So he began dwelling in a cave, he and his two daughters. (**Genesis 19:30**)
- And the firstborn proceeded to say to the younger woman; Our father is old and there is not a man in the land to have relations with us according to the way of the whole earth. (**Genesis 19:31**)
- Come, let us give our father wine to drink and let us lie down with him and preserve offspring from our father. (**Genesis 19:32**)
- So they kept giving their father wine to drink during that night, then the firstborn went in and lay down with her father, but he did not know when she lay down and when she got up. (**Genesis 19:33**)

- **And it came about on the next day that the firstborn then said to the younger; Here I lay down with my father last night. Let us give him wine to drink tonight also. Then you go in, lie down with him, and let us preserve offspring from our father. (Genesis 19:34)**
- **So they repeatedly gave their father wine to drink during that night also, then the younger got up and lay down with him, but he did not know when she lay down and when she got up. (Genesis 19:35)**
- **And both the daughters of Lot became pregnant from their father. (Genesis 19:36)**
- **In time the firstborn became mother to a son and called his name Moab. He is the father of Moab, to this day. (Genesis 19:37)**
- **The total of the information on all these inscriptions, however, is but a small fraction of that found in the Hebrew Scriptures.**
- **The Hebrew Scriptures themselves, though covering a wide range of subjects and employing an extensive vocabulary, by no means contain all the words or expressions of ancient Hebrew.**
- **The Siloam inscription and the Lachish ostraca, for example, contain certain word and grammatical constructions that do not appear in the Hebrew Scriptures, yet these constructions are clearly of Hebrew origin.**
- **Undoubtedly the ancient vocabulary of the Hebrew-speaking people contained many more root words, plus thousands of words derived from these, than are known today.**
- **Aside from those portions of the Bible definitely known to be written in Aramaic, there are quite a number of words and expressions found in the Hebrew Scriptures for which the original roots are unknown.**
- **Lexicographers classify many of these as loanwords, claiming that Hebrew borrowed these from other Semitic tongues, such as Aramaic, Akkadian, or Arabic.**
- **This is speculation, however. As Edward Horowitz states: But sometimes the borrowing is so ancient that scholars do not know**

which language did the borrowing and which was the original owner.
[How the Hebrew Language Grew, pp. 3,5]

- It seems more probable that such questioned terms are genuinely **Hebrew** and are further evidence of the incompleteness of modern knowledge of the scope of the ancient language.
- Among the evidences pointing to a rich vocabulary in ancient **Hebrew** are writings from the start of the **Common Era**.
- These include non-Biblical religious writings forming part of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and also the Mishnah, a body of rabbinic writings in Hebrew dealing with Jewish tradition. Writing in *The Encyclopedia Americana* [1956, Vol. XIV, p. 57a], Professor Meyer Waxman says:
- **Biblical Hebrew does not exhaust the entire stock of words, as is proved by the Mishnah, which employs hundreds of Hebrew words not found in the Bible.** Of course, some of these could have been later additions or coined expressions, but doubtless many were part of the **Hebrew** vocabulary during the period of the writing of the **Hebrew** Scriptures.

•• When Did Hebrew Begin To Wane

- It is popularly held that the Jews began to change over to Aramaic speech during their exile in Babylon. The evidence for this, however, is not strong. Modern examples show that subjugated groups or immigrants can and frequently do retain their native tongue over periods far longer than 70 years.
- Particularly since the Jews had the divine promise of a return to their homeland, it may be expected that they would be little inclined to drop **Hebrew** in favor of either Akkadian, Assyro-Babylonian, or Aramaic, the lingua franca of that time.
- True, Aramaic passages and words are to be found in the exilic and postexilic books, such as Daniel, Ezra, and Esther. This is not unusual, however, inasmuch as those books include accounts of events taking place in Aramaic-speaking lands, as well as official correspondence, and they deal with a people subject to domination by foreign powers using Aramaic as a diplomatic language.
- And they continued reading aloud from the book, from the Law of the true God, it being expounded, and there being a putting of meaning into it, and they continued giving understanding in the

reading. (**Nehemiah 8:8**)

- Describes the putting of meaning into and giving understanding in the reading of the Law. It has been suggested that **Hebrew** was not then perfectly understood by the returned exiles and that some Aramaic paraphrasing was done.
- However, the text itself points more to an exposition of the sense and application of what was being taught in the Law, rather than to some clarification of linguistic terminology or grammatical forms.
- And toward them the prophecy of Isaiah is having fulfillment, which says; By hearing, you will hear but by no means get the sense of it, and, looking, you will look but by no means see. (**Matthew 13:14**)
- Did you get the sense of all these things? They said to him; Yes. (**Matthew 13:51**)
- Then he said to them; That being the case, every public instructor, when taught respecting the kingdom of the heavens, is like a man, a householder, who brings out of his treasure store things new and old. (**Matthew 13:52**)
- And commencing at Moses and all the Prophets he interpreted to them things pertaining to himself in all the Scriptures.
- And commencing at Moses and all the Prophets he interpreted to them things pertaining to himself in all the Scriptures. (**Luke 24:27**)
- Philip ran alongside and heard him reading aloud Isaiah the prophet, and he said; Do you actually know what you are reading? (**Acts of Apostles 8:30**)
- He said; Really, how could I ever do so, unless someone guided me? And he entreated Philip to get on and sit down with him. (**Acts of Apostles 8:31**)
- Actually, there is no reference in the Bible to any abandonment of **Hebrew** as the daily tongue of the people. True, Nehemiah found certain Jews who had Ashdodite, Ammonite, and Moabite wives and whose children did not know how to speak Jewish.

- **But the mention of this factor in connection with Nehemiah's indignation at the Jews involved in these marriages with non-Israelites indicates that such slighting of **Hebrew** was strongly disapproved.**
- **Also, in those days I saw the Jews that had given a dwelling to Ashdodite, Ammonite and Moabite wives. (**Nehemiah 13:23**)**
- **And as for their sons, half were speaking Ashdodite, and there were none of them knowing how to speak Jewish, but in the tongue of the different peoples. (**Nehemiah 13:24**)**
- **And I began to find fault with them and call down evil upon them and strike some men of them and pull out their hair and make them swear by God; You should not give your daughters to their sons, and you should not accept any of their daughters for your sons or yourselves. (**Nehemiah 13:25**)**
- **Was it not because of these that Solomon the king of Israel sinned? And among the many nations there proved to be no king like him, and loved of his God he happened to be, so that God constituted him king over all Israel. Even him the foreign wives caused to sin. (**Nehemiah 13:26**)**
- **And is it not something unheard of for you to commit all this great badness in acting unfaithfully against our God by giving a dwelling to foreign wives? (**Nehemiah 13:27**)**
- **This might be expected in view of the importance given to the reading of God's Word, which was till then mainly in **Hebrew**.**
- **The period from the close of the **Hebrew** canon, likely in the time of Ezra and Malachi in the, **Fifth Century B.C.E**, down till the start of the **Common Era** is not dealt with to any extent in the Bible.**
- **Secular records are also few. But even these give little support to a changeover from Hebrew to Aramaic on the part of the Jewish people. The evidence indicates that many of the Apocryphal books, such as Judith, Ecclesiasticus, not Ecclesiastes, Baruch, and First Maccabees, were written in **Hebrew**, and these works are generally viewed as dating from the last **three centuries** before the **Common Era**.**
- **As already mentioned, some of the non-Biblical writings among the Dead Sea Scrolls were also in **Hebrew**, and **Hebrew** was used in compiling the Jewish Mishnah after the beginning of the Common Era.**

- Because of these and related facts, **Dr. William Chomsky** states that the theory held by some Jewish and non-Jewish scholars that Aramaic had completely displaced **Hebrew** is without any foundation and has been effectively disproved.

- If anything, it is more likely that the Jews became a bilingual people, but with Hebrew prevailing as the preferred tongue. As Dr. Chomsky says of the Mishnaic Hebrew:

- This language bears all the earmarks of a typical vernacular employed by peasants, merchants and artisans. On the basis of the available evidence it seems fair to conclude that the Jews were generally conversant, during the period of the Second Commonwealth, especially its latter part, with both languages [**Hebrew** and Aramaic] Sometimes they used one, sometimes another. [**Hebrew; The Eternal Language, 1969, pp. 207,210**]

- The strongest evidence, however, favoring the view that **Hebrew** continued as a living language down into the **First Century** of the **Common Era** is found in the references to the Hebrew language in the **Christian Greek Scriptures**.

- Now in Jerusalem at the sheepgate there is a pool designated in **Hebrew** Bethzatha, with five colonnades. (**John 5:2**)

- Therefore Pilate, after hearing these words, brought Jesus outside, and he sat down on a judgment seat in a place called The Stone Pavement, but, in **Hebrew**, Gabbatha. (**John 19:13**)

- And, bearing the torture stake for himself, he went out to the so-called Skull Place, which is called Golgotha in **Hebrew**. (**John 19:17**)

- Therefore many of the Jews read this title, because the place where Jesus was impaled was near the city, and it was written in **Hebrew**, in Latin, in Greek. (**John 19:20**)

- Jesus said to her; Mary! Upon turning around, she said to him, in **Hebrew**; Rabboni! Which means Teacher! (**John 20:16**)

- They have over them a king, the angel of the abyss. In **Hebrew** his name is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. (**Revelation 9:11**)

- And they gathered them together to the place that is called in **Hebrew** Har–Magedon. (**Revelation 16:16**)
- While many scholars hold that the term **Hebrew** in these references should instead read **Aramaic**, there is good reason to believe that the term actually applies to the **Hebrew** language, as is shown in the article, **ARAMAIC**.
- When the physician Luke says that Paul spoke to the people of Jerusalem in the **Hebrew** language, it seems unlikely that he meant thereby the Aramaic or Syrian language.
- After he gave permission, Paul, standing on the stairs, motioned with his hand to the people. When a great silence fell, he addressed them in the **Hebrew** language, saying; (**Acts of Apostles 21:40**)
- Well, when they heard he was addressing them in the **Hebrew** language, they kept all the more silent, and he said. (**Acts of Apostles 22:2**)
- And when we had all fallen to the ground I heard a voice say to me in the Hebrew language; Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? To keep kicking against the goads makes it hard for you. (**Acts of Apostles 26:14**)
- Since the Hebrew Scriptures earlier distinguished between Aramaic or Syrian, and **the Jew's language**
- At this Eliakim the son of Hilkiah and Shebnah and Joah said to Rabshakeh; Speak with your servants, please, in the Syrian language, for we can listen, and do not speak with us in the Jews language in the ears of the people that are on the wall. (**2 Kings 18:26**)
- And since the **First-Century** Jewish historian Josephus, considering this passage of the Bible, speaks of Aramaic and **Hebrew** as distinct tongues [**Jewish Antiquities, X, 8, i, 2**], there seems to be no reason for the writers of the **Christian Greek Scriptures** to have said **Hebrew** if they meant Aramaic or Syrian.

See Also ARAMAIC

- That Aramaic was widely used throughout Palestine by that time is acknowledged. The use of **Aramaic *Bar***, meaning son, rather than **Hebrew *Ben***, in several names, such as Bartholomew and Simon Bar-jonah, is one evidence of familiarity with **Aramaic**.
- Of course, some Jews also had Greek names, as did Andrew and Philip, and this would not of itself prove that their common speech was Greek, any more than Marks Latin name would prove that this was the common language of his family.
- Evidently four languages were current in Palestine in the **First Century** of the **Common Era**. The three mentioned in the Bible as appearing on the sign over the impaled Jesus head, **Hebrew**, Latin, and Greek
- Pilate wrote a title also and put it on the torture stake. It was written. Jesus the Nazarene the King of the Jews. (**John 19:19**)
- Therefore many of the Jews read this title, because the place where Jesus was impaled was near the city, and it was written in **Hebrew**, in Latin, in Greek. (**John 19:20**)
- And the fourth one, Aramaic. Of these, Latin was undoubtedly the least common.
- Jesus may well have used Aramaic on occasion, as when speaking to the Syrophenician woman.
- From there he rose up and went into the regions of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered into a house and did not want anyone to get to know it. Yet he could not escape notice. (**Mark 7:24**)
- But immediately a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard about him and came and prostrated herself at his feet. (**Mark 7:25**)
- The woman was a Grecian, a Syrophenician nationally, and she kept asking him to expel the demon from her daughter. (**Mark 7:26**)
- But he began by saying to her; First let the children be satisfied, for it is not right to take the bread of the children and throw it to the little dogs. (**Mark 7:27**)

- In reply, however, she said to him; Yes, sir, and yet the little dogs underneath the table eat of the crumbs of the little children. (**Mark 7:28**)
- At that he said to her; Because of saying this. Go! The demon has gone out of your daughter. (**Mark 7:29**)
- So she went away to her home and found the young child laid on the bed and the demon gone out. (**Mark 7:30**)
- Certain expressions recorded as spoken by him are generally considered to be of **Aramaic** origin. Yet, even here there is need for caution since the classifying of these expressions as Aramaic is not without question. For example, the words spoken by Jesus while impaled on the stake, *E'li, E'li, la'ma sa-bach-tha'ni?*
- About the ninth hour Jesus called out with a loud voice, saying; Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? That is, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (**Matthew 27:46**)
- And at the ninth hour Jesus called out with a loud voice; Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? Which means, when translated; My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (**Mark 15:34**)
- Are usually considered to be Aramaic, perhaps of a Galilean dialect. However, **The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible** says; **Opinion is divided in regard to the original language of the saying and as to whether Jesus himself would more naturally have used Hebrew or Aramaic.**
- Documents indicate that a form of Hebrew, somewhat influenced by Aramaic, may have been in use in Palestine in the **First Century A.D.** [Edited by G. A. Buttrick, 1962, Vol. 2, p. 86]
- In reality, the Greek transliteration of these words, as recorded by Matthew and Mark, does not allow for a positive identification of the original language used.
- One further evidence for the continued use of **Hebrew** in apostolic times is the testimony that Matthew's Gospel was originally written by him in Hebrew.
- It appears, then, that **Hebrew** began to wane primarily after, and as a result of, the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple and the scattering of its remaining inhabitants in the year **70 C.E.**

- Nevertheless, its use was continued in the synagogues wherever the Jews spread. Particularly from about the **Sixth Century C.E.** onward, zealous efforts were made to maintain the purity of the Hebrew text of the Scriptures by those Jewish scholars known as the Masoretes.

- And particularly from the **16th Century C.E.** onward, interest in ancient **Hebrew** revived, and the following century saw intensive study of other Semitic tongues begin.

- This has contributed to a clarification of the understanding of the ancient language and has resulted in improved translations of the Hebrew Scriptures.

· Hebrew Alphabet And Script

- The **Hebrew** alphabet was composed of 22 consonants, several of these evidently can represent two sounds, giving a total of some 28 sounds. The vowel sounds were supplied by the reader, guided by the context, much as an English-speaking person fills in the vowels for such abbreviations as bldg. (building), blvd. (boulevard), and hgt. (height).

- It is believed that the traditional pronunciation of the **Hebrew** Scriptures was kept alive and handed down by those specializing in reading the Law, Prophets, and Psalms for the instruction of the people. Then, in the second half of the **First Millennium C.E.**, the Masoretes devised a system of dots and dashes called vowel points, and these were inserted in the consonantal text.

- Additionally, certain accent marks were supplied to indicate stress, pause, connection between words and clauses, and musical notation.

- The earliest **Hebrew** inscriptions known are recorded in an ancient script considerably different in form from the square-shaped Hebrew letters of later documents, such as those of the early centuries of the Common Era.

- The square-shaped style is often called Aramaic, or Assyrian. It is believed that the change from ancient Hebrew characters to square **Hebrew** characters took place during the Babylonian exile. However, as **Ernst Würthwein** says:

- For a long while the Old Hebrew script remained in use beside the square script. The coins of the period of Bar Kochba's revolt, A.D. 132-135, bear Old Hebrew letters. Among the texts found in the Dead Sea caves are some written in the Old Hebrew script. [The Text of the Old Testament, 1979, p. 5]

- Origen, a Christian writer of the Second and Third Centuries C.E, stated that, in the more correct copies of the Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures, the Tetragrammaton, or sacred name of Yehowah, was written in ancient Hebrew letters.

- This has been confirmed by the discovery of fragmentary leather scrolls dated to the First Century C.E, containing the minor prophets in Greek. In these scrolls the Tetragrammaton appears in the ancient Hebrew characters. [See Northwest appendix, p. 1563, Nos. 2-4]

- Fragments from the late Fifth or early Sixth Century C.E. of Aquilas Greek version also contain the divine name written in ancient Hebrew characters. [NW appendix, p. 1563, Nos. 7,8]

- Dr. Horowitz says; It was the old Hebrew alphabet that the Greeks borrowed and passed on to Latin, and it is the old Hebrew alphabet that the Greek most closely resembles. [How the Hebrew Language Grew, p. 18]

•• Qualities And Characteristics

- Hebrew is a very expressive language, lending itself to the vivid description of events. Its short sentences and simple conjunctions give movement and flow of thought. Hebrew poetry, which adds to these qualities those of parallelism and rhythm, is remarkably expressive and moving.

- Hebrew is rich in metaphors. Seashore, at;

- I shall surely bless you and I shall surely multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens and like the grains of sand that are on the seashore, and your seed will take possession of the gate of his enemies. (Genesis 22:17)

- In Hebrew is, literally, lip of the sea. Other expressions are the face of the earth, the head of a mountain, the mouth of a cave, and similar metaphoric expressions.

- **That this use of human terms in no way indicates any animistic belief can be seen from reading the Scriptures themselves, for the utmost disdain is shown toward those who would worship trees and other objects.**
- **There is one whose business is to cut down cedars, and he takes a certain species of tree, even a massive tree, and he lets it become strong for himself among the trees of the forest. He planted the laurel tree, and the pouring rain itself keeps making it get big. (Isaiah 44:14)**
- **And it has become something for man to keep a fire burning. So he takes part of it that he may warm himself. In fact he builds a fire and actually bakes bread. He also works on a god to which he may bow down. He has made it into a carved image, and he prostrates himself to it. (Isaiah 44:15)**
- **Half of it he actually burns up in a fire. Upon half of it he roasts well the flesh that he eats, and he becomes satisfied. He also warms himself and says; Aha! I have warmed myself. I have seen the firelight. (Isaiah 44:16)**
- **But the remainder of it he actually makes into a god itself, into his carved image. He prostrates himself to it and bows down and prays to it and says; Deliver me, for you are my god. (Isaiah 44:17)**
- **For the customs of the peoples are just an exhalation, because it is a mere tree out of the forest that one has cut down, the work of the hands of the craftsman with the billhook. (Jeremiah 10:3)**
- **With silver and with gold one makes it pretty. With nails and with hammers they fasten them down, that none may reel. (Jeremiah 10:4)**
- **They are like a scarecrow of a cucumber field, and cannot speak. Without fail they are carried, for they cannot take any steps. Do not be afraid because of them, for they can do nothing calamitous and, what is more, the doing of any good is not with them. (Jeremiah 10:5)**
- **In no way is there anyone like you, O Yehowah. You are great, and your name is great in mightiness. (Jeremiah 10:6)**

- Who should not fear you, O King of the nations, for to you it is fitting, because among all the wise ones of the nations and among all their kingships there is in no way anyone like you. (**Jeremiah 10:7**)
- And at one and the same time they prove to be unreasoning and stupid. A tree is a mere exhortation of vanities. (**Jeremiah 10:8**)
- Woe to the one saying to the piece of wood; O do awake! To a dumb stone; O wake up! It itself will give instruction! Look! It is sheathed in gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it. (**Habakkuk 2:19**)
- The **Hebrew** vocabulary is composed of concrete words, words that involve the senses of seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, and smelling. Thus, they paint mental pictures for the hearer or reader. Because of this concrete quality, some scholars say that **Hebrew** is lacking in abstract terms.
- There definitely are some abstract nouns in Biblical **Hebrew**, however. For instance, the noun *ma-chasha-vah'*, drawn from the root *cha-shav'*, meaning think, is translated by such abstract terms as thought, device, invention, scheme.
- *Ba-tach'*, a verb that means trust, is the source of the noun *be'tach* or security. Nevertheless, as a general rule abstract ideas are carried by concrete nouns. Consider the root verb *ka-vedh'*, which means, basically, be heavy as at;
- Thus ten thousand chosen men out of all Israel came in front of Gibeah, and the fighting was heavy, and the Benjamites did not know that calamity was impending over them. (**Judges 20:34**)
- The ships of Tarshish were your caravans for your articles of exchange, so that you get filled and become very glorious in the heart of the open sea. (**Ezekiel 27:25**)
- This same verb is translated become glorious, that is, literally, become heavy. Correspondingly, from this root is drawn the noun *ka-vedh'*, which refers to the liver, one of the heaviest internal organs, and the noun *ka-vohdh'*, meaning glory.
- And the two kidneys and the fat that is upon them, the same as that upon the loins. And as for the appendage upon the liver, he

will remove it along with the kidneys. (**Leviticus 3:4**)

- For this is what Yehowah has said; Here I am extending to her peace just like a river and the glory of nations just like a flooding torrent, and you will certainly suck. Upon the flank you will be carried, and upon the knees you will be fondled. (**Isaiah 66:12**)
- This taking of the abstract from the concrete is further illustrated by *yadh*, meaning hand and also care, means, or guidance
- To this they said; A certain Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds and, besides, he actually drew water for us that he might water the flock. (**Exodus 2:19**)
- But Reuben said to his father; My own two sons you may put to death if I do not bring him back to you. Give him over to my care, and I shall be the one to return him to you. (**Genesis 42:37**)
- Every man and woman whose hearts incited them to bring something for all the work that Yehowah had commanded to make by means of Moses did so, the sons of Israel brought a voluntary offering to Yehowah. (**Exodus 35:29**)
- The following are the things inventoried of the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the Testimony, which was inventoried at the command of Moses, as the service of the Levites under the guidance of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest. (**Exodus 38:21**)
- *ʿAph* refers to both nostril and anger,
- After that I asked her and said; Whose daughter are you? to which she said; The daughter of Bethuel the son of Nahor, whom Milcah bore to him. Accordingly I put the nose ring on her nostril and the bracelets on her hands. (**Genesis 24:47**)
- Until the anger of your brother turns away from you and he has forgotten what you have done to him. And I shall certainly send and get you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of both of you in one day? (**Genesis 27:45**)
- *Zeroh'a`*, arm, also conveys the abstract concept of strength
- As for a man of strength, the land is his, and one who is treated with partiality himself dwells in it. (**Job 22:8**)

- Widows you have sent away empty-handed, and the arms of fatherless boys are crushed. (**Job 22:9**)
- It is, in reality, this very quality of concreteness that makes the **Hebrew** Scriptures lend themselves so well to translation, for the sense of the terms is generally of a universal quality, meaning the same in virtually any language.
- Still, it is a challenge for the translator to reproduce in another language the peculiar charm, simplicity, manner of expression, and forcefulness of **Hebrew**, particularly in its verb forms.
- **Hebrew** is remarkable for its brevity, the frame of its structure allowing for such terseness. Aramaic, the closest to **Hebrew** of the Semitic tongues, is by comparison more ponderous, roundabout, wordy.
- In translation, it is often necessary to use auxiliary words to bring out the vividness, picturesqueness, and dramatic action of the Hebrew verb. Though this detracts somewhat from the brevity, it conveys more fully the beauty and accuracy of the Hebrew text.

•• Hebrew Poetry

- These very qualities, including the strong sense of reality, are also what make **Hebrew** peculiarly suited for poetry. **Hebrew** poetic lines are short many are no more than two or three words making the total effect one of strong impact.
- **Professor James Muilenburg**, a member of the **Revised Standard Version** translating committee, has fittingly noted; **Speech in Hebrew poetry is concentrated, and all the emphasis is placed upon the important words. The Hebrew text of (Psalms Chapter 23) contains only fifty-five words, our modern western translations employ twice that number.**
- **Yet even in translation the economy of the original Hebrew is not lost. Hebrew poetry is language that is alive in speech. The Hebrew poet helps us to see, to hear, to feel.**
- **The physical sensations are fresh and alive. The poet thinks in pictures, and the pictures are drawn from the area of everyday life common to all men. [An Introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the Old Testament, 1952, pp. 63,64]**

- To exemplify the terseness of **Hebrew** poetic language observe the first verse of
- Yehowah is my Shepherd. I shall lack nothing. (**Psalms 23:1**)
- In grassy pastures he makes me lie down, by well-watered resting-places he conducts me. (**Psalms 23:2**)
- My soul he refreshes. He leads me in the tracks of righteousness for his names sake (**Psalms 23:3**)
- Even though I walk in the valley of deep shadow, I fear nothing bad, for you are with me, your rod and your staff are the things that comfort me. (**Psalms 23:4**)
- As found in the **NW**. Those English words needed to translate each **Hebrew** word are separated with a diagonal stroke (/):
- Yehowah/ is my Shepherd./
I shall lack/ nothing./
- It can be seen that the English equivalent needs eight words to translate four **Hebrew** words. The is has been supplied to give sense to the English, in Hebrew, it is understood.

•• Primary Forms Of Parallelism

- The most important formal element in **Hebrew** poetry is **parallelism**, or **rhythm** that is achieved not by rhyme, as in English, but by **logical thought**, it has been termed **sense rhythm**. Consider the two lines of.
- To Yehowah belong the earth and that which fills it, the productive land and those dwelling in it. (**Psalms 24:1**)
- The lines here quoted are said to be in **synonymous parallelism**, that is, the second line repeats a portion of the previous line, but in different words. The phrase To Yehowah belong is essential to both lines. However, the terms the earth and the productive land are poetic synonyms, as are that which fills it and those dwelling in it.
- Most contemporary scholars agree that there are two other primary styles of parallelism.

- In **antithetic parallelism**, as its designation implies, each line expresses contrary thoughts.
- For evildoers themselves will be cut off, but those hoping in Yehowah are the ones that will possess the earth. (**Psalms 37:9**)
- Illustrates this;
- For evildoers themselves will be cut off, but those hoping in Yehowah are the ones that will possess the earth.

Then there is **synthetic**, or, **formal**, **constructive**, **parallelism** in which the second portion does not simply echo the same thought as the first or give a contrast. Rather, it enlarges and adds a new thought.

- The Law of Yehowah is perfect, bringing back the soul. The reminder of Yehowah is trustworthy, making the inexperienced one wise. (**Psalms 19:7**)
- The orders from Yehowah are upright, causing the heart to rejoice, the commandment of Yehowah is clean, making the eyes shine. (**Psalms 19:8**)
- The fear of Yehowah is pure, standing forever. The judicial decisions of Yehowah are true, they have proved altogether righteous. (**Psalms 19:9**)
- Notice that the second part of each sentence or clause completes the thought, the whole verse, therefore, is a synthesis, that is, the result of bringing together two elements.
- Only with the second half-lines, such as bringing back the soul and making the inexperienced one wise, does the reader learn how the Law is perfect and how the reminder of Yehowah is trustworthy. In such a series of **synthetic parallels**, this division between the first and second part serves as a **rhythmic** break.
- There is thus, along with the progression of thought, the preservation of a certain verse structure, a parallel of form. It is for this reason sometimes called **formal** or **constructive parallelism**.

·· **Miscellaneous Forms Of Parallelism**

- A number of other styles of parallelism have been suggested, though they are considered to be only variants or combinations of the synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic. Three of these suggestions are: **emblematic, stair-like, introverted.**

- **Emblematic, or comparative;** parallelism makes use of simile or metaphor. Consider;

- As far off as the sunrise is from the sunset, so far off from us he has put our transgressions. (**Psalms 103:12**)

As far off as the sunrise is from the sunset,
So far off from us he has put our transgressions.

In **stair-like parallelism** two, three, or even more lines may be used to repeat and advance the thought of the first.

- Ascribe to Yehowah, O you sons of strong ones, ascribe to Yehowah glory and strength. (**Psalms 29:1**)

- Ascribe to Yehowah the glory of his name. Bow down to Yehowah in holy adornment. (**Psalms 29:2**)

- The **introverted parallelism** is more elaborate and may take in a number of verses. Observe this example from

- The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of the hands of earthling man. (**Psalms 135:15**)

- A mouth they have, but they can speak nothing, eyes they have, but they can see nothing. (**Psalms 135:16**)

- Ears they have, but they can give ear to nothing. Also there exists no spirit in their mouth. (**Psalms 135:17**)

- Those making them will become just like them, everyone who is trusting in them. (**Psalms 135:18**)

- This **parallelism** is explained by **W. Trail** in his work **Literary Characteristics and Achievements of the Bible** [1864, p. 170]: **Here the first line introverts with the eighth in the one we have the idols of the heathen, in the other those who put their trust in idols.**

- The second line introverts with the seventh in the one is the fabrication, in the other the fabricators. The third line introverts with the sixth in the one there are mouths without articulation, in the other mouths without breath.
- The fourth line introverts with the fifth, where the introverted parallelism may be said to unite its two halves in a parallelism of synthesis eyes without vision, ears without the sense of hearing.
- A similar, but more simple, form is an inversion of words in adjoining lines, as in;
- And the jealousy of Ephraim must depart, and even those showing hostility to Judah will be cut off. Ephraim itself will not be jealous of Judah, nor will Judah show hostility toward Ephraim. (**Isaiah 11:13**), RS

· Verbs

- Verbs are the most important part of speech in the **Hebrew** language. The simplest verbal form is the third person singular masculine of the perfect state, this is the form found in lexicons.
- The three consonants of this form usually constitute the root. The root is ordinarily trilateral in structure, that is, made up of three consonants, the usual arrangement in Semitic languages. Such trilateral roots serve as the source to which nearly all other words in the language can be traced.
- The verbal root is the simplest stem of the verb. It is often referred to as the pure stem. From this pure stem, six other stems are formed by adding prefixes, doubling certain letters, and making vowel changes. The seven verbal stems represent the verbal root idea in three degrees:
- To show variations in person, number, and gender, certain prefixes and suffixes are attached to the verbal stems.

· State

- Verbs in English are viewed particularly from the standpoint of tense, or time, past, present, future. In Hebrew, however, the **condition** of the action, rather than the time involved, is the important thing. The action is viewed as either complete or incomplete.

- If the verb portrays completed action, it is in the **perfect state**. For instance,

- In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (**Genesis 1:1**)

says: In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth. The action was completed. God created, that is, he finished creating the heavens and the earth.

- If the action is viewed as incomplete, the verb is in the **imperfect state**. This can be illustrated by;

- At that time Moses and the sons of Israel proceeded to sing this song to Yehowah and to say the following; Let me sing to Yehowah, for he has become highly exalted the horse and its rider he has pitched into the sea. (**Exodus 15:1**)

- Moses and the sons of Israel **proceeded to sing**. Here we see that while the action had started, they **proceeded** to sing, it had not terminated and was thus imperfect, unfinished.

- Of course, since by its very character the **Hebrew** perfect state represents action as completed, it belongs most naturally to past time. Therefore, *ka-thav'* a perfect-state active verb, means, basically. He wrote. And it is often so translated.

- And the regulations and the judicial decisions and the Law and the commandment that he wrote for you, you should take care to do always, and you must not fear other gods. (**2 Kings 17:37**)

- And Hezekiah proceeded to send to all Israel and Judah, and even letters he wrote to Ephraim and Manasseh, to come to the house of Yehowah in Jerusalem to hold the Passover to Yehowah the God of Israel. (**2 Chronicles 30:1**)

- Even letters he wrote to reproach Yehowah the God of Israel and to talk against him, saying; Like the gods of the nations of the lands who did not deliver their people out of my hand, so the God of Hezekiah will not deliver his people out of my hand. (**2 Chronicles 32:17**)

- Also, in the days of Artaxerxes, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel and

- the rest of his colleagues wrote to Artaxerxes the king of Persia, and the writing of the letter was written in Aramaic characters and translated into the Aramaic language. (**Ezra 4:7**)
- She now said; If to the king it does seem good, and if I have found favor before him and the thing is proper before the king and I am good in his eyes, let it be written to undo the written documents, the scheme of Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews that are in all the kings jurisdictional districts. (**Esther 8:5**)
 - The idea of action completed in the **past** can also be observed in the rendering **had written**.
 - And the Jews accepted what they had started to do and what Mordecai **had written** to them. (**Esther 9:23**)
 - O that I had someone listening to me, that according to my signature the Almighty himself would answer me! Or that the individual in the case at Law with me **had written** a document itself! (**Job 31:35**)
 - And the word of Yehowah occurred further to Jeremiah after the king had burned up the roll with the words that Baruch had written at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying; (**Jeremiah 36:27**)
 - However, *ka-thav'* also may be rendered as has written
 - And the rest of the affairs of Uzziah, the first and the last, Isaiah the son of Amoz the prophet has written. (**2 Chronicles 26:22**)
 - What would be called the present perfect in English. **Must write** is also used to translate this perfect-state verb and shows the certainty of the actions being carried out.
 - And the priest must write these cursings in the book and must wipe them out into the bitter water. (**Numbers 5:23**)
 - And it must occur that when he takes his seat on the throne of his kingdom, he must write in a book for himself a copy of this Law from that which is in the charge of the priests, the Levites. (**Deuteronomy 17:18**)

- Both of these latter renderings correctly imply completed action, but not in past time. So, the active verb **of itself** does not necessarily convey a concept of time.
- The perfect state can portray action as completed at any period of time: past, present, or future, contrastingly, the imperfect, while also able to show action at any time period, always views it as incomplete.
- Therefore, while the ancient **Hebrews** were obviously able to comprehend the idea of time, in their language it is accorded a secondary position.
- **The Essentials of Biblical Hebrew, by K. Yates, states; The time as understood in most modern languages is not the same as that of the Semitic mind. The discernment of the time of an action is not of vital importance to the Hebrew thought pattern.**
- **It is necessary for the Indo-germanic thinker only to fit the action into his overemphasized estimation of time. The understanding of the condition of the action as to its completeness or incompleteness was sufficient generally to the Semite and if not, there was some word of temporal or historical significance which would bring time into focus. [Revised by J. Owens, 1954, p. 129]**
- **If, as the Bible indicates, Hebrew was the original tongue used in Eden, this lack of emphasis on verbal time may reflect the outlook of man in his perfection, when the prospect of everlasting life was before Adam and when life had not been reduced to a mere 70 or 80 years.**
- **Yehowah provided Hebrew as a perfectly satisfactory means of communication between God and men, as well as among human's.**
- **For English translation the time feature of the verb is determined by the **context**. The context shows whether the action being narrated is viewed as having occurred earlier, as taking place now, or as yet to occur.**

·· **Nouns**

- **As noted above, nearly all words, including nouns, can be traced back to a verbal root. The root can be seen in both the spelling of the noun and its meaning.**

- There are two genders, masculine and feminine. The feminine is generally distinguished by the termination *ah ohth*, plural attached to the noun, as *'ish-shah'*, woman, *su-sohth'*, mares feminine plural.
- The three numbers in **Hebrew** are singular, plural, and dual. The dual, identified by the suffix *a'yim*, is customarily used for objects that appear as pairs, such as hands *ya-dha'yim* and ears *'oz-na'yim*.
- Personal pronouns may also be inseparably attached to nouns. Thus *sus* is horse, but *su-si'*, my horse, *su-sey'kha*, your horses.

•• Adjectives

- Adjectives, too, are derived from verb roots. Thus, the verb *ga-dhal'*, grow up, become great, is the root of the adjective *ga-dhohl'* (great). The definite article in **Hebrew** is *ha*, the. There is no indefinite article a.
- An adjective may be used in either of two ways:
 - (1) It may be a **predicative adjective**. In this case it stands before its noun and agrees with it in gender and number. The phrase *tohv haq-qohl'*, literally, good the voice is translated the voice is good, the verb is being supplied.
 - (2) Or, it may be used to **qualify** or modify. In this situation it stands after the noun, agreeing with it not only in gender and number but also in definiteness. Then *haq-qohl' hat-tohv'*, literally, the voice the good, means the good voice.

•• Transliteration

- Transliteration has reference to replacing characters in the **Hebrew** alphabet with English letters. **Hebrew** is written from right to left, but for English readers it is transliterated to read from left to right. The accompanying chart and the following explanation set out some of the general rules followed in this work.

•• Concerning The Consonants

- It will be observed that five letters have final forms. These appear only at the end of words. Certain consonants have both a soft and a hard sound, the latter being indicated by a dot in the bosom of the letter.

• However, a dot in one of these consonants also signifies that it is to be doubled if it is immediately preceded by a vowel. Thus is *gab-bai'*. Most of the other letters, though they have only one sound, are also doubled by a dot in their bosom, for instance, is *zz*. An exception is the letter *he´*, which sometimes has a dot in it when it appears at the end of a word, the *he´*, however, is never doubled.

• The consonants *waw* and *yohdh* may be employed in forming vowels. The *waw* will occur with the vowel *choh'lem* above it to make what is called a fully formed *choh'lem*, transliterated in this work as *oh*. The combination serves as a *u* and at the beginning of a word always stands alone as a syllable, however, if there is an additional vowel point below the letter, the dot indicates the *waw* is to be doubled. Thus □is*baw-wai'*, is *buz*.

• In the final form of *kaph*, the *shewa´* or *qa'mets* is written within the bosom rather than below the letter:

•• Concerning The Vowels

• All the vowels in this chart appear below the line except *choh'lem*, which is placed above, and *shu'req*, which, as noted above, appears in the bosom of *waw* (u)

•• Concerning The Half Vowels

• The English equivalents shown above are meant only as approximations. The **Hebrew** pronunciation of these half vowels is, in each case, an extremely slight sound.

• Under certain conditions, a *shewa´* is vocalized and transliterated as an East. However, when the *shewa´*, follows a short vowel or when it stands under a consonant closing a syllable, it is silent and considered a syllable divider. Thus is *yiq-tol'*.

•• Syllables

• In **Hebrew** every syllable begins with a consonant and includes (1) one full vowel or (2) one half vowel and a full vowel. Thus, is made up of two syllables, one being *qa* and the other *tal*. Both syllables contain a full vowel and begin with a consonant. On the other hand, *berith'* has only one syllable since it contains only one full vowel (.=i), the *shewa´*, E, is a half vowel.

• There are two apparent exceptions to the rule of only consonants starting a syllable: (1) When a word opens with (u). Then the u stands as a separate syllable. Thus **u-shen'**, is *u-shemi'*. (2) With a furtive *pa'thach*. This is the vowel *pa'thach* placed under the consonants, when they appear at the end of a word, in this case the *pa'thach* is sounded before the consonant. Thus is *ru'ach*, and not *ru-cha'*.

• Sometimes a small horizontal line called a maqqeph, similar to an English hyphen, appears between words. This serves to combine two or more words so that they are treated as a single word with only the last word retaining its accent. Thus is **kol-´asher'**.

•• Accents

• All **Hebrew** words are accented on the last or next to the last syllable. Most are accented on the last syllable.

• In transliterations in this work a single dot separates syllables, the accent is placed after the stressed syllable, using an accent symbol to denote primary stress