

The Written Language of Abraham, Moses and David

- A study of the pictographic roots and basic notions in the underlying fabric of the earliest Biblical script

André H. Roosma ¹

DRAFT Working Document ²

last updated: 2014-09-10
(considerably extended and updated !)

What was the language of the Biblical patriarchs like Abraham, and what kind of script did they use? What script did God and Moses use, when writing the *Torah* – the great teaching to Israel? Which were the letters David employed to write down his wonderful Psalms?

This document is the result of a research project that is digging deep into the soil of history to uncover the earliest roots of the Semitic languages, and in particular of the early Biblical Hebrew language. For this research many Biblical Hebrew, Aramaic and some Arab words were linked to what appears to be the earliest pictographic script – in which probably several of the books of the First Testament of the Bible were originally written.

This research revealed that the earliest root of the old Semitic script and language is much older than supposed up to now, and that it was build up from 22 to 29 building blocks: basic notions and associated ‘sound bites’. The main 22 of these have been identified and described. They are reflected in the 22 main pictographic symbols of early West-Semitic, in active use till the time of David. Around that time it formed the basis for the Paleo-Hebrew and Phoenician script and via Phoenicia for almost all alphabet scripts in the world.

This document uses these symbols and their underlying notions and meanings to reconstruct likely original interpretations or meanings of hundreds of old Hebrew and several Aramaic and Arabic words and names. Insight into the identified notions appears to be a tremendous aid in the analysis and understanding of old Semitic texts and the etymology of Biblical Hebrew.

¹ By origin the author is not a linguist. This work is carried out from a spiritual-theological and general scientific interest. If you might encounter any linguistic imperfections, please do feel free to suggest textual improvements or additions. They will be appreciated! You can mail them to: info@Hallelu-JaH.nl.

² This is a living document, still in a draft-state. The underlying research is still going on and this document will be updated regularly to reflect any new insights and/or additional information that may still be uncovered. Also the presentation may be changed at times.
In compiling this document I used a great variety of information on the history of the Semitic languages. At the end of the document *a small selection* of these sources will be given.

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Introduction: the quest for the script of the earliest books of the Bible

To understand the earliest books of the Bible, we must understand the basics of the languages in which they were written. The scripts used provide an important entry to this understanding. One of those scripts is what is called the **Hebrew square script**. The alphabet of this script looks like this:

Square script	א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	כ	ל	מ	נ	ס	ע	פ	צ	ק	ר	ש	ז	ח	ט
transliteration	'a	b	g	d	h	w	z	ch	t	j	kh	l	m	n	s	gh	p	ts	q	r	sh	s	t	u

This was the script used in the Middle Ages to duplicate the manuscripts that have since served as our originals of the books of the First Testament. Many people today are somewhat familiar with it. Often it is alleged that this is the 'Biblical Hebrew' script in which the First Testament of the Bible was written *originally*. However, as most scholars are aware, this is not so. Languages and scripts have been in constant change and development. Only **after** the Babylonian exile (i.e. about 500 BC) the Jews adopted an early variant of the Hebrew square script from the Assyrians in Babylon (a Jewish name for the script is *Ketav Ashuri*). However, the majority of the First Testament is much older. Consequently, its writers must originally have used other scripts. We thus have to look further.

When we go further back in time in Israel, past 500 BC, we encounter the Paleo-Hebrew script, and very similar scripts (Phoenician, Moabite, etc.) in the neighboring countries. The alphabet of this looked about this way:

Paleo-Hebrew	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	𐤖	𐤗	𐤘	𐤙	𐤚	𐤛	𐤜	𐤝	𐤞	𐤟	𐤠	𐤡	𐤢	𐤣	𐤤	𐤥	𐤦	𐤧	𐤨	𐤩	𐤪	𐤫	𐤬	𐤭	𐤮	𐤯	𐤰	𐤱	𐤲	𐤳	𐤴	𐤵	𐤶	𐤷	𐤸	𐤹	𐤺	𐤻	𐤼	𐤽	𐤾	𐤿
--------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

The Paleo-Hebrew script was in use roughly between 1000 BC and 300 BC. With its sister-scripts, it emerged gradually (1100-900 BC; the timeframe in which the state of Israel and various neighboring states became institutionalized, and Biblically Shaul, David and Solomon/Shlomo can be placed) from a common ancestor. Various ancient Northwest Semitic inscriptions from Israel, Edom, Phoenicia, Moab, Syria, Ammon, and Philistea thus enlighten and sharpen our vision of the First Testament books at the time of the Kings in various ways. The geographical area we look at is the western part of the area that is known as being inhabited at that time by descendants of the Biblical patriarch Sem. Before about 1100 BC many of the languages in this area, were still largely as one, with at most some different local dialects, spread over the area. Populations then of course were a fraction of what they were later. Still further back all Semitic languages were still one. This single language – the (reconstructed) common ancestor of all Semitic languages – has been given the name: Proto-Semitic.³

Now back to scripts. The Paleo-Hebrew script developed from a script that was used in the West-Semitic area during the second millennium BC. Various excavations have found text fragments of it, in a very large area (ranging from current Syria to Egypt to the Sinai desert). Commonly, it is often referred to as Proto-Canaanite or Proto-Sinaitic script, but these denotations do not do justice to its geographical distribution. The common language in this area and era has been named West Semitic or Central Semitic. So, Proto-West-Semitic script or Proto-Central-Semitic script would be more proper choices for the name of this script. This is my somewhat normalized reconstruction of the most important graphemes of this script:

³ Proto-Semitic is a *dead language*, and largely a reconstruction, based on analysis of its descendants: the Semitic languages, and in part based on a number of archeological findings of text fragments.

Concerning the terms 'Hebrew' and 'Proto-Semitic': On the surface archeologists and linguists on the one hand and some religious teachers in Judaism on the other, seem to disagree concerning the history of the Hebrew language. Many Jewish religious leaders teach that Hebrew is very old – maybe even as old as mankind. 'No', say archeologists and linguists, 'Hebrew proper does not extend further back than the first millennium BC. Before that, we talk about Canaanite, Central Semitic, West Semitic and Proto-Semitic, for an increasing number of Semitic languages were still as one when we go back in time over the second millennium BC and earlier.'

To me, all that is primarily a matter of names or convention: what we choose to call 'Hebrew'. This Proto-(West/Central)-Semitic we might just as well call 'early Hebrew' or 'pre-1st millennium BC Hebrew', or to put it in a Biblical timeframe: 'Adam till David Hebrew'. It is this language and especially the associated script – the father of almost all alphabet scripts in the world –, that this document is all about. The variant of the early Semitic script in the area of Israel (archeologists and linguists speak geographically of Canaan) is also named (Proto-)Canaanite script, distinguishing it from e.g. (Proto-)Sinaitic to which it is highly similar, used in more southern area's – till far down into Egypt. I do not make this distinction.

old (West-) Semitic	+ (?) ω ⚔ ρ ⓪ ₣ ♀ ℳ ∫ ☾ ➤ ⊗ III ± γ Δ Γ □ δ
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As I studied this script and many Semitic words and names formed with it, I discovered that this script is kind of pictographic in origin, and its pictographs appear to be related to basic notions or building blocks in the earliest root fabric of the Proto-(West-)Semitic language. Since this research shows that this script and/or the underlying basic notions are very old, I decided to use simply the term old Semitic script.

So, historically Israel used the following scripts:

2 nd mil. BC: old (West-) Semitic	𐤀 𐤁 𐤂 𐤃 𐤄 𐤅 𐤆 𐤇 𐤈 𐤉 𐤊 𐤋 𐤌 𐤍 𐤎 𐤏 𐤐 𐤑 𐤒 𐤓 𐤔 𐤕 𐤖 𐤗 𐤘 𐤙 𐤚 𐤛 𐤜 𐤝 𐤞 𐤟 𐤠 𐤡 𐤢 𐤣 𐤤 𐤥 𐤦 𐤧 𐤨 𐤩 𐤪 𐤫 𐤬 𐤭 𐤮 𐤯 𐤰 𐤱 𐤲 𐤳 𐤴 𐤵 𐤶 𐤷 𐤸 𐤹 𐤺 𐤻 𐤼 𐤽 𐤾 𐤿
1000-500 BC: Paleo-Hebrew	𐤀 𐤁 𐤂 𐤃 𐤄 𐤅 𐤆 𐤇 𐤈 𐤉 𐤊 𐤋 𐤌 𐤍 𐤎 𐤏 𐤐 𐤑 𐤒 𐤓 𐤔 𐤕 𐤖 𐤗 𐤘 𐤙 𐤚 𐤛 𐤜 𐤝 𐤞 𐤟 𐤠 𐤡 𐤢 𐤣 𐤤 𐤥 𐤦 𐤧 𐤨 𐤩 𐤪 𐤫 𐤬 𐤭 𐤮 𐤯 𐤰 𐤱 𐤲 𐤳 𐤴 𐤵 𐤶 𐤷 𐤸 𐤹 𐤺 𐤻 𐤼 𐤽 𐤾 𐤿
from 500 BC: Square Script	א ב ג ד ה ו ז ח ט י כ ל מ נ ס ע פ צ ק ר ש ת
transliteration	th s sh r q ts ph ' gh sc n m l kh j t ch z w u h d g bh 'a

The subjects of this document are these earliest building blocks of the Semitic languages (the West-Semitic branch in particular), the process of word-formation that led to these languages in the first place, and this early pictographic script. My systematic research reveals that the roots of this script are very old (*probably predating any other script!*) and that in all likelihood underlying these languages and their grammar is a most comprehensive system of simple building blocks: some 22 to 29 basic notions and associated sounds (phonemes). Each of those building blocks is represented in the old West Semitic script by a picture of some object from simple everyday life at the edge of the subtropical desert: the head of an ox, a floor plan of a simple Bedouin tent or house, a shepherd's staff, a tent pin, an arm with a hand, a rising sun, an eye, or a palm tree. Most words were originally formed from these basic notions as building blocks.

This basic set of notions as building blocks in word-formation really is unique. It is far more comprehensive than the systems at the root of more common pictographic scripts such as the Egyptian hieroglyphs or the Chinese characters. From this basic set of notions emerged a script that is the most unique writing system in the entire world. The fact that this script was written with a very limited number of small drawings of things encountered in simple everyday life makes it very easy to read and learn.

Research in this area is relatively young. Most Semitic scripts of the *first* millennium BC have been identified and deciphered only relatively recently: mainly since the 18th century.⁴ The 20th and 21st centuries – especially the beginning and the end of the 20th – have been the main age of archeological findings from the *second* millennium BC; almost every decade new text fragments were discovered, and this development is continuing still. The old Semitic script was inventoried and largely deciphered. However, the last centuries have seen the wildest theories on the development and nature of this script come and go, as highly speculative and biased theories were continuously challenged by older texts discovered in new archeological excavations.



Old Semitic text-fragment *B'alat*,
(found 1904/05 in [Serabit el-Khadim](#));
the lower line, from left to right (!):
mt l b'alat (מת-לִבְעֵלַת)

Source: [Wikipedia](#) & '[Proto-Sinaitic Inscriptions](#)'
(Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, USA).
More in Grimme (1923).

Usually this script has been studied as predecessor of its successors, such as Phoenician and Paleo-Hebrew.

In the text-fragments found, archeologists and linguists have searched for recognizable words. They studied which symbols corresponded more or less with the later Phoenician and Paleo-Hebrew letter signs. As far as they looked at the pictures, they **assumed** *à priori* that of the pictured object only the first letter (in the sense of: sound) is relevant (the *acrophonic* principle) and that the meaning of this object plays no role whatsoever. From this prejudiced viewpoint they did not look at all to the coherence of the pictured objects and the words composed with them. Here, that has been the centre of

⁴ See also: [‘Trying to read Canaanite in the 18th century: how "Hebrew" was the language of Canaan?’](#), blog by someone naming himself ‘Mississippi Fred MacDowell’, 16 Febr. 2010.

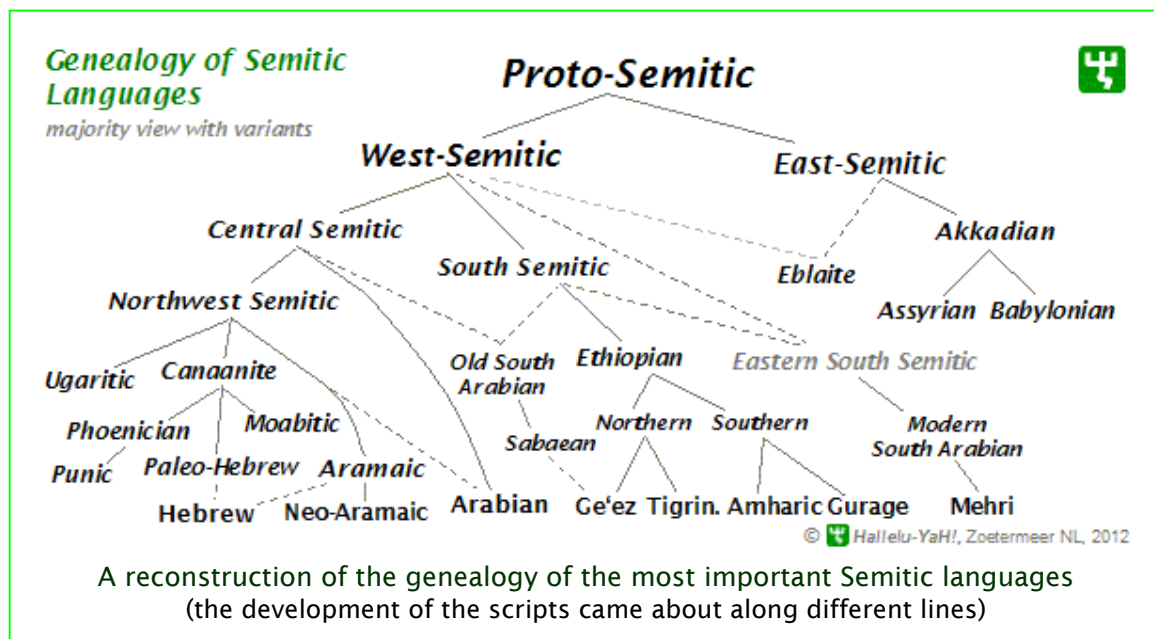
focus, with surprising results. It appears, that every symbol represents a notion, which we encounter in the meanings of the words composed with them.

The research as presented here in draft identified and uncovered most of these underlying notions, related to the original pictograms and sounds. The beauty of this language and especially about this script is its concreteness; it is not 'up in the air' but closely tied to everyday, concrete reality. The association of basic notions with sounds and a representing picture is a unique feature, which made it also a great source of progress, as that allowed it to develop into the first alphabet. Most other scripts and alphabets in the world emerged from it: not only the Paleo-Hebrew, Phoenician, Moabite, Aramaic, old-Arabic, Ge'ez and other alphabets within the Semitic language group, but also the Greek alphabet, as well as the Latin, the Cyrillic and still others. It has left an unparalleled mark on world history!

Proto-Semitic: original language in the area of Sem

All around the Middle East archeological excavations have brought to light a number of texts and text fragments that were written in this old Semitic script, or in variants of it. These findings – up to today – date from the time period that runs from about 1900 ([Wadi el-Hol inscriptions](#)) until 1000 BC.

The script used in these discovered texts was largely common to a number of early Semitic languages (Semites are the descendants of Sem, that lived in the region reaching from current Iran and Iraq to Lebanon, Arabia and Egypt and more western parts of Northern Africa⁵). Therefore I name this script somewhat loosely old Semitic script, though the term Proto-West-Semitic script might be more accurate, scientifically speaking (proto- is pre- or early-; as mentioned; the often used terms *Canaanite* or *Sinaitic* certainly are too narrow, since later Aramaic and Arabic scripts, and even the Ugaritic cuneiform script (developed around 1300 BC) appear to be descendants of this script; there are significant similarities with the Old South Arabian scripts as well).



As the diagram shows, the Proto-Semitic language⁶ is the reconstructed forerunner of a.o. [Akkadian](#), [Ethiopian](#),⁷ [Ugaritic](#), [Arabic](#), [Aramaic](#), [Hebrew](#), and [Phoenician](#) (though it is not certain that ethnically

⁵ The name *Sem*: שֵׁם should perhaps be שֵׁם - *Shem* [pronounced much like *Shame*] (Hellenic influence may have caused the shift from *sh* to *s*; the Greek version is Σημ). Originally, this name probably referred to 'a water well' or 'source of water' – most essential there and then, or to a source of abundance, corresponding to the blessing of God over Sem's life. If the first letter was originally a sin/samekh, the meaning would be palm trees, or palm tree and water. Palm trees were very attractive because of their fruit and other materials derived from them. Spiritually, they were a symbol of the Tree of Life. So they were associated with wealth and having a 'name'. Spiritually this name *Shem* may also be seen as referring to the glorious Name of God (there is a relationship to the Hebrew word for heaven as well). The Semites are the people of The Name, they belong to God – *The Source* of abundance. More on שֵׁם later in this document.

⁶ Often the first split observed within the Semitic language family is a split between West-Semitic and East-Semitic, or between Central, South and East Semitic, where the Central Semitic languages were still very similar in the second millennium, but differing already from Akkadian, the major representative of East-Semitic. For similarity of all Semitic languages – West and East, or Central, South and East – we have to go back further to the 3rd or 4th millennium BC.

A very good scientific analysis of these times and periods (the *phylogeny* of the Semitic languages) is given in: Geoff K. Nicholls & Robin J. Ryder, '[Phylogenetic models for Semitic vocabulary](#)', in: D. Conesa, A. Forte, A. Lopez-Quilez, F. Munoz (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 26th International Workshop on Statistical Modelling*, València, Spain, July 2011; ISBN 978 84 694 5129 8; especially Figure 2, showing that the origin of Hebrew & Aramaic (mid-2nd mil. BC) is not very far from the root of Proto-Semitic (mid-3rd mil. BC).

See also: Andrew Kitchen, Christopher Ehret, Shiferaw Assefa and Connie J. Mulligan, '[Bayesian phylogenetic analysis of Semitic languages identifies an Early Bronze Age origin of Semitic in the Near East](#)', *Proc. Royal Soc. B* 2009, 276, p.2703-2710 (doi:10.1098/ rspb.2009.0408; first published online: 29 April 2009); especially [Figure 2](#); see also [this scheme](#) from the background material of this article, with alternative placement of Arabic; there the split between Hebrew and Aramaic or the hypothesized common origin of Aramaic and Arabic – these three being the most relevant Central Semitic languages – is

the Phoenicians were Semites). Apart from the archeological findings, also the similarities between these various Semitic languages form an important clue to discover more about this Proto-Semitic, though much remains speculative.⁸

Discovering more about the old Semitic script

The mentioned period of 1900 to 1000 BC covers about the Biblical period from Abraham until David or Solomon. This is a most relevant period for the Biblical text, since in this period a large part of the First or 'Old' Testament was written. So, in all likelihood, several books of the First Testament were written originally in this old script. It should therefore not come as a surprise that this script will provide a lot of clarity on these early Bible books and on the Bible in its entirety.

By studying the uncovered inscriptions, getting familiar with the culture there and then, and by transliterating early Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic as well as old Arabic words back into this script, we could identify some 23-29 basic notions – which appear to be the building blocks of the Proto-Semitic language. And we found very clear indications that these earliest origins of the linguistic building blocks of Proto-Semitic probably date back to the time of or shortly after creation. Originally, the symbols of the old Semitic script probably formed a pictographic/ideographic as well as phonemic representation of these basic notions or building blocks of the early Proto-Semitic language.

Later the old Semitic script developed into a pure alphabetic script (possibly with a logo-syllabic intermediate step). This early Semitic alphabet (*aleph-beth*) stood at the base of many alphabets, a.o. the Greek and Latin (from which also our western alphabet evolved).⁹

Around that time, at about 1000 BC (that's just after the transition from the bronze to the iron age), we observe the further division of this alphabet script into a number of different branches, such as Phoenician and Paleo-Hebrew (in Judaism this is called *Ketav 'Ivri*; a 'semi-vocal' script and not a pure consonant script as is sometimes taught; like Proto-Semitic it knew the three vowels: *i* [ee], *u* [oo] and *a*¹⁰).

This apparently arose around the time of King Solomon (*Qeijafa ostrakon inscription*). In the beginning there was still much likeness between early Paleo-Hebrew and early

Phoenician – (see e.g. [the inscription on the sarcophagus of Ahiram](#)¹¹). The Paleo-Hebrew was used at



Paleo-Hebrew text-fragment from the Moabitic *Mesha stele* (about 840 BC)

calculated to fall around the middle of the second millennium BC (+/- 400 years); this is quite significant, since Biblically this is the time of Moses and the early formation and expansion of the state of Israel!

⁷ Some scholars note: since the 8th or 9th century BC. I conclude that that is: since the time when the queen of *Sheba*⁷ [probably: Ethiopia + southern part of the Arabian peninsula] visited Solomon adopting his culture and religion; but more likely the Semitic origins of the Ethiopian languages are even much older.

⁸ Speaking about relatedness: the old Celtic language shows remarkable similarities with the Phoenician (see e.g. Karel Jongeling, *Comparing Welsh and Hebrew*, CNWS / Leiden University, Leiden, 2000; ISBN: 978 90 5789 032 1; and: [‘The Hebrew-Celtic connection’](#), web-article, in which it is shown that Celtic is clearly derived from Phoenician). This creates a link between Proto-Indo-European (of which Celtic is normally regarded a branch) and Proto-Semitic.

⁹ Some see the line from the early Semitic script to the Greek and Latin scripts running via the Phoenician script. The Phoenicians as sea-faring nation of the time certainly contributed greatly to the propagation of this script via their extensive international trade.

¹⁰ Remarkably, the (cuneiform) script of a Semitic sister language, Ugaritic, precisely has specific signs for these three vowels.

Gesenius noted in his grammar (1.2 §24): “*ʾ and ʿ are, as consonants, so weak, and approach so nearly to the corresponding vowels u and i, that under certain conditions they very readily merge into them.*” A little further, he explains what he means by that ‘merge into them’: “*It then merges in the homogeneous vowel, or more accurately it assumes its vowel-character (ʾ as u, ʿ as i), and is then contracted with the preceding vowel into one vowel, necessarily long....*”

¹¹ It reads (from right to left; small vertical marks are word-divisions):

[illegible]

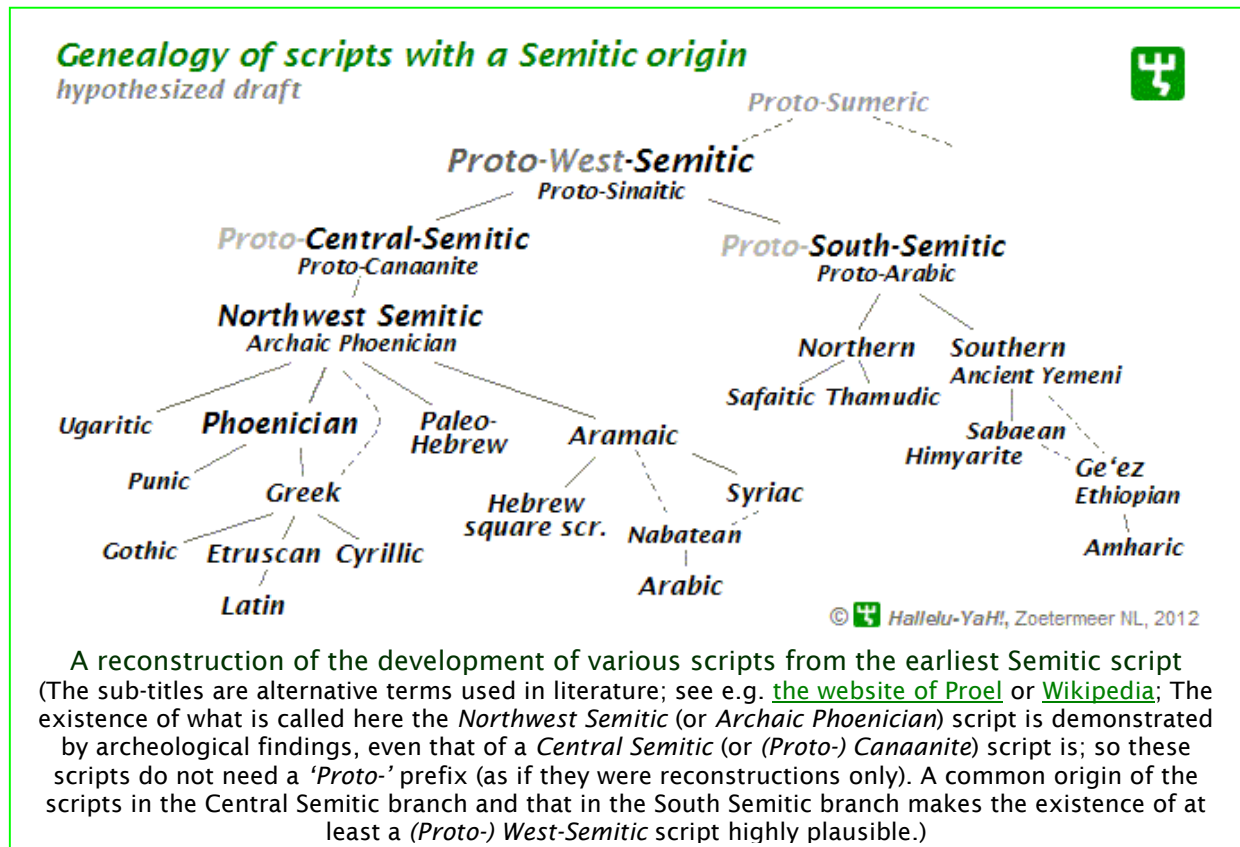
The following transliteration into the Hebrew square script can be easily derived:

ארן ז פעל אתבעל בן אחרם מלך גבל לאחרם אבה כ שתה בעלם ואל מלך במלכם וסכנ בסנם ותמא מחנת עלי גבל ויגל ארנ זן תחתספ חטר משפטא תהתפך כסא מלכה ונחת תברח על גבל והא ימח ספרז לפי שרל

(The National Museum of Beirut, housing this sarcophagus, gives as English translation:

"Coffin which Ithobaal son of Ahiram, king of Byblos, made for Ahiram his father, when he placed him for eternity. Now, if a king among kings, or a governor among governors or a commander of an army should

least till about the fourth century BC (a rather late variant we find a.o. in the [Lachish letters](#) of about 590 BC, and in a few Paleo-Hebrew versions of Bible scrolls, found at Qumran, a.o. one scroll of Exodus, designated 4Q22, one Genesis and Exodus, 4Q11 and one of Genesis, 4Q12; each dated variously between 100-25 BC and 225-175 BC; unfortunately, of these only limited copies are available electronically, as far as I know¹²). The Paleo Hebrew script remained in usage till the time of Christ for writing the glorious Name of God amidst later Hebrew square script or Greek script, as in the early editions of the Septuagint. That late version is also observable in [the 11Q1 Paleo Leviticus scroll](#) (dated about 0-50 AD), of which facsimiles of the remaining fragments are available at [The Leo Levy Dead Sea Scroll Digital Archive](#). At the time of the [Bar Kokhba revolt](#) (132-136 AD), the Paleo Hebrew script experienced a renewed interest by the Jews, in their endeavor to go back to their roots. This is attested by numerous coins and other text fragments from that period, which have been discovered by archeologists in the last centuries.



The current Hebrew square script is clearly of much more recent origin: the Jews (the 2.5 tribes southern kingdom of old Israel) only developed it from the Imperial Aramaic script during or after their Babylonian exile, under very strong influences from outside (in particular of the Aramaic of those days from that region – therefore, in Judaism they also speak of Assyrian script or *Ketav Ashuri* –, and the by then extensively Hellenistic Babylonian culture¹³). The history of the development of this Aramaic script

come up against Byblos and uncover this coffin, may the sceptre of his rule be torn away, may the throne of his kingdom be overturned and may peace flee from Byblos. And as for him, may his inscription be effaced..." The American [California Institute for Ancient Studies](#) gives a slightly different translation.)

¹² Fortunately, [they are at least partly available](#) in print, in: P. W. Skehan, E. Ulrich, J. E. Sanderson, 'Qumran Cave 4 – Palaeo-Hebrew And Greek Biblical Manuscripts', [DJD IX](#), 1992; 17-50 pls. I-VI. (4Q11; Gen. 50: 26 and Exod 1-36); 51-52, pl. VI. (4Q12; fragment of Gen.26); and 51-130, pls. VII-XXXIII (4Q22; very large portion of Exodus). *DJD* is a serial work in progress: *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert (of Jordan)* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1955–. Some material also in Eugene Ulrich, Frank Moore Cross, James R. Davila, Nathan Jastram, Judith E. Sanderson, Emanuel Tov, and John Strugnell, 'Genesis to Numbers', [DJD XII](#), 1994. And in: David Noel Freedman, K.A. Mathews and Richard S. Hanson, *The Paleo-Hebrew Leviticus Scroll (11QpaleoLev)*, American Schools of Oriental Research, Philadelphia PA / Winona Lake, Indiana, 1985.

Addition, March 2013: Many of the scrolls and scroll fragments – normally present at *the Israel Museum's Shrine of the Book* – are now also viewable online at [The Leo Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library](#). Already somewhat longer a few important ones (among which the Great Isaiah scroll) are integrally shown at [The Digital Dead Sea Scrolls](#) website of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

¹³ Some Jews see it just the other way round: in their vision the Square script is holy and the older one profane, but I have not discovered any justification to do so.

in the Babylonian and Assyrian empires is very well documented. Note that the Northern ten-tribes kingdom of Israel (in the New Testament and up to now also known as the Samaritans¹⁴), though by the Jews traditionally seen as less 'pure' in their religion as well as genetically, actually remained with a variant of the Paleo-Hebrew script and never went along in this Jewish Hellenizing step.

Many people think that the Akkadian cuneiform script was the oldest script, which 'consequently' predated pictographic scripts like the old Semitic script I am talking about here. However, the Akkadian cuneiform was derived from the Sumerian cuneiform, which developed from an archaic Sumerian *pictographic* script where each sign represented a word or a syllable. Thus, the Akkadian script, too, was syllabic and ideographic rather than alphabetic in origin. No surprise that the oldest West-Semitic script was syllabic and ideographic in origin as well. And, by the way, according to C.J. Ball, the oldest Chinese script was related to this old Sumerian pictographic script as well.

Such a development from a pictographic script to a cuneiform script was repeated later in the development of the Ugaritic cuneiform from the old (West-)Semitic pictographic script via the Early-Phoenician script.

Word formation and the origin of the Semitic languages

A lot of what has been written about language and especially about Biblical Hebrew seems to assume that language is static and that the Hebrew at the time of Jesus was the same as the language at the time of Moses. It was not. Languages are in constant development. They have an origin. Vocabulary and grammar have *developed* over the ages. Even a few decades ago, nobody in the world knew what an iPad was or that a tablet was not only a slab suited for or bearing an inscription, a small booklet for notes, a compressed block of a solid material, a medical pill or a small table, but also a mini-computer.

What follows is not just a theory of the old West-Semitic script. In fact, it is a theory on **the formation of the vocabulary of the Semitic languages**. All over the world, vocabulary is formed mainly by a few simple principles. We see borrowing, imitation of sounds and shifts in meaning (like that of the tablet as mini-computer, from its likeness in form and partly in use – for writing/reading). But the most important and most frequent form of new word formation is by joining two or more already existing words or by adding a pre- or suffix to an existing word: agglutination.¹⁵

The rest of this document is in fact a test of the hypothesis that most words in the old West-Semitic that were not borrowings or onomatopoeia, were originally – in their original meaning – formed by this agglutination principle, from a very limited set of basic notions. Even pre- and suffixes and grammatical additions originated for a large part from this basic set of notions.

I stumbled upon this when I studied the Semitic vocabularies. Early on I discovered similar notions in words that had letters in common. When I saw the pictures of the old West-Semitic script, I saw pictures of objects representing these basic notions.

The natural sciences show that everything in creation is built up out of smaller building blocks. The same counts for language. We regularly form new words by combining two or more smaller words. Pictographic scripts do the same with their symbols. Some study of Japanese and Chinese once showed me that many characters are built up out of other, smaller characters (with fewer 'strokes').

¹⁴ Strikingly, Jesus directed Himself exclusively to Israel, not to any persons of other nations (Matthew 15: 24), and explicitly He did direct Himself to the Samaritans, even putting a Samaritan as an example to the Jews (Jehudim from Jehudah - Judah) (Luke 10; 17; John 4). Only one conclusion is possible: in Jesus' vision the Samaritans were not heathen but part of Israel, just like the Jews; albeit that Yeshu'ah (Jesus) Himself came from the tribe of Jehudah.

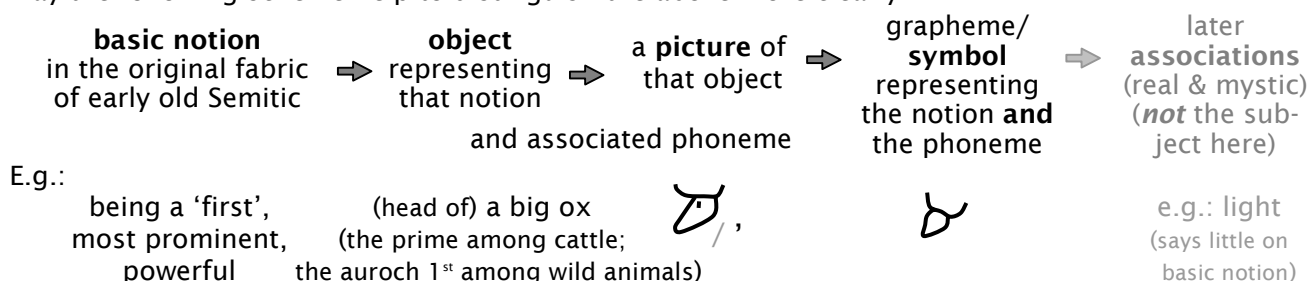
¹⁵ I use the term agglutination broadly here, including synthesis, compounding, pre- and suffixing.

The basic notions underlying the Early Semitic languages

When studying old Semitic languages and the old Semitic script, one cannot avoid the observation that the characters represent objects of early everyday life. Many scholars have thought that these objects were chosen only to represent their first phoneme. My extensive research on this has demonstrated that this neglects the underlying notions – the building blocks in the basic fabric of the Proto-Semitic language. Each of the depicted objects represented one of the basic notions that served as the building blocks of the early Proto-Semitic language. The fact that this underlying structure and its notions were – as far as I know – not discovered earlier is partly due to the diversified and often inadequate theories on the objects represented by the old Semitic symbols and the limited eye of linguists for logical structure.

In order to find the basic notions underlying the early Semitic languages, we first have to de-mystify the old Semitic symbols. There is a plentitude of sources that associate meanings to the old Semitic symbols or to the Hebrew letters (often specifically to the square script letters!). Most of them are rooted in Jewish mysticism, which has its main roots in Babylon. This study takes explicit distance from that. We do not have to become inaugurated in Qabbalah or some other Jewish, Gnostic or mystic system in order to talk about the rather concrete notions represented by the original symbols or graphemes.

May the following scheme help to distinguish the above more clearly:



The earliest old Semitic graphemes are clearly pictographs, each picturing an object representing one of the basic notions as well as its associated phoneme ('sound'). That object and its related notion can be objectively and scientifically researched and attested.

The matching of notions to graphemes (symbols) and to phonemes (sounds) has also been observed in [Sumerian](#). Many of the notions and sounds that I will discuss here, correspond strongly to those in Sumerian.

And one of the good things is that the result greatly enhances our understanding of ancient writings from that region, including all the riches the Bible is all about.

In this version of this document (as from May 2012) here and there some relationships with other pictographic scripts, like old Chinese, will be given. Many script systems seem to have an ancient common origin, which is understandable from a Biblical viewpoint: from the time of Noah.

What I call here old Chinese in this context, is *Jiaguwen* – the script found on oracle-bones and turtle shells (mainly 14th – 11th century BC; possibly in part already older) and *Dazhuan* – on cast bronze vessels (mainly 11th – 8th century BC).¹⁶

¹⁶ See e.g. the book by C.J. Ball, or www.ancientscripts.com/chinese.html and the books by Nelson & Broadberry in the literature list for some examples.

A brief discussion of the most important basic notions & symbols

Below you will find a brief discussion of the 22+ most important basic notions, and the objects and symbols used to represent them.

Remarkable in the oldest drawings, is that the orientation of the symbols (the angle at which they are drawn) is obviously not fixed yet at that time (concretely this means that symbols sometimes appear 90° rotated, sometimes upside down or mirrored). Also completely different representations of the concerned object or notion appear – for me another clue that in the beginning the notion was pictured, not an abstract letter of an alphabet. The geographical area in which these signs were used is immense (covering an area more than half that of the USA), explaining that there are so many dialects: many small variations, especially in the less frequent notions and their representing symbols. In addition some symbols/letters later frequently got mixed up, not always only on the basis of similarity in sound, as it appears: e.g. the *samekh*, *tsade*, *sin* and *zayin* (compare Hebrew *tsadeq* and Aramaic *zadeq* for ‘righteousness’), the *’aleph* and *’ayin*, the soft *chet* and the *hei*, the *chet* and the hard *’ayin* (/ghayin) and the *teth* and the *tav*. This makes reconstructing and interpreting old Semitic roots more cumbersome and increases the chance of small errors, but it can be done, as what follows will demonstrate.

Concerning the notions and their representing objects behind the symbols/letters: Of several symbols/letters the underlying notions and objects are rather clear. Such a notion will be recognized in almost all old Semitic words in which the symbol originally appeared. This is for example the case with the *aleph*, *beth*, *wav*, *yod* and *mem*.

Some of the notions and objects were somewhat less clear, as e.g. that behind the *tsade* and *samekh*. However, as the research presented here will show, these can be reconstructed with great confidence. Ingredients for that reconstruction effort are: finding the common element in Hebrew, Aramaic, (Akkadian) and Arabic words containing that letter (especially: beginning with that letter), and studying the relevant culture of that time around the possibly depicted object and related notions. Other symbols, objects and the notions behind them can be verified in this way.

With each notion below I provide a picture of the early Paleo-Hebrew / Phoenician alphabet letter (of about 1000 BC) at the top left of the discussion. Below that I will give one or more examples of old Semitic symbols representing the notion that stood at the basis of the Paleo-Hebrew / Phoenician letter. Sometimes I will discuss a link with the corresponding square script letters.¹⁷ Frequently I may combine letters with other letters, some of which may only be discussed further on, to form words. With words I sometimes supply the Strong code in [\[blue between square brackets\]](#).

¹⁷ The later Hebrew square script developed from or under strong influence of (western/ Imperial) Aramaic. Yet I will compare the letter shapes to their old Semitic ‘ancestors’.

'A / 'al / 'alpu / 'alp / 'alpa / 'aleph / 'alluph



old:



The Paleo-Hebrew 'aleph is derived from a picture of the head of an ancient ox or auroch. A first basic notion in early old Semitic language was that of being a 'first' or 'most prominent' among others or of being **unique**. The object representing this notion is the head of an ox: 'aleph (*al, alpa*), very simply drawn (sometimes an eye was additionally drawn in). In those days the ox was one of the most prominent and strongest animals among the cattle (one of the meanings of the Akkadian 'alpu was *head of the cattle* - [The Assyrian Dictionary](#), Part I, p.364). So that is why this notion of being the first, the powerful one, or the one most valuable, was associated with the ox. In most words written with an aleph we recognize the notion of a 'powerful' or 'first/primary' (as compared to others). The symbol may also represent the object 'ox' itself in some cases.

When, in those days of old, one encountered one of those huge aurochs (the wild ox with a shoulder height of up to 2 meters! This was also the animal from which our domestic cows were bred), one's breath stopped in one's throat. It may well be that therefore, the associated **sound** or phoneme of the א - 'a is the **glottal stop** (also known as **hamza** and transliterated as '), often in combination with something close to our vowel *a*.

In Paleo-Hebrew this symbol later got somewhat styled and simplified to three strokes.

From this evolved (by rotation) the Greek capital letter *alpha* Α and from that our Latin capital A (the lower case letters from the P-S original). Strange enough the shape can hardly be recognized anymore in the 'aleph of the later Hebrew square script א.

As prefix the 'aleph sign is the *first* person (singular): 'I'.

In distinction to the elementary **notion** (language building block) and symbol, the full **word** 'aleph - אֵלֶּף - אֵלֶּף can be interpreted as 'the oxen lead into the open' and is related in Hebrew to the notion of the domestication of the wild ox. A well-trained strong animal, like an ox, was *most* useful in farming. Pronounced as 'eleph - אֵלֶּף [504] it can mean those tamed oxen or cattle itself, or a family as following a leader in a similar way. Pronounced 'alph - אֵלֶּף [502] it is the verb to learn, to be trained or trainable (docile), or causatively to teach, to train. (Apparently, in early Arabic it has also been seen as 'the first Leader's mouth' in the sense of not only teaching but also relational intimacy). For quite some time the auroch or wild ox was the strongest animal in nature. The domesticated ox was the prime among the cattle. With some training, one easily becomes the 'first' or a leader oneself. How the relationship of the same root pronounced as 'eleph - אֵלֶּף [505] with the number 1000 came into existence is not 100% clear to me yet. Theories range from an origin via **one** (thousand) (i.e. numerically), or via an 'aleph - 'first one' becoming a leader over 1000 oxen/people/soldiers, or 1000 people being joined in a school, and the leader therefore becoming a 'leader over 1000' - an 'eleph. Typically 'chicken and egg' - hard to find out which came first. I wonder if there is a relationship with the elephant (certainly a 'first' or leader in the animal kingdom); Isaac E. Mozeson readily confirms this of course.

As word אֵלֶּף - 'aleph appears amongst others in Psalm 144: 14 :

When our **oxen** ('**allupheinu**) are well laden; When there is no breaking in, and no going forth,
And no outcry in our streets:

And the following Bible text, from Zakhar-Yahu (Zachariah) 9:

6 And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.
7 And I will take away his bloods out of his mouth, and his idolatries from between his teeth.
But the remnant, even he, shall be for our God. And he shall be as a **first one** (*ke-'alluph*) in Judah, and Ekron like a Jebusite.

Besides the aspects mentioned, there is still another way in which the ox was a 'first' or 'most important', and that was in the sacrifice service to the God of the Bible. We see this when we realize how old the sacrificing of oxen was; we encounter it early in the history of mankind, as described in Genesis as well as in stories and rites of other peoples. It is known that the Chinese had a very old imperial ritual of bull-sacrifice to the God of gods, *Shang Di* (some relate this name to the Hebrew title 'El *Shaddai*).¹⁸ Animal sacrifice was an important ritual for it symbolized that man had become mortal by his rebellion against God, and in need of reconciliation, and that God accepted a substitution death. It was also a way to feast and eat abundantly together, celebrating God's goodness. By giving the *first* or *best* of everything to Him and use it for that common celebration, we humans keep our priorities straight while at the same time building our essential attachments.

¹⁸ See a.o. the literature of Nelson & Broadberry.

Ba / baytu / beth




old:




variant:




The second notion is that of being **'inside or part of something'** – like we can be inside a **house** or in **our body**. It was symbolized by a drawing of the layout of a small Bedouin tent, a simple house or a vase or other receptacle or container: **beth** (*baytu*, *beith*). Its associated phoneme is *b*. In words the **beth** often represents a tent, house, body (cf. our expression: 'our earthly tent'), or some other **container** (vase, box, etc.). As prefix the **beth** stands for **'in'** or **'inside'** as well – in full accordance with the basic notion, represented by the **beth** as being inside a container of some sort. (And as it still seems to do even in English, as some say, noting that the prefix *be-* represents 'in' in words like *before* – *in* the fore, *behind* – *in* the hind, *beside* – *in/ at* the side, *beyond* – *in* the yonder.)

The sound associated with the  - **ba/beth** is the hard *b*, later supplemented by the soft *bh* (of which the pronunciation approaches that of our *v*), possibly associated with the sounds around a possibly flapping tent in the wind. These – *b* and *bh* respectively – I also use as transliterations of this letter into our Latin script.

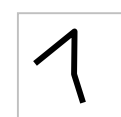
In Paleo-Hebrew this sign was changed to make it easier to write by hand. In this (again rotated) our lowercase **b** and some of the Greek *beta* **B** can be recognized. In the square script  still something of the original house or tent is still recognizable as well.

Biblically, the **beith** or house is not just the physical dwelling place, but includes any object or notion that anything can be contained in or part of, and those concepts we associate with the 'home', and '(extended) family', 'family line/tree' or 'clan' we are part of.¹⁹ We find all these meanings of **beith** as word among others in the following text, from Genesis 12:

1 And **YaHUaH** had said to Abram, Go out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's **house** (*beith*) into a land that I will show you.

In Old Chinese pictographs  (radical 22) is a symbol for *a box* or for the verb *to hide*.

Ga / gam / gamlu / gimel



old:







variant:





unclear:



The third notion, **gam** / *gamlu* / *gimel*, with phoneme the hard *g* (as in English *gone* or *green*), is that of **going or transportation**. This notion and graphic has already been observed in Mesopotamian (i.e. Sumerian) script, around the beginning of the third millennium BC, standing for the verbs *gen* – to go, *gub* – to stand and *de₆* – to carry.²⁰ The **gam** was represented by a picture of the very first means of going or transportation: a **foot** (with the lower leg), or of a hooked or curved staff (walking stick?).²¹ The latter may also have played a role in construction work. Some people see an association with a cornered throw stick (a kind of boomerang; though I am not aware of the existence of such a thing there and then and do not recognize such a notion in words). In Hebrew and Arabic words this symbol indeed often relates to the function of feet or a proverbial foot or basis: transportation, to move, to go (on foot), to carry, to gather, movement, foundation, (to place at) a pedestal. Sometimes it seems to represent mainly the bended shape (as e.g. in  - *gābab* – to be bent/arched; though here too *the foot of a house* in the sense of  - *gāboah* – a hill, height, or dwelling mound could well be the basis). About the third picture, discussions are still going on whether it is a *gam* or a *pu* (see further on).

In the beginning the angle was often placed at the bottom, in the later Paleo-Hebrew letter the angle definitively got positioned at the top. This stayed that way with the Greek capital **gamma** **Γ** (after the transition to the Greek the orientation did change from 'from right to left' to 'from left to right', making the side-bar of the **gamma** pointing to the right). Our **G** and **C** emerged from those, where from the gamma the Etruscans first formed the **C** – they had no *g*-sound – and later the Romans added the **G** again. The square script *gimel*  has changed quite a lot. Concerning phonology, in the **sound** of the  - **ga**, one can hear that of a footstep.

A well-known derived word is *gamal* -  [1580-1581] -  , from which our word camel is derived. It can literally be interpreted from the symbols as: feet with water for a leader (see Table 2, further on). As word this appears a.o. in the following text, from Genesis 24. Remarkably it is noted that the camels indeed belong to the 'master' (leader, lord; archeology has affirmed that in those days possessing them was indeed a limited privilege of the wealthy and rulers):

¹⁹ See also: Marjo Korpel, 'בֵּית – house, housing, sachet', in: [לֵב Database – Utensils in the Hebrew Bible](#), online resource, Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap (OTW; Old Testament Workgroup), 2010-2011.

²⁰ See: Christopher Woods (Ed.), *Visible language*, Oriental Institute Museum (no 32), Chicago, 2010; p.43.

²¹ In Akkadian a *gamlu* was a hooked or curved staff (*Assyrian Dict.* Univ. Chicago, p.34).

10^a And the servant took ten **camels** (*gemallim*) of the **camels** of his master, and departed. For all the goods of his master were in his hand.

A camel and the weaning (or ‘ripening’) of a child (that too: לָמַל – see e.g. Psalm 131: 2; Genesis 21: 8) seem two very different things. From the old Semitic notions it becomes very clear: a weaned child (in that culture around 4, sometimes 5 or even 6 years of age) was one who could walk on his own feet, could fetch his own drink (notion of water) and could manage a shepherd’s stick (√-ממ-ל). In such a dry climate it was easy to recompense any leader (e.g. for his protection), namely: go fetch water for him: √ממל, which may well serve to explain the third meaning of לָמַל – to repay, recompense.

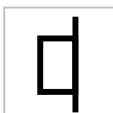
Da / dal / dalt / daleth



old:



variant:



unclear:



Dalt (later: *daleth*) was the notion of **movement** or **flexibility**, associated with the phoneme **d**, and was represented by a drawing of a **door** (of a hut or tent; either a rectangular or a skewed triangular board of wood or woven materials attached to a pole (√-l)). Compare the Proto-Semitic word *daltu* - door. Most often the symbol graphically represents a physical **door**, a **door opening** or **entrance** and has the meaning ‘**to enter**’, ‘**entrance**’. Sometimes it means ‘**to move**’ or ‘**to hang (down)**’ – precisely what such a door did. The associated phoneme is the **d** – an imitation of the sound of the door closing. The notion of **movement** and the phoneme **d** seems occasionally represented by another symbol as well: that of a fish (לָג - *dag*; *digg* in Phoenician). Next to a door and movement, the *daleth* also represents any **opening** as of a door, and the verbs **to open** and **to expose**.

It is interesting to look at the Hebrew word דַּלְתַּי *daleth* [1817; cf. 1802] - door; that was: +√Δ - a hanging/moving panel or board that can open and give entrance (Δ) by means of a big stick construction (+√). In an appendix I will go into detail on this.

Characteristic for *daleth* as word (door in occasional movement, though not on its own initiative) is the following text, from Proverbs 26:

14 As the **door** (*haddeleth*) turns upon its hinge, so does the lazy man turns upon his bed.

In the Hebrew original, the hinge (singular!) here really is a door socket – a hard stone with a hole in it, in which a large round pole (stick) attached to the door panel could turn. See the related appendix. Note that the second pictograph above may well have been turned on its side!

How physical and flexible the old Semitic *pictures* script is, appears from the following example: what does this picture make you think of: ΔΔ? Many people whom I ask think of a bra or bikini, in other words: of a pair of breasts. That is right. It is the word *dad* – breast(s), nipple(s). Here the sign is used in a broader pictographic way, apart from the basic notion it usually represents.²²

The later Paleo-form often (not always) has a somewhat longer ‘stick’ right below. From the triangular shape the Greek capital *Delta* Δ developed, and from that our capital **D** (with the stick on the left side). In the square script *daleth* ד, little is left of the original doorpanel.

²² The Hebrew word *dad* may be an alteration of what was originally a *thad*. More on that word in the discussion of the letter *shin/shad*, further on. Some people explain the association of the two door-signs with breasts from the ‘hanging’ of the breasts.

Ah / ha / hallu / hillul / hey



old:



variant:



A most interesting notion (originally probably called *āh*, *hā*, *hallu* or *hillul*; in Hebrew now *hey*) is that of **awe** and **wonder** or **surrender**: being **amazed** and **joyfully excited** about something you see or experience, often in the relationship with God. The original sound has probably been close to *āh* (still -internationally- a call of wonder/ awe!).

Theologically, this is one of the most interesting notions in the entire set. It is represented by a picture of a person with raised hands – one of the symbols most frequently encountered. Sometimes the middle stroke at the top (the head) was drawn as a small circle, sometimes the legs were spread, and sometimes one arm was directed downward. In the most common form, as depicted here, the legs are bent (together) as in a kneeling posture. This emphasizes the basic notion of awe and **worship/adoration**. This is in line with the Hebrew (and even Proto-Semitic) verb *hillul/hallal* – to worship, to praise, to glorify, to exalt in. Associated notions are: to **surrender**, to **celebrate** (to rejoice)/jubilation, **wonder** (all three still reasons to lift your hands in the air, even with us) and to **live** or to **breathe** (compare how you stretch with a deep yawn). These meanings can still be discovered in many words containing the Hebrew ה or the Arabic ه (hey). In the square script we still find

הָ - *hā*, הֵאָהָ - *'ahāh* [162] and הֵאָהָ - *hāh* [1929]. Remarkable I find the usage of this letter as prefixed question particle (הֵאָהָ - *hā* of wondering) and as suffix for 'feminine'; apparently women were commonly associated with wonder and/or rejoicing ☺ ! The **phoneme āh** (*aah*) is still very fitting for the notion of wondering.²³

The use of הֵאָהָ - *ha* as definite article (actually: as emphasis / demonstrative element) finds its origin probably in the Proto-(West-)Semitic form הֵאָהָ - *han* that can very well be regarded as a grammaticalization²⁴ of 'note the following', or 'behold, children!'

The *hey* is the *fifth* letter of the later *aleph-beth*; *five* – that calls forth an association with the *five* books of Moses, the *Torah*. The *Torah* also magnifies God and helps man to assume his proper position, living well in joy and worship with God **YaHUaH** and with each other.

Unfortunately, in my eyes, this letter got reduced or violated most of all the letters at the transition to Paleo-Hebrew. Only the upper part remained, set on its side, whereby apparently the association with the rich original notion got lost completely. Also the sound changed in the direction of the later ה. This Paleo-form was mirrored (cf what I wrote with the *gimel*) at the transition to the Greek capital *epsilon* Ε and our capital **E**. In the square script form nothing seems recognizable anymore from the theologically most significant original notion of the הֵאָהָ - *ah/ hallu/ hillul*. Jewish mysticism has described the ה in the square script as likening a high window in a small house, but any relationship of ה and a window remain obscure and hidden.



Whenever you will encounter a capital **E** again, remember that it is derived from a picture of a person with knees bent and hands lifted in joyful wonder and worship.

We find *hey* (or *ha!*) as word a.o. in the following (remarkably: Aramaic/Chaldean) text, from Daniel 3:

25 He exclaimed, "Behold! (הֵאָהָ - *Hā!*; some transl.: *Look!*) I see four men, not tied up, walking around there in the flames, unhurt; and the form of the fourth is like a son of gods!"

The notion of הֵאָהָ - *hallal* appears very frequently throughout the entire Bible, as word *hallal* a.o. in the following verses from 1 Chronicles 16 and Psalm 22:

4 And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of **YaHUaH**, and to record, and to thank and praise (*welhallēl*) **YaHUaH** God of Israel.

23 You who fear **YaHUaH**, **praise Him** (*hallelu-hu*); all of you, the seed of Jacob, glorify Him; and fear Him all the seed of Israel.

Hallal appears most in the Psalms (56%), and in general mostly God **YaHUaH** is the recipient of the honor or worship. However, there are a few cases where people are the recipients, as in Genesis 12 the beautiful Sarah:

15 The princes of Pharaoh also saw her and commended (*waihallelu*) her before Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

In old Chinese pictographs the basic symbol 𠂔 appears a lot in relation to the divine and to praise and blessing. It may be related to the old Semitic *ah*, but also to the Paleo-Hebrew shape of *kaph* (see further on).

²³ Old Akkadian confirms in fact also that the *āh* sound is the original one here. There the h-sound even was (almost) absent from it there. The (emphasized) Hebrew article ה (mostly pronounced *hā*; corresponding to an emphasized *the*) corresponds there more or less with the pronoun *a* or *ā* (*that*).

²⁴ See also what Aaron D. Rubin writes about it in [his brief note on grammaticalization](#), in the *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, Vol.2 G-O, Brill, Leiden (NL), 2013; p.133-135.

Wa / u / wawu / wav



old:



variant:



Also frequent and very interesting is **wav** (originally probably: *wa*, *wawu* or *u*) – the notion of **security** and **connection** or **bonding** (especially with the Creator or Source of Life), close to our psychological notion of **secure attachment**. As such it is also a model of the **vine** (cf. John 15). As phoneme it is associated with the consonant *w*, and the vowel *u* (*oo*), later also the vowel *o*.

It is represented symbolically by a tent pin; a sharpened stick that was put in the ground for attaching lines (guy-ropes) that kept one's tent upright. It provided the connection as well as security – that one's tent and all in it would not collapse or be blown away in a raging desert storm. The *wav* sign was also used in its physical meaning of any **small** (pointed) **stick**, such as an **arrow**, or a living 'stick in the ground', as a **vine**. Incidentally it might also signify a man (as only a small stick in the hand of his Creator), or a **rib** or other bone.

The shape of this symbol/ letter largely stayed the same over many ages, with small variations in the shape of the 'head'. The original *wav* stands at the basis of the Greek *upsilon*

Υ and our Y and V/U (and the W derived from those), and of the Greek *digamma* Ϝ and our F.

In Babylonian/Assyrian culture the joyful notion of secure connectedness to the Creator **YaHUaH** got lost entirely. As a consequence, the *wav* at the beginning of words in Aramaic and in Aramaic-influenced post-exilic Hebrew was often replaced by the *yod*, as e.g. in Hebrew *yayin* – originally *wayin* (literally: 𐤆𐤅𐤓 – a vine (a stable, connecting and nourishing stick in the ground) with arms/branches [tendrils] bearing fruits) – wine, or to tend a vineyard (the words wine, wein (D), wijn (NL), vin (F) etc. are clearly derived from the old Semitic *wayin*!). Sometimes *wav* in Hebrew is replaced by another letter, like the 'aleph, as in 'echad (here, too, a version with *yod*: *yachad*), from *wachad* 𐤆𐤅𐤕 (the pin near the doorpost [on which the door turns, which **connects** the unstable door to the wall and which remains **stable** amidst all the movement of the door], or a stick in the ground to limit the movement [of a tent or animal], such that it remains stable and reliably at its proper place). (By the way: in several other Semitic languages like Arabic and Ge'ez it is still *wayin* and *wachad*.)

As conjunction/prefix the *wav* still represents the notion of **connecting**, as it equates to our 'and' (even in Akkadian *u* was the conjunction; this even got adopted into late- Sumerian). While at the same time it keeps some of its notion of security, as sometimes a *wav* at the beginning of a sentence adds emphasis, and can be translated as 'Surely ...'.

There is one *wav*-word that survived the Babylonian/Aramaic *disconnection*. That is *wav* - 𐤆 - itself as a separate word meaning 'hook', 'nail' or '**connecting pin**', which occurs a few times in the Bible, in particular in the description of the Tabernacle, where it connects an important curtain (a.o. Exodus 26: 32; remarkable is the 𐤆 in the plural there: 𐤆𐤅𐤕; these *wav*'s were hooks involved in *worship* service).

Furthermore, the Bible is full of this notion of connection/belonging and security provided by God, as often represented by the *wav*.

Za / zan / zayin



old:



unclear:



Zan, the basic building block: **cutting** or **mowing** (with the typical z-sound of that!) is represented by a picture of kind of a **scythe** or hoe from that age – the symbol later known as **zayin**. By extension this was used for every sharp, large tool, for example also for a plow, or a sword or similar weapon, or for a large (butcher's) knife. From there we see also concepts such as to cut or to chop up, and harvest (as the grain harvest was collected with a *zayin*) or to make space (in dense overgrowth). The *zan/zayin* is the seventh letter in the later alphabet, and not without reason; note that the notion of cutting off (from the rest of the days) and making space is also in the seventh day – the *shabbath*.

Possibly this letter originates in two distinct letters; Arabic still discerns in corresponding words a *dz*- and a *dh*- sound (ذ and ذ respectively), where the first can be associated especially with words around seed, sowing and harvesting and the second especially with cutting. In the corresponding Aramaic words the second often changed into a *daleth*. The scholar Brian E. Colless sees in various inscriptions a sign = at the beginning of lines as a variant of the *zayin*: *dh* – an old Semitic demonstrative pronoun, akin to our 'this'.

The **sound** belonging to the notion of mowing, and so with the 𐤆 - **za**, is a sound as of our z.

Zayin in full (𐤆𐤆𐤆) appears as such a.o. in the verb *'azin* – first the chopper-knife through the bushes / the scythe through the grain – 'to create space' (though the usual grammatical interpretation differs slightly), a.o. in Proverbs 17:

4 A wicked doer gives heed to false lips; a liar *gives ear to* (𐤍𐤆𐤆 - *mezin*; creates space for) an evil tongue.

It is quite likely that via these first metal tools, *zayin* came to represent also **anything metal**, anything **valuable** or **splendor** (compare: 𐤆𐤆 [2099] - *ziv* – brilliancy; cf. the Sumerian *zag* - the shine of metals). For example: 'gold' in old Semitic is 𐤆𐤆𐤆 - what I interpret as 'the metal (the material of the big knives) in the worship-house/-tent (the temple or tabernacle)' (see Table 2). So, *zayin* can also represent: **to decorate** (with ornaments of gold, silver, etc.). When one is going to worship (𐤆) all that is made of (comes forth from; 𐤆) that precious metal - 𐤆𐤆𐤆, one ends up at what the Most High calls *fornication* or *serving as a harlot* (זנה) (why do people today still sell themselves in prostitution? mostly for the money! – apparently it still is that way, *also* in *that* sense).

The seventh day was set apart, cut off or dedicated for sanctified use as the precious metal in the temple.

There is also a hypothesis that the *zan/zayin* originally represented the **olive**, **olive-oil** and the **shining** features of it (compare: 𐤆𐤆𐤆 - *zayith/zeithan* [2132] in table 2, also words like 𐤆𐤆 [2100] - *zub* – to flow, seem to confirm this). Because of likeness in color and brilliance it then later came to represent bronze as well, when that was discovered (molten bronze looks very much like olive oil), and especially a scythe or sword made from that metal. This might be the basis of the Arabian distinction as well.

The shape has only been somewhat simplified in the course of the ages. The *zayin* was the basis of the Greek *zeta* **Z** (the sound of this could be an affirmation of the olive oil hypothesis mentioned above; from the Greek *zeta*, *zayith* seems a more probable original than *zan*) and our letter **Z**. With the origin of our alphabet it was first considered unnecessary (even Shakespeare still considered it superfluous!) and left out; therefore it finally ended up at the end.

The early Chinese basic symbol for knife/sword/scythe (*dao*): 𠂔; later variant: 刀, seems clearly related in shape as well as sound (the latter especially considering that the link would have gone via Aramaic, where z - d or d - z shifts have been observed frequently). Japanese knows this symbol for sword as well: 刀 (it looks like that for power: 力 but those two appear etymologically unrelated; the oldest forms of the power-symbol pictured an arm and so this symbol is in origin and meaning more related to the Semitic *yad* or *kaph*).

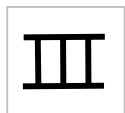
Cha / chet / chuts?



also:



old:



unclear:



A covering **tissue**, wall, **outside border**, **separation**, **boundary**, or **limit** is a notion represented by a picture of a **curtain** or **wallpanel of a tent or tabernacle**: the **cha** or **chet** (also: *cheith*). The meanings include also: outside, **fence**, **skin/leather**, border, **limit** and texture. By extension it refers to the **flesh** and skin, as opposed to bones of a human or animal body.

⌘ could be an alternative old form, representing a twined thread or rope, the basis-form of tissue. In the Paleo-form this symbol has been put on its side. The square script form could be seen as a rather radical further simplification. From the old Semitic *chet* the Greek *eta* Η (η) and our H originated, as well as the *chi* Χ (χ; the latter could well be related in shape to the alternative – yet unclear – old form).

Chet as full word does not appear in the Bible. The form חת - חת we do encounter as the name of the patriarch of the Hittites (esp. in Genesis 23), and the form חית - חית (*chayith*; beast, animals, vermin) as declination of חית - חית (*chai* - life, wild animals (readable as: flesh (III) with legs (ח); a.o. Genesis 1:25; Hoshea 2: 12). So, this offers few clues.

However, the concept represented by the *chet* does appear clearly in the Bible. God is a God Who regularly sets clear boundaries. The Tabernacle had a wall all around – on purpose.

A more important old Semitic *chet*-word appears to be *chuts* חוץ - חוץ III - the boundary of sticks and some kind of plants or of sticks and cloth (cotton or linen? – see at *tsade*), also: outside (Genesis 6:14). Or, if it had been set up with smaller sticks or branches, *chajits* - חַיִּיט - חַיִּיט III - fence (note that between pieces of land often more or less natural boundaries of plants, sticks and/or stones were used – see also at the discussion of the *samekh* as a palm tree, which were often used to mark an area of land; and with a tent, like the tabernacle, sticks and large pieces of fabric made of plant material were used for the external wall and for the walls in between compartments). Honoring such a boundary becomes חַיִּיט III - *chatsah* - divide (the space) in two. From there also *mechitsa* - מַחֲצִיטָה - partition/division, *mechetsa* - מַחֲצֵה - half and *chitson* - חִיצוֹן - external (lit. what comes after the fence).

Chet as חַיִּיט - חַיִּיט III (sin) stands literally for: ‘the boundary/wall/outside of the clay basket first’ which reminds me of Jesus accusing the Pharisees of focusing on the outside performance instead of a renewal of the heart. In that they missed the mark completely, which is what this word *chet* exactly represents. (An alternative interpretation is that חַיִּיט III refers to ‘[what led to] the flesh/ body had to be clothed/surrounded, in the beginning’; cf. Gen.3).

The curtain/veil in the temple (a kind of tent wall/cloth) was spiritually related to the human flesh, as explained in Hebrews 10: 20. In the name of Eve (חַוָּה - חוה [2332] - - *Chuah* or *Chawwah*) Adam indeed expresses his joyful wonder (חַ) over her being of the same flesh (III) and bones (Y).

Ta / teth



old:



The ninth elementary notion has to do with man's awareness of being created or taken out of the **earth** that once **surrounded** him; as if being formed by a great Potter out of **clay**. Related to this, the symbol **teth** pictures either an earthenware bowl or basket, or a potter's wheel. In both cases it is related to the root $\text{Y} \otimes$, from which Hebrew טוה and Arab طوى - *tawa(h)* - **to twist, to wrap around**. Besides the connotation with 'to twist or wrap [tent pins or twigs] together', the connotation to the turning of an earthenware bowl on a potter's wheel - that turns around a pin or axle - has been forwarded.

Hence, the underlying notions pictured by the **teth** include: to turn around, **to surround**, **shell**, to contain, **to cover**, and **clay** or mud (טיט - *tiyt* - $\otimes \text{ } \text{ } \otimes$ - one's hand surrounded

by clay like that of the potter's, appears in the Bible as clay or mud; cf. Yesha-Yahu/Isaiah 41:25). The relationship with a wheel, which has been forwarded, seems to refer mainly to the potter's wheel used in creating an earthenware bowl, also considering the words in which the **teth** appears. Aramaic טין and Arabic طين - *tin* - $\text{ } \otimes \text{ } \text{ } \otimes$ (literally, according to the symbols: what comes forth from 'working' clay with your hand) is potter's clay, a basis for the verb to daub or coat with clay. A surrounding thing (+) that can easily be formed (\otimes) by hand ($\text{ } \otimes \text{ } \text{ } \otimes$) and out of twigs (small branches: $\text{ } \text{ } \otimes \text{ } \text{ } \otimes$) is a **teth** - $\text{ } \text{ } \otimes \text{ } \text{ } \otimes$ - טית - basket.

When the covering wasn't with clay, twigs or textile but with planks or beams, or when a cover or shelter is upheld with big sticks, the combination $\text{ } \otimes \text{ } \text{ } \otimes$ was used, as in Hebrew טלל - *talal* [2926] - to cover (esp. with planks). When there is too much of it, it becomes $\text{ } \text{ } \otimes \text{ } \text{ } \otimes$ - טלם - *telem* [2928] - oppression, as in Arabic ظلم *z.alama/zulam* - to do (or treat s.o.) wrong or evil, to be or grow dark / iniquity, darkness. (Another way to derive this word is as follows: Sharing is a high value in Semitic cultures. To cover (hide) water or abundance - *telem* - was considered evil.) Note that young lambs need a stable covering first, while sacrificial lambs provide a kind of spiritual 'covering', hence $\text{ } \otimes \text{ } \text{ } \otimes$ - טלא [2922-3] - *tela'* or $\text{ } \otimes \text{ } \text{ } \otimes$ - טלה [2924] - *taleh* for 'lamb'; probably the latter - *telah* - is more original - a protection before worship.²⁵

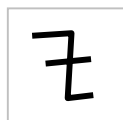
The pure technical Paleo-form was hardly changed. Here too, the square script form can be seen as a -radical- further simplification. In the Greek *theta* Θ still some more of the **teth** can be recognized. In the Latin, and so in our present day script, this letter was not adopted.

Sometimes the **teth** got mixed up with *tav*, *tsade*, *daleth* or *zajin*. This kind of 'exchanges' can make it more difficult to reconstruct the original old Semitic notion and its associated symbol.

The **teth** makes me regularly think of the New Testament notions of our 'being in Christ' (Colossians 3: 3) and His being in us - 'the treasure in **earthen vessels**' (2 Corinthians 4: 7). Significant in that context is the name of Lot: לוט - $\otimes \text{ } \text{ } \otimes$ - the Leader (God) secured his 'shell', while he himself ($\text{ } \otimes$) was connected ($\text{ } \text{ } \otimes$) with twisting (\otimes) the truth, and had a covered (\otimes) pin ($\text{ } \text{ } \otimes$) (he was uncircumcised).

²⁵ The notion of 'being spotted or patched' as 'being covered with spots/patches' (טלא [2921] - *tala'*) may also be at the basis of this word (cf. Genesis 30: 35). And some young animals tend to be spotted anyway.

Ya / yad / yud / yod



old:



variant:



Then, as tenth, we encounter again a most interesting notion and associated symbol: the **yad/yud** or later **yod**. In the old handwritings, clay tablets, etc. two shapes appear, as depicted here. Both represent a forearm, from elbow to and including the hand (with loose thumb). It stands in particular for the **giving hand** or the **working hand**. Next also generalized to: **arm**, **branch** (any side-branch of anything: body, plant, river, ...), to work, to throw or to worship.

The sound of the original **yod** (in those days: **yad**) was comparable to our **y** (consonant; the continental European **j**) as well as our **i** (so, as vowel; note that our **j** descended only relatively recently from the **i**!).

It formed the basis for the Greek **iota** **I** and our **I** and later **J**. The Paleo-form is a slightly rotated variant of one of the older forms. The square script form **י** is again a **very** radical further simplification.

As a prefix, the **yod** could denote literally 'he gives' / 'he will give' (creating out of the rest of the word something that God gives), which generalized to 'he' (2nd p. masc. imperfect). As

suffix, 'I' am the recipient, so the **yod** stands for 'mine'.

In the Bible, the full word **yad** appears frequently as referring to a human hand or to the hand of God, as in Exodus 13: 14 (see also under the next letter, the **kaph**). As the male genital is kind of a 'branch' on the body, it was often denoted by the **yad** as well, as by the word **yad** in Yesha-yahu (Isaiah) 57: 8. Generalized as a side, bank or small arm or branch of a river, it appears in Exodus 2:5 – the finding of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter:

And Pharaoh's daughter came down to the Nile to bathe while her maids walked along the arm / border (**yad**) of the river. She saw the ark among the reeds and sent a servant girl to get it.

Ka / kaph



old:



The **kaph** symbol shows a raised hand. This can be a **reigning**, victorious hand, or a **blessing** hand. In both cases it is a hand that reflects the elementary notion of **authority** (think of a king or queen or a spiritual leader who raises a hand and everyone is silenced). Meanings deriving from this elementary notion of authority are such as: to reign, to bless, to set after one's hand, to admit, to tame, and to cover. Later the forearm was added in the picture, picturing the hand in a childish simple way by a few strokes (fingers) connected on one end to the arm (note that this form shows affinity with that of the **lamed**, which is there in its meaning also). The last Paleo form is an abstraction of this. The final **kaph** in the square script seems derived from it. The regular form in the square script looks like a simplification of the original form, put on its left side. The Greek **kappa** **K** and our **K** are derived from the old Semitic **kaph**.

The second person (in the Bible: Israel to whom God spoke) being the recipient of the blessing or protection, the **kaph** as suffix stands for 'you'. As prefix I also think of blessing those who are not present; for example: '... as/like the blessed Moses ...' – which came to stand for a comparison in general. The word **קַפִּי** - **קַפִּי** - **kaph** is the **hollow** (**קַפִּי** / **פִּי**; see further on) of the hand (Akkadian: **kappu**), though there is an additional reading, which is also related to another literal meaning of the symbols: a strong (or commanding -

קַפִּי) wind (**קַפִּי**) that makes everything in nature (reed, trees, even people) **to bend** (compare words like **כַּפֶּה** and **כַּפֶּה**).

Kaph has sometimes become mixed up with **qoph** and with **gimel** (concerning the latter: e.g. **קַפִּי** - **gaph** in Aramaic is a bird's wing – probably the waving/blowing hand - **kaph** - of a bird; cf. what Jesus says about the blessing of Father God being as a caring/blessing wing of a mother bird over her young, though also interpretable from the **gaph** form as the device to 'go or travel on/with the wind').

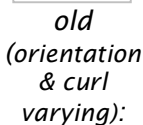
The idea of a hand radiating or representing power we clearly encounter in the Bible (often it uses the word **yad** for 'hand' with an adjective expressing power, e.g. **chazaq**) as in Deuteronomy 26: 8 (cf. also 4:34; 5:15; 7:19; Exodus 3:19; 13:9,14,16; Yirme-Yahu 21:5; 32:21; Ezekiel 20:34), where we read:

8 And **YaHUaH** brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm [cf. the **kaph**, sign of His power/might, and the **yod**, sign of His dedication to work something out], and with fearful might, and with miracles and with wonders.

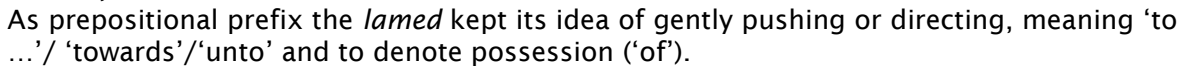
And in Ezekiel 20:5 the lifted hand is both a blessing and a ruling hand, with a promise:

5 and thou hast said unto them: Thus said the Lord **YaHUaH**: In the day of My fixing on Israel, I lift up My hand, To the seed of the house of Jacob, And am known to them in the land of Egypt, And I lift up My hand to them, Saying, I am **YaHUaH** your God.

La / lam / lamad / lamed




The twelfth notion is that of a **leader** or **shepherd**. A **shepherd's staff** or ox goad served as a model for the original **lam** symbol (later also *lamed*, *lamad*). Often the *lam* stood (*pars pro toto*) for the shepherd or leader himself (or even any man), or for the verbs to lead, to educate, to teach, to instruct, to drive on, or to bind, or for direction, or for a yoke imposed. Sometimes a *lam* was literally used as a pictograph for a stick (e.g. tent pole, walking stick). In Biblical language, often the *lam* stood for **the great Shepherd and Leader, God Himself**.



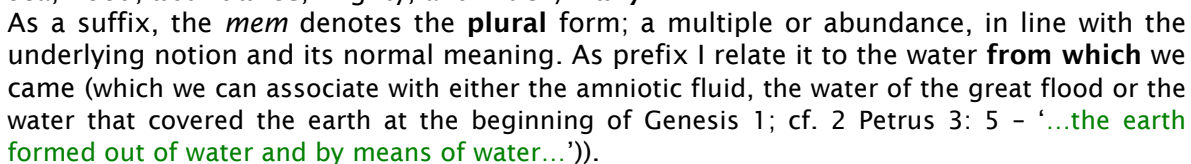
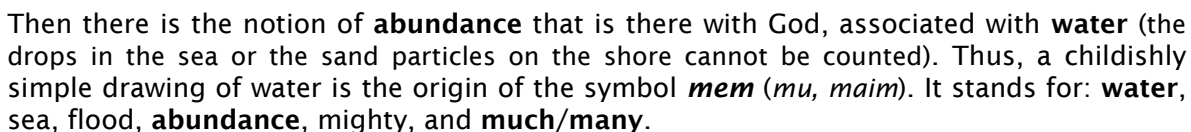
Fürst and others note that on the end of words, the *lamed* can sometimes denote the diminishing form; and that it sometimes has been dropped or changed into an *'ayin*.

Concerning the shape: the curl at the one end of the stick seems to have diminished somewhat over time (very early variants sometimes show a full 360° curl). The orientation varied strongly. The orientation of the Paleo variant differs from the most frequent old Semitic variant. Our capital **L** is easily recognized in the orientation as in the Paleo variant, while the Greek *lambda* **Λ** seems based on another, differently oriented variant. Remarkably, in the Demotic script, a similar shape refers to the divine or kingly (ultimate leadership).

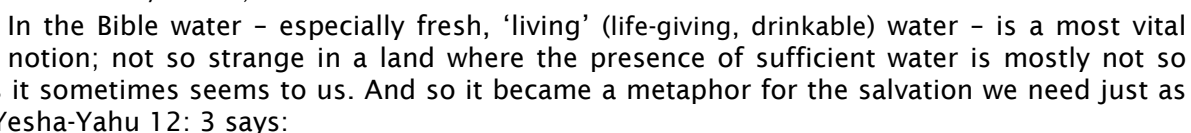
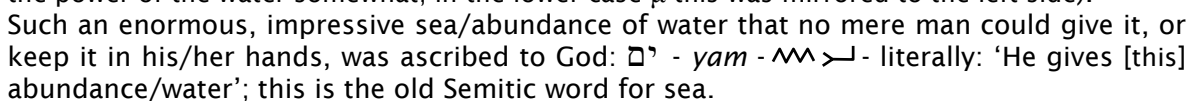
Concerning the Bible, of course the shepherd's stick or -staff from Psalm 23 is very well known. The word למד -  signifies that with a shepherd's staff one gets a lot of movement [into a herd of cattle] or make them enter a stable or sheepfold. Conjugations of the verb *lamad* - to teach - appear twice in Yirme-Yahu (Jeremiah) 12: 16 (cf. also Psalm 25: 4, 5):

And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn My entire way from My people, to swear by My name: '**YaHUah** live,' even as they taught My people to swear by Ba'al; then shall they be built up in the midst of My people.

Mu / am / maim / mem



The Greek *mu* **Μ** (μ) and our **M** are easily recognized in it. In the Paleo form it got a big, bended stroke on the right (appearing to me -subjectively- as if one wanted to dam or curb the power of the water somewhat: in the lower case *u* this was mirrored to the left side).



And with joy you shall draw water out of the wells of *Yeshu'ah* (salvation).

How widely this notion of the *mu*, *ma* or *am* has been distributed among languages, is illustrated to me by the fact that even in the Niger-Congo and Bantu languages in Africa, the prefix or suffix *ma* represents a liquid like water or something that cannot be numbered.

Nu / nun



old:



The next notion is that of **new life** or a **next generation**, represented by a **sprouting seed**. This is depicted in the symbol *nun* (with *u* pronounced as *oo*).²⁶ Original meanings of the *nun* then are: seed, seedling, **offspring**, descendant, that what appears from, new life, son (showing some likeness to the Hebrew word זרע - zera), and the verbs **to continue** or **to bring forth**. The significant word נין - *nin* [5209] means offspring (נולד - as coming forth from semen or seed from the male *yad*).

As a suffix to other words, *nun* often represents a noun (!) depicting something that is the **result of** or **follows from** the constituent other word, as e.g. in למדן - a learned man, from למד - teaching/ learning (see at the letter *lamed*, above), or בנין - a building, from

בנה - to build (lit. to celebrate/lift up/ erect a house for your offspring). Often the *nun* comes in front, as a prefix denoting 'what comes forth from', as very elementary in נץ - צץ - *nets* [5322] - 'what comes forth from a plant' - blossom, or some -not further specified- bird.

As a grammatical prefix the *nun* also denotes the family community around me and I: 'we', or as suffix (often with the *wav* of bonding: *-nu*) 'us', or (often with *yod*: *-ni*) 'me'.

Regarding the notions it is not strange that the roots לא and נא are similar in meaning; there is little difference between letting a child or a leader go first, in both cases you wait a little while.

Nun (נץ - צץ - נן) in full is in fact 'continuation of life secured through offspring'. In association with that it is remarkable in the difficult context of Exodus 33 how Joshua is denoted as 'son of *Nun*':

11 And **YaHUaH** would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he turned again to the camp. But his servant, Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not leave the middle of the tabernacle.

Joshua, a picture of *Yehoshua*/'*Yeshu'ah* (Jesus; the name Joshua or *Yehoshua* is in fact the same as *Yeshu'ah*), was the 'son of Nun' - the son through whom life continued into the promised land, secure and connected, like *Yehoshua* - Jesus is The Son securing the continuation of Life, securely bonded, by incorporating many as children (offspring) in the home/family of God...

In the course of time the dot at the top disappeared, leaving only a zigzag line. In the Paleo form it is not completely clear, but it seems a small zigzag has replaced the dot, while the line has only one bend left. Thus it has become a simpler edition of the *mem*, like the derived Greek *nu* Ν and Latin *N* are with respect to the *M*, and *M* respectively.

In the Old Chinese there was a very similar, though somewhat more detailed symbol for a son, child or offspring/descendant: 子 (sometimes the three 'hairs' were omitted there as well). Even in current Japanese script this symbol for a baby, child or young is still recognizable: 子.

Remarkable I find the many *nu*-related words in many languages related to new life.

²⁶ About the origin of this symbol some discussion has been going on. This is typically a case where one's starting points will determine what one will see. Those who position the origin of the old Semitic script in Egypt and not further back than 2000 to 2500 BC, see a resemblance to the Egyptian symbol for snake (the snake was an important idol in Egypt). Scientists open to the option of an older, possibly even much older, not necessarily Egyptian origin of the old Semitic and who worship **YaHUaH**, the God of the Bible as God (and hence not join in with the worship of snakes), see in the *nun* a sprouting seed reflecting new life. The words in which the *nun* appears appear to affirm the latter group. Also the similarity with the mentioned old-Chinese symbol clearly confirms the seed-/offspring-notion.

Sa/si / samekh / sin



old:



very unclear:



One of the letters from the old Semitic that was least clear is the *samekh* that probably coincided with the *sin* and possibly also had either name. Various theories on early forms and associated meanings have been forwarded. Therefore I will show some more of my investigations here, as compared to the other letters. On the left you see three variants of early shapes. The first old image – also the basis for the later Paleo-Hebrew and Phoenician forms – has been associated with a support pole, pillar or column; both the first two pictures with thorn(s) or a thorny plant. Lastly, there is a doubtful (therefore: drawn in light gray), possibly regional third variant: fish.

A quite general idea is that the first would have the meaning ‘support’ or ‘support pillar’. I do not know all about it, but that this meaning would be based on an Egyptian hieroglyph, seems largely based on ill-information.²⁷ The second, much less occurring variant actually is equal to the Egyptian hieroglyph *s* and might be a representation of the original *tsade*. Other meanings that I encountered included: to protect (possibly related to the thorny plants often put surrounding a house or piece of land as protection against predators), the verb to grasp (thorns on some seeds grab the fur of animals for distribution), evil and to hate. In word meanings I do recognize some of the meaning of support and thorn, but not that of a fish, which enforced my suspicion that the basic meaning could be some **thorny plant**.

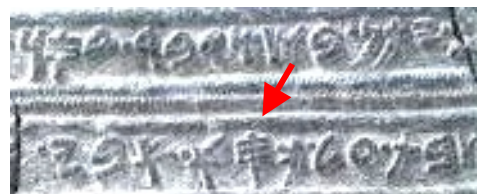
Another letter that was unclear for some time to me, was the *sin*, whose origin is likely the same as that of the *samekh* (one reason to assume this, is that in various Semitic languages there is no *samekh* and on that spot in the alphabet a *sin* appears; another reason is that various old words like that for a booth, *sok*, appear with a *samekh* as well as with a *sin*). So I stumbled upon the word *sansin* - סנסין (5577) - סנסין - which seems the repetition of an old root, סנסין - literally: ‘what comes forth from / seed of [whatever-the-samekh-stands-for]’ with the meaning: bough or **fruit-stalk of a date tree**. And indeed, these sturdy trees – ubiquitous in the Middle East from old times – have typical leaves and fruit-bearing boughs at the top and kind of big ‘thorny’ sharp remains (סנסין) of branches (סנסין)/fronds/leaves: (סנסין - סנסין (5512,5) - thorn²⁸) all around the whole stem/trunk. Also from the edges of the fronds (סנסין) **thorns come forth** (סנסין). This *sin* could then have been the name of the old letter as well! ‘To cover’ is a frequent association with *samekh* (cf. e.g. כסה - *kasah* (3680, 3780)²⁹ – the blessing of palm leaves, or: honoring a ruler with palm leaves [by so covering him against the sun]). In antiquity, coverings were often made from **palm leaves**.



Amman Citadel Inscription, 9th century BC

Fragment of a [photo by Bruce and Kenneth Zuckerman, West Semitic Research](#);

Early Ammonite – closely related to Paleo-Hebrew and Phoenician;



Phoenician inscription of Kilamuwah - king of Sam'al, ca. 825 BC


Fragment of a [photo from: Glenn Markoe, Phoenicians - Peoples of the Past](#);

The symbols depicted by the **red arrows** are *samekh/sin*'s; note the tall ‘trunk’.

²⁷ This theory is based on likeness with the Egyptian hieroglyph for a *Djed column* or *Tet pillar*: 𓆎, which some *think* to be a supporting pillar, which it is not. The Egyptian *Djed pillar* was a highly cultic tube-like structure (related to a hollow papyrus-stem and the sacral vertebrae of an idol) filled with seed (wheat, or godly/human semen, thought to originate in the spinal fluid) in Egypt's fertility and power directed cult, often depicted in the company of snakes and the *ankh* symbol (which depicts the fruit at the top of a palm tree). As such one could relate it to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, eating the fruit of which God had forbidden. If there is any relation of the *samekh* with the *Djed pillar* hieroglyph, it is to be found in the Egyptian symbol of the *Djed pillar* being *derived* from (the same background as) the *samekh/sin*, I assume.

²⁸ Quote from [a web page](#) on palm tree trimming: “Some palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) leaves are very spiky, and can be hazardous to come in contact with.” And: “Many species of palms have thorns on the edges the palm leaves and could be hazardous to the palm trimmer.”

²⁹ *Kasah* - כסה (3780) – to cover with flesh, to grow fat, is well explainable as worshipping ther blessings of the date palm (of so much sugar you will get fat!). The *sin* in it may in origin well be a conflation of *shin* and *samekh*: to be covered/blessed with with sugar-rich dates and shade of palm leaves as by a source of abundance. The same for *sok* - שֹׁך (7900) – booth (pavilion or tabernacle) – the place where that could happen. I still have to check this with other Semitic languages and old sources, though. The first tents and shelters seem to have been made from palm leaves, using a palm trunk as support.

The Old South Arabian script (an early offshoot of West-Semitic used for Himyarite, Sabaeen, etc.) depicts *samekh* like this: , which is in full accordance with the patterned look of the stem/trunk of a date/palm tree.

So, all that makes the **date tree** or any **palm tree**³⁰ a very likely candidate to have served as model for the original *samekh/sin*.³¹ Let us look whether that is affirmed or refuted by other word-meanings/-associations.

Seeing a palm tree in the *samekh*, and a palm branch (or the dry and spiky remains of it) in סן indeed explains words like סנפיר (5579) - *senappiyr* - 'fin', rather easily; in this case: סן-פיר - 'palm frond to blow (air) with your hand at an other', that is: a hand fan; similar to a fin indeed. Related: סעיף (5585 cf. -9) - *sa'iph* - fronds, boughs (from the hand-fans you 'see' in it, or 'date palm sees the hand at the mouth [eating the fruit, amidst the branches]') or cleft (the clefts in the trunk between the 'thorns' are used to climb to reach the eaten fruit and the leaves; cf. also סנה (5572-3)). And: סעף (5585) - *sa'aph* - to cut off boughs/ fronds. סעף (5587-8) - *sa'iph/se'eph* - ambivalence, division - may, apart from the normal derivation from סעף (5585), be related to the wild movement of the leaves in strong wind, and/or the sturdy trunk. The branches (hand-fans) are then contracted in other compound words to סן, as in what can result (סן) of palm-fronds (e.g. by weaving them): סןן (5603-4) - to cover in, panel [as those made of woven palm-leaves]. Moving them up and down gives ספף (5606) - *saphaq*, to slap, clap or to splash. The fans are used for cooling; cooled water or date palm water (date juice) (shortened to סמם/סמ) is a most refreshing blessing (סמ/ס), hence סמך (5564) - *samak* - to refresh, to support (in the heat!); when you bring someone such water, you may get a promotion or a good mark out of it: סמן (5567) - *saman*.

Later, man-made columns may have resembled the straight-up trunk of the palm trees, which may have led to the support-notion. But words like סעד (5582-3) - *ca'ad* - to sustain, stay, to support, may also derive much more literally from the old Semitic form סעד: 'a palm tree - watch [how little] it move[s]' - even in the strongest winds only the leaves move, the trunk remains standing sturdy and still (cf. סעה (5584) - to rush, of that stormy wind). This **sturdiness** may as well be behind סר (5620,-37) - *sar* - סרף - 'another like a palm tree'; unmovable, so: **stubborn**/resistant. Such a stubborn one in the family (סר house) is experienced by the others as a *rebel*: סרף - סרב (5621). *Sa'ad* might also derive from a form related to 'see to (i.e. care for) the movement of the fan' for cooling, and thus sustaining (in parallel with *samak*, above). When a skilled man (shepherd or leader) climbs/goes up (ס) into a palm tree (פ), he surely *ascends* / *comes up* (high): ספף (5559) - *seliq*.

Then how about the palm tree pictures and carvings in the Jerusalem Temple (1 Kings 6:29-35; Ezekiel 41: 18-26)? They are not written with *samekh* but with a word beginning with a *tav*: תמר - *tamar/timmor(ah)* [8561]. One could posit that that is because that is what they were: *pictures* and *carvings* (fully in line with the meaning of *tav*)! An original *tav-samekh* may have been conflated into *tav* only. An more plausible explanation on *tamar* is that it stands for a sign of water/abundance from the Other (where there were palm trees, there was water!). Still another one is suggested by Arabic *thamara* - to bear fruit, related to old Semitic תמר - the source of water (liquid; juice, oil, life) of the Other/other. Palm trees were a rich source of fruits, juice and oil and a symbol for the tree of life.³²



A not so tall date palm with its abundant date clusters

Photo: Guus H. Molenaar, Huizen, NL



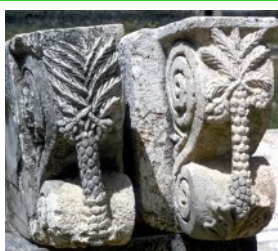
A column as a date palm (Egyptian temple ca.200 AD)

Photo: [Travel Tuesdays](#) blog

³⁰ Possibly also including what we now call an agave, which is very similar in basic shape. Its leaves' fibers, *sisal*, are used also to make rope. B.t.w.: pure coincidence that *sisal* - especially used by farmers (cf. ס), worldwide - has two s's and an l in it...?

³¹ In the 2nd millennium BC this was a usual way to depict a palm tree. See for example the palm trees at the map/floor plan of [a luxurious villa with gardens](#) from the tomb of Amten in Thebe (Egypt, XVIIIth dynasty; there depicted with not one but three top-fronds and three on each side).

³² Interestingly, Akkadian, an older Semitic language (likely the language of Abraham's grandparents!) called the palm tree *gitshimmaru* and associated it as **tree of abundance**, where *gitsh* was the general term for a tree, from Sumerian, and the *ma - re* combination is identified here as representing abundance



Palm tree sculptures from an old synagogue in Capernaum

photo: V. Gilbert & Arlisle F. Beers, [FaithImages](#)

The palm tree being high and admirable, may have lead to 𐤏𐤍𐤔 (the other like a tall palm tree – the basis for words like 𐤍𐤔 (8269) - *sar* - leader, prince, captain, and 𐤍𐤔𐤏 - סרַח [5628-9] - *sarach* - to overhang, grow luxuriously, exceed, be unrestrained, go free, princess, act as a wealthy man; note that 𐤏𐤍𐤔 can also be interpreted here as ‘the other with palm trees’, as palaces etc. were often surrounded by palm trees). The dried old fronds/branches (𐤍𐤔𐤏 [8286]) bending and ‘about to go’ (both symbolized in 𐤏𐤍𐤔) hang down and get intertwined/mixed up (𐤍𐤔 [8276]), forming a big ‘nest’ or ‘skirt’/shell (in words the letters *teth* or *chet* are used for it) around the trunk. These ‘shells’ of sharp, dry material resist climbing to the top and taking the fruit; another aspect contributing to the association with resistance (from which 𐤏𐤍𐤔 - סרין [5630] - *siryon* - armour / coat of mail and 𐤏𐤍𐤔 - סִיחון [5511] - *sichon* - warrior).³³ These ‘big nests’ are a frequent hideout -

חַסוּת - *chasut* for rodents and ... snakes! So, here we even have the frequent mythical connotation of the *samekh* with the snake, and with *satan* - 𐤍𐤔𐤏 - שָׁטָן [7853-4] - literally from the old Semitic signs: the [sneaky (!)] creature coming out of such a ‘nest’/hull of resistance (when equating *sin* and *samekh* here)...! In other words, *satan* is an offspring of shielding/covering up the Tree of Life!

Making an opening in that ‘skirt’ or opening the border of the palm tree is 𐤏𐤍𐤔 - חָשַׁף [2834-5] - *chasaph* (to pull off, make naked, dis-cover; also: the skirt of the palm tree pulled off by the wind). Doing something that resembles pulling or tearing the skirt away is 𐤏𐤍𐤔 - נָסַח [5255-6]. The result is that rats, mice and snakes **flee** out (נִסּוּ - *nuc* - lit.: come forth from the fronds of the palm tree).

Dates, in the Bible ‘love apples’ - *duda'im* (related to *dad* - breasts, or *dud* - love; see Song of Songs 7:7-8; even the name ‘date’ likely derives from this), the fruits of the **date tree**, grow in bunches resembling a net or basket full of fruit (a 2nd meaning of *duda'im*). They are full of sugar (60% - hence 𐤏𐤍𐤔 - סָם [5561] - *sam* - sweet, as date juice), and hence very restorative/nourishing (**supportive** in that sense!), and were and still are used as a strong aphrodisiac (cf. Gen.30:14-18 and the name *Issaskhar* in Table 3. A thick moustache was seen as the result of eating a lot of dates: 𐤏𐤍𐤔 - שָׁפַם [5572] - *sullam* - 𐤏𐤍𐤔 - literally: [a kind of] poles (big sticks) for a palm tree.



The dangerous ‘skirt’ of the palm tree

The Indians tell that the ‘Great Spirit’ (referred to by some Cherokees and Yuchis as *Yahuh* or *Yaho*) originally passed on the earliest script, written on a palm leaf. Also around India as well as in the eyes of the old philosopher Pliny („*Olim in palmarum foliis scriptitatum*”) the palm leaf is supposed to be the first writing material. Biblical Hebrew seems to confirm this vision with words such as 𐤏𐤍𐤔 - סֵפֶר [5608-5613] - *sépher/sáphar* - script/writing (the palm tree as mouth of God); 𐤏𐤍𐤔 - the palm tree speaks of the Other / of God. There is a city, called 𐤏𐤍𐤔 - קִרְיַת סַנַּח - *Qirjat Sannah* - ‘City of the book’; so, *sannah* - 𐤏𐤍𐤔 - ‘crown of the palm tree’ or ‘what comes forth from the palm tree for worship’, is an old word for book/scroll... In Sanskrit one and the same word is used for writing and for a palm frond

from God, fully in line with the notions. This underwrites clearly what I denote from Arabic, with the possibility that somewhere the *sh/s* exchange (as apparently occurred somewhere in the development of Hebrew) has to be taken into consideration, such that we can see the Akkadian *gitshimaru* as related to a reconstructed West-Semitic *samar* - the palm tree with water/abundance of God.

³³ How dangerous this ‘skirt’ can be appears still regularly even in present time. Only **in the USA** almost yearly death casualties occur among people who tried to remove it, often by its ‘coming lose’ unexpectedly.

³⁴ This (with other things that have emerged lately) casts serious doubts regarding the expertise of the translators of the Septuagint (LXX) who made them into **Mandrakes**, a poisonous plant of which the roots and fruits contain hallucinogens, but certainly not specifically improve sexual appetite or fertility! Remarkable is that *Mandrakes* were often employed in the world of occultism (Babylon!)...

³⁵ A Biblical basis for the association of the date palm with the Tree of Life is the following. In Genesis cherubs guard the access to the Tree of Life, denying it to man (Gen.3:24) and the first Temple was decorated with an alternation of cherubs and date palms (and open flowers - lilies?) (1 Kings 6:29-35; cf. Eze. 40:16-37; 41:18-26).

A prime vision on the so called *Assyrian Sacred Tree* actually sees it as representing a symbol of the date palm, and relates it to its fertility enhancing fruits and/or to the Divine power to bestow life.

(*lekhana*).³⁶

All this affirms the *samekh/sin* = **palm or date tree** hypothesis. Since I did not encounter a single contra-argument, I have adopted this hypothesis.

It also shows that some confusion with *tsade* may likely have started early, since, however different they may be, palm trees and papyrus both are decked with a big flat circular 'crown' of horizontal leaves that makes a very pretty **sunshade**, and whose – dried – leaves allow weaving into **mats** and the like that make good sunshades as well.³⁷

*It is good to know the truth,
but it is better to speak of palm trees.*

Arab Proverb

That there was so little clarity around the old Semitic *samekh* sign is also due to its infrequent appearance, its large variations in shape, and its large change in shape – certainly in the transition from the Paleo form to the square script form (maybe the rather round circumference of the *palm leaf* or the *date fruit* stood model for the square script *samekh* [?]). I am still studying on this one. From the *samekh* the Greek Xi Ξ (/ξ) arose, from which our X.

Very intriguing I consider the סנה [5572] – the *senah/ceneh*, from which God spoke to Mosheh (Moses; Exodus 3: 2-4). I always found it peculiar that He, Who sees thorns and thistles as evil, would choose a thorn bush to speak from. However, when we see that ס – פ stood for a (fruit)branch of a date tree, and that one worshipped in those days with lifted hands פ (as the palm tree seems to do with its 'arms'/ branches), then we can identify סנה – פפ as the leaves and fruit bearing 'crown' of a date palm. When we additionally consider that the date tree had a connotation with the Tree of Life, with stability and support (both stability in its trunk and nourishing and healthy in its fruit) coupled to a measure of being hard to access when one did not eat of its fruit *regularly* (removing the old branches), all of a sudden the picture becomes a lot more understandable.³⁸

Do we add the images of palm trees in the temple – wanted there by God – and the facts that He resides or eats in the middle of סנה (Deut.33: 16), and that people who recognize(d) Jesus' divinity, waved with (date)palm fronds or ditto branches to Him (John 12:13; Rev.7:9), then everything fits nicely together!



**Palm tree / Menorah with
above it from left to right:**

דוּתס - **God's sign** uttered

(?). On each side: a Ram
(He is great / lifted up), with
(left) another *yad* and *tav*: He
gives a sign.

On a Lachish ewer, 13th c. BC.

³⁶ Source: Theodore Benfey, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, Longmans, Green & Co, London, 1866; p.800.

³⁷ Even biologically, the palm is closer related to the papyrus than one might expect. From the same web page as one of the previous footnotes: "Palms are not trees, and are better categorized with the grass family." (Both belong to the so-called '*monocotyledones*' or *monocots*, just like the banana tree, the lily, the onion and the orchid. Quite fitting, in *monotheism*...)

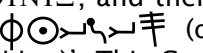
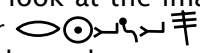
See e.g. this blog for some examples of what is still being made out of palm leaves in Egypt. Note that also raffia (used to make rope or to weave mats) is made of palm leaves.


In his big treatise on the history of Egypt and southwest Asia, Maspero noted about the palm tree in Mesopotamia:

"The date palm meets all the other needs of the population; they make from it a kind of bread, wine, vinegar, honey, cakes, and numerous kinds of stuffs; the smiths use the stones of its fruit for charcoal; these same stones, broken and macerated, are given as a fattening food to cattle and sheep." Such a useful tree was tended with a loving care, the vicissitudes in its growth were observed, and its reproduction was facilitated by the process of shaking the flowers of the male palm over those of the female: the gods themselves had taught this artifice to men, and they were frequently represented with a bunch of flowers in their right hand, in the attitude assumed by a peasant in fertilizing a palm tree. Fruit trees were everywhere mingled with ornamental trees – the fig, apple, almond, walnut, apricot, pistachio, vine, with the plane tree, cypress, tamarisk, and acacia; in the prosperous period of the country the plain of the Euphrates was a great orchard which extended uninterruptedly from the plateau of Mesopotamia to the shores of the Persian Gulf.

Source: G. Maspero, (A. H. Sayce, Ed.; M. L. McClure, Transl.), History Of Egypt, Chaldea, Syria, Babylonia, And Assyria; Volume III., The Grolier Society, London, 1903.

³⁸ The usual explanation 'thorn bush' is still more peculiar, because the word סננה - *cannāh* is well identified by the renowned dictionaries as '**palm frond/branch**'. And the old Canaanite town קרית סנה - *Qirjat cannāh* (Joshua 15: 15-16, 49; Judges 1: 11-12) is explained as '**city of the book**' (compare that palm fronds – from the crown of the palm tree – were likely the original writing material)! Also: קרית ספר - *Qirjat cepher* (city of language; literally: of the palm tree mouth of God) and later the place was called *Debir* (cf. *dabar* = word).

Even more striking it all becomes, when we note down the Greek word that is used there in its earliest form: ΦΟΙΝΙΞ, and then look at the image of the corresponding letters from which the Greek were derived:  (or  - 'to see the palm fronds and its fruit stems go up and down (or blow)'. This Greek word was used for the name of the Phoenicians, historically: seamen and inhabitants of coastal areas (palms!), but the etymology of ΦΟΙΝΙΞ (a.o. in the Septuagint of Ps.92:12 (LXX 91:13) and Job 29:18) was unknown so far, according Thayer's lexicon. And, yes, the mythic bird Phoenix (Φοινιξ as well; according the Egyptians a re-incarnation of the highest God) is reported to build its nest on top of **a palm tree** (said Ovid), each 500 years, after which it burned itself there and renewed its life. I read these phoenix myths as a mythic corruption of the real event, where the Angel of **YaHUaH** landed in fire on top of a palm tree and spoke to Mosheh (Moses), announcing new life for God's people (and/ or an earlier similar encounter with someone else). In that, the palm tree symbolically represents the presence of God in which He brings new life to His people (concerning Ovid's period of 400-500 years: cf. Gen.15:13 - 400- 500 years before Mosheh, and 400- 500 years after Mosheh the consecration of the 1st temple with palm trees - 1 Kings 6: 1, 29-35; again such a period later the 2nd temple, and lastly 'tongues as of fire' representing God's presence on top of people worshipping with raised hands (like palm trees), in Acts 2, again ca. 500 years later - all as sign of **God's presence and renewal of the covenantal relationship with His people**).



Does this look like what Mosheh saw?



***Does this look
like what
Mosheh saw?***

Chinese tradition (in particular from the 11th cent. BC; about 300 years after Mosheh) calls the *Phoenix*: *Fenghuang* (鳳凰), says that this big, both masculine and feminine flying being is the opponent of the dragon [which in essence is a snake, still with legs!] and pictures him, attacking snakes with its strong claws. He would embody the five most important virtues [goodness, uprightness, knowledge, faithfulness/integrity and good behavior; characteristic for the God of the Bible] and only stay with a ruler who was without darkness and corruption. They apparently heard *something*... (This explanation on the סנה - *seneh* may also give a base for the explanation of the earlier mentioned סלק - *seliq* - the palm tree from which 'El, the Primary Shepherd, raised (like the sun at dawn), as a word for to ascend or go up (high).) Isaiah 19: 18 talks about a future when five cities of Egypt will speak Canaanite (not Egyptian) and one city will be called הָרָם אֱלֹהֵי - to worship the God of the palm tree! Some think this refers to Heliopolis - the city of the sun-god. Remarkable is also the verb שָׂרַף - אֱלֹהֵי - *saraph* [8313,-5] - to burn, literally: to blow like the palm tree of God;³⁹ or *seraph* [8314] - a kind of angel with 6 wings (3 on both sides!) speaking in the Name of God...



**Israel Liberata
1958 and 1971
memorial coins**

Nelson and Broadberry show that in the older Chinese pictographs the Name of the original God of the Chinese, (*Shang*) *Di* (possibly related to *Shaddai*), was represented symbolically by a representation of the Trinity atop a tree (the Tree of Life).


A similar 'leftover' of Biblical notions (spiritually we often observe the adversary copying things of God – though partly and badly) we see in the possible roots of the Sinai (סִינַי) peninsula and mountain. Both the above word *seneh* and the name of the Mesopotamian moon-god whose name was equal to that of the letter Sin have been forwarded as root of this name (and both may derive from the same root, as the above illustrates). According old mythology this god is the Creator and highest God, and the son of a god whose name was abbreviated shortly to *El*. In the middle to end of the 3rd millennium BC his greatest sanctuaries stood in Ur and CHarran – places we know from the story of Abraham, of course.



Very interesting is also the word סִינִים (5511) - 𐤱𐤢𐤏𐤍 - *Sinim* (in the Bible only in Yesha-Yahu (Isaiah) 49:12), which many relate to the inhabitants of (Southern) China (perhaps also those of (West-)ern America – the Indians). Under the sub-heading '*Chinese connections...*?', near the end of this document, I will dig further into this.



Just like the palm, we may lift our arms/hands in the encounter with **YaHUaH** and welcome His fiery and **delighting** presence.

³⁹ This notion of the ‘blowing’ of the palm fronds towards God as expression of glorifying Him, we encounter in many words. E.g. in פָּאֵר - *pa’ar* [6286] - to glorify, decorate, gleam; but also: shake a tree, go over the boughs; according to the symbols: to blow towards the prominent Other (God), like the palm fronds did. With other vowelization: פִּאֵר - *pe’ér* [6287] - a fancy head dress (hair or hat). And: פִּוּאָרָה - *peo’rah* [6288] - branches with foliage, ornamentation. Also: פָּאֲרִיר - *pa’rur* [6289] - to glow, to become red, is very well explainable from the way God appeared to Moses, announcing His salvation and covenant. Without this context the relationship between these varied words and meanings was very hard to see!



By the way, do you share my amazement about the striking similarity between the Menorah -  and the original *samekh/sin*? Both have a central 'trunk' with on each side three branches (in the Menorah they are bent upwards to carry the lamps; in the letter they are straight for simplicity). Both served for a considerable time as a national symbol of Israel (only relatively recent the so-called '*star of David*' with [its mystical/occult background](#) [666!] was adopted by the Jews). And the seven (fullness!) burning lights on top the Jerusalem Temple Menorah clearly reflected or symbolized God's continuous presence there. In the recent history of the resurrected state of Israel also the palm tree (almost always pictured with 7 fronds - three fronds on each side and one in the middle as shown in the picture; only incidentally with 6 fronds on each side and none in the middle, so 12 in total) has been revived again as symbol on memorial coins.

Concerning the word  -  - *samekh*, this can either be interpreted as the date palm (remember: fresh, ripe dates have 60% sugar content and are rich in almost all vitamins!) and water being a blessing / giving strength [again; in a dry and tiring climate!], or the date palm giving a lot of power [again], or many palm trees [around one's house] being a sign of authority.

The Ugaritic cuneiform (of Semitic origin as well) knew two symbols with an s-sound:  and . Both show similarity with the palm tree; the first is a crude, simplified presentation, about the second symbol one notes that on both sides of a central trunk, three 'branches' have been drawn, just like in the pictographic original.

Chinese had a similar [symbol](#) as well: 丰 (old shapes: sealscript: 𠂔, 𠂕, 𠂖; oracle bones a.o.: 𠂗). This represents a (for the Chinese unknown) flourishing plant in the soil, and stood also for *flourishing*, *fertility* and *riches*. Here too, there is, in combination with the symbol for a knife, a link with *writing*. This seems surely related in origin. Also related seems the Chinese [symbol](#) 王 (old shapes: 𠂔 and 𠂕) which represents all that is related to the emperor or highest godhead. It appears a.o. in the symbol for *emperor* or *highest authority or godhead*: 皇 (which puts together 白 - a great, pure, white light atop the 王); a symbol that we encountered earlier already as part of the Chinese name of the Phoenix: [Fenghuang](#): 鳳凰.. With a small extra stroke in it we get: 玉 - the Chinese symbol for jade, a gem with the color of the fronds of many palm trees! Remarkable as well I consider the parallel with the oldest variant of the Chinese symbol 氣 - [qi](#) [chi/tshi], being: 𠂔 (so, looking strongly like the Greek variant of the 𠂔: 𠂔). This is the symbol for *life energy*. The Chinese [symbol](#) 手 - *shiou* is originally a hand with five fingers and seems *not* to be related. However, in combination with one of the above symbols we get: 拜 - to humbly bow oneself down, to be obedient.

'A / 'ainu / 'ayin & ghan / ghainu / ghayin



old:



variant:



The original **'ayin** (*ainu/aynu*) is, despite the variations, fortunately rather clear again; it was a picture of an **eye**, representing the basic notion of **vision**; to see as well as to see to (i.e. care for), or to oversee. That is the primary meaning as well; derived from that are meanings like: to see, to see to, seer, to watch, insight. Phonetically the *ayin* is a **voiced pharyngeal fricative**; to our ears it often sounds like the continental European vowel *a* (*aw*) or a short *o* as in *log*, though with a soft throat h-like sound attached to it.

What complicates the *ayin* according to some is that next to the **'ayin** originally there existed a harder variant: *ghan/ghayin* (*gh* or *g*; softer than the *chet*). In a number of Hebrew words that now contain an **'ayin**, this originally was this variant *ghayin*. Though there is a difference in sound, so far I did not encounter a clear original symbol other than . For the difference in meaning I looked especially at word meanings in Arabic, which still distinguishes the غ - *ghayin* as a separate letter next to the ع - *'ayin* (Ugaritic did so too).⁴⁰

What appears there is that the غ - *ghayin* seems to represent the notion of **surrounding** or **covering**. Some examples: غم - *ghamma* - - to cover or sheathe something total-

ly⁴¹ and from there: غمد - *ghamada* - - to insert something into a hull, to sheathe something (e.g. a sword in a sheath), غامر - *ghāmir* - - to surround others like the first water (the worldwide flood), that is: to flood all (also without the *'aleph*: to flood, to put under water / to cover with water), غل - *ghal* - or the emphasis by doubling of it: غلغل - *ghalghala* - (to surround a stick or man): insert, to penetrate, to immerse oneself in, and غور - *ghaur* - to penetrate deeply (lit.: - to sheathe one's 'pin' in/with the other person). This notion of sheathing is graphically well represented by the symbol (thereby the notion and the symbol stand close to that of the - *teth*). We are still talking then about what one sees at the outside, as with the **'ayin**, though here it is mostly something **not** seen anymore because it is **sheathed**, **covered** or **concealed**. So it seems to be merely a **variation** in sound and meaning. In Greek a *ghayin* in transliterations has mostly been represented by the letter *gamma*; for example in the city name Gomorrha: Γομωρρα for the Hebrew עֲמֹרָה - *'amorāh* - originally very likely *ghamorāh* - (in line with the meaning of this as a place, **covered** in ruins and no longer visible, because of polytheism and/or where the phallus was worshipped a lot).

In the form of the later ע - *'ayin* (and especially in the cursive form of it:) we see also a clear relation with the small (cursive) Greek letter γ - *gamma*.

The Paleo form is a simplification, as is the Greek *o-mikron* ο and *o-mega* Ω and our O.

The full word עֵיִן - *'ayin* - - can be interpreted as the attentive **eye** you give to your children (you watch them carefully). It can also be seen as derived (shortened) from מַעֲיִן - *ma'yan* (4599) - (water - look - He/it gives - new life / offspring) - a fountain or well (the second meaning of the word, next to 'eye').

In other pictographic scripts like old Chinese, the eye was often depicted as: . Its current Chinese pronunciation is *yan* - 眼 - pretty similar to *'ayin*. The symbol there represented the sun (the light of which makes everything *visible*). In that context it is remarkable that the Egyptian sungod *Ra'* or *Re'* (Hebr.: רע) in Egyptian hieroglyphs script was represented by the same symbol: , and that his name in W-Semitic was written as - the god 'sun' / the god who makes us see.

Remarkable in Hebrew is that many words with an *'aleph* in them exist also with an *'ayin* at the same location. The meanings are often somewhat related. Only the word with the *'aleph* has something of authenticity and trustworthiness or integrity in it while the word with the *'ayin* seems more directed to outward appearance, to the public eye (or as *ghayin* to conceal from that public eye). This difference is striking for the meanings of the *'aleph* and *'ayin*: the *'aleph* then represents the first, the authentic, and the *'ayin* the counterfeit - made for the eye / as an image, for the outward appearance. Take the example of the words אור - *'ór* = (great) light and עור - *'ór* = skin. God Himself is enrobed in a great light (אור - *'ór* - cf. His shining Face as the first (א) secure (ו) face of an Other (ר), like the sun every morning). Since we stepped out of that light in Genesis 3, we became naked and have to cover ourselves in a garment of skin or other cloth (עור - *'ór*) and thereby protect (ו) us against the eye / the on-looking (ע) of the other (ר).

⁴⁰ Akkadian cuneiform did not have a separate letter for it in their script (borrowed from the Sumerians), but the existence of *ghayin* is also attested in Akkadian, with similar words as taken here from the Arabic. For details, see e.g.: Gary A. Rendsburg, Aaron D. Rubin, John Huehnergard, *'A Proper View of Arabic, Semitic, and More'* (also [here](#)), JI of the American Oriental Society, Vol. 128, No. 3 (Jul. - Sep.), 2008, pp. 533-541; and ref. 15 in there. They mention a.o. the root Gh-L-P (Akkadian: *ghalāpu*, Arabic *ghallafa*, Ugaritic *GhLP*, Hebrew עָלָה [5968] - 'to cover, wrap' - - literally: to wrap a stick in an opening/hole.

⁴¹ So: covering the entire *gamma*! It is not unthinkable that the original notion under the early Greek *gamma* is especially that of the *ghayin*. It might be possible that the old name was not *ghayin* but *gam*.

Pu / pi / pei / peh



old:



variant?:



unclear:



The elementary notion of an **opening** for airflow like the nose or **mouth**, an **open space** and the **airflow** associated to both, is the basis of the symbol **pu** – later: **peh** or **pei**. It also has a soft variant: **phu**. In general, the **phu** is seen as representing open mouth, as the word פֶּה - *peh* still is mouth in Hebrew. However, when we look at the Semitic word פֶּה - *aph* - פֶּה, literally: the primary or prominent **phu**, we observe that this is not the mouth but the **nose**. This shows that the single letter **phu** originally represented primarily an **opening for airflow**, more than a mouth. By extension, it may represent any other opening (open place, or ‘here’, as פֶּה - *po*), dilatation, widening or corner/edge, and the verbs **to blow** (esp. of wind!) or to drive apart / **disperse** (e.g. of cattle, creating an opening in the middle). From the verb ‘to blow’ the **phu** can also represent wind, breadth or even speech. Most likely the original symbol **pu** was a picture of an **opening between two pieces of tent cloth** (through which the wind was blowing).⁴² The old symbol I pictured earlier with the *gam* – here as last – *could be a pu* as well.

Here on the left two old symbols that have been mentioned as the original. Sometimes it was also pictured simply as two parallel lines: ||. The Paleo-form of the symbol seems to fit better with the first old variant (some see a thin flag in the wind), as does the Greek *Pi* (here, too, the ||), which is seen as derived from the *pu*, as is the *phi* Φ and our *P* (again by mirroring the Paleo-form, and closing the opening).

With respect to **sound** the hard *p*, and especially the soft variant *ph* of the *phu* fit very well with the notion of airflow or wind; the hard variant especially at its start (e.g. when a tent canvas was getting somewhat loose).

A lot of wind/airflow is needed to light up a fierce fire to melt metal, or to forge, weld, or purify it. We recognize this in a word like פָּזַז - *pazaz* [6338] - to purify metal. The finest metal was פָּז - *paz* [6337] - *purified* or *pure/solid* gold.

In the Bible, the words *yad* and *peh* appear a.o. in Job 21:5, where Job parallels:

Turn to me and be amazed, and lay *your* hand (*yad*) on *your* mouth (*peh*).

A very significant use of *the letter pei/phu* = mouth/breath we find in the last word of Psalm 34: 1; which is בִּפְּי בֵּי - *be-p-i* – in my mouth/breath; prefix *be* - in, suffix *i* - my, and *the letter pei*: mouth/breath/opening. That even the small word פֶּה - *peh* [6310] not only denotes ‘mouth’ but any sort of opening or gap, we see a.o. in Genesis 42: 27; 43: 21; and 44: 1; where it signifies the *opening* of the bags of the brothers of Joseph.

Benfey's *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* says *va* is ‘to blow’ (as the wind). In the Old Chinese script the mouth was depicted as: 口 or 𠂔. The notion of ‘opening for airflow’ I did not look up there yet.

⁴² According another vision the *pu* descended from the second symbol above and originally represented ‘border’. This notion could match somewhat with the picture of two parallel lines and the idea of an opening or gap between pieces of tent cloth, as well as support the later Paleo-form. But in the words formed with the *pu*, I do not recognize the ‘border’ notion very clearly.

Tsa / tsad / tsade / tsadi / tsaddiq



old:



unclear:

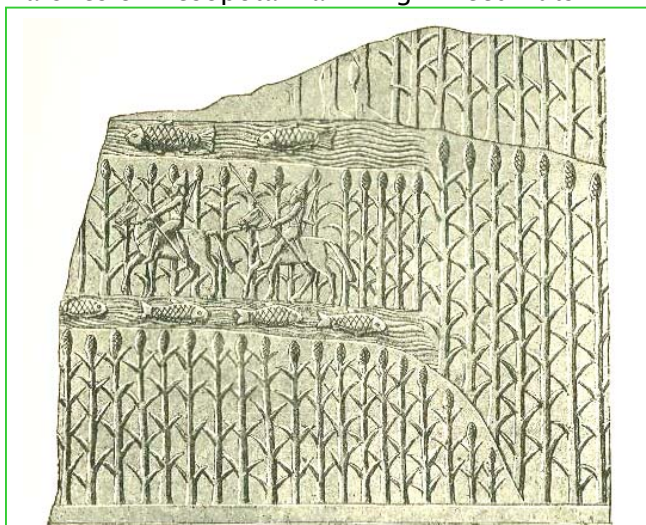


The origin of the **tsade** (*tsadi/tsad*) is much debated and at first seemed somewhat difficult to *extract*. Therefore, I will examine it here in some more detail. Of this letter I encountered two seemingly totally different old Semitic groups of symbols and two groups of meanings in literature: the sign on the far left (and variants, still easily recognizable in the Paleo-Hebrew shape) with the meaning: **plant** (maybe papyrus or reed), and the sign to the right, with the *assumed* meanings: lying, hunting man, lasso/trap, or path towards a goal. I will come back to this later.

Some clarity is provided by the word for tree, as being a 'seen' (respected or well-visible) plant: 𐎶𐎵 - *ets*.⁴³ The later Phoenician variant of this letter indicates what kinds of plants are meant in particular, as they named it after the **papyrus**. In the oldest pictographic Sumerian script (early on, Semitic and Sumerian had a profound influence on each other) there was the symbol 𐎶 - *še*, representing (the ear of) **grain**.⁴⁴ Runic alphabets or *futharks* had a symbol equal to the middle figure, meaning **sedge** or **protection**, (with a sound similar to modern x, z, zs or Turkish ç - all not to far from *tsade*).

Investigating more Hebrew and other Semitic words beginning with a *tsade*, showed that this letter probably represented a **water-loving, straight up growing plant**, like **papyrus**, **reed**, **grain** (esp. barley or wheat), **sedge**, or **cotton**. In the desert one was happy to see some of these plants, for then one had found water. Walking amidst them **squeezed** water from the earth or clay below. Even if the water level was too low, you could **extrude** some water from the plants. Together with the *mem* - water the *tsade* stands for thirst (what you feel when a lot of water is **extruded** out of you). Papyrus to write on was created by **squeezing** or **extruding** water out of the inside or marrow of the papyrus stems (hence maybe also the link with the color white). **Dried** woven reed or sedge fibers were used for larger surfaces (think of sunshades, walls and roofs) - linked to 'to cover' (probable meanings that I encountered as well). Quite significant is the word 𐤆𐤁 [6632] - *tsāb* - 𐤆𐤁 - a reed/rush/wicker hut (later: a covered litter, sedan or canopy). Until recently, the *Marsh Arabs* continued a habit of at least five millennia in the gigantic marshes of Mesopotamia: living in reed huts.⁴⁵

Renowned are the Egyptian vessels made of papyrus stalks. Papyrus, flax, cotton and other plant fibers were used quite early to make coverings as well as ropes for a lasso or trap of some kind. Nuts from e.g. the chufa sedge (*cyperus esculentus*; probably ubiquitous in the bronze age Egypt Nile delta), **extruded** from the watery soil, were used both as human food and as fish bait (hence, possibly, the connotation to fish hunting amidst the reeds!). I do not exclude that a thick hollow stem of some of such plants was used to make a kind of cylinder or tube (or by means of a process analogous to the production of paper) - linked to words for to lay down and to roll -, and such a tube may be used as a blowpipe (or a tough stem to make a bow) (in order to **extrude** the *wav* as an arrow or dart), from which the connotation with hunting and 'shooting away fast' is immediately clear as well. Also, the *tsade* words related to oppression are well explainable from the *pressing* or *squeezing* needed to *extrude* water or oil from a plant, seed or nut.



GIGANTIC CHALDEAN REEDS.¹

Men on horseback (fishermen?) amidst a lot of reed and fish at an old Chaldean picture

From: G. Maspero, (A. H. Sayce, Ed.; M. L. McClure, Transl.), *History Of Egypt, Chaldea, Syria, Babylonia, And Assyria: Volume III.*, The Grolier Society, London, 1903.

⁴³ In Sumerian: 𐎶 - *giš* or *geš* = tree. The usually supposed pronunciation of this with a [sh] sound on the end is a reconstruction. Personally I suspect that this was more like [tsh] (Akkadian: a.o. *ets*, *itsu*). The start sound [g] makes it likely that the 'ayin, beginning the West-Semitic form, may well have been originally the variant *ghayin*. The final sound of the Sumerian *giš* can be regarded, there too, from the 𐎶 - *še* - (ear of) grain (source: D.A. Foxfog - see next note). In Akkadian *tsutsû* was a swamp, moor or forest of reeds (or coppice or other upshoot of twigs or bushes).

⁴⁴ Source: D.A. Foxfog's *Introduction to Sumerian grammar*, p.8.

⁴⁵ See the picture above and: Edward Ochsenchlager, 'Life on the Edge of the Marshes', *Expedition*, Vol. 40 No.2, 1998; p.29-39; Univ. of Pennsylvania Museum illustrated publication. And: 'The Mesopotamian Marshlands: Demise of an Ecosystem', UNEP/DEWA/TR.01-3; also with photo's.

The plant name צאל - *sal* - *tsal* [6628] is a wild lotus (*lotus silvestris*) growing at places where wild animals often hindered access to them (a.o. hippopotamuses or dinosaurs on the shore of the Nile – cf. Job 40: 21) – therefore, and because of its beauty literally: the plant of God.

From all of the above I strongly believe that the *tsade* originally was an image of a **reed- or wheat-like plant**, also the **papyrus** and represented also the associated elementary notion ‘to dehydrate or to extrude liquid (water, juice, oil) out of something by pressing, squeezing or sucking’.

Various words illustrate this meaning quite clearly, such as the root מץ - *mats* [4711] - water extruded from the plants, meaning ‘to suck, to drain out, to squeeze’ (cf. also מץ - *mits* [4330]), and נץ - *netsach* [5332] - juice (what comes forth from the flesh of a plant or fruit). (I suspect that in some words the *samekh* and *tsade* have become confused, as in נץ [6071/-2].) When we get warm, we often sweat (i.e. extrude water out of the skin) on our forehead: נץ - *mits* [4696]. Arabic still has a word صوح - *tsawwach* - *tsaw* [4696] - to dry (out) (completely; bone & flesh/skin). Nice is also the root of Arabic صهر - *tsahara* - *tsah* [4696] - ‘pressed together to rejoice in the other’ – to melt, fuse or to be or become related by marriage. The ‘parched place’ Zion - ציון [6724 - -6] - lit.: ‘the result of presswork with a stick’ – in Arabic (صهيون) has an extra *ah/hey* – there it’s apparently holy/ worship-worthy presswork - ציון. It can also be related to flourishing, as the flowers come forward from a ‘branch’ of a ‘stick in the ground’ (see *tsuts/tsits* in Table 2).

Also the *tsade* words related to **oppression** can well be explained from the pressing or squeezing needed to **extrude** water or other liquids, such as oil, from a plant, seed or nut.

The lying figure symbol may well be a picture of a plant stem with a drop of liquid at the end.

The **sound** of the *tsade* just fits the kind of plants just discussed, as they **rustle** in the wind, and with the sound of squeezing them out or pressing of liquid out of something as well: *tsss...*

The words צו - *tsav* [6673] and צוה - *tsawah* [6680] (from which *mitswah*) I consider related to the grain harvest, where grain stalks were connected (Y) or bound into sheaves to ripen; the main significance being the aspect of being brought together in unity and in worship to God. The word צו in the mysterious text of Isaiah.28: 10 and 13 has been seen as a spelling exercise, indicating that the original name of the letter צ was *tsu* or *tsav* rather than *tsa*, or as referring to bindings, “binding to binding, rope to rope...”. The Septuagint confirms this (“θλιψιν επι θλιψιν ...”), and it fits well in the context. This makes a מצוה - *mitswah* not so much a commandment but more a sign of **having been united / bound together in joyful worship** (like sheaves in the grain harvest).

An illustrative *tsade* word is what you might have shouted when you saw an adder had just bitten the hand/arm of your child (a child’s hand or arm being one of the most likely spots an adder would bite a human): “*suck out [the poison from] the opening seen on the child’s hand/arm!*” Right; that cry spells: צפוני - *tsiph’only* – a word (or must I say: yell?) for “*adder!*”⁴⁶

By the way, the association between reed, sedges and papyrus on the one hand and sucking or squeezing out on the other, can be found elsewhere in the Hebrew language as well, as in the root גמא - *gome’/gama’* [1572/-3] – reed, sedges, papyrus *and* to suck out, to drink (after the old symbols: גמא - something that stood with its feet in water).

Noteworthy with respect to what the *tsade* stood for is also the word מצה - *matsah* [4682], that is: מצה - plain bread: made from water (מ) and grain (צ) to enjoy/live from (ה).

Some have thought that the *tsade* has two or even three origins, and do not see a relationship between צור - *tsur* as ‘to bind’ [6696] (see צו above) and as ‘rock’ [6697]. In my view, the old Semitic צור makes this clear, as it signifies binding another (or oppress him with a tent pin, to limit his movement; as you might do with cattle, put them on a rope on a tent pin, such that they cannot run away⁴⁷). This ‘limitation of movement’ can be seen as a good description of the most significant characteristic of a big rock: that it ‘cannot move’; it is ultimately steady. Alternatively, one can see this as a very strongly compressed, ‘squeezed out’ matter, connected to God (in antiquity God was often worshipped on mountains, so a big rock was a place where the bond צ with God ה was experienced most vividly).

Confusion between *tsade* and *teth* may have arisen out of baskets/covers (⊗) made of צ-stalks.

In the Bible, the full word *tsad* - צד (standing for ‘side’; with possible readings: ‘the reed goes in’ (to the water, at the border or side of it), ‘the reed moves’ - implying it is pushed *aside*, reed on the *side* of a river, ‘the pressing/extruding movement’ exerted on the *side* of a plant or so, or ‘pressing the door’ [with

⁴⁶ After reading this in a previous version, a pastoral colleague noted: “So in fact Bible language affirms that the evil the snake (meaning satan) has put in us, surely has to be sucked out?!” Indeed! It is an important metaphor!

⁴⁷ This is related to my explanation of ‘*echad* - originally *wachad* - *wachad* [4696] - lit.: ‘the pin on the doorpost (i.e. on which the door hinges)’, which is stable, amidst the continuous moving of the door; hence: steady/stable, not volatile; hence: ‘one’, single-minded; also in view of Exodus 21: 6 : ‘with an awl on the door-post’, forever loyal; in Akkadian ‘slave’ was *warad* – in the old Semitic script represented by *warad* [4696] - ‘pin on the other’s door’.

your side)) appears a.o. in Yesha-Yahu 66:12 – and even there with an association to being **pressed upon** and a close association to **sucking** nearby:

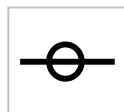
For so says **YaHUaH**, Behold, I will hold out peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like a flowing stream. Then you will suck, you will be carried on her side (or hip) and be dandled upon her knees.

The *tsade* is sometimes also named *tsaddiq* [6662] – **righteous one**. The two notions are rather close, for the purely **straight up** growing grain or reed plant (without twistings or kinks, branches or crookedness), that simply shines as gold in/as the sun (Mat. 9: 37-38; 13: 24-43) and bears fruit in manifold is an important model for the **upright one**.

Qu / quph / qoph



old:



The **quph** (later: *qoph*) was not trivial either and required some more investigation as well. One of the oldest symbols is the left variant here, which appears to depict **a sun on the horizon**. The many connotations with 'East' denote that it refers to the rising sun. Many words in which the *qoph* appears are indeed related to the basic notion of **a rising motion**, an alternation of **going up and down** or a **circulation** (as the orbit of the sun), or a **circle**. An associated notion is: to be **small** or **low/humbly** or to **grow** from that to great, as the rising sun begins small and low before coming great and intense. 'To go up in flames' and 'to smell' (pleasant or unpleasant) are two other meanings that sometimes are associated to the letter *quph*; especially to the *quph-dalt* combination (𐤀𐤌 - up-going movement of the rising sun - with warmth and light / rising movement, as of flames).⁴⁸ The association with **becoming light** or with **fire** is thus encountered.

Some scholars regard the later Paleo-Hebrew *quph* as a stick with a rope attached to it (or in miniature also a needle and thread); I suppose this refers to *the word quph*, written as

𐤀 𐤌 𐤌 - what rises from a tent pin – that is a guy-line – and forms an opening/loop/strap (on which you could tie a tent, but an animal as well; an alternative explanation is that of a guy-rope against the wind). Next to the original meaning of **rising sun** and **rising movement** the *quph* then gets the additional connotation '**rope on a stick**' or 'needle and thread' and also: 'eye of that needle' (or even the hole in the blade of an axe).

The notion of encircling or revolving is recognized in words such as קוּף - *quph* and נָקַף - *naqap*, - to go around, compass, and תְּקוּפָה - *tekupha* - a coming around, circuit of space or time, revolution, season, and הִקְפָּה - *hakafa* - encircling, surrounding. Klein reports that the root verb קוּף covers a circular motion and that it also serves to denote the ear of an axe or needle (or the back of the head).

The idea that the letter *quph/qoph* originally represented an ape (a meaning of the word *quph/qoph*) is not right; this word is a loanword from India or Egypt.⁴⁹

Our Q/q goes clearly back to the old Semitic *qoph*, as did the old Greek *Qoppa* - Ϟ / ϟ.

Illustrative of the formation of words is *qanu (qanah)* - a hollow stick or tube. When a sprouting seed of wheat or reed 'comes up' (& lives) - 𐤀 𐤌 𐤌, a (living) hollow stalk is exactly what you get indeed. English words like cane, canister, canon and cannon seem to be derived from it (partly via the Greek). In old Chinese pictograms the rising sun was depicted as: 𠄎 (also serving as ideogram for morning).

⁴⁸ Concerning the association between 'rising'/'ascending' and burning/sacrificing/worshipping: compare the Jewish altar-names מִזְבֵּחַ הָעֹלָה and מִזְבֵּחַ הַקְטָרֶת - of 'ascendancy', i.e. go up in smoke, and of incense – that also went upward in smoke.

⁴⁹ This is posited by Aaron D. Rubin, in: '[Egyptian loanwords in Hebrew](#)', in: G. Khan et al. (Eds), *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, Brill, Leiden, 2012; p. 793-794.

Ra / raisu / resh



old:



One of the last notions in this list is that of a **(higher) other** or **The Other** (God). The *raisu* (*resh*) symbolizes this by picturing the head of a man (ראש - *rosh* still is a head in Hebrew; almost all other Semitic and many African languages have parallel words like *ras*, *rash*, or *rasu* for a higher other or leader and many cultures knew a godhead *Ra* 'or *Re*⁵⁰). In the pictures there is a lot of variation, as illustrated here on the left (the last two variants are influenced by Egyptian drawings; the lower one is an early form supposedly representing a typical Egyptian haircut⁵¹); apparently everybody just drew a head to his own liking. The meaning is: man, but especially: the other or a (higher) other, often God (concerning the 'higher': compare the old root *ram*, as in *Abh-ram* – exalted/high father). From the old Semitic it is understandable that *the word resh* represents first, higher, top, etc., for ראש can well be read as: [allow] the other first to eat (what one typically did with a higher one – see Luke 17: 7-8), or more likely: **the Other Who comes forward prominently**, which clearly refers to God, or the other with the first well/spring (generally the highest person of the region).

Often, confusion between or development from the *r* to the *l* (or vice versa) phonemically explained; the above shows that an explanation from the closeness of the meanings is possible as well, because the notions under these two letters can be very similar.

A challenging word seemed the Hebrew טרף - *tārāph* – to pluck off (to eat leaves from a tree; specially fresh green ones), to devour (one animal by another) / *tereḫp* – booty, food, prey / *tārēph* – to be satisfied. So, the central notion is that of a great quantity of food.

The old form is: ראש. In first instance I thought of rather complicated explanations needing to see the *resh* more broadly than the higher Other (mostly God!). Later I saw that this simply depicts: to open (רא) the basket (ש) (with food) of that higher one / of God (ראש).⁵² The Arabic words ثرف - *taraf* / *turfa* – luxury / *tarifa* – to live in luxury, seem to affirm this. The same root appears to be also at the basis of the Arabic ثرع - *tari'a* – to be or become full / to fill (especially of a bowl or basket!) (old: ראש - to see the basket of God or the higher one, which apparently will be well-filled). About the opposite of this wealth you get when you screen/hide that basket of God: טרח / טורח - *tārach/torach* / *taricha/tarach* – (to experience) sorrow, trouble (old: ראש - the basket of God is screened).⁵³

According to Klein our word 'race' is derived from *resh*.

The Paleo form has been abstracted and simplified radically, and is easily confused with the *daleth* (the most important difference being the somewhat longer 'stick' below right and the *resh* often inclining a little more to the left). The square script form ר and the Greek and Latin forms – Greek *rho* ρ and our capital *R* – are easily identified as being related to the Paleo-Hebrew simplification, Greek and Latin again in mirrored form. In the square script form the easy confusion with the *daleth* is still there.

⁵⁰ In Hebrew written as רע – in the old script: רא – so: the god who makes us see. Indeed: in Egypt and elsewhere *Ra* was often identified with the sun, pictured as רא.

⁵¹ It is possible as well that the back of the head of the godhead is chosen here on purpose; compare how Moses could only see God from behind.

⁵² The *tet* here might possibly be interpreted, not only as a basket, but also as picture of the firewood under a sacrifice (torn-apart parts of an animal).

An alternative though less likely association of the word טרף is 'hull, given by God, lying open' (as with an animal being devoured / ripped apart). Alternatively, it can be seen as 'hull from God for the nakedness after the gap', related to the gap that human distrust had caused between man and God (Gen.3), resulting in man feeling naked. God then made a new hull of animal hides for them by – for the first time – sacrifice (rip apart) an animal. I do not exclude that at an early instance contamination took place with a form beginning with a *zayin*, where the notion of cutting enforced that of devouring / tearing apart.

⁵³ The agreement in words demonstrates that in Arabic, next to the letter ط - *tet*, also the ث - *tha* (sometimes) corresponds to Hebrew *tet*, though in shape it looks more like the Arabic ت - *tav*, and is otherwise as regards its origin often associated with the Hebrew *shin*.

Sha / shad/thad / shadu / shin



old:



The origin of the later Hebrew letter ש *shin* proves of all letters one of the most difficult to retrieve. A lot of discussion has been going on about it. Here on the left four early symbols are given below the Paleo-Hebrew letter. Because the Hebrew word *shēn* means *tooth*, there are people who think that to be the original meaning as well (Benner modifies the old shapes to the rectangular/edgy 𐤑 in order to be able to maintain this proposition). However, I cannot see a picture of a tooth or teeth in any of the old inscriptions found in archeological excavations and neither do I recognize the notion *tooth* in any Semitic words that contain this symbol (apart from the single word *shēn*). Other suggestions that have been forwarded are an Egyptian (shooting) bow, a couple of horns (cf. *shophar*) of e.g. the *auroch* or original wild ox (*ra'am*), a snake, a big cloud(cover) or even the sun.

What attracts attention is that the Hebrew *shin* corresponds to two letters in some other Semitic languages, such as Arabic. In the notions present in words formed with the *shin* I also see two main groups. Though my diligent study of this symbol in its shape and context isn't finished yet, I consider it likely that originally, we are dealing here with two or three symbols that in later Hebrew merged into one alphabet letter. There is now general agreement among scholars that the Hebrew *shin* phoneme represents a merger of two phonemes in earlier (2nd millennium BC) West-Semitic: the *sh* and the *th*.⁵⁴ In Arabic and some other Semitic languages, still two letters are present (i.e. *shin* and *ta*) that are represented in Hebrew by the single letter *shin*. Some more insight is gained here from

Ugaritic cuneiform, closely related to the West-Semitic. Its script had 30 signs. The prime Ugaritic equivalent of West-Semitic 𐤑 is 𐎗 - *t/th* (*thanna*). It seems related to Arabic ث - *t/th* - *ta*. It had two variants that were very much alike: 𐎗 - *š/sh* (*shin*) and 𐎗 - *d* (*dal*; all three incorporating the big, breast-like 𐎗 sign; the *dal* not to be confused with the equivalent of Semitic 𐎗 - *daleth*, being: 𐎗 - *delta*; derived from a picture of a big gate or pair of doors).

In various old symbolic presentations of it one can easily recognize two motherly **breasts**. One variant could thus be a picture of a couple of breasts. This symbol could have been named *shad* or *thad* (= breast(s); cf. Arabic *ta*). The correspondence between Ugaritic *th* and West-Semitic 𐤑, combined with the ancient *thad* - breasts in various early Semitic sources⁵⁵ affirms the idea that the 𐤑 -sign could well represent a drawing of a pair of breasts and its earliest old Semitic name was likely *shad* or *thad*. One of the meanings of the Hebrew word *shad* 𐤑 is *feminine breast, nipple*. Possibly the word *dad* 𐤑𐤑 which I earlier interpreted as an image of *two breasts* could etymologically as well be a degeneration of *thad* (though cf. also *dod* - beloved, and *dudaim* - dates or 'love apples' for their sensual appetite & fertility enhancing effect). (In one of the very old Wadi el-Hol inscriptions [Brian E. Colless](#) sees a similar shape: 𐤑 as *thad* - breast; knowing that both *shin* and *daleth* are close to *th* in sound, this is not strange either; I see this *thad* as an early variant of 𐤑).⁵⁶ Compare the English word *tit* as well.

A very important notion that we encounter in ש-words is that of a **well** or **source** that wells up an abundant (**bulging**) measure of water or any other **drink** or **food** or that **brings forth warmth, nourishment or fullness**. So, coupled to the above interpretation of the symbols as motherly breasts are the notions of **bulging** from **fullness**, and a **well** of water or of life. What a well/ water source is for a grown-up person, the motherly breast is for the infant (refreshing, satisfying when dehydrated, nourishing, etc.). Both were **vital for life**. That of a **bulging source** of **nourishment, drink** (food), **warmth** and fullness is indeed a most vital notion. It is reflected in this symbol *shin*, or rather *shad* or *thad*, by what I see as a drawing of a pair of bulging female (motherly) **breasts**. Note that Arabic ث (*t/th* - *ta*) still looks like contents in a sack that makes that sack bulge, or somewhat like a single breast with nipple drawn in, while it also seems graphically related to the *nun* - the offspring that is

⁵⁴ A very informative article on this is: Yigal Bloch, 'On Some Alleged Developments of the Proto-Semitic Phoneme /t/ In Iron Age Canaanite Dialects' *Journal of Semitic Studies*, LIII/1, Spring 2008. He discusses a.o. the Proto-Semitic root *yṯ* - to save, represented in Hebrew with *shin* as שׁשׁ - *yš* (here transliterated as: *ysh*).

⁵⁵ Remarkably, in Arabic two forms of the word for female breast or udder are left: ثدى *thady* and ثدى *thadan* -literally: my breast and the baby's breast, respectively. One might also say that apparently, they are to be touched only by the hand (يد) [of the woman herself or her husband (or the farmer, in the case of the udder)] and by the baby / the young (offspring; ي), respectively.

⁵⁶ See also the comment on [Proverbs 5:19](#) by Keil & Delitzsch' *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*. It is remarkable, how many fertility related idols (goddesses) in old Middle Eastern cultures, often depicted with big or many breasts, had names in which the *shad/shin* or *thad* featured prominently, e.g. starting with 'ash.... - 'the prime breasts' or *hath*... - 'worship the breasts/source ...', not seldom followed by a *resh* - 'the higher other' (god).

nurtured. Like the *nun* as a seed signified the result or the life coming forth, the *shin* seems to signify the **source** of that life bringing it forth (what produces life or at least what nourishes to make life possible).

I see this illustrated in words such as שור - *shor* [8270] - source of life from another person - umbilical cord, navel (note the parallel with drink or refreshment in Proverbs 3: 8; this root is also used for the vine, feeding the tendrils and grapes); שׂוֹאֵב - *sha'ab* - a well of a prominent house; which became: 'to draw water'; or שֶׁרֶשׁ - *sheresh/shoresh* [8328-8330] - root.

In Biblical Hebrew language, the link between feminine breasts and the wife in general on the one hand and that of a source, well or fountain on the other, we find very clearly e.g. in Proverbs 5: 15-21. Again: both were **vital for life**. Additionally, like breasts, the *shin* has the connotation with **warmth** and **fire** (also Proverbs 6: 27 and surrounding verses lays the connection between fire and breast(s)).

With respect to the **phonetics**: The *th* and *sh* are typical sounds of an infant suckling on a mother's breast.

The many destruction-related *shin*-words might well be related to a second old symbol, to be interpreted as a pair of bull's horns - possibly of the often feared and much hunted original wild ox or **auroch** (the pictographic likeness is good). The fact that the *shin* in many of these words is coupled to the '*aleph*', makes this interpretation more plausible. The Ugaritic ש - *sh* could be at the basis of this. It has two upright 'sticks' at a small angle and a symbol ◀, often representing a circle in the original pictographs (as in the Ugaritic *ayin*), thus representing an ש-like sign. This interpretation could be related to the later Hebrew interpretation of the word *shin* as a pair of teeth (e.g. *elephant's* teeth function a bit like bull's horns).

The Hebrew *shin* would thus be a combination of originally at least two old Semitic symbols: one for breasts and one for ox-horns. The fact that in some other Semitic languages there are (e.g. Arabic) or were (Ugaritic) two or more symbols represented in later Hebrew by the *shin*, is in agreement with this.

What the horns, the well and the breasts and the milk coming from the breasts all have in common is the notion of something **protruding** from the body or from the ground or whatever. We also encounter some of this in the most simple verb that was based on this letter: שָׁחַ - *shah*; that is: to reach (to/out), to stretch; while also having the connotation of giving (as sharing from fullness, like a well, source or breast does).

The word *shen* - שֵׁן - tooth could be explained as above or as what protrudes (ש) from a child (נ) (around the time of weaning), while it also looks like a young sprout, protruding (ש) from a seed (נ). Alternatively, it could be derived quite literally and grammatically as 'what comes after breastfeeding' - eating for which one needs teeth; or: 'the resource of [weaned] children [who have teeth]'.⁵⁷

Someone was so kind to direct my attention to the Arabic word قوس - *qush* - a (shooting) bow, also appearing in Biblical Hebrew as קוּשׁ - *qush* or *qosh* - bow, or: to lay a snare; original form probably: שׁוּשׁ-קוּשׁ. The combination שׁוּשׁ-קוּשׁ can be interpreted as: something going up from a tent pin (a line, rope or cord; see my discussion at *qoph*), and a snare is such a line suddenly emerging (protruding from hiding). What the bow does, is that it sends (lets protrude; ש) an arrow (ק) upward (שׁוּשׁ). By the way, those upward arrows are a sign of might (קוּשׁ - *qav-qav*). The *wav* (a stick with a sharp tip) was also used to denote an *arrow* or *spear*.

That puts me on the trail of hunting. Indeed there is an old root שׁוּשׁ - *shud* (easy to remember from the verb *to shoot*) - protruding/sending forth an arrow to move/to go in, that is *hunting*, and from there another meaning of *shad* שׁוּשׁ (literally: protruding to move/to go in) is: *destruction, violence* and *power*.⁵⁸ When it is *another person* at whom the hunt is directed, it becomes שׁוּשׁ - *shadar* - to battle. However, in some other Semitic languages (e.g. Ugaritic), the verb denoting *to shoot* is written with a *tsade*: *tsad* or *tsud* (צ) - explainable as: to go into the vegetation, or as: let an arrow (like a reed stalk) go into. It is not unlikely, that this is the origin of the hunting-related words with a *shin*, assuming confusion between *shin* and *tsade* at some early point (possibly in the second half of the second millennium BC when the West-Semitic pictographic script evolved into the Paleo-Hebrew/Phoenician alphabet script). The same *ts* - *sh* confusion is at the root of the difference between שׁוּשׁ/שׁוּשׁ - *shibbolet/sibbolet* [7641, 5451], originally with *tsade*: ear of grain (grain shell/'house' ending the stalk), *shibbolet* from *shobel/shibbol* [7640-1] - stream/trail (coming forth [as wool] from the tent of a shepherd), and שׁוּשׁ - *sibhlol* (e.g. in Exodus 6:6), from שׁוּשׁ - *sibbolah* [5450] - burden (the palm or pillar that bears the dwelling of the honored Leader, related to שׁוּשׁ - *sabbal* [5449] - a porter, and שׁוּשׁ - *sābal* [5445] - to bear a burden, be burdensome).

⁵⁷ In shape, the Arabic the letter *shin* (ش) looks like a ש or small pair of ט (ta - t/th) with an Arabic נ (nun) attached to it, so indeed like the equivalent of: שֵׁן - *shin/shen*.

⁵⁸ Pronounced as *shed* also devil, demon.

What I noted about the multiple sources of *shad* I find quite remarkable in connection to the fact that God is named *El Shaddai* – literally: God my *Shad*. Biblically and linguistically He can indeed be associated with great power and protection on the one hand, as well as with a source or with nourishing/feeding and cherishing on the other (concerning the latter, see Yesha-Yahu [= Isaiah] 66)! He wants to come in! The more remarkable, because these two are the things people (currently no longer men only!) so intensely long for, and that are so attractive to them: unlimited power and the warmth of a nourishing breast. What these people often – unfortunately – do not know, is that they in fact long for *El Shaddai* – the only true God, and for His tender love and fierce protection given to us in *Yeshe'ah*... Psychologically, nurture/cherishing (𐤎) and being ready to move out or protrude (𐤎) into the world around (𐤎) appear to follow logically after each other; the former is necessary for the latter.

When we take all of this together, the central element of the 𐤎 that emerges is **coming forward, bulging or bringing forth**. This element is present in the interpretation of motherly breasts, of a well / source of water or life, and in that of cow-horns (as additional meanings have been mentioned: tooth, to sharp(en), to press, to grind, though I do not recognize those in any way; the assumed meaning 'to press' seems to derive from confusion with the *tsade* and 'to sharpen' from the *sin*).

There is some circumstantial evidence that a third original symbol may have represented the sun and the brilliant radiance coming from it. This could be related to the Ugaritic 𐤌 - *d*. The Ugaritic 𐤌 often represents a circle in the original pictographs, and other pictographic scripts denote the sun as a circle with a dot or line in it (as does the *qoph*, also in Ugaritic). This would explain many radiance related words with a *shin* (though there is also a relation between radiance and horns in Semitic), like *shemesh* – the sun itself, as source of much radiance (in reconstructed Proto-Semitic, the first and last letter of *shemesh* differ, that's why I interpret them differently here too). In Hebrew, the letter *d* often corresponds to the *zayin*, also associated with shining (metal) and lighting fire (burning olive oil).

The connection between the *shin* and the *sin* that seems to exist in the square script, does not seem to have a very material origin. The origin of the *sin* seems to be related more to that of the *samekh* in old Semitic and not to the *shin*. *Sin* and *samekh* have been mixed up a lot in the course of history, in quite a number of words. This can be observed clearly still when comparing Hebrew to Arabic where the *sh* and *s* are often just exchanged (cf. e.g. Hebr. *shalom* and Arab. *salam* and compare Hebr. 𐤑𐤍, Biblical Aramaic 𐤑𐤍, and Aramaic 𐤑𐤍 – to lift up, to carry, to Ugaritic *nsh* – to lift, and Arabic *nasha'a* – to grow up (old Semitic: the seeds of the palm trees grow up first!, while 'to lift up' may also derive from '(to take away) the seeds from the palm tree first' – from on high); while the Hebr. 𐤑𐤍 – to deceive (the deception came *after* or was brought about by the breasts they [a prostitute] first showed), does not seem to be related).

Interesting is a comparison of the notions under the *shin/thad* and the *sin/samekh* respectively: breasts/well/source/to protrude and (date) palm tree. Palm trees often grew/grow near a well or oasis. God is associated with both. Both can supply in an enormous need and provide new energy (see also Song of Songs 7: 8). Both have something almost holy and represent an aspect of intimacy (physical or spiritual).

Another typical *shin* word is 𐤑𐤍 – *shem* – name, identity, honor. Literally, it stands for a source of water (i.e. a well), the Source or Horn of abundance. When, in a primitive culture, you have a great well and/or regularly provide water to others, you get a good name, so the link is not that far-fetched. Note that the Jewish way to denote God by 𐤑𐤍 𐤇 – *Ha Shem* – normally translated as 'the Name' – is at least as validly translatable from its old Semitic origins as: 'praise the Source or Horn of abundance'. This makes an early use of this expression (at the time when the glorious Name of God, *YaHuaH*, was still regularly used as well) quite likely...

How come 𐤑𐤍𐤌𐤍 – *shemayim* and 𐤑𐤍𐤌𐤍 – *shamem*, which at first sight both look like a multiple of this source of water, differ so vastly from each other as 'heaven', and 'devastation'? Well, the first – heaven – can be seen in a number of ways: (i) physically as a combination of *shin* (breast, origin, well) and *mayim*: the heaven as where the rainwater comes from (cf. Gen.7:11; Deut.11:11); (ii) simply as a multiple: 'plenty of water wells', so: 'no worries anymore'; or (iii) as the place where we will all have names – be known and recognized personally for who we really are – and know God intimately (cf. e.g. Revelation 2: 17; 3: 5, 12). However, the second, *shamem* – with its double *mem* – can be seen as deriving from a second root – e.g. the horns of the auroch, or violently protruding waters yielding a lot of destruction. Or it may be seen, in conjunction with the *shin* as source or well, as simply referring to a great flood (occurring occasionally, even in desert lands!) that can drown livestock, wipe out all food crops and make even drinking wells unusable for a considerable period of time! Now talk about devastation or desolation!⁵⁹

⁵⁹ In this context it is significant what Maspero wrote in his enormous work about the Euphrates and Tigris – that important 'source area' of the Semites:

Is there a relationship with our symbol '3'? The fact that שֵׁשׁ/שִׁשָּׁה - *shēsh/shishāh* (8337) - 'six' equals 2x3, makes me suspect that such could well be the case...

The Paleo shape of the letter is simplified for ease of writing. The Greek sigma Σ is clearly related, only rotated 90° (the original *thad* often was rotated 90° as well with the two points facing right; the Greek version then is the regular mirrored version of this); the place in the alphabet is that of the *samekh*.

In the Old Chinese script 凵 was a symbol for a well or fountain; this might well be related (compare especially the 1st and 3rd old form). Another old Chinese symbol that might perhaps be distantly related is the sign for rain: 雨. The upper part of this, where the rain apparently comes from (the source of the rain), shows vague likeness to the old Semitic *shad-/shin*-symbol (upside down; but orientation was not considered essential at first).

My eye still fell on the likeness between the Semitic root *shi*: שׁ שׂ ש׃ with the Chinese radical *shi*, *shih* or *sī*: 糸 or 𦃟 modern simplified: 纟 (sometimes doubled), not so much in shape (though graphically the upper part of the modern variant looks much like a post-Babylonian Hebrew *shin*), but as regards meaning and pronunciation – the two sounding almost equally. Both stand for **silk** (of the silk worm) (see). At least a very remarkable parallel, which likely denotes a later borrowing (so also Fürst, p.877 under שׁ שׂ ש׃ - silk [4897] as well; contrary to Strong, who saw it as derived from שׁ שׂ ש׃); a common source is to be excluded, when we consider that silk was at first produced in China only and when we look at the older variants of the Chinese sign.⁶⁰

"They are subject to annual floods, which occur when the winter snow melts on the higher ranges of Armenia. The Tigris, which rises from the southern slope of the Niphates and has the more direct course, is the first to overflow its banks, which it does at the beginning of March, and reaches its greatest height about the 10th or 12th of May. The Euphrates rises in the middle of March, and does not attain its highest level till the close of May. From June onwards it falls with increasing rapidity; by September all the water which has not been absorbed by the soil has returned to the river-bed. The inundation does not possess the same importance for the regions covered by it, that the rise of the Nile does for Egypt. **In fact, it does more harm than good**, and the river-side population have always worked hard to protect themselves from it and to keep it away from their lands rather than facilitate its access to them; they regard it as a sort of necessary evil to which they resign themselves, while trying to minimize its effects."

Source: G. Maspero, (A. H. Sayce, Ed.; M. L. McClure, Transl.), *History Of Egypt, Chaldea, Syria, Babylonia, And Assyria; Volume III.*, The Grolier Society, London, 1903.

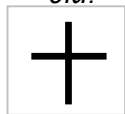
⁶⁰ In old variants of Chinese the 糸 is depicted as: 𦃟, 𦃟 or 𦃟 (Seal script/Dàzhuàn, Jinwen, Jiaguwen respectively) – a picture of a twisted (silk) string. A similar symbol appears in fragments of the old Semitic script as well, though it often has been interpreted there as a variant of *chet* or as a *ghayin*. It would be good, to revisit and review this interpretation... (There might be also a relationship between this old Chinese character and the Old South Arabian 𐩣 - see at the *sin/samekh*.)

By the way, the current Chinese 糸 (*shi*) symbol has two parts; the meaning of both the upper and the lower part is: 'small', which does not seem to be associated with the meaning of the Semitic or Hebrew symbols. This enforces my impression that we are dealing simply with a borrowed word here.

Ta / tav



old:



The **tav** typically represents the notion of a **closure**, an **end** and the **completion** of the **aleph-beth**. This cross sign stands for a **sign**, a **mark**, a **cross**, or a **signature** (incl. the connotation: settlement/fixation), **writing(s)** (*tavah* - טָוַח - to write is a form of celebrating *tav*'s - signs of security and bonding; something written down was secure), or for to mark, or to press. As suffix it denotes that a word is an abstraction or variant of something else or a drawn or sculpted object (also the feminine plural is formed with a *tav*). The sound is that of a tap with a hammer on a chisel – the way to write in stone. Sometimes the *tav* symbol literally/physically and simply stands for two crossed sticks or any **construction**. The *tav*-sound is that of ticking on a chisel to engrave signs in a rock.

The later Paleo variant is rotated slightly. In the Greek *tau* Τ (/τ) and Latin T (/t) variants the upper part of the vertical line is short or even left out completely. In the square script ט *tav* it is hard to recognize the original cross sign.

Tav (ט) as word exists of two signs: ט - the *tav*-sign itself and the *wav* - elementary: the sharp pointy stick with which one could engrave such signs in a rock or stone surface. In addition, the word *tav* also stands for '(cross)sign of secure belonging/bonding'. This *tav* (ט/טָוַח) as a sign from God is Biblically very significant: the BDB dictionary has for the *tav*: **mark (as a sign of exemption from judgment)**! We encounter it in Job 31: 35 (which is much richer in the (Old) Hebrew original than in any translation); and in Ezekiel 9: 4-6, where we read:

4 And **YaHUaH** said to him [the cherub], Go through in the midst of the city, in the midst of Jerusalem, and set a **tav** (cross-mark) on the foreheads of the men who are groaning and are mourning because of all the abominations that are done in her midst. 5 And He said to those in my hearing, Go over in the city after him, and strike. Let not your eye spare, nor have pity. 6 Fully destroy old men, young men and virgins, and little children and women. But do not come near any man on whom is the **tav** (cross-mark). And begin at My sanctuary. And they began at the old men who were before the house.

Another typical *tav* word is תָּמַח (8552, 8549) - תָּמַח - *tamam/tamiym* - the final sign of abundance of abundance (or: of abundances - plural); that is according to the BDB dictionary: to be complete, be finished, be at an end; also referring to perfection.

Very significant is the *tav* in the word **Torah** - תּוֹרָה (8451) - תּוֹרָה - literally: (cross) sign of secure belonging from the Other Who is to be joyfully worshipped, or: a-(cross)-sign-of-secure-belonging-from-the-Other that is to be celebrated and lived out! It is not a legalistic *law* as a *burden* - by no means! It's a sign of Love to be joyfully accepted, and a source of vibrant and flourishing community Life! Remarkable I find the similarity in sound and symbols with תְּרוּעָה (8643) - תְּרוּעָה - *teruah* - the blowing of the ram's horn, as sign, from **YaHUaH**, the God of secure attachment, Who sees to or gives vision for real **life** in worship towards Him.

Together the '**aleph and tav**' stand for either 'the first sign' of something, or for something that is **complete**, full, a complete whole (compare our expression: 'from A to Z'). This short word appears frequently in the Bible, amongst others already in Genesis 1: 1, where I believe it says that God created the *entire* heaven and the *entire* earth, so: as emphasizing the fullness of the direct object. Even the development into that accusative use of תָּב can be explained from the old symbols, for the ט (*tav*) was more often used to denote a material thing, such that תָּב made something into a significant object (*this* thing; a *specific* or 'direct' object). By the way, the little word תָּב/אֵת has many meanings, of which most come forth from dropping one or more other symbols. A very physical meaning is derived from the ט as cross beam, that is a *construction*, pulled by an ox בָּ: a plow or something like that [855] (probably a *wav* got lost here). From תָּב/אֵת in the sense of closeness [854] an original *nun* was lost; originally it was תָּב/אֵת - a *sign* to value one's *children* as being *primary/important*, and so: to be with them (see also Fürst, p. 168).

Some see in תָּב also a reference to Jesus: the First and Last / the Prominent One on the cross. They say that תָּב appears about 7000 times in the First Testament and especially there where Jesus was actually involved. I see something like this as *possibly* a nice *extra* connotation, definitely *not* as the basic meaning.⁶¹

⁶¹ In Bible-exposition the rabbi's often discern four layers, where the first is the most important one, etc: (1) what is meant literally (*Peshat*), (2) a (possibly spiritual) application/interpretation of that (*Remez*), (3) a further unraveling with the aid of other passages about the same thing (*Derash*), (4) a secret/hidden message of God (*Sod*; this entire system is called *PaRDeS* - paradise/orchard). Seeing this kind of 'extra's' in the text, then belongs in that 4th layer, while reading 'et as literally: *whole/entire* belongs to layer (1). Though they can be very compelling, in general I am rather reserved concerning interpretations at layer (4) (where some Jews often introduce the occult *qabbalah* etc.) while I concentrate more on the higher layers (1)-(3), especially at (1). →

That God finishes and completes everything with the cross is a thoroughly Biblical idea, of course. As Christian I find this also a reason to return to the script that I called old Semitic, where the cross was clearly recognizable. In Paleo-Hebrew that was reduced already and in the square script it became totally unrecognizable. No wonder, that the pharisaic/*talmudic* Jews from Jesus' time here on earth did not recognize His crucifixion as 'of God'!

In Old Chinese, the sign 十 (radical 24) is also a sign for **fullness** and **completion**. Additionally, it is said to be a sign for ten (10), though according others, it is originally a sign for seven (7) – the fullness of the week (of creation), and the sign for God Himself. Nelson en Broadberry (see literature) also relate it to an old Chinese pictogram picturing God in a blessing posture; most appropriate for *the cross*...

In **Table 1**. on the next page you will find all this systematically summarized with next to the old Semitic signs their reconstructed meanings and their Paleo-Hebrew and Square Script equivalents.

The available old Semitic sources are limited and because some letters appear relatively infrequently, it is cumbersome to identify them completely correctly. It may be plain that the origin and the meanings of some of the characters are not fully clear yet. Additional research will be needed before we have everything completely clear. Therefore, this document is a living draft working document...

By the way, in this particular case the claim about Jesus' presence is contradicted by e.g. 1 Samuel 13:2, where the little word תא appears 5 times and in at least 2 meanings in one sentence, in a situation where the people had clearly left God.

Table 1. The old (West-)Semitic characters and their reconstructed meanings

On the basis of a large number of sources and a lot of Biblical word study I reconstructed the following list of old Semitic symbols and the probable (basic) notions and meanings they represented.

old (West-)Semitic script (till about 1000 BC)						Paleo	Square script	
sign + var.	description	associated meanings	name	sound	sign	sign	name	sound
	(head of) an ox	first, premier, strong, powerful, 1 leader, most dear, begin, 1000	al	', 'a			'aleph	' / 'e
	tent (-floormap), vase?	family, house/home, temple, 'in'/ 'inside', body, 'container', live, 2	bet	ba, bha			bet	b,bh
	foot /lower leg, staff, throw-stick?	to walk, to gather, to carry, to go, footing, basis, vehicle, 3	gam	ga			gimel	g
	door of tent / of house, fish	to move, movement, to hang, to enter, anything flat, 4	dalt / dag	da			dalet	d
	man with arms lifted (kneeling)	rejoice, wonder, worship, adore, (make to) see, live, breadth, 5 celebrate (<i>hurrah</i>), flourish, reveal	hillul, hi(gh), ah, ha	ah, ha, a			hei	h / a,e
	tent-pin, pointed stick (in t. ground)	to join, connect, 'and', secure, man, arrow, (back)bone, hook, 6	wav	wa, u			wav	w / u,o
	scythe, hoe, sword, knife, standing grain	weapon, (to) harvest/chip/hew/cut (off), metal, precious, food, 7 olive (oil),	zan	za			zayin	z
	'wall' of tent/ ta- bernacle, fence	border, limit, skin/leather, outside, separation, texture, flesh, 8	chets	cha			chet	ch
	(ceramic) bowl / basket, wheel	to surround/ contain/ cover, clay/ mud, shell, to spin, darkness, 9	thet	tha			thet	t
	hand (thumb loose, fingers to- gether)	giving hand, arm, branch, to work, throw, worship, fingers, he, me, what God gives, infinite, 10	yad yimnu	ya, i			yud	y / i
	(raised) hand (of authority), wing	to bless, to tame, set after one's hand, to allow, to cover, to reign	kaph kappu	ka, kha			kaph	k,kh
	shepherd staff/ stick, ox-goad	to lead, to teach, to train, yoke, 'unto', to bind, movement, 30	lam	la			lamed	l
	water, liquid, (streaming) time?	abundance, sea, multiple, liquid, much, mighty, from, blood, life, 40	mah mu	ma, mu			mem	m
	sprouting seed, snake?? (Egypt)	offspring, to live, new life, follow on, continue, son, we, Holy Spirit?	nun nahasu	nu			nun	n
	palm/date tree / thorny plant fish??	tree of life, support, fertility, plant, cover, cool, fan, sturdy (pillar), protect, nourish, resistant, high	sin samaku	sa, si			sa- mekh/ sin	s
	eye, vision / to sheathe	to see (to), seer, to look at, to show, insight, to look like, shade	'ainu, ghayn	'a, gha			'ayin/ ghayin	,
	opening / airflow / angle, curve	opening (widening), wind, mouth, to blaze, to scatter, edge, gap	pey panu	pu, phu			pei	p,ph
	(papyrus-)plant, reed (squeezed) lasso?, net?	to extrude, to squeeze, to press, hollow pipe, cover, to cover, hunt, spear, trap, catch, paper, to roll	tsad	tsa			tsadi	ts
	sun on horizon, ~ in orbit/ monkey ? weaving spool?	to rise, go up & down, circle, cir- culation, east, opening (in w. light enters; eye of needle), smell, 100	quph	qu			qoph	q
	head of a man	a (higher) other (also: God or spirit), man, begin, top, principle	raisu re'ish	ra, re?			resh	r
	breast(s), well, bow? cow-horns? source, cloud(s)?	source (of life, water), t. bring forth / forward, to bulge, fullness, well, drink, food, community, yoke, two	shadu shin	sha/ tha			shin/ sin	sh,s
	two crossed sticks, cross	to mark, mark, (to) sign, signa- ture, writing, to press, end, close	taw tau	ta			tav	t,th

The pictures and meanings in grey are questionable or later or temporal/regional developments and additions.

The *u* stands for the oo sound as in the English word *good*.

This table has been put together on the basis of a large number of sources and verified, completed and edited after thorough analysis of a large number of Biblical and Arab words and recovered inscriptions from that era.

Old Hebrew words and their meanings

The first words and observations that I encountered intrigued me to reconstruct a meaning of a large number of words from the old Semitic pictograms (or ideograms). Such an analysis has its limits. Not all Hebrew (or Aramaic) words can be interpreted this way: certainly not the grammatically derived forms, often with pre- or suffixes, forms from which other letters have disappeared (in particular letters like the *wav* often disappeared), onomatopoeia and borrowed words from other languages.¹ It is also known that sometimes the order of letters has changed or letter replacing/exchanging has occurred (e.g. between *yod* and *wav*, *lamed* and *resh*, or *sin/samekh* and *sin/shin*). Being fully aware of these limitations, I was perplexed at the large portion of all the words that I encountered that appeared 'readable' (with the most probable original meaning) from the old Semitic pictures.

The list on the following pages denotes, how a non-educated Israelite between 2000 and 1000 before Christ (roughly: the time of Abraham till David) could **possibly** have interpreted the words from the Bible, by deriving the meanings from the early basic meanings of the old Semitic symbols that constitute them. *This is given primarily for illustrative purposes*; in some cases the real etymological evolution or development *may* have come about differently.

Several words are particularly interesting to analyze, because of the light they shed on the history of Israel. In Israel and surrounding nations/peoples אֱל - אֱל - 'El (Akkadian: *ilu/elu*) was the common word for God/god or an important (first/prime/great) leader. This fits exactly with the old Semitic symbols. However, when we take the old Semitic symbols a bit more literal, it is immediately clear why people in those days often associated the word 'god' with an ox (bull, calf or cow). This corresponds with an older source of the word 'El, which was the name of a Canaanite godhead, often depicted as an ox. Because of its enormous power the great auroch (shoulder height up to 2 meter!) was for long ages a symbol of the higher powers. All kinds of idols/'gods' were often depicted with parts of the body of an ox. In ancient Mesopotamia a recurring figure is the bull-man, *gud-alim* in Sumerian (note the likeness of the *alim* = auroch, bull, bison, wild ram to 'Elohim; while *gud* = domestic ox). One expert argues that this figure emerged especially during the "phase of development which culminated in the structuring of city-based, hierarchical societies".² Biblically, that is the time that culminated in the building of the tower of Babel.

These days there are dedicated people who even confess God's glorious Name YaHUaH, who have trouble using the word 'God/god' because it resembles the name of an ancient idol. Instead they rather use the Hebrew (Biblical, they say) denotation 'El. The above shows that this is misled: precisely of 'El it can be stated with certainty that it once was used as the name of an idol.

A bit more elaborated than 'El is אֱלֹהִים - אֱלֹהִים - 'Eloha / 'Elāh / 'Aloha³ - literally the first great Leader to be worshipped (or the first honorable Leader). The God of Israel used for Himself the form: אֱלֹהִים - אֱלֹהִים - 'Elohim. Many have studied or stumbled over the plural they see in this 'Elohim. But from the old Semitic the suffix *-im* is not only to be interpreted as a plural, but also as 'He gives'


¹ A few remarkable examples of such loanwords are:

פַּרְעֹה - *phar'oh* - pharao, from Egyptian *pr' 3* - big house* (think of the use of 'the White House' as metonym for the presidential government of the USA in our days). For an Israelite in the time of Moses/Mosheh this word looked like: see the 'blowing' (authoritative speaking) of the higher other, and worship – precisely what they first had to do towards the pharao and what in the end that pharao had to do towards God.

הֵיכָל - *hēikāl*, or: הֵיכָל - *hēikhal* - temple or palace, via Akkadian *ekallu* derived from Sumerian *e₂-gal* - literally: big house.** Note that etymologically a more original form of this word thus is אֱלֹהִים - *hagal*, to be interpreted as: worship to/for the feet of the Leader; it is in line with Biblical thinking that the holiest room in the temple was or contained the footstool of God.

* See: Aaron D. Rubin, 'Egyptian Loanwords in Hebrew', in: G. Khan et al. (Eds), *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, Brill, Leiden/Boston, 2012/2013; Vol.1. A-F, p.793-794.

** See: Aaron D. Rubin, 'Sumerian Loanwords', in: *ibid*, Vol.3. P-Z, p.665-666.

² M. Rice, *The Power of the Bull*, Routledge, London, 1998, p.272; cited in: Renate Marian Van Dijk, *The Motif of the Bull in the Ancient Near East: An Iconographic Study* , PhD thesis, University of South Africa, febr. 2011; p.68. It must be noted in this context that the great auroch or wild bull of those days could easily handle a lion. Van Dijk also mentions that Mesopotamian kings would often be likened to bulls (p.107) and most early Egyptian kings or pharao's would be called epithets such as 'Mighty Bull' or the like (p.105). Compare also Gen. 49: 22 and Deut. 33: 17 where Joseph is likened to a bull.

³ This variant appears a.o. in Psalm 30: 13 (with suffix *yod* = mine). And a lot in the *Peshitta* – the text of the First Testament written in Syriac Aramaic, used in some Eastern churches. Not to be confused with אֱלֹהִים - 'allah, 'elah - oak, terebinth. This is the living (אֱלֹהִים) form of the strong material from which the better (1st class) shepherd's sticks and tent pins were made – the word אֱלֹהִים - 'ul - strong.

(‘He hands us’: 𐤇 or 𐤈) abundance (𐤌); indeed **YaHUaH** shares His abundance most gracefully...

Other words are most interesting, since their meaning is often hard to understand for our Western minds. An example is the Hebrew word חכמה - חכמה - *chokhmah* - wisdom, since it seems so hard to ‘get’ what wisdom is all about. Well, let’s see what the constituting old Semitic symbols tell us. We know that *chokhmah* is derived from חכם - *chakham* [2449], it’s the ‘celebrating’ 𐤇 (hillul) or feminine form of it. And חכם - *chakham* stands for: 𐤌𐤇𐤍 - the boundary (-ies) (limit(s)) of the raised (reigning) hand(s) (of the plural form -m it is not 100% clear whether it refers to the limit or the hand). In other words: when we know and celebrate the limitations of human power, we are acting wisely. Another derivation via an envisioned root *chaikham* is possible as well – see below.⁴

Another important word to mention here is the word *Hebrew* itself: עברת - ‘*ibhriet* - 𐤇𐤁𐤅𐤃, sign - 𐤇 - *script* (!) of ‘*ebher* - 𐤇𐤁𐤅𐤃: seeing / having a view at - the house - of the other (on the other side, you can *see it* but you may not be able to reach it easily; a region beyond or across; the later meaning of the associated verb became: to cross or to pass, as Jacob/Israel passed over the river Jabbok – Genesis 32: 22, and the people of Israel later crossed the river Jordan – Joshua 1).⁵ In this way, Israel came ‘from the other side’; they were the ones ‘from beyond’ - ‘*ibhri* - , and in that way their language was also seen. There is an additional layer here,⁶ because 𐤇𐤁𐤅𐤃 can also stand for someone who ‘sees to’ (cares for) the house of another person, that is: a servant. In the name of their language, the people of Israel were reminded that they had been servants in Egypt (as Jacob with Laban), and their God had delivered them! Note that in world history nobody has been so literally ‘*ibhriet* - 𐤇𐤁𐤅𐤃 – a servant on a cross, with the signs of that cross in Himself – as *JeShu’ah*/ Jesus. Indeed: He came from ‘the other side’ to bear that cross as a servant, here in our place!

Table 2. Hebrew words and their meaning according the old Semitic symbols

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤇𐤁	𐤇𐤁	אל 𐤀𐤋	’El	410	the prominent/ first/ most powerful Shepherd/ Leader: God (or locally the greatest leader)
𐤇𐤁𐤅𐤃	𐤇𐤁𐤅𐤃	אלוה 𐤀𐤋𐤅	’Eloha / ’Elāh / ’Elah / ’Ilāh ⁷	(426 433)	the prominent/ first/ most powerful Shepherd/ Leader (providing secure attachment) to be worshipped: God
𐤇𐤁𐤅𐤃𐤌	𐤇𐤁𐤅𐤃𐤌	אלהים	’Elohim	430	the prominent/ first/ most powerful Shepherd/ Leader to be worshipped, He gives (/hands us) fullness/ abundance: title for God YaHUaH

A **grey letter** denotes that it is not always there. The explanations in **grey** are preliminary ideas; not yet verified and not so clear that it really should be *that* explanation. **Purple text**, a **purple A** or **Arab.** denotes Arabic; **Aramaic variants** are often set in **dark red**. Variants in other languages, such as **Akkadian (Ak)** or **Proto-Semitic (PS)** often in **green**.

The *ā* is the sound of the Hebrew *kamats ā*, as in *aahhh*. The *ē* that of the *tseree*, as in *play*, the long *i* is pronounced *ee* as in (*to*) *see*. The *u* represents the *oo*-sound as in *cool*, unless denoted otherwise.

⁴ More on this in a separate article: [Wisdom](http://www.Hallelu-YaH.nl), here at www.Hallelu-YaH.nl, April/May 2011.

⁵ There are indications that here too, we have to read ‘the Other’ and that the house refers to the sun, which was quite generally viewed as the house of the gods; for example the word ברק *baraq* would then originally have been (the light of) the rising sun (the house of the Other that rises/shines). ‘*Ebher* would then refer to the point at the (eastward) horizon where you can look at the (rising) sun without being blinded.

⁶ Still another layer is seen by comparing ‘*ibhrit* to *berit*; ‘*ibhrit* is then: having an eye for (paying attention to) the covenant.

⁷ *Ilu* in the old Sumerian, with -remarkably- as feminine form: *Ilatu* (remarkable, because -at is the well known Semitic feminine suffix).

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
אב	אב	אב	'ab, later: 'ābh ⁸	1-2	the first/ most powerful (authority figure) of the house/home (/ family): father, patriarch
אב	אב	אב	'ēbh	3-4 cf. 24	the first tent (made of reed, palm leaves etc.): (young, fresh) green, vegetation, greenery, fruit
אבד	אבד	אבד	'ābhad	6-7, 9	to go into the fresh greenery (in 1 st instance esp. of a lamb or a child): run off/away, get lost, disappear
אביר	אביר	אביר	'Ābir 'abbir ⁹	46-47	my Father, God: the Mighty One ; my father/patriarch, higher one: a mighty one ; an ox from the house of God or to offer in the temple to God: very big ox, bull, buffalo
אביל	אביל	אביל	'ābhēl	58	the fresh green of a shepherd / first place of a shepherd: meadow ¹⁰
אדון	אדון	אדון	'ādōn	113	the first door-pin ¹¹ for the children (i.e. who keeps them stable & connected to the house/ family): lord, leader of the household
אדם	אדם	אדם	'ādam 'ādām 'edom PS 'adam Ak: adam	119-132	first blood: (dark) red, red earth, blood red, a human being, Adam, Edom
אהב	אהב	אהב	'ahābh	157-160	to first celebrate your own (family at) home / worship the First with your body / at home: to love
און	און	און	'on	202	first-born child; reproduction-power evidenced in getting a first son or child: power, might ¹²
און	און	און	'aven	205	primary attachment with one's children: for some an idol , far many trouble and often it doesn't work (⇒ idle, nothingness)
אור	אור	אור	'or	215-218	the first secure attachment from/with the Other (God): light, to shine ¹³
אזר	אזר	אזר	'ezōr 'izār	232	first riches connected to God; made with the first knife of the prominent God (to replace the light in which we were earlier robed – just like God ¹⁴): piece of clothing to cover lower body, girdle ; fig. / metaphor. also: loyalty ; power of God over kings (Job 12:18)

⁸ Already in Sumerian *abba* was the word for father, in old Chinese it was *ba*. It is remarkable that the formation of 'ab resembles that of the English word *husband*, from Old Norse *husbondi* - literally: house-master.

⁹ In Dutch, I wrote a separate article about it: 'אביר' - 'Abir – de Machtige van Ja'aqobh / Isra'el', at the Dutch Hallelu-JaH website, June 2014.

Related is probably also: אביר - *jaber* - the *hiphil* form of אביר - 'abar [82] (as mentioned in Job 39: 26): he does my father be like God: to be lifted up high ⇒ to fly (high; esp. of birds of prey).

¹⁰ The meaning of אביל [56-57]: to mourn, is probably derived from the name 'Abhel and his sad fate – see there (in table 3).

¹¹ The pin attached to the doorpost or doorstep, on which the door hinges. It has strongly the connotation of stability and 'keeping things together', allowing the *limited* movement of the door, here applied to children (off-spring). See also *wachad*.

¹² "This root occurs as noun only twelve times. In Genesis 49:3, Deuteronomy 21:17, Job 40:16, Psalm 78:51 and Psalm 105:36 the word designates **reproductive power as evidenced in the first born son**. In Isaiah 40:26-29 the creative power of God is highlighted. Physical strength and/or wealth are denoted in Job 18:12, Job 20:10 and Hosea 12:9." Source: R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (TWOT), Moody, ISBN 978-0802486493 (emphasis added).

¹³ See also: 'The Light of the World', short web-article at this Hallelu-YaH website, May 2012.

¹⁴ That light, that attachment to God, was destroyed by the distrust of man towards God, as the *zan* in this word shows pictographically.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
III ע	III ע	אח اخو	'āch 'achu ¹⁵ Ak: achu	251- 252	your 'premier flesh & blood' / the first/closest to your skin: brother, neighbor
III ע	IV ע	אחר اخر	'acher 'achar	312	the first tent wall / boundary / flesh of the other: another, following, the next
ע- ע	ע- ע	איש אנוש	'ish PS: 'ish cf. 'anosh from: PS: 'inush Ak: nishu A 'ins-ān	376- 377 582 cf. 605	brought forth by a prominent 'hand' / the first being (man) connected to the Source / to the immaterial: (mortal) man / husband / human being ¹⁶
ע	ע	אם	'am / 'ēm amma ¹⁷	517	the first water / (amniotic)fluid / the first to provide drink/ the first of abundance/prosperity: mother/ mom
ע	ע	אמן	'āman 'omen	539- 540, 543- 544	the first liquid/milk (abundance/fullness) for the offspring / what a mother brings forth: ¹⁸ to feed, cherish, affirm, support, (to be) faithful, trustworthy, trust
ע	ע	אמר	'āmar	559- 564	the first abundance/fullness of the Other (God): The Word (Jesus), (His) speaking (cf. Genesis 1), ⇒ to speak (in general)
ע	ע	אמיר	'āmīr	534 cf. 559- 564	the place where God spoke / passed on His abundance: mountaintop, treetop, height
ע	ע	אמש	'emesh	570	the first big rain shower (opportunity to drink) (of this day): evening , (in particular what is to us: yesterday evening)
ע	ע	אמת	'emet	571	mother has signed (for) it / the sign of the first water (the flood): sure, secure, faithful, stable, truth
ע	ע	אנף	'anaph	599	to be opened for (give birth to) the first child: to breath hard / sigh; painful; strong emotion; later also (due to association with a sniffing bull): angry, trembling of nostrils
ע	ע	אף	'aph	639	the first air opening: nose








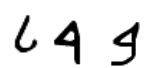


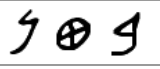


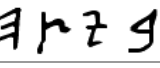







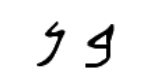

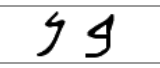


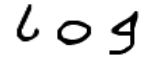

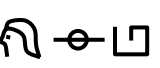


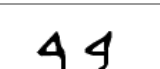

¹⁵ The Arabic form **أخو** - 'achu' is the corresponding verb: to fraternize, to behave oneself as brother or friend; after the old symbols: to connect (as) with a brother / primary flesh (a bodily/fysical being). Possibly this is the basic form (the primary flesh one is connected to).

¹⁶ Some of the old form is still observed in the plural: אֲנָשִׁים or: אֲנָשִׁי (see e.g.: Judges. 18: 25; 2 Chron. 9: 14; Ps. 119: 24), and is used in the Samaritan Pentateuch (Gen. 18: 16; 19: 10, 16). Remarkable is that אֲנָשִׁי is interpreted elsewhere as 'mortal', 'deadly wounded' or 'incurable sick'. The Akkadian *enēshu* meant: 'to be weak'. Such is apparently the natural state of humanity: weak, dependent on God and others... Also the connotation 'social' is encountered, which seems to follow logically from the mutual dependance. It appears in de Bible 42 times in the Hebrew and 25 times in the Aramaic form ('*enash*'), both predominantly in later poetic texts (e.g. Psalm 103: 15; 9: 20 v.v.). See also in table 3 under the name '*Enosh*' [582].
I am also reminded of אֲנִי - 'ani - 'I am' (lit: the 1st in my family).

¹⁷ Sumerian: *ama*. According Giovanni Semerano the corresponding Akkadian form *ummu* (pronunciation: *uum*; mother, womb; probably also related to the Sumerian *ummu*) is the basis of the English word *womb* and the Gothic *wamba*. The added *b* therein as a kind of home or container, I find remarkable. The closely associated womb notion seems to confirm the interpretation as the *first or primary water*.

¹⁸ Think also of what God says in Yesha-yahu (Isaiah) 49:15.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
			'ēsh 'azāh 'as 'ēs	784-785 228	what comes forward prominently / the first source (of warmth) / primary power / the best olive oil to burn (for light) / the prominent palm tree (the <i>seneh</i> in fire): fire
			'ishāh PS: <i>nishu</i> cf. <i>nāshim</i>	802 cf. 5389	the first to bring forth (children), to be enjoyed / the first connected to the Source, to be enjoyed / the first source of life (<i>feminine form of 376 or 582</i>): wife, woman
			<i>bādal</i>	914-915	shepherd (with his stick) at the stable door (separating the goats from the sheep or the he goats from the she goats): to separate, to set apart
			<i>beten</i> <i>boten</i>	990-993	'house' (space) as an enclosure for children/seed: womb (also: belly, pistachio nut)
			<i>bēitsā</i>	1000	'lives' in/ adores a 'birds-house' on the branch of a tree, to be enjoyed: egg
			<i>bākar</i> A: <i>bikr</i>	1069	in the home: one who reigns over or blesses others (his siblings) / in a family: the blessing of God: a first born / to be born first
			<i>bāmāh</i>	1116	house of much worship / big house of worship: mountain or high place, esp. mountain or height for worship
			<i>ben</i> PS: <i>bin</i> Ak: <i>binu</i> A: <i>'ibn</i> ²⁰	1121	offspring of the house (= family!): son, ²¹ grandson, member of a group in plural also: a people descendant from one patriarch ('father')
			<i>bānāh</i>	1129	to honor (a house for) your offspring: to build
			<i>bā'al</i> PS: <i>ba'l</i> Ak: <i>bēlu</i> A: <i>ba'l</i>	1166-1169	in the house the 'seen' (respected ²²) leader: husband, master, owner (esp. of slaves)
			<i>boqer</i> (<i>bāqar</i> <i>bāqār</i>)	1242 (1239 - 1241)	the 'house of the rising sun of God' [that time of day]: dawn, morning (and activities that were done esp. in the morning, such as asking things from God, seeking and plowing)
			<i>bar bār</i>	1250	the house of God: open country, open field; the grain that grows there (original houses were also made of reed – grain-like stems)

¹⁹ There seems to have been confusion here already early about the spelling (compare also: Sumerian *izi*, Turkish: *isi*). The second and third variants are the oldest Aramaic and Phoenician forms. The Phoenician is probably older than the first variant depicted; the Hebrew. In Arabic there is no such word for fire (as far as I know); for the most important Arabian word نار - *n'ur* see [5135] and [215]. The word may be a loanword from Sumerian *izi* (also present in Turkish *isi*).

²⁰ The Arabic form seems to denote that originally it may have been an offspring of 'ab - father.

²¹ Ernst E. Ettisch (in: *Hebräisch – ein uraltes Hieroglyphensystem*, Tel Aviv, 1951) explains the parallel בת - *bat* - daughter as that you have to close your house well to protect a daughter, esp. her virginity ("Tochter, zusammengesetzt aus den Hieroglyphen Haus, Kreuz (Abschließung). Derjenige, welcher eine Tochter hat, muß sein Haus abschließen, es behüten, bewachen.", p.16); this notion is familiar in the Bible – cf. e.g. Song of Songs 8: 9. The plural בנות - *banot* makes clear that בת - *bat* really is a feminine variant of *ben*.

²² 'Seen' as 'being looked up to'. Compare what I said in the first part about the *ayin* (contrary to the 'aleph) as a letter of (being focused on) the outward appearance. The interpretation of the 'ajin as *ghajin* is possible here as well: the leader who envelops or covers, i.e. protects, the house / family.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
בֹּרַח	𐤁 𐤅 𐤇	בֹּרַח ²³	<i>bōr</i> (<i>borit</i>) <i>bar</i>	1252-1253 (1305 / 1262 Eccl. 3:18) cf. 1287	the House of/connected to God is pure like shining metal or cristal: boron is a metal with cristal-like minerals, predominantly from extra-terrestrial origin; sodium perborate (Dutch: <i>boorwater</i>) and <i>borax</i> are used already very long resp. for cleaning dirty hands and to purify metal / prevent oxidation during melting or hot soldering of silver and gold
בָּרַר	𐤁 𐤅 𐤇	בָּרַר	<i>bārar</i>	1305	⇒ to purify, select, polish, choose, purge, cleanse or make bright, test or prove
בָּרַח	𐤁 𐤅 𐤇	בָּרַח	<i>bārāh</i>	1262 vgl. 2274	to worship or let live the house in which God lives (the temple, our body) or the house/body of another: to eat, to feed (esp. of meat, then often in combination with. ... esp. in the tabernacle/temple and when coming together meat was eaten), to provide with meat, to feed also: to select
בְּרִית	𐤁 𐤅 𐤇	בְּרִית	<i>berith</i>	1285 1286	[being] <i>in</i> the sign that the Other (God) gives / the sign or signature that God gives to His house (family) / to the house (e.g. of Israel) God gives a sign / pure (cf. <i>bōr</i>) sign(ature): covenant ²⁴
בָּרַךְ	𐤁 𐤅 𐤇	בָּרַךְ برك ברכה ²⁵	<i>bārakh</i> A: <i>bāraka</i> A/G: <i>berk</i>	1288-1291	to be <i>in</i> God's raised (right, blessing) hand / to bless the tent/house/body of the other/Other: to kneel, knee, to bless, to praise
בָּרַק	𐤁 𐤅 𐤇	בָּרַק	<i>bāraq</i> ²⁶	1299-1301	to let shine (cf. <i>bārar</i>) (for a moment) as the rising sun / in God's light: lightning
בָּשָׂר	𐤁 𐤅 𐤇	בָּשָׂר	<i>bāsār</i>	1320	the house (dwelling place) for the life (palm tree - symbol of life) from the Other (God) / the tent as the seat (palm tree) of God: body ; also: servant who e.g. is sent to convey good news
גִּבְלָה	𐤁 𐤅 𐤇	גִּבְלָה	<i>gebal</i>	1380-1381	the foot of the house of the Leader: mountain (the Phoenician city by that name was called Byblus in Greek)
גִּבְבֵּן	𐤁 𐤅 𐤇	גִּבְבֵּן	<i>gibbēn</i>	1384	one gets a bent back of it (curved earthly tent) from walking with one's children: with bent back, hunchbacked
גִּבְנוֹן	𐤁 𐤅 𐤇	גִּבְנוֹן	<i>gabnon</i>	1386	what looks like a hunchback / foot of the house of ongoing life: (rounded) hilltop
גִּדְדָה	𐤁 𐤅 𐤇	גִּדְדָה	<i>guwd / gadad / Gad</i>	1410 1413 1464	put your foot against (the hinging pin of) the door: to invade [by force] [this was often done in] a troop (invasion)



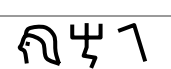
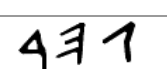



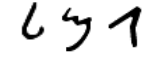

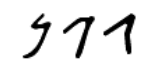

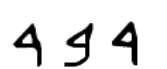

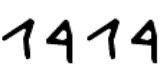

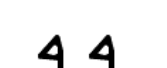
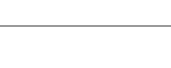
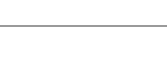

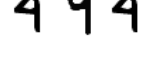
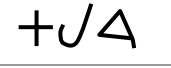
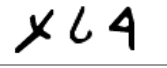
²³ Fürst says of a form *bōr* that the *wav* in it is old; he doesn't say this, however, of a most clearly related form with a *patach* with the meaning: *in a moral sense, tried, approved, pure, clear*; the Biblical form is without that *wav*. Gesenius says nothing about this and links *bōr* as *purity* and specifically as *cleanness of hands ... figuratively for innocency* more or less to *bōr* as *that which has a cleansing property: lixivium, alkali* with reference to [H1287]. See also the discussion on this word-family, in the text after this table.

²⁴ The descriptions given here are only additional mental associations. According the usual and most probable etymology *berit* comes from *bārāh* – to eat together.

²⁵ A/G = Amharic/Ge'ez.

²⁶ *Baraqu* in Sumerian. In Akkadian *baraq* is a ram (the body of a being that 'rises' in the sense that its horns are standing high up and in the sense that it rises high up on the mountains).

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
		גדול	<i>gadal</i> <i>gādol</i> <i>godel</i>	1419- 1420 1431- 1433	the foot or stick that enters at the leader's / foot/staff of a leader who invades: (to become) great/big (in length, number, ...), mighty, influential, high, old
		גָּהָר	<i>gāhar</i>	1457	to worship the feet of the higher Other: to fall down/ to stretch oneself out (in worship)
		גֹּר	<i>gur / ger</i>	1481/ 1616	to go to (the tent pins of) the other: to sojourn / sojourner/stranger
		גמל	<i>gimel / gāmāl</i> ²⁸	1581	(animal with big) feet, able to take much water, used to transport a leader / feet for a (mighty) leader: camel
		גֶּפֶן	<i>gephen</i> ²⁹	1612	bended stick, offering an opening to fruit/seed / 'transports' the mouth of your children (makes them walk): vine, grape, fruit
		דָּבָר	<i>dābhar</i> <i>dābhār</i>	1696- 1697	by speaking a word you sort of enter into the life of the other/Other ('into his/her house'); also: a thing (with which you enter)
			<i>Tigre:</i> ³⁰ <i>dāgdāgā</i> <i>PS: d.gd.g</i>		to move one's feet (reduplicated, as a shout): to trample down, to press, squeeze, to tap
		דָּד	<i>dad</i> <i>A: dad-ah</i>	1717	(after the likeness in shape, and according to some, from the notion of 'hanging'): feminine/motherly breasts / feeding mother ³¹
		דָּוִד	<i>dud, dod, (David)</i> <i>Ak: dādu</i> <i>A: dād</i>	1730- 1732	to connect door-to-door (or according the previous one: breast-to-breast): to connect, to put together, to attach, to weave together, ³² loved one, foster father, also: a woven basket
		דֶּלֶת	<i>deleth</i>	1817; vgl. 1802	what hangs/moves from a stick-construction: a door
		דָּם	<i>dām</i> <i>PS: 'adam</i> <i>Ak: damu</i> <i>A: dam</i>	1818	moving ('circulating' we say) / streaming (from a wound) liquid: blood; ³³ ⇒ also: (red) wine ('moves' in the cup)

²⁷ According to Fūrst the oldest form did not have the wav.

²⁸ The name *gammal* for this animal appeared already in *Akkadian* and *Sumerian*, there often preceded by the *determinative* symbol *ANSHE* (not pronounced) for something like 'things', comparable to our 'pack' in 'pack mule', sometimes in combination with a word for (sand)sea; already in the 3rd millennium BC in the M.E. the camel was known as pack animal for desert travel, especially for the higher class (sometimes it is contended that it was domesticated only later, but this is what archeology demonstrates via language/script and pictures).

²⁹ *Gupnu* in *Akkadian* (the same consonants; I do not exclude that the first u (Y) is also original: the vine as stick in the ground – cf. *wayin* - in that case the meaning is even clearer, as the vine is a foot that gives way to the grapes).

³⁰ Tigre is a South-Semitic language. This is just one out of a multitude of examples from this language group that just fit the old (West-)Semitic script like most words from the other Semitic languages.

³¹ Fūrst compares also דָּתָת - to give to drink, moisten, and the Sanskrit *da-dhi* - milk, *dhē* - to drink and *dhajā* - a (breast-)sucking child. He also mentions the Aramaic synonym דָּת, but it is not certain whether this shouldn't be related etymologically to *thad / shad*, so in origin דָּת - *shad* – see there.

³² Fūrst explains that the original root of this was possibly דָּת - *daw* (to attach, weave, bind together); from the old symbols, this might be explained very well as: to enter with a pin, as in original sewing and weaving.

³³ Possibly also via the connotation of blood and soul, finally 'entering into (God's) abundance'.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤔𐤕𐤁	𐤔𐤕𐤁	דרך	<i>dārah</i> <i>derekh</i>	1869-1870	to (let) move the other(s) with/before the reigning/blessing hand (ruler): to tread, march; way, road ³⁴
𐤔𐤕𐤁	𐤔𐤕𐤁	דרש	<i>dārash</i>	1875	to move to the other, the source [of information]: to ask, inquire
𐤔𐤕𐤁	𐤔𐤕𐤁	דשא	<i>dāshā'</i> <i>deshe'</i>	1876 1877	to 'enter into' bringing forth prominently / to go into / move the source [of water] first [to cause everything]: to sprout, to grow green, new grass, vegetation
𐤔𐤕𐤁	𐤔𐤕𐤁	הדר	<i>hādār</i>	1926	to worship/honor at the door of the other: dignity, honor, majesty, glory
𐤔𐤕𐤁	𐤔𐤕𐤁	הוה היה	<i>hāwāh</i> later: <i>hājāh</i>	(1961)	(being able to) worship together in wonder and secure attachment, now <i>that</i> is: to live, to be (with), to breath
𐤔𐤕𐤁	𐤔𐤕𐤁	הון	<i>hon</i>	1952	(to be able to) rejoice about a good connection with your offspring is: riches, wealth, enough
𐤔𐤕𐤁	𐤔𐤕𐤁	הלך	<i>hālakh</i>	1980	to live (/worship/celebrate) with a shepherd's staff in one's right hand: to walk, go ³⁵
𐤔𐤕𐤁	𐤔𐤕𐤁	הלל הליל חלל	<i>hālāl</i> <i>hillul</i>	1984 1974	to worship or rejoice in the Leader of leaders: to shine, to celebrate, to praise, to boast in
𐤔𐤕𐤁	𐤔𐤕𐤁	הנה הן	<i>hinneh</i> <i>hen</i>	2009 2005	exclamation/exhortation as to children (𐤔) to watch and take note (as wondering, with respect) carefully: behold!, see!, watch this!
𐤔𐤕𐤁	𐤔𐤕𐤁	הורר	<i>har, hor, harar</i>	2022-2023	[place where you] worship the Other (God) / [where you] rejoice in being connected to the Other (God): mountain, hill, rock
𐤔𐤕𐤁	𐤔𐤕𐤁	הרה	<i>hārāh</i>	2029-2030	celebrate that the other lives (/ is rejoicing in you): to become pregnant
𐤔𐤕𐤁	𐤔𐤕𐤁	ודד ידד וד	<i>wad / ud</i> <i>wādad</i> <i>udad / jādā</i> <i>wadda</i>	3032 vgl. 1730-1732	transposition of du / daw (cf. 1730-1732) – enter into attachment / connect one's tents entrance to entrance: being connected/ united, e.g. in close friendship; being attached to / to love ³⁶
𐤔𐤕𐤁	𐤔𐤕𐤁	ודה ידה ודי	<i>wādāh / udāh / yādāh</i> <i>wada</i>	3034 (I) vgl. 3032	wādāh & hiph'il van jādāh: to honor a loved person (Person): to praise, to recognize, to mention, to thank, to express oneself, to acknowledge, to confess (e.g. God's Name), to celebrate, to glorify, to exalt; also: to move one's hand in (/ He gives you to enter into) joyful adoration: worship (cf. הויידה / הויידה - <i>huyēdāh</i> [1960] - song of praise); also: to throw [oneself down]

³⁴ Cf. Yesha-yahu (Isaiah) 49: 11; 57: 14 and 62: 10.

³⁵ See also under *lā'akh*. Another explanation refers to the stretched arm/hand of the leader saying: "Go!", possibly giving a direction, as for example God said to Abraham in the passage (the *Parashah*) from Genesis (12:1–17:27) traditionally denoted '*Lekh lekha*' (לך-לך), so: walking/going because one is send.

³⁶ See also Fürst's dictionary (Julius Fürst (Samuel Davidson, vert.), *Hebrew & Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*, Bernhard Tauchnitz, Leipzig / Williams & Norgate, London/Edinburgh, 1885) on this, p. 540-541. This is al closely related to the Sanskrit *wad* - to speak, to tell and *wand* - to praise, he says. See also at *wādāh* [3034] and *wādā'* [3045]. which are clearly related.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤕𐤁𐤕	𐤕𐤁𐤕 𐤕𐤁𐤕	וּדָה יָדָה ودی	wādāh / udāh / yādāh wada	3034 (II) vgl. 3384	(to rejoice in) an arrow or spear that goes into (an animal or whatever; such that one can live): to throw (down), to shoot
𐤕𐤁𐤕 𐤕𐤁𐤕	𐤕𐤁𐤕 𐤕𐤁𐤕	וּדָע יָדָע	wada' / yada' ³⁷	3045- 3047	to see/observe attachment (see 3032) / to see (know about) the pin on which the door hinges: to know / to discover / to be well acquaint- ed with the other and his tent/house/body ³⁸ (a personal, experiential knowing) the later form also: to see a hand (moving) (before one's eyes): to see ; hiphil (cf. 3034 (III)): to see to it that an arrow/ thorn enters: to pierce some sharp thing into something else , as in: to chastise someone with thorns
𐤕𐤁𐤕	𐤕𐤁𐤕	וּחַד אֶחָד	wachad / 'echad yachad ³⁹	259 3162	the pin at the doorpost remains stable – even with all the movement of the door – and con- nects/provides unity of door & wall: 'one'
וַיִּין	וַיִּין	וַיִּין وین	wayin / yayin A: wayn	3196	fruit (seed) at an 'arm' (branch/tendrill) of a connecting stick in the ground: grape; vine; vinery
וַיִּין וַיִּין	וַיִּין וַיִּין	וַיִּין ילד	walad walat yalad ⁴⁰	3205 3206	the branch of the leader (man) that enters / the pin of the leader (man) that is enclosed: sexual intercourse -> from that comes forth: to be pregnant, to bare, to bring forth => child
וַיִּין	וַיִּין וַיִּין	וַיִּין ورد یرد	wārad warada / yārad	3381	to let the tent pin of the other one go in: to let sink down, to go or take down, descend / to enter into the covenant with God: to arrive, be found

³⁷ As mentioned earlier, the words that originally began with a wav have once been adapted and now begin with a yod or another letter. This is one of those. Note that the later form yāda' can be interpreted as: seeing the hand - seeing what you have to do, completely in line with Babylonian / Rabbinic shift in vision in the direction of 'working'. In some derived words such as *todah* (תּוֹדָה [8426] - confession, thanks to God) the wav still persisted. The root is probably related to the Sanskrit *wid* – what is seen as the basis of the Dutch *weten* (to know), German *wissen*, Gothic *witan*, Latin *(di)videre*, etc.

³⁸ Concerning the bodily aspect, to see the pin (or 'hand' - cf. Cain) and door (opening) can be interpreted symbolically (bodily), which immediately clarifies another meaning of *wada' (/ yada')*: 'having sexual intercourse'. Compare the choice of words in the First Testament, e.g. in Ruth 4:13: „he (Boaz) went in to her...” Compare also Arabic: *wadād* - love, friendship.

Both meanings are present in the first occurrence of this word in the Bible, in Genesis 3: 5, 7, where Adam and Eve ('Adam and Chawwah/Chuah) literally saw their pin and opening and 'noticed' (NBG) that they were naked. Remarkable in that context is that the word טוב - *tobh* - good, can literally be seen as: 'sheathing the bodily pin' and רָע - *ra'* - evil as: 'to see the other'. As pastoral worker I know that in pornography the issue is *seeing* (distance!) while in a good relationship the issue is to welcome and – as it were – envelop/protect each other (spiritually as well).

By the way, the table's explanation also gives the relation with the synonym יָדָע - *da'at* [1847].

Compare: *yachad* - intercourse - 'to enter the flesh with the branch' (cf. the physical explanation for *yāda'*).

³⁹ In Arabic still *وحد* - *wachada*. For a better understanding of my explanation, see also Exodus 21: 2-6.

⁴⁰ In Gesenius' grammar, 1.2 § 19. these two words are etymologically related to each other. The Proto-Semitic original probably was WLD. The English *to weld* and *wild* may well be related in origin.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
			<i>wārāh/ yārāh</i>	3384 cf. 8451	to live in attachment with God (God then gives rain, lets your arrow hit its target & teaches you about life): to rain (on), to throw/hit, to instruct/teach to 'worship' another with an arrow (or sling): to aim at a target and hit it; to throw, to shoot; / to let live the vines of the Other: to water, to rain (on), to flood; ⁴² / <i>hiph'il</i> : to make another reach his target/goal / to let him live: to teach, to point at, to show, to give direction, to instruct ⁴³
			<i>wāthēd / yāthēd</i> A: <i>watad</i>	3489	pin as support of / in the construction of a door / pin to 'enter into' a cross: nail, big nail; (tent) pin; pin on which a door hinges
			<i>zābach</i>	2076- 2077	cutting in the body's flesh/meat: a butcher's knife / to slaughter
			<i>zāhābh</i>	2091	the metal of the large knife(s) in the tent/house of worship (the Tabernacle/Temple): gold
			<i>zayith zeythan</i> A: <i>zaytun zait</i>	2132 2133	sign like that of a metal (i.e. bright shining) tent pin (originally: זֶתֶן) or of a metal hand-decoration: (brightness/brilliance ⁴⁴ and from that:) (illuminating) olive oil, olive tree, olive (note: olive oil was used in lamps / for light)
			<i>zākhar zēker zakhār</i>	2142- 2145	to value the blessing of the Other (God) / [that] the sword [victory, judgment] or scythe [harvest] [is] a blessing of the Other – God [we need]: to remember, to commemorate aloud (esp. what God has done); also: having an instrument to bless another (and honor God): masculine ⁴⁵
			<i>zāman zemān</i>	2163- 2166	what comes forth from [having] much olive oil [for lamps] / to have harvested a lot of grain: (to take, set, appoint) time [for someone/-thing], season
			<i>zānāh</i>	2181	to worship what comes forth from (a precious) metal (thing; an idol): to commit idolatry, adultery (especially spiritually)

⁴¹ Old South Arabian and Ethiopian *wrw*, Ugaritic *iri*, Eblaite: *warum*. In Arabian I could not find a parallel form; I did encounter *fawwārah* (so, with an opening in front) - well, fountain, which lines up with the *to rain down on*. In Akkadian there was *erā* or *irā* - side-by-side (positioning).

⁴² Fürst (p.607) suspects that this form has been transposed from רָוַה - *rawah*, which is even more clearly explainable from the old symbols as: to let God's vines live.

⁴³ Fürst (p.606/-7) connects this with אָרָא / אָרַח – *to glow / to burn / to bring/give light* (אֹר).

⁴⁴ Think also of the **flaming/blinking sword** of the angel guarding the entrance to paradise – Genesis 3: 24. It is not 100% clear here whether the *zan/zajin* was originally connected to the olive and olive-oil and upon the discovery of metals (bronze, in first instance) was used for that as well (and in particular for a scythe or sword) or that the etymological line possibly ran the other way.

⁴⁵ Or: the tool for blessing another (& honoring the Other), or: (giving) a sword or a scythe in the (reigning) hand of an other; to fit him out (to remember = to empower in the OT; by commemorating Gods acts aloud you provide emotionally/spiritually a sword to overcome, or a scythe to harvest, in someone's hand).

The second meaning refers also to this empowerment by God. It is masculine, to find your strength in God! And besides that, having a masculine 'tool' is meant for blessing another (& honoring the Other)

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
⊙ ר א	○ 4 I	זָרַע	<i>zāraʿ</i>	2232	to see the scythe of the other (do something with an eye on the mowing/harvesting to come): to sow, to produce seed or fruit , <i>niphal</i> : to be sown or fertilized/impregnated
ר ח ב	4 9 8	חָבַר	<i>chābhar</i>	2266-2269	the border of your house (or the skin of your body) against another: to join, unite
ר ח	1 8	חָגַג	<i>chag</i>	2282	to give feet to one's flesh or tentcloth: to go on pilgrimage, to celebrate a feast, a feast
Δ ח	4 8	חָדַד	<i>chad</i>	2299	entering the skin/flesh/ wall: sharp
ז י ח	3 4 8	חָוָה	<i>chāwāh</i>	2331 2421?	to 'celebrate' (let dance) your ribcage (lit.: the flesh/skin over tent pins - ribs): to breath, to live
ז י ח	6 4 8	חֹל	<i>chul</i>	2342 2343	the boundary of the tent pins of the leader/shepherd: a circle; to dance (in a circle), to turn (also internally, of pain or labour)
ר י ח	4 4 8	חֹר	<i>chor</i>	2356	a kind of tent (tent veil and pins / tent veil of the covenant) of God: hollow, cave, cavern ; (cf. <i>hor</i> [2022, -3] - mountain, and Ex. 33: 18-23)
ז י ח	7 8	חַי	<i>chai</i> <i>PS: chaiah</i>	2416-2417	(if someone's) skin (esp. of his wrist/arm[!]) still 'works', there is: life in him; to live ⁴⁶
ז י ח	7 8	חַי	<i>chaiā</i> <i>Ar. cheiva'</i> <i>PS: chaiah</i>	2416 2423	flesh/meat with legs, living: animal, beast; living being
ז י ח	3 7 8	חַיָּה	<i>chaiah</i> <i>Ar. chaia'</i> <i>PS: chaiah</i>	2418 2421-2422	(see previous ones): to live (verb)
ז י ח	6 7 8	חַיִּל	<i>chayil</i>	2428-2429	to live like a leader / with the (wide) limits of the hand of a leader (what he can do): power, strength, might, wealth, riches, force
ח ח ח	7 7 8	חָכַם	<i>chākhām</i>	2449-2450	(acknowledge) the limits of our human powers / (seen as derived from <i>chaikhām</i>): to live like (people) with a raised hand (rulers & priests; clean): (to be) wise ⁴⁷
ז ח ח ח	3 7 7 8	חֻכְמָה	<i>chokh-māh</i>	2451-2452	(acknowledging and) celebrating the limitations (boundaries) of our human power: wisdom ⁴⁸
י י ח	5 4 6 8	חֲלוֹן	<i>challon</i>	2474	what looks like, or what comes forth from, a big and a small stick in a wall: window
ח ח	7 8	חָם	<i>cham</i>	2525-2527	wet (sweaty!) skin: warm, hot
ר ח ח	4 7 8	חֹמֶר	<i>chomer</i> <i>chēmar</i> ⁴⁹	2563-2564	tent cloth filled with the abundance (e.g. of grain) of the Other (God) container of ca 300 liter ; a boundary against water from the Other (e.g. making a house or ship watertight): mortar, bitumen, asphalt ; boundary (/ wall of a container) for water from the Other/other:
ח ח ח	7 7 8	חֶמֶת	<i>chēmet</i>	2573	thing of skin for water / skin that stops/contains water: waterskin

⁴⁶ Compare the usage of our word 'wrist' or 'pulse' in medical circles; as in: "without a pulse, someone is dead", or: "wrist?" - "okay".
Cf. also *Chinese*: 持 - *chi* - to live, 氣 - *Qi / khaiy* - (breath of) life

⁴⁷ Also -very basically-: the flesh blesses the water (that it needs so badly), as illustration of what is wise.

⁴⁸ See also the brief article: '[Wisdom](#)', here at the [Hallelu-YaH](#) website, April 2011.

Note the related Arabic words *حاکم* - *chākim* (ruler/lord) and *حکیم* - *chakīm* (wise man/physician).

⁴⁹ From this also: *חֲמֹר* [H2543] - *chamor* - donkey, or the (max.) load of a donkey in grain or other goods.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤁 III	𐤁 III	חנן	chen, chan, chanan	2580- 2581, 2603- 2604	(to touch) the skin of your (grand)children: to bow friendly ; life/vegetation at the border (of the desert): oasis (i.e. grace/surprise in the desert); crossing a boundary and still/yet get new life / being able to continue: grace ⁵⁰
𐤁𐤁 III	𐤁𐤁 III	חסד (خُصْد) (حُصْد)	chācad cheched	2616- 2617	to get/allow entrance behind the border around the Tree of Life (i.e. to give life) / [the role of] a palm tree (pillar/column) as door post (between wall and door; see at <i>wachad</i>) / <i>lit.</i> : to move the (stubborn!) 'skirt' of the sturdy palm tree: to relinquish stubbornness and to be loyal, faithful, kind; kindness, loyalty ⁵¹ / <i>piel</i> : to enter the tentwall of the palm-hut: to bow the head or neck ⇒ to be reproached; shame
𐤁𐤁𐤁 III	𐤁𐤁𐤁 III	חֲפָף	chāphaph	2653 cf. 2645 2348	a tent cloth over an opening / against wind: to cover, shelter
𐤁𐤁𐤁 III	𐤁𐤁𐤁 III	חסד חצד حُصْد	chāsad chatsad chatsad	vgl. 2673	to create a door in a wall of reed / to enter the wall or 'flesh' of the grain: to cut or mow it; to cut short, divide in two also fig.: to cut with sharp words
𐤁𐤁𐤁 III	𐤁𐤁𐤁 III	חוק	chōq	2706 cf. 2708	tent wall, set up with pins: safe limitation ⇒ limit, statute, ordinance, prescription
𐤁𐤁𐤁 III	𐤁𐤁𐤁 III	חרה	chārāh	2734	to worship God with flesh/meat: to burn, to set on fire (originally especially of a sacrifice/ offering) ⁵² , ⇒ also: to glow, grow warm, to blaze (of anger or jealousy)
		חרון	chārōn	2740 cf. 2734	what comes forth from <i>charah</i> : anger, heat, burning, fire
𐤁𐤁𐤁 III	𐤁𐤁𐤁 III	חשב	chāshabh	2803	the wall of a well (lit: the well-house) required: to design, to ponder, to invent, to plan, to count, to assess
𐤁𐤁𐤁 III	𐤁𐤁𐤁 III	חושן	choshen	2833	(extra) piece of cloth or a sheet or plate connected to the breast, in front of it: breastplate, ~-piece (part of the clothing of the high priest; this piece of cloth of the covenant brought symbolically the offspring of Israel forward to God)

⁵⁰ The notion of grace can also be understood from the symbols as: a protective tent panel (protecting against the hotly burning sun as well as the cold at night) for your offspring. It gives them room to play and to grow up, without burning alive.

⁵¹ Alternative explanations involve [to be welcomed] to enter into the palm-tree border [of a wealthy men's house] or into the [forbidden] zone around the Tree of Life; or: to bend the neck (nodding friendly towards a person of lower standing) as a doorpost (palm tree-like column between wall and door) was bent at the top, towards the one on the other side of the door.

⁵² Also the interpretation: 'to worship the appearance of God' (Who often appears in radiant fire!) is possible.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	טבל	tābal	2881	to surround the body of the leader / of the staff: to dip (in), to immerse
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	טבע ظبيغ	tāba' A: z.abagh	2883	to show the hull of the house/body (the sign on shields and rings): to impress a seal, to seal, to sink in
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	טהור ⁵³ טהר	tāher tāhor tehor tohar	2889- 2892	God is dressed in (surrounded by) light; hence: the 'hull'-to-be-worshipped connected to the Other: to shine, to be or to become bright, clean or pure
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	טוב	tobh	2896- 2898	surrounded by the security & belonging of home: good ⁵⁴
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	טוהי طوى	tāwāh A: tawa tawiya	2901 cf. 4299	to surround/wrap the tent pins in your hand: to roll together, to twist/spin, to wrap, to envelop, to conceal, to hide, to bury / to conceal or to feel the twisting of your tent pins (ribs, bones that have become visible): to be hungry, to fast
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	טול	tul	2904	surrounded by the tent pins of the leader: i.e. living in his house: to belong / i.e. (physically) lying on the ground: to prostrate / <i>hiphil</i> : to be thrown down
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	טוש	tus	2907	to surround / circle around the fronds of a palm tree: to flutter, to fly around
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	טל	tal	2919 2920	what surrounds the shepherd's staff: dew
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	יד	yad	3027- 3028	the open or moving (active, working, giving) hand ; also: branch
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	ידה היידה	yādāh huyedāh	3034 1960	moving one's hand in (/ He gives you to enter into) joyful adoration: worship ; also: to throw [oneself down]
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	ידיד	yedeed	3039 vgl. 1717, 1730	(with whom you walk/sit) hand-in-hand / in whom your '3 rd hand' goes in: beloved, lovely
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	יהב	yahābh	3052	providing joy at home / He gives the House of worship: to give, to provide, to come
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	יונה	yonah	3123- 3124	He gives connectedness (covenant w. God) to the offspring who worship: the Spirit (/messenger) of God, symbolized by a dove / pigeon ⁵⁵ - the hand on the tent pin, who worships seed
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	יחש	yāchas	3187	the branches/fronds in the 'skirt' of a palm tree show a clear historical sequence of 'generations' (often <i>hithpa'el</i>): to (be) register(ed) via geneaology
𐤁𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤁𐤁	ימן	jāmin PS: jamin Ak: imnu A: jamin	3231- 3233 cf. 4326 8486	the hand of abundance for your children: right hand, choose right, turn right (also: south)

⁵³ Cf. אור 'or – light. There are also associated words with *tsade* (shining of oil that is pressed out or rubbed on) or *zayin* (shining metal).

⁵⁴ Derived from this: יטב - *yātabh* – **He** gives that it is good: being prosperous.

⁵⁵ Think here also of the role of the dove in the history of Noah, that of Jesus, and the name of the prophet Jonah and his role for Ninevéh. The pigeon often visits (is connected with) places where many people gather.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
		יָסַר	yāsar	3256	the (swishing, thorny) branch/frond of the palm tree of the Other / God: to chastise, to correct, to instruct
		יָקַר	yāqar	3365	the hand that is raised towards God: to esteem, be worthy, be costly
		יָרָא	yārē' yir'ah	3372-3373 3374 cf. 7200	to give the other first / to work for the other first / to sue first for the hand of the other / He (God) sees [7200] ⁵⁶ / God gives prominently / God gives prominent joy/awe/life (in order that we will): to fear, to respect; fear, respect
		יָרָא יָרָא	yārāh	3384	see at wārāh
		יָרַח	jerach Jerach	3391 3392	he gives/leads God's tent canvas (i.e. the starry firmament): the (new) moon
		יָשַׁב وُثِبَ	jāshabh waṭaba	3427 vgl. 7673-7676	He gives the bulging / the fullness/satiation of your house: to sit, to live, to dwell, to settle (to prepare for marriage) to jump (enthusiastically) (Himyaritic: to sit)
		יָשַׁע	yāsha' yeshā'	3467-3468	to see the hand that comes forward / He gives a source/drink/food in sight: to save, to be saved, rescued; salvation, safety (drought was often the largest threat)
		יָשַׁר يَسِر	jāshar jēsher jāshār jasar jasira	3474-3477	the hand coming forward/upward from God: (being) upright, right, just the source of God close at hand: to level, leveled, to be even/level, to thrive/prosper, (to be/make) easy, to flourish, flourishing
		כֶּבֶשׂ	kebhes	3532	the blessing over one's house with life (as meat, cheese, wool and sacrifice): a ram, lamb or sheep
		כִּבְשָׁה	kibhsāh kabhsāh	3535	the blessing over one's house with life, for worship: an ewe (to sacrifice)
		כֹּהֵן	kohen	3548-3549	the blessing hand that lets worship continue / that leads your offspring in worship (towards new life): priest
		כֹּל	kol	3605 3606	the blessing hand of the Leader makes everything: complete, all, whole
		כָּלָה	kālāh	3615 3617	⇒ to complete, to finish, to end; completion, full end, termination
		כָּלָה	kallāh	3618	woman who makes you or your family complete: bride, daughter-in-law
		כֵּלִי	keliy	3628	makes your hand more complete: utensil, tool, article, vessel, implement, weapon, jewelry

⁵⁶ Compare that the name יִרְאִיָּה - Yir'i-yah (Irijah) (in Yirme-yahu / Jeremiah 37: 13-14) is explained by some dictionaries as 'fearful of Yah' (from yir'ah [3373]), by others as 'Yah sees me' (from ra'ah [7200]).

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
נל	𐤎	כָּנַף	<i>kānāph</i>	3671 3670	what comes forth from a hand and can displace air: wing (also used symbolically for a corner or flap of clothes, a part of a building, etc.); also (what that wing does with air): be pushed aside
נל	𐤎	כֶּסֶם כִּסֵּה כִּסֵּה כִּסֵּה	<i>kēs</i> <i>kissēh</i> <i>kissē'</i> <i>kāsāh</i>	3676 3677 3678 3680 cf. 5440 5521 5526 7900 7931	the blessing hand (of authority) of the palm tree, worshipping : the palm tree crown as throne of the Angel of YaHUaH: throne , and: royal dignity, power / also, in comparison: the (moon)light shining through that crown of palm fronds: feast of full moon / those palm fronds above or around you as clothing: to cover, to protect
נל	𐤎	כַּף	<i>kaph</i>	3709	the hand (of authority) open: palm of the hand / to bless with wind: [blow by waiving with] a palm leaf / frond
נל	𐤎	כְּרוּב	<i>kherub</i>	3742- 3743	the blessing hand of the Other (God) over the security of your house: cherub or angel
נל	𐤎	כָּרַת	<i>kārat</i>	3772 vgl. ook 3774	a sign of the blessing hand of God: to cut/ make (a covenant – often: by cutting animals to pieces and then sacrificing and/or consuming them, thus destroying those animals) ⁵⁷
נל	𐤎	כֶּשֶׁב	<i>kesebh</i>	3775	the blessing with life over one's house: a young sheep (also as a sacrifice)
נל	𐤎	כַּתָּב	<i>kātab</i>	3789- 3792	the authoritative hand signs the stone tablet / house/vase (/body/skin/parchment?): to write
נל	𐤎	לֹא	<i>lo'</i>	3808 3809	a shepherds staff in front of an ox: no, not, none, neither/nor
נל	𐤎	לֵאכָה	<i>lā'akh</i>	– vgl. 1980 3212 7993	the leader's first (i.e. right) hand of authority: command, to command, to send, to execute, to fulfill, to work, to serve, "forward!" ⁵⁸
נל	𐤎	לֵב	<i>lebh</i> ⁵⁹	3820- 3821	the leader of our 'earthly tent' (body): (physical) heart / the leader inside: (spiritual) heart ⁶⁰
נל	𐤎	לָבָן	<i>lāban</i>	3835	what comes forth from / looks like a house of a leader (the stone houses of leaders were often chalked shining white to keep heat out): (shining) white, noble, to make stones Spiritually also : coming forth from the house of the Leader (after offering sacrifice) one is: clean, pure ⇒ to purify, cleanse

⁵⁷ See e.g. Genesis 15: 18 – God's covenant making with Abraham, for which A. had cut/hewn a couple of animals, each in two.

⁵⁸ This is a nice example to illustrate the frequent omission of certain letters – here the א. Fürst denotes that לָאֵךְ must be seen as root of לָלֵךְ [1980] – to go, to walk, to come, לָלֵךְ [3212] – to walk, and לָשֵׁלֵךְ [7993] – to throw, and even of לָשֵׁלֵךְ [7971] – to send (supposing confusion between א and soft כ). See also the footnote on *mal'akh*.

⁵⁹ In Sumerian: *libbu*.

⁶⁰ According Giovanni Semerano this, that is: the corresponding Akkadian word *libbu*, is the basis of the German word *Liebe*, Latin *lubens*, and the English *love*.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤀𐤌𐤍	𐤀𐤌𐤍	למד	<i>lāmad</i> ⁶¹	3925	the shepherd provides a lot of movement/exercise / lots of (guidance by) shepherd's rods to enter: to train, to learn, training
𐤏𐤀𐤌𐤍	𐤏𐤀𐤌𐤍	מועדה	<i>mow'ed</i> <i>mo'ed</i>	4150-4151	to see the abundance of the covenant and to enter into worship / to see many tent pins (men?) move (because many went up with their tents to a central place) to worship: feast, feast time (of YaHUAh, for a holy, festive gathering), appointed place
𐤏𐤍	𐤏𐤍	מוץ	<i>mutš</i>	4160 cf. 4671	to press hard with a stick: to suppress, suppressor (also: to thresh / to husk grain)
𐤏𐤍	𐤏𐤍	מלא מלא מלא	<i>mālē'</i> <i>mālā'</i> <i>melā'</i>	4390-4392 (4393 - 4396)	the abundance of the shepherd for his oxen: to (ful)fill, to make full, be satisfied; full
𐤏𐤍	𐤏𐤍	מלח ملح	<i>mālach</i> <i>melach</i> A: <i>malacha</i> <i>milch</i>	4414-4417	water at the shepherd's skin: [sweat], salt, to salt, to rub in with salt, evaporate, to rub to powder, also: attractive
𐤏𐤍	𐤏𐤍	מלח ملح	<i>mallāch</i> A: <i>mallāch</i>	4419	a leader / man with water at his own? skin: sailor, mariner, seaman
𐤏𐤍	𐤏𐤍	מלך	<i>mālakh</i> <i>melekh</i> PS: <i>malik</i> Ak: <i>maliku</i> A: <i>malik</i>	4427-4429	powerful leader with raised hand of authority (who has everything under his hand/control / who can bless all): king; (to start) to reign as king or queen ⁶²
𐤏𐤍	𐤏𐤍	מן	<i>mān</i>	4478	an abundance of seed/wheat/grain / an abundance that makes life continue: man(na) ⁶³
𐤏𐤍	𐤏𐤍	מנורה מנורה	<i>menorāh</i>	4501	bearing lamps (as light-bearers - cf. 5135 & 215) / bringing forth life from God, for worship: (the great tabernacle/temple lampstand) Menorah ⁶⁴

⁶¹ *Lamadu* in Sumerian.

⁶² Not to be confused with מלאך *mal'akh*: **deputy, messenger or servant** (also: **angel**) – possibly from לאך *la'akh* - to go / to walk – see there and also at *hālakh*; (and/or from מלא - *male' / melo'* (4390-3) - make full, fullness - literally: 'abundance/water from the Leader/Shepherd, the First' (cf. Ex.40:34; Isa.6:1); also related to: מלה (4405-6) - *millah* - word, speech, expression). Compare מלאכיה *Mal'akhi-Yah* or מלאכי *Mal'akhi* - Malachi the prophet, a special kind of messenger of YaH, the Most High.

⁶³ The old signs can also be interpreted as: water/liquid for kids. That reminds of mother's milk. The taste of the *manna* appears to affirm this association. Numbers 11: 8 says that the taste was like לשד הששמן - *leshad hashshāmen*; literally: *to the breast - fat/liquid*; or, a little free: *fat juice* (the Jewish Publ. Soc. translation has: 'rich cream'). Rabbi Abraham H. Gottesman indeed relates it to breast feeding and to God's promise of 'milk and honey' (natural mother's milk has twice the sugar contents of goat's milk as known then) (see: Abraham H. Gottesman, 'Milk and Honey', *Jewish Bible Quarterly*, Vol.22, No.3, July 1994; p.187-189; compare also the metaphor Moses used in Numbers 11:12; and compare Yesha-yahu / Isaiah 7: 15, where mother's milk is characterised as *chemah u debash*, mostly translated as: butter and honey). What a wonderful image of God's motherly care for His people!

⁶⁴ See also the articles-series on the palmtree and the Menorah at this [Hallelu-YaH website](#). In an extensive study of the word מנורה, C. Houtman notes: "It is argued that as to its shape, the lampstand was based on the iconographically attested tree of life, and that as to its function it was primarily a 'tree' and secondarily a light holder, symbol of YHWH's approachability and powerful presence in the aniconic sanctuary. ... The shape of the tree might have been picked because the presence of the tree of life turns the sanctuary into a kind of paradise and also conveys the idea that the resident is the owner of the tree of life (Gen. 2:9; 3:24). More weight, however, might be attached to the fact that the tree was a specific place where theophanies happened (Gen. 12:6f.; 18:1; Judg. 6:11, 19, and see also 2 Sam. 5:24). That suggests the possibility that the form of a tree was chosen as an invitation to YHWH to manifest himself right there, in the sanctuary (cf. Gen. 21:33). Besides, the symbolism associated with the tree makes it fitting that the lampstand, the

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
		מִנְחָה	minchah	4503	what comes forth from meat for worship: (meat)offering, sacrifice, tribute, gift
		מַעְשֵׂר	ma'asēr ma'asar	4643	coming forth from / seeing the abundance of the palm tree of God (that is so rich, then you want to give/share a): 'tithe'/'tenth'/gift
		מוֹץ	mots	4671 cf. 4160	the majority of the grain stem (dehydrated): straw, chaff, husks (of grain)
		מַצָּה	matsāh	4682	plain bread, made from water and grain (only, without yeast or sourdough) to live from / enjoy: matzo
		מִצְוָה	mitswāh	4687	what comes from grain connected/gathered as in sheaves to ripen in/to worship (worshipping & thanking God for a rich harvest, think of Shabhuot): what you do when united/ bound together in worship; being set up (to let one's fruit ripen), instruction, commandment
		מִצֵּץ	matsats	4711 cf. 4160	water extruded from plants: to suck, to drain out, to squeeze
		מֵרָאָה מִרְאָה	mar'eh mar'ah	4758 4759	coming forth from <i>rā'āh</i> - to see. cf. [7200-04]: vision, to see ; also: mirror ⁶⁵ (side-asociations: having worshipped the Other much / putting the abundance of the Other at the 1 st place leads to ~)
		מִשְׁפָּט	mishpāt	4941 vgl. 8199	cover over or fence around the opening of a water well (boundary for safety): judgment, decision, regulation, ordinance, right, privilege, fitting, protecting measure
		נָגַע	nāga'	5060- 5061	the sequel to go and see: to touch (a.o. Gen.3:3)
		נוּחַ	nuwach	5118	the result of secured boundaries (tent walls with tent pins & lines): rest / resting place
		נֹר נֹר	nur	5135 (5216)	what comes forth from light (/attachment to God; cf. 'or): to light, illuminate, flower, shine / what comes forth from God's proximity: fire (cf. אֹר <i>'or</i> - light, and נֵיר [5214] - lamp ⁶⁶)
		נָזַר	nāzar nāzir	5139 5144	coming forth from finding God valuable: to devote oneself to God, to separate oneself; someone who is specially devoted to God: Nazarite
		נֵין	nin	5209	what comes forth from semen/seed from the male <i>jad</i> : offspring, posterity
		נֶכֶס	nekas	5232 5233 vgl. 3676	what comes forth from the blessing fronds of the palm tree (cf. <i>kēs</i>): dates, riches, goods, materials, treasures

primary function of which is to spread light, should be in the form of a tree. After all, the life it symbolises owes its existence to light. The oil is its sap and the lights are its flowers and fruits."

Source: C. Houtman, 'מִנְחָה – lampstand', in: [Database – Utensils in the Hebrew Bible](#), online resource, Het Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap (OTW; Old Testament Workgroup), 2010-2011.

⁶⁵ Traditionally seen as derived from the verb *ra'ah* [7200] - to see. However, remarkable is the likeness to the Akkadian *amāru* – to see, find, meet, get to know, read, appear (be visible) (*Akkadian Dict.*, Univ. Chicago, p. 5-27; cf. also Arabic *مَرَأَى* - *mar'an* - viewpoint, vision and *'amma* - to see). Possibly *mar'ah* is closer to the original form than *ra'ah*. The first a-sound in both (the second, long *ā* in Akkadian) could point to an original *'ajin*, as denoted light grey in the old Semitic form.

⁶⁶ That originally it was here נֹר also, we recognize e.g. in the word מְנוֹרָה - *menorah* [4501] - many lamps for worship. Also already in Sumerian: *nuru* = light.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤁𐤍	𐤁𐤍	נס	<i>nēs</i> (<i>nace</i>)	5251 cf. 5264	made after [the example of] a palm tree: flag, flag pole, pole, standard, banner
𐤁𐤍𐤁	𐤁𐤍𐤁	נער	<i>na'ar</i>	5288 5290 5271	child who [is no longer focused on itself but] sees an other person [and helps]: boy, lad, servant
𐤁𐤍𐤁	𐤁𐤍𐤁	נפש نفس	<i>nāphash</i> <i>nephesh</i> <i>A: nafs</i>	5314- 5315	new life blown into your breast: to breathe; breath, soul
𐤁𐤍	𐤁𐤍	נץ	<i>nēts</i>	5322	comes forth from the plant: flower, bird (especially: falcon, sparrow-hawk)
𐤁𐤍𐤁	𐤁𐤍𐤁	נצח	<i>netsach</i>	5332	what comes forth from pressing the flesh of a plant or fruit: juice
𐤁𐤍𐤁	𐤁𐤍𐤁	נצר	<i>nātsar</i>	5341	someone who looks like a plant of God (because he stands/sits still): watchman
𐤁𐤍𐤁	𐤁𐤍𐤁	נצר	<i>nētsar</i>	5342	what comes forth from a plant of God: sprout, shoot, branch
𐤁𐤍𐤁	𐤁𐤍𐤁	נקיא	<i>nāqiy</i>	5355	new life with raised hands (cf. 1 Tim.2:8) (what comes forth from offering up an ox in fire): clean, blameless, innocent
𐤁𐤍𐤁	𐤁𐤍𐤁	נשא נסה	<i>nāsā'</i> <i>nāsāh</i>	5375- 5376	to honor/rejoice in the fruits of the palm tree: to carry, support, pi'el: to lift, bear up, exalt, richly laden, to honor/rejoice in new life via the palm tree (Tree of Life): spare, forgive, accept
𐤁𐤍𐤁	𐤁𐤍𐤁	נשר	<i>nesher</i>	5403 5404	coming forth from the source (clouds) of the Other (God): eagle, vulture ⁶⁷
𐤁𐤍𐤁	𐤁𐤍𐤁	נתן	<i>nātan</i>	5414- 5416 cf. 4976	sign of life for your offspring/children / what comes forth from a sign/thing to your children (cf. also <i>yahāb</i>): to give; giver ⁶⁸
𐤁𐤍𐤁	𐤁𐤍𐤁	סוכך שוכך	<i>sobek</i>	5441 7730	palm tree fronds that bless your house: interlace of palm fronds
𐤁𐤍𐤁	𐤁𐤍𐤁	סבך	<i>sābak</i>	5440	verb from <i>sobek</i> [5441]: to braid, to twine, to weave together
𐤁𐤍𐤁	𐤁𐤍𐤁	סין cf. שן / שן سن	<i>siyn</i> <i>PS: shin /</i> <i>cin / tsin</i> <i>A: sinn,</i> <i>sanna</i>	5512, 5515	what remains left (big on the tree trunk, or small in one's skin) of a branch/frond of a palm tree: a thorn, spike, tooth, tusk, point/spike; verb: to sharpen

⁶⁷ Alternative interpretation: what comes after the eating by the other: (the leftovers and) the bird of prey coming to eat those leftovers.

⁶⁸ Probably this word is adopted from **Sumerian** (hence the meaning does not follow so clearly from the symbols?). However, it is remarkable that it meant there *to receive* ... See Matthias Ifejika, '[The Biblical Exegesis: Does "natan" mean give or receive?](#)', at [Academia.edu](#), 26 June 2014.

Very nicely illustrated in the old representation I find: God's ultimate gift of new life via the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God's Son. In that we are the recipients of that great grace...

⁶⁹ In the Middle East there are more plants and trees with thorns, so an original with *tsade* is well possible as well, regarded the uncertainty about the first letter of the Proto-Semitic form as observed by the experts. Because of West-Chadic (language group in N-Africa, related to Semitic) **sin** (with *samekh*) - sharp point, tooth or sharp, I expect that the form based on the palm tree is the original one.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
		סכה סכך שכך שוך	sukkāh sākāh sākak sok	5521 5526, 7900 vgl. 7931	a palm tree's blessing hand / worship the blessing (hand) of (being) under palm fronds: sukkah (hut; pl. sukkot ⁷⁰), tent, tabernacle, pavilion / to weave together, to build, to cover, to shelter
		סמל	semel	5566 cf 8071	the majestic palm tree [as example for] many leaders: statue, idol
		סנסן	sansin	5577	what comes out of (/ seed of) a date tree: bough or fruit-stalk of a date tree (SoS.7:8)
		סעד	sā'ad	5582- 5583	a palm tree which (as pillar/doorpost) looks after the door or (with ghajin) which envelops the door / a palm tree – see it move (only the leaves, the trunk remains sturdy): to stay/ sustain (also by cooling w. palm-fans); steady; to support
		ספק	sāphaq	5606	blowing [wind] by moving palm leaves up and down / in a storm wind the leaves slap wildly: to slap, clap, splash
		ספר	sāphar sep̄har sēpher	5608- 5613	the palm tree (that is the physical representation of the) mouth of God: script, to write, to count, book, scroll, writer, accountant ⁷¹
		סרה	sārach serach	5628- 5629	the palm tree's 'other skin' (the old palm fronds/ leaves forming a wide skirt around the trunk) ⁷² / a wide garment ('skin') of palm leaves, worn by some foreign people? / the flesh of a sar - a prince (high person): to overhang, exceed, go free, be unrestrained, grow luxuriously
		סתר סתרה סתר סתר	sēter sitrāh sātar setar	5641- 3	palm tree construction of the other/Other: shed, shelter, cover ⇒ to hide (⇒ to be not seen, to destroy) ⁷³

⁷⁰ Note that from early on **Sukkoth** is the big festival of the **light** (and of water/abundance). The light atop the big seven-armed **Menorah** (itself a picture of a palm tree) in the temple symbolized the presence of God there. For more details on this: see the discourse on *seneh/senah* under the discussion of the *sin/samekh*, the articles-series: 'The Palm tree in the Bible' (1), (2), (3), (4), and the article: 'The great golden Menorah', all at this Hallelu-YaH site, January 2012. Compare also Jesus' statement: „I am The Light of the World!“ (John 8: 12).

⁷¹ Derived from this is ספיר - *sappir* / *sapphire* [5601] (*lapis lazuli*), the precious stone and the heavenly blue color of it. This gem and color were often associated with God and His throne (Exodus 24: 10; Ezekiel 1: 26; 10: 1; cf. Revelation 21: 19 – the appearance of the second foundation of the heavenly Jerusalem).

⁷² The same idea is apparently at the root of סרין – what comes forth/ remains from the fronds of the 'other palm tree' (i.e. not the date, but the one on coast lines) – a 'skin' or 'armour' around the tree, with lots of razor-sharp and/or spiky edges – see [this page about palm tree pruning](#) for a video.

⁷³ By the way, I find it remarkable that **the palm tree sign of God** (think of my explanation of the *seneh*, with the discussion of the *samekh*) got **hidden (covered up)** 2500 years ago and **remained like that all those ages...**

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤁𐤅𐤇	𐤁𐤅𐤇	עבד	'abhad	5647	to see to the tent/house & the door / to see to all movement in/of the tent/house: to serve (another) / to work
𐤁𐤅𐤇	𐤁𐤅𐤇	עבר	'ābhar	5674 vgl. 5679	(when you arrive in a valley to let your sheep graze there and) see (there) the tent of an other person: to pass over/by/through/ beyond, to cross over
𐤁𐤅𐤇	𐤁𐤅𐤇	עבר	'ēbher 'abhar ghēbher?	5675-5677 vgl. 5680-5684	to see (but not being able to reach directly) the (or, with <i>ghayin</i> : the surrounded, i.e. not visible) tent of another person: region beyond or across
𐤁𐤅𐤇	𐤁𐤅𐤇	עדה עדות	'ēd 'ēdāh 'ēdut	5707 5713 5715	to see the going in and out: witness; to witness; testimony, evidence
𐤁𐤅	𐤁𐤅	עד	'ēd	5708	what is seen, coming out (or, with <i>ghayin</i> : what covers the entrance): menstruation , ⁷⁴ soiling
𐤁𐤅𐤇	𐤁𐤅𐤇	עדן	'eden	5727-5731	to see the movement of one's children/off-spring / to see the open door of one's children (so, to live close and have a good relationship) to see the door to life: a delight, joy, loveliness
𐤁𐤅𐤇	𐤁𐤅𐤇	עוד عود	'ud	5749	the seen (big) 'pin' of the door (on which the door hinges) / see the pin move/ enter into the ground: stick, rod, pole, stem, trunk, stalk, switch, twig, branch; cane, reed; aloes, wood; also: lute (5000 year old musical instrument! <i>lute</i> via Spanish: <i>laúd</i> , from العود - <i>al-'ud</i> ; i.e. incl. the particle!) ⁷⁵ (cf. עיד - festival); ⇒ also: body, build, physique; strength, force, intensity; ⇒ also: to see the stick move: to admonish, go about, return, repeat, do again
𐤁𐤅𐤇	𐤁𐤅𐤇	עזר	'ēzer, 'āzar	5826-5828	he sees (timely) the weapon of the other / he looks after the tools/weapons/valuables/ olive oil of the other: help (servant), support; to help, to protect
𐤁𐤅𐤇	𐤁𐤅𐤇	עין	'ayin PS: 'ain Ak: inu Egypt: 'in	5869-5870	(to have) an eye for the hands of one's kids / to see to and work on the seed: eye, to see, to look after (also: insight, to know)
𐤁𐤅𐤇	𐤁𐤅𐤇	עלה	'ālāh	5927	look at the Leader and worship Him: to go up (to the temple in Jerusalem, where God 'lived') / look after the Leader, worship Him: to offer / offering of sacrifice
𐤁𐤅𐤇	𐤁𐤅𐤇	עֲלָף ⁷⁶	ghālaph	5968	to cover a stick in an opening: to veil, to cover
𐤁𐤅𐤇	𐤁𐤅𐤇	עם	'am	5971-5972 (5973)	to see many; 'seen' (i.e. big) quantity/mass: people, tribe, nation, multitude
𐤁𐤅𐤇	𐤁𐤅𐤇	עמר	ghomer ('omer)	6016	hull for the abundance of the Other (God): measure for grain, or grain sheaf

⁷⁴ The vagina is more often compared to a door(opening), see also *wāda' / jāda'* [3045].

⁷⁵ [Wikipedia](#) says: "The origin of the name **oud** (and its etymological cousin, lute) for the musical instrument is uncertain, but the Arabic العود (*al-'ūd*) refers literally to a thin piece of wood similar to the shape of a straw, and may refer to the wooden plectrum traditionally used for playing the oud, to the thin strips of wood used for the back, or to the wooden soundboard that distinguished it from similar instruments with skin-faced bodies. ... A plectrum called a *risha* is used to play the oud."

⁷⁶ Arabic: *ghallafa*, Akkadian: *ghalāpu*, Ugaritic: *GhLP*. So, the 'ayin really clearly is *ghayin* here! This word strongly confirms the meaning of the *ghayin*.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
		ענה	'ānāh	6030 6032	see to your children becoming joyful / will worship/ show respect: to answer ⁷⁷ , to humble / seeing your offspring makes you worship (God Who blessed you so): humble earth on which you see that your children dance: to tread down/flat
		ענן	'anan	6050- 6051 / 6049	to look after your offspring (and so, to protect them against the sun by a cover) / (protect) the eyes of your children (or, with <i>ghayin</i> : to cover your children or seed): to cover / to cloud, a cloud / to look at your children's children (i.e. into the future): soothsaying, magic
		עץ	'ets ⁷⁸	6086 6097	a seen (i.e. big) plant: tree
		עֲקֵב עֲקֵבָה	'āqēb 'iqqēbāh	6119	what sees to the rising of one's body (at every step): heel (/ Achilles tendon / hamstring) ⁷⁹
		עֶרֶב	'ārab	6150	to look out for or to cover the other coming home: evening, sundown, getting dark ⁸⁰
		עֵרֶר	'aroēr	6176	"the eye of the other, the eye of the other!" or: "they see me" (says someone who is) naked
		עָרַר	'ārar	6209	make visible for other(s): to strip, make bare, strip oneself
		עָשָׂה	'āsāh	6213	"see how (even) (or: see to it, that ...) the palm tree worships (producing fruit between its fronts)!": to do / accomplish / make (something), to act, to celebrate
		פֶּה	pēh ⁸¹	6310 cf. 639	air opening by which to live and worship: mouth
		פֹּט	put	6316	opening that 'encircles' an arrow: shooting bow
		פֹּת deriv: פתה	put, poth	6596	opening/hole in which a pin ends: socket/ opening/hole in which the hinging pole/pin of a door moves, female pudenda, etc.
		פֶּסַח	Pesach pāsach	6452 6453	an opening in the fence around the Tree of Life / in the veil before the Holy of Holies (left of the Menorah / golden palm tree): Pascha; to give new life; / (as this is impossible to us!): to be lame ⁸²

⁷⁷ Think of it that in Israel – according the *Torah* – children had to ask questions about what God had done, and the parents then had to answer by giving testimony. This was meant to lead to joy and worship.

⁷⁸ In Sumerian: 𒄠 - *giš* of *geš* [gitsh/getsh] – tree, lumber. The g-like sound at the beginning of this gives the impression that the 'ayin may have been originally the variant *ghayin* here. In Akkadian a.o. *ets*, *itsu*.

⁷⁹ Compare Aramaic ܫܩ - *shaq* – the source (ש) of the raising (ק): the lower leg.

⁸⁰ See also a discussion of many variants of this root, at the end.

⁸¹ *Pu* in Sumerian and Akkadian.

⁸² See the series of short articles on *Pesach*: [Pesach \(1\)](#), [\(2\)](#) and [\(3\)](#), at this 𐤄 Hallelu-YaH site, april 2012.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
		פקד فقد	<i>pāqad</i> ⁸³ A: <i>faqada</i> Ak: <i>paqādu</i>	6485	to open and let light enter / to blow a [lighting] fire higher: to light(en); to visit, to pay attention to, to discover
		פקוד	<i>piqqud</i>	6490 cf. 6485	⇒ what has been laid open / enlightened, what is to be paid attention to: precept, statue, instruction, directive, direction(s)
		פרדס	<i>pardes</i>	6508	open spot where the Other (God) gave entrance to the Tree of Life: paradise ⁸⁴
		פרה	<i>pārāh</i>	6509 cf. 6529	the mouth of the other rejoices / to rejoice in the speaking of the Other (God) / to rejoice in the opening that the Other (God) gives: to bear fruit, to be fruitful
		פרח فرح فرج	<i>pārach</i> <i>farrach</i> <i>faraja</i> Ak: <i>parāchu</i>	6524- 6525	an opening in an other's skin/boundary: to bud, sprout, shoot, bloom / to open, part, separate, cleave / an opening in the Other's (God's) fence/ boundary (cf. <i>Pesach</i>): joy, gladness
		פרס	<i>pāras</i> ⁸⁵	6536- 6537	the opening of the Other (God) to the Tree of Life (got separated/inaccessible): to divide, break in two
		פרש	<i>peresh</i> <i>pārāsh</i> ⁸⁶	6567- 6571	what comes forward from an opening of the other: excrements, dung, gore, offal ⇒ to separate, scatter, divide; ⁸⁷ to declare, distinguish, make distinct, specify; to wound, to cut, to pierce, sting, bite (as of a snake, with venom); a draught-horse
		פתח	<i>pātach</i> <i>petach</i>	6605- 6608 6610	opening, constructed in a wall: doorway, opening, entrance; to open; also: to engrave

⁸³ Can also be interpreted as: an opening that rises/ goes up, or: in which the sun goes up, becoming a door: offering access to what is inside. From there as well the original meaning is: to lay open, to bring light into, to look well at. The notion of 'to lighten' (shortened to פד - *p-d*) we see again in what literally might be called a 'light stick': a torch: לֶפֶד - *lappid*.

The equivalent Akkadian *paqādu* stands for meanings like: 'to care for', 'to entrust something to someone', 'to exert oneself' (source: *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, Oriental Institute, Chicago IL, USA, 1956-2006; ISBN 0 918986 05 2; Part 12 (2005), p.115-129). And the Arabic *faqada* means: to see something, to research, inspect or to miss / have lost. All this supports the interpretation 'to pay attention to', and definitely not the *later* Rabbinic-Judaist (traumatized/distrusting) interpretation 'to punish', which some translations employ.

⁸⁴ The *Jewish Encyclopedia* gives in its explanation of 'Paradise' some valuable background info with regard to paradise and the role of the Tree of Life (looking like the date palm) in it. See there also under 'Tree of Life'.

⁸⁵ Probably related (loanword? common origin?) to Sumerian: *parasu* – to cut, to tear apart. In Akkadian: *parāsu* – to stop, to cut off, to tap off, to divide, to sift out / unravel (also: *parsu* – to divide, separate, dissociate; *parrasu* – one half, and *parātsu* (with *tsade*) – to break an oath / to lie, to breach; source: *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, Oriental Institute, Chicago IL, USA, 1956-2006; ISBN 0 918986 05 2; Part 12 (2005), p.165-195).

⁸⁶ The Akkadian had already *parshu* - excrement(s), gore (concerning the latter, cf. *parishtu* - a post-menopause woman; and *parāsu* in the sense of stopping the bleeding; source: *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, Oriental Institute, Chicago IL, USA, 1956-2006; ISBN 0 918986 05 2; Part 12 (2005), p.187, 205-206). The word appears there, as in the Bible, especially in the context of slaughtering animals for sacrifice.

The name of the Pharisees פְּרוּשִׁים - *perushim*, was derived from the verb *pārāsh*.

⁸⁷ Concerning the meaning 'to divide' confusion with *pāras* may have played a role.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤊𐤍	𐤅𐤁	צָב	<i>tsābh</i>	– 6632	originally: a reed hut/house/tent; later: a tent for shelter, a roof, a sedan, a canopy
𐤊𐤍𐤁	𐤅𐤁𐤁	צָבָא	<i>tsābhā'</i> 88	6633 6635	what they used to do with reed for a house: to collect, gather or bring together (a great mass); to be assembled, joined together; a multitude/assembly of things or people
𐤊𐤍	𐤅𐤁	צָד	<i>tsad</i> As. <i>tsaddu</i>	6654	to enter the grain or wheat: to push it aside; side; also: to enter into a rope of reed-fibers: to catch (encircle) in a trap, snare or net
𐤊𐤍𐤁𐤁	𐤅𐤁𐤁𐤁	צָדוֹק צָדִיק	<i>tsādoq</i> <i>tsādaq</i> <i>tsedeq</i> <i>tsaddiq</i>	6659- 6664	to grow straight upward (upright; directed at the sun and shining like gold/fire in the sun) like a reed or wheat plant (cf. Mat.13:43): upright, righteous ⁸⁹
𐤊𐤍𐤁𐤁 𐤊𐤍𐤁𐤁	𐤅𐤁𐤁𐤁 𐤅𐤁𐤁𐤁	צָהַל צָהַר	<i>tsāhal</i> <i>tsāhar</i> <i>tsohar</i>	6671- 6672 cf. 6693	to extrude (a substance for) worship out of something else: to press out oil / to rub such extruded oil onto another: do glisten / when all and everybody glistens like that in the brightest sunlight: noon
𐤊𐤍𐤁𐤁	𐤅𐤁𐤁𐤁	צָוָה	<i>tsāv /</i> <i>tsav</i> , <i>tsāvāh</i> ⁹⁰	6673 6680	to collect lots of grain stalks or reed and sticks (for a house) in sheaves (to ripen/dry); to arrange, to set up, to establish, to order, to delegate, to give power over, to appoint, to command, to charge, to constitute enjoin
𐤊𐤍𐤁𐤁	𐤅𐤁𐤁𐤁 𐤅𐤁𐤁𐤁	צָוַץ צִיצַת	<i>tsuts /</i> <i>tsits</i>	6692 / 6732	to come forward (extrude) on all sides from a stick in the ground (plant) or from some of its branches: to blossom, shine / flower ⁹¹

⁸⁸ Also צָבָא. Cf. Proto-Semitic *tsub* - tribe. Fürst (p. 1179) gives also צָבָא - *tsoba'* - “plantation, establishment, settlement”. See also his reference to the root צָב in his note on צָוָה - *tsāvāh* [6680] (below). On p. 1174 (see also p. 1172) he gives צָבָת - *tsābat* – “to bind together”, and as *tsebet*: “a sheaf, a bundle”, which all confirm my theory.

⁸⁹ Also: to press the door-pin (hinge, lock) up, so that the door works properly or so that God can enter. The righteousness of Abraham is illustrated in this word as well, as he moved the tent pins, by hand, upward, extruding them (from home ground) – to go and leave (extrude from home) in answer to God’s call. And as the Papyrus with the stick (the Scripture scrolls) went round, to act upliftingly.

⁹⁰ This deals with organizing / arranging the grain harvest or the harvest of reed for building houses, with many people. Fürst (p. 1180; see also p. 1172) notes on צָוָה – *tsāvāh* [6680]: “prop. to establish, to erect, to set up, proceeding from the fundamental signification to join firmly together, to put closely together (into one), to close or wind together, closely connected in its organic root צָוָה with צָב (צָבָב). ... Hence 1. ... to erect, set up ... 2. ... to settle, to appoint, to constitute, to give definite directions, to arrange; ...” (emphasis and underlining mine). In his further explanation of the meaning in various specific cases, what stands out is the central theme of arranging, partly by delegating power, to set up something great by unified effort.

⁹¹ Did you ever think of a *tsiytsit* (6734) as a sign of flourishing (before God)? That is what it most literally is! See also the article on the *Tsitsit* at this Hallelu-YaH site, april 2012.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
		צוּק	<i>tsuq</i>	6693-6695	to press (as for extruding oil) by hammering (up and down) with a stick or to squeeze by winding like around a stick: to press, to oppress, to constrain / to press/pour out
		צָחַק	<i>tsāchaq</i>	6711-6712	to lighten/raise the pressure (tension) in one's muscles/skin: to laugh, to sport
		צִיר	<i>tsir</i>	6735	pressed by the hand of God: hard stone with a hole in it, used as a pivot/socket stone for a door in which it turned on persons: inner pain pressed by the hand of another: messenger, delegate, ambassador
		צמא	<i>tsāme'</i>	6670-6673	when the water you (person or land or...) first had is all extruded, you become: thirsty / when you are thirsty you have to extrude some water out of something first (to survive)
		צמח	<i>tsāmach tsemach</i>	6779-6780	extrudes like water (sweat) from one's skin: sprout, shoot, growth (esp. of plants)
		צר	<i>tsar/ tsār</i>	6862	(like papyrus) being oppressed by an other/ the Other: in distress, narrow, oppressor
		קבב קבה	<i>qab qābab qēbāh qubbāh</i>	6894-6898	arched (like the sun goes round) house/ tent: dome, arch, vaulted tent ⇒ stomach/ belly, vessel (as dry measure) ? from a collapsing dome?: curse
		קבר קברה	<i>qeber qibrāh</i>	6913	to ascend to the house of God: to die ⇒ grave, tomb
		קדד	<i>qad qādad</i> <i>Akk.: qadādu</i> ⁹² <i>quddudu</i>	6915	to enter like the rising sun (low!) / to move up and down (like an old tent door): to bow down (and come up again)
		קדוש (קודש) قدوس	<i>qādash, qādash, qodesh, qiddush, qadusa, qaddūs, quds</i> ⁹³	6918 6922 6942-6947 4720	the rising sun enters and comes forward (it penetrates): radiant, glorious, bright light go up [i.e. to a pure well] and bow down to (have yourself/something) enter into a secure well: to bath/ cleanse/ purify ⇒ / be subjected to (bowed down before and connected to) the Source (God Almighty) holy, to consecrate, to hallow, pure, glorious, shining bright ⁹⁴

⁹² Whether in **Akkadian** this is even related to *qadû* – to pay attention to (bow oneself over it?, let light enter into it?), is not completely clear.

⁹³ Compare also: **Arabic**: *quds, qadusa*, **Akkadian**: *qudushu, qadāshu*; there a *qudāshu* was a kind of wedding ring (a ring, worn by women as sign of being married); also: *quddushu* - holy, pure; and *qushshudu* - to cleanse, purify.

⁹⁴ In the root קדוש there is both the aspect of cleansing and of setting apart for the service to God. Though the word itself does not appear there, I see the notion clearly illustrated in Numbers 8: 5-22.

The interpretation of the old symbols is not completely clear (yet). The interpretation 'radiant/shining', based on: light (as of the rising sun) that, moving and becoming stronger, comes forward / radiates from the inside out, is partly based on how God Himself in His holyness radiates with the glorious light in which He is enrobed. Christ sanctifies (and cleanses) His Bride such that she will be glorious/dignified/worthy (and without spot or wrinkle, respectively) – Ephesians 5: 25-27; Revelations 19: 6-8. Alternative interpretations are e.g.: fire connected to the Source (?), spiritually: to let the rising sun / Morningstar enter into your heart (?).

From the physical interpretation: to enter (going up and down) into a couple of breasts (a woman), we see the meaning: '(male temple-) prostitute' [6945]. The female Canaanite idol called by this name, was often depicted, pushing her breasts upward (very literal physical interpretation: upward movement of the breasts). Note that even this involved a certain pride (*supposed* dignity).

(continued)


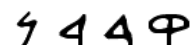











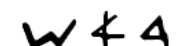

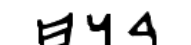


Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤑𐤕𐤔	𐤒𐤕𐤔	קוהל	<i>qāhal</i>	6950	the upward 'line' / the circle to worship our Leader: our gathering/assembly; to gather
𐤕	𐤕	קו	<i>qā / qo / qav / qāv / qāweh</i>	6957 6961	what rises/goes up from the tent pin is a: guy-rope ; also: measuring rope, line (cf. מקום - <i>maqum</i> [cf. Yiddish <i>Mokum</i>] - city: a place where many lines come together)
𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤕	קוה	<i>qoāh / qāwāh</i>	6960	celebrating/remembering the upward line (in one's life): to hope, expect also: let a rope 'live' (create it, use it): to turn, to bind ⇒ (if you can do that): being strong
𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤕	קול	<i>qol</i>	6963	the 'line' from our Leader (to us and v.v.): voice ; with such an upward line there is a lightness in our life
𐤕𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤕𐤕	קום	<i>qoam / quwm</i>	6965- 6966	many guy-ropes: to erect, to stand up (cf. מקום - <i>maqum</i> [Jiddish: <i>mokum</i>]: a place where many houses are erected: city ⁹⁵)
𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕	קטר قتر قطر קטר קטורה	<i>qātar qitter</i> <i>Ak: qatār</i> <i>A: qatara</i> <i>qutār</i> <i>PS: qutr</i> <i>qetorah</i>	6999- 7004 6988	what ascends and surrounds us towards God (in connection with the God Who we worship): to let smoke/smell of a sacrifice ascend, to surround, mist, smoke, incense, to smell (also: something misty: a riddle, knot)
𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕 𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕 𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕 𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕 𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕	קצץ קצב קצב קצב قصب קצה	<i>qātsats</i> <i>qātsab</i> <i>qetseb</i> <i>qatsaba</i> <i>qātsāh</i> etc.	7094- 7099 7112- 7113	the shining, raising (gold colored ; i.e. ripe) grain / reed for your house/for sheaves (cf. <i>tsabah/ tsavah</i>): to cut off, shave, mow, harvest, to cut into pieces; to be cut off / sheared ; ⇒ border, lowest, coast, limit, 'till so far'
𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕 ⁹⁶	קציר قصر	<i>qātsir</i> <i>qātsar</i> <i>qatsura</i>	7105 7114	the shining, raised grain from (the hand of) God: (to) harvest, to reap (grass or grain); also: to be short(ened), to curtail, be impatient, be vexed, be grieved; to be short(ened), shortness, reduction
𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕	קרב ⁹⁷	<i>qārab</i>	7126- 7127 7131 7138	to go up to the other's/Other's house: to approach, to come close, to offer sacrifice (cf. <i>qorban</i> 7133)
𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕	קרב	<i>qereb</i> <i>PS: q.rb</i> <i>Ak: qerbu</i>	7130	the centre (around which all revolves) of the body of everyone: intestine, waist, 'heart' (fig.)

⁹⁵ In Gen.1:9-10 מקום is the *place* to which the water streamed, so there the old water notion of the מ is connected to it, compare מקוה - *miqwah* - bath, used there for 'the water that had thus gathered'.

⁹⁶ The Gezer calendar has a form without *yod*.

⁹⁷ Compare also: Arabic: قرابة - *qarābah* - relationship, relatedness.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
		קרבן قربان	qorbān qurbān	7133 cf. 7126	what comes forth from approaching/ sacrificing: an offer (distinct fr. <i>grammat. suffix nun!</i>)
		קרן	qāran PS: qarn Ak: qarnu A: qarn	7160	the rising/exalted light coming forth from the Other (God): radiate (a.o. of sunlight), also: to be horned (see [7161-7163]; in the Talmud also used for a mast rising up high from a ship)
		קרן	qeren ⁹⁸	7161- 7163	what comes forth, rising from the <i>ram</i> (great wild ox, probably the auroch [7213]): horn (also in other applications, e.g. as for drinking); in extension also: power
		קרע קרע	qāra' qera'	7167 7168	raising (such that light enters) of the other's hull such that he is seen (esp. about clothes): to tear, to rend, to tear into pieces (e.g. when mourning or upon shock), rag
		ראה رای	ro'eh rā'āh ra'ā	7200- 7204	what you can become by worshipping the Other (god) first (cf. Rom.1): seer, prophet ⇒ verb to see
		ראים	ra'am / ram / re'em	7213- 7214	the other's/Other's oxen of abundance: original ox / auroch (shoulder height: 2 m.); ⁹⁹ ⇒ to lift up, to exalt, to be exalted
		ראש	resh / rosh A: ra's Akk: ra'shu → rēshu Ug: rīsh	7217- 7220	the other with the prominent appearance/ with the first well: the big boss, chief, head, 1st , the first source [of a river; a stream provided by God] is: up in the mountains, top (of a mountain or otherwise), hill/ height ¹⁰⁰ also: another gets fever (fire) of this: bitter, poison(ous) ¹⁰¹
		רוח רוח روح	ruach / rāwach / rewach A: ruch	7304- 7308	the higher Other connected to our body/flesh: breath of life, soul, spirit the other (spirit) touching your tent pins and tent walls: wind the other's tent pins at our border: space in between (tents)
		רוע	ru'a	7321	to see God's covenant: to shout, make noise (of joy, in appreciation, upon victory, in worship)

⁹⁸ *Qannu* in Sumerian. Compare the consonants in the Latin: *cornu* (*kárnon* in Keltic; Proto-Indo-European: *k'rū*, *k'era(w)*); to which our 'horn' is related. The original root seems to be *qr* – raising from (or: upper side of) the head.

⁹⁹ This view is in full agreement with that of Frederic Delitzsch, in: *The Hebrew Language – Viewed in the Light of Assyrian Research* (Williams & Norgate, London & Edinburgh, 1883; p.6-7). He compares this word to "the Assyrian *rimu* – that strong-homed, fierce-looking wild bull, skilled in climbing the mountains whose colossal and formidable likeness was placed by the Assyrian kings before the entrance of their palaces to ward off and terrify the approaching enemy." He strongly opposes the interpretation as *Antelope leucoryx*, an animal denoted ראם לבן in modern Ibhrit. From the dual plural *horns* (קַרְנִי) in Psalm 22: 21; 92: 10 it appears not to be a *Unicorn*. Cf. Job 39: 9-10 and Deut 33: 17. Think also of our word *ram* – both the horned animal and something to *ram* a city gate in the process of trying to conquer it.

¹⁰⁰ In Sumerian *reshu* was a top or summit (e.g. of a mountain).

¹⁰¹ Originally there was an additional *wav* in the word with this meaning: check on eating safely, therefore this notion also appears in the form ר״ו.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
		רחם רחם	<i>rācham</i> <i>recham</i> 102 <i>Ug: r-ch-m</i>	7355- 7362	the other's skin (as protection around you) with water: a mother's womb, uterus → also the feelings that a mother cherishes there: love, compassion, tender affection
		רִמון رمان	<i>rimón</i> <i>A: rummān</i> <i>Turk.: nar</i> <i>Hindi: anār</i>		abundance of seed from the hand of the Other (God): pomegranate (after the Latin: <i>Pōmum/ Mālo grānātum</i> = apple with lots of seed; biological name: <i>Punica granatum</i> , the genus <i>Punica</i> refers to the Phoenicians who distributed it) ¹⁰³
		רִיעַ	<i>rēy'a</i> <i>rē'a</i> <i>PS: ri'</i>	7453	with <i>ghayin</i> : ¹⁰⁴ the other who embraces you with his arms / who offers you protection / (possibly with <i>'ayin</i> : the other who shows himself / his working hands (i.e. who helps you)): friend, companion
		רַע	<i>rā'</i>		the higher (god) who makes us see: the sun served as idol Rā' in Egypt ¹⁰⁵
		רָעָה	<i>rā'āh</i> <i>roa'</i>	7451 7455	to worship that idol / to hide God: evil, wrong, vicious ¹⁰⁶
		רעה	<i>rā'āh</i>	7462- 7464	the other who sees to it (or <i>ghayin</i> : envelops, protects) that one can live/flourish with joy: shepherd, friend
		רַעַם רַעַם	<i>ra'am</i> , <i>rā'am</i>	7481- 2	the god of light and water: thunder, thunderclap the other sees water: to be or to behave excited
		רפאה	<i>rāphāh</i> <i>rophe</i>	7495 7499 7505	(cf. <i>nephesh</i> [5314-5]) the Other (God) blows or breathes life into you again: to heal, to cure, healer

¹⁰² This word was known already in Akkadian as well; there it underwent a development, in particular in the vowelization: *rachmu* → *rechmu* → *re'mu*. Compare Arabic: *rachima* - to have mercy (for s.o.), compassion, *rachma* - pity, compassion. And Ugaritic: *r-ch-m* - to be kind.

¹⁰³ Biblically the pomegranate is a symbol of fertility, blessing and abundance – in full accordance with its original name. They say that one fruit may contain up to 800 seeds. The pomegranate is also attributed an aphrodisiac effect; it would increase testosterone levels in men and women. Others say the seeds have an estrogenic effect, useful for women in menopause. Ironically, Hippocrates and others prescribed it to *prevent conception*.

When the ripe fruit falls on the ground, the seeds spread everywhere around. From there the association in the hand grenade, which in Ivrit is also a רִמון יד - *rimon jad*.

The post-Babylonian Judaism connects the pomegranate to the 613 *mitsvot* they distilled from the *Torah*, and therefore with righteousness and holiness. Biblically this is incorrect, in my opinion. According the *Torah* righteousness and holiness are a grace gift of God and not the merit of human endeavor to keep 613 laws...

¹⁰⁴ The Greek form ΡΑΓΟΥΗΑ of the derived name Reghu'el [7467] gives an indication that the original form was written with a *ghayin*.

¹⁰⁵ The old notation is remarkable, for in Egypt the hieroglyph by which this idol/god was denoted was or , sometimes also a more detailed picture of a right eye.

¹⁰⁶ Possibly, among Israelites and later among Jews, this word contributed to the fear to see God. It is tragic that in the Roman imperium the sun-worship – so a big form of 'evil' – was adopted syncretistically into the Roman church (see e.g. the aureoles around heads of 'saints', etc.). The interpretation from the form with *ghayin* shows how evil it was to hide the glorious Name of God, as Rabbinic Judaism did.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤁𐤍	𐤁𐤍	שָׂאן	shā'an	7599-7600	what mother's breasts mean (bring forth) prominently for baby's/children: rest, to be at ease / peaceful / calm, to bring to rest
<div>𐤁𐤍</div> <div>𐤁𐤍</div>	<div>𐤁𐤍</div> <div>𐤁𐤍</div>	<div>שָׂבַע</div> <div>שָׂבַע</div> <div>شبع</div>	<div>shāba'</div> <div>sābā'</div> <div>sāba'</div> <div>sābēa'</div> <div>shebha'</div> <div>PS: shaba'</div> <div>or saba'</div> <div>Ak: shebu</div> <div>A: shabi'a</div>	7646-7659	<div>(𐤁/𐤍) to see one's erected tent / the source/ fullness of your house is visible / to see how well one's house flourishes:</div> <div>to be satisfied or complete, to swear;</div> <div>also: fullness, seven (7)¹⁰⁷, a week</div> <div>(𐤁/𐤍) to see the palm tree (with its sugar rich fruits and shadow and as symbol of Life) at home: to be satiated/satisfied/full, etc.</div>
<div>𐤁𐤍</div> <div>𐤁𐤍</div>	<div>𐤁𐤍</div> <div>𐤁𐤍</div>	<div>שָׁבַת</div> <div>سبت</div>	<div>shābat</div> <div>shābhat</div> <div>shebet</div> <div>shabbāt</div> <div>sabt</div>	7673-7676	<div>see the previous one; the sign of bulging (fullness/growing/flourishing) of your tent/house/ family / the sign of the source of your house for: Shabbath¹⁰⁸</div> <div>also: intense form of שָׁבַת yāshabh [3427] (see there)/ the sign of the source/fullness of your house: to live, to rest (there);</div>
𐤁𐤍	𐤁𐤍	ثدى شَد	shad thada	7699	mother's breast that enters (into baby's mouth): nipple, breast, bossom ¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ In Sumerian *sebet* / *sebe* (mascul./femin. form; seventh: *sebu*) was already the word for the numeral seven; our word *seven* would even be derived from a common source, compare also Gothic *sibun*, Latin *septem* and Sanskrit *saptan* - सप्तन् .

¹⁰⁸ Compare also the Arabic: ثَبَت - *thabata* - to stand stable/sturdy, solid. The Arabic ث - *tha/ta* corresponds, like the Arabic س - *sin*, often with the ש - *shin* in Hebrew. I interpret it here from the idea of bulging/protruding, coming forward or raising from the base surface, just like breasts and horns do that. In combination with the symbol for a tent or house one sees an erected tent. When, at the end of a day, as a nomad in the Ancient Middle East, one had erected one's tent again, one was ready and could relax / sit down. Remarkable in this context is also the Arabic وَثَب - *wathaba* - to jump, in the olde symbols: 𐤁 𐤍 𐤁 - the pin(s) of the erected tent; being stamped into the ground by foot. Compare also 𐤁𐤍𐤁 - *shābach* - the tent cloth of the erected tent, no longer flapping or so but **coming to quiet** and leaving **no worries anymore**. And 𐤁𐤍𐤁 - to let an erected tent rise / go up again – **to let go, to leave**.

The most original explanation or etymology is hard to establish here. *Shabbath* can also be read as: to finish (𐤁) one's work as source of income/feeding (𐤍) for one's family (𐤁) (this explanation fits with Arabic *sabab* – source of existence), to make full / finish (𐤁) the fullness (𐤍) at home (𐤁), to cherish (𐤍) one's home/family (𐤁) to fullness (𐤁) (or the sign of [the connection/ covenant of] one's house with The Source / the sign to eat at home). An alternative explanation, starts from a form with possibly an additional *aleph* in it: the sign (𐤁) of the Source (𐤍) of the first man (𐤁𐤍 - father [of all]), the sign of God's covenant with Adam. See also *shāba'*.

Another explanation sees in the *shin* the number six such that *shabbat* or *shebet* is the finishing off after six work days, related to *shebha'* - seven (7); our word would even originate from a common source). In Sumerian *sebet* was already the word for the number seven and in Sanskrit it was: *saptan* - सप्तन् .

¹⁰⁹ Fürst says of this: "of fullness that pours itself out". This is completely in line with the interpretation of the symbol 𐤍, given here. In Sumerian *shadu* or *sadu* was a mountain – in fact a 'bulging' of the earth, from which rivers brought fullness of life to a wide area.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤠𐤢𐤛	𐤠𐤢𐤛	שׁוֹדֵד	shed, shod, shud, shadad	7700- 7701, 7703 vgl. 7710, 7712	what comes forward and enters (with an arrow or spear) (i.e. what penetrates / breaks into violently): violent, to destroy; destruction; demon ¹¹⁰
𐤠𐤢𐤛	𐤠𐤢𐤛	שׁוֹב	shubh	7725	to come up for the connection with your house/family / the source, connected to your family: to turn back, - around; again
𐤠𐤢𐤛	𐤠𐤢𐤛	שׁוֹפָר	shophār	7782	the fullness connected to blowing for the Other (God) / use your breast and ribs/ribcage: ¹¹¹ to blow the shofar / ram's horn
𐤠𐤢𐤛 𐤠𐤢𐤛 ¹¹²	𐤠𐤢𐤛	שׁוֹק שׁוֹק	shoq shuq A: saq	7785 7783 7784	the source connected with the raising/ascending (what cares that one can stand): thigh, hip, leg, shank / from there also: to run , and: street (where one can run)
𐤠𐤢𐤛 𐤠𐤢𐤛	𐤠𐤢𐤛 𐤠𐤢𐤛	שׁוֹר תּוֹר ثور	shōr Aram: tōr shurh A: taur Ak: shūru Ug: toro shur	7794 8450 7791- 2 7788 7789	the appearance (horns? abundance? sacrifice? ¹¹⁴) connected with God: ox, bull, cow ⇒ also: a support in a wall (in particular for a large building, sometimes decorated with the image of a bull); and: to walk/strawl around (what oxen did); and: an enemy (the auroch was dangerous) these two ⇒: to scout
𐤠𐤢𐤛	𐤠𐤢𐤛	שׁוֹכַר שׁוֹכַר سكر	shekhar shākhar shikor sukkar σικερα ¹¹⁵	7941 7937 7910 7942-3 G4608	abundance from the blessing hand of God: molasses or sugar and the alcoholic drinks made of liquids with a high sugar-content; to be or become drunk, intoxicated
𐤠𐤢𐤛	𐤠𐤢𐤛	שׁוֹלָם سَلَام	shalom ¹¹⁶ A: salām PS: shalām	7965	the source of the leader connected with abundance: completeness, wholeness, soundness, welfare, peace, safety, health

¹¹⁰ The original first letter is uncertain here; a similar root appears also with the letter *tsade*: צוֹד - *tsud* [6679] – to hunt (to suppress by penetrating with a pin/arrow/spear). It is likely that this was the original form.

¹¹¹ Probably, the *Y wav* was not only used for tent pins but also for bones and horns (from the same *ram* as from which the horn was used as *shophar*); so that line of thought may well provide another possible explanation. The name of *Chuah/Chawwah* (Eve [2332]) seems to indicate that this is indeed so.

¹¹² An explanation from the palm tree as support pillar is possible as well; the original form: 𐤠 or 𐤠 is not 100% clear.

¹¹³ The Greek ταῦρος - *tauros*, Latin: *taurus* and PIE *tauro* - (powerful) bull, ox are clearly related / derived from this! This word (all variants) stood also for the constellation *taurus*.

The Arabic form stands also for a master or chief. The plural of it is: *tirān* – the etymologic parent of our word tyrant! This gives an image of how one looked at the big oxen / aurochs in those days.

¹¹⁴ The Arabic form has a *ṭa* (also in Mehri). The Aramaic differs from Hebrew. So, it is not clear whether originally here we have to think of the 𐤠 as breasts or well, or possibly the 𐤠 - shell, or the 𐤠 as horns. The explanation for the generic notion of the 𐤠 is possible as well: the coming forward – that is: the appearance of God. The bull (think of the big auroch with 2 m. shoulder height) was regarded as the mightiest animal and therefore served as image (hull of clay; the 𐤠 is very suitable!) of the gods/idols (see also at 'EI).

¹¹⁵ Sanskrit - *śárkarā*. The Spanish and Portuguese words, *azúcar* and *açúcar* respectively, have kept a trace of the Arabic definite article. An explanation from a first letter 𐤠 is very plausible as well, as date palms were a great source of sugar in those days there.

¹¹⁶ Sumerian: *salymu*, *silymu*. In Akkadian: *shalamu* - to be(come) whole, safe; to recover; to succeed, prosper; also: *salimu* - peace, concord; *salimatu* - alliance.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤌𐤍𐤌	𐤌𐤍𐤌	שמן	shāman shemen	8080-8082	a source of abundance for your offspring / what comes forth from a source of abundance / a full bosom/udder (for many children): oil, fat; to become or make fat ¹¹⁷
𐤌𐤍𐤌	𐤌𐤍𐤌	שמע	shāma' shema' PS: shema' Ak: shemu A: sama'	8085-8086 8088-8098	to see a source or coming forward of abundance, urges one to: to hear/listen (in the sense of obeying); hear! also: a hearing , or a message being listened to
𐤌𐤍𐤌	𐤌𐤍𐤌	שמר	shāmar	8104 8106	a well/fountain/source of water/abundance from God (what to do with it): to keep, to watch, to guard, to give heed, to protect, to preserve
𐤌𐤍𐤌	𐤌𐤍𐤌	שען	shā'an	8172	babies & small children that see the breasts of their mother can rest confidently
𐤌𐤍𐤌	𐤌𐤍𐤌	שָׁעַע	shā'a'	8173	to see a well/fountain: to rejoice in, to look upon and take delight in
𐤌𐤍𐤌	𐤌𐤍𐤌	שָׁעַע	shā'a'	8173a	(also, in an apparent aversive or protective reaction, or from 3 rd letter ghayin to cover the appearance / a well out of sight: to smear shut, esp. of eyes; to be smeared over, to be blinded)
𐤌𐤍𐤌	𐤌𐤍𐤌	שָׁעַשׁוּעַ שָׁעַשׁוּעַ	sha'shu'ā sha'shua'	8191 vgl. 3467	„a well in sight, a source of security/safety in sight!": delight, pleasure, enjoyment, also: an object of ~
𐤌𐤍𐤌	𐤌𐤍𐤌	שפט	shāphat shephat shephet	8199-8202 cf 4941	cover over or fence around the opening of a well (boundary for safety): to rule, to govern, to judge, to vindicate, to punish, to decide, to determine officially
𐤌𐤍𐤌	𐤌𐤍𐤌	שקל	shāqal sheqel Ak: shiqlu		the source of the raising (power) of (a) leader-(ship) / the shining breast of a leader / shin as balance that quph goes up and down?: shekel (coin); to weigh (weight)
𐤌𐤍𐤌	𐤌𐤍𐤌	שורר سر	shorer A: surr	8270 8326	one's (original) source (of nutrition, life) from the other: belly button, navel, umbilical cord; also: vine in its function towards the tendrils
𐤌𐤍𐤌	𐤌𐤍𐤌	שָׂרָה	shārāh	8281 8271 8284 8285	to bring forth the other into life, or to worship the Other (God) / what you do with a just-born baby-on-its-umbilical-cord [8270]: to make loose, to set free; ¹¹⁸ also: vine tendril (Jer. 5: 10 parallelism; cf. 8286,-91,-9) and: to honor the Other/other - your Source: bracelet (and the umbilical cord was often wound around an arm!)
𐤌𐤍𐤌	𐤌𐤍𐤌	שורש	shārash sheresh shoresh	8327-8330	root, to uproot, to root, do something to the roots

¹¹⁷ Originally possibly referring to fat mother's milk and/or (milk)butter. See also the footnote at man(na) [4478].

¹¹⁸ From this also: שְׁרוּת - shērut [8293] – freedom, freed remnant (cf. also shā'ar 7604-6); שָׂרַי - shārai [8298] - releaser (Ezra 10: 40); שָׂרִיד - shārid [8300-1] - survivor, one who is released, remnant; שָׂרַר - shārar [8324-5] - to set oneself free from another, which developed (at least in the Babylonian / Jewish vision) to: to oppose, to be hostile, to attack, to oppress, to assail; and שָׂרַת - shārat/shāret [8334-5] - to function as kind of an umbilical cord: to contribute to, serve (spiritually); ministry.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤍𐤋𐤕	𐤍𐤋𐤕	שבע	saba' soba' sabea'	7646- 7649 7653- 7654	to see the palm tree -residence (where God re- sided; + abundance of fruit! + notion of princely): fullness, abundance, to be fulfilled
𐤍𐤋𐤕	𐤍𐤋𐤕	שגב	sāgab	7682 7687	(a) palm tree/ trees as 'foot' (foundation, support) of one's house: to be high / lifted up (as on pillars) / exalted, to exalt
𐤍𐤋𐤕 𐤍𐤋𐤕	𐤍𐤋𐤕 𐤍𐤋𐤕	שטן	sātan	7853- 7854	(1 st letter <i>sin/samekh</i>) 'skirt' of date palm/Tree of Life that hides access to the fruit: adversary / creature coming out of the resistant 'skirt' (of old, prickly leaves) around a palm tree: snake / adversary/ satan / (1 st letter <i>shin</i>) what comes of eating the protec- tive boundary (set by God): sin ; and its personified master: satan his character is to keep us separated from the fruit that God wants to give us by His Word and Spirit
𐤍𐤋𐤕	𐤍𐤋𐤕	שכל	sākhāl sekhel	7919- 7920 7922	the palm tree blesses the Leader / the sok (tent) of the leader: to be prudent, be cir- cumspect, to consider, wise, intelligence, wisdom, prudence
𐤍𐤋𐤕	𐤍𐤋𐤕	שמאל	semol	8040	many palm trees of the first covenantal Leader (God?): around Phoenicia (Greek for: Palms land): north , to the left (when facing east)
𐤍𐤋𐤕	𐤍𐤋𐤕	שמחה	sāmach sāmēach simchāh	8055 8056 8057	palm tree (Tree of Life), water and a tent over your head (to rejoice in), then you have: joy, to rejoice
𐤍𐤋𐤕 (𐤍𐤋𐤕 ?)	𐤍𐤋𐤕	שן שן	shēn PS: <i>shin</i> / <i>cin</i> / <i>tsin</i> A: <i>sinn</i> ¹¹⁹	8128 vgl. 5512 5515 5572 5577	what comes forth from a branch of the palm tree (on the border of the fronds and what remains when the fronds drop off): thorn, something sharp, tooth
𐤍𐤋𐤕	𐤍𐤋𐤕	שערה	sā'ar Se'ar Se'orah	8175 8177 8178 8181 8184	(cf. what the discussion of the samekh/sin said on the word <i>ceneh</i>) the palm tree sees the Other (and sways heavily with its fronds as in a): storm / (wild) hairdo (looking like that palm) / barley (cf. the long, wild 'hairs' on the ear)
𐤍𐤋𐤕	𐤍𐤋𐤕	שרף	sāraph	8313	the palm tree of the Other (God) (see at the discussion of 𐤍𐤋𐤕) Who/that 'blows': fire, to light a fire / set to fire
𐤍𐤋𐤕 𐤍𐤋𐤕	𐤍𐤋𐤕 𐤍𐤋𐤕	שרף	sārāph seraph	8314	(1 st letter <i>sin/samekh</i>): a rebelling/ stubborn (see at 𐤍𐤋𐤕) mouth/spirit: serpent / (1 st letter <i>shin</i>): [one who provides] fullness from the Other's (i.e. God's) mouth: seraph ¹²⁰ (high angel/messenger of God; plural: seraphim)

¹¹⁹ Also *sin* (with *samekh*) - sharp point, tooth or sharp, in West-Chadic (language group in N-Africa, related to Semitic).

¹²⁰ Remarkably in Yesha-yahu (Isaiah) 6, where *Seraphim* are mentioned, is that one of them takes a coal from the altar of God ('food' of the fire; see at 'esh) and touched the other's - Yesha-Yahu's - lips (mouth). The old Semitic rendering of the good *Seraph* illustrated or paralleled!

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤀𐤁𐤁	𐤀𐤁𐤁	תבה	tebāh	8392	the God-signed/-drawn house of a worshipper (Noach, Moses): an ark
𐤀𐤁𐤁𐤀	𐤀𐤁𐤁𐤀	תודה	todāh	8426	manifest a sign of knowledge (see at <i>wada'</i>): confession, testimony, thanks to God
𐤀𐤁𐤁	𐤀𐤁𐤁	תוה	tāvāh	8427-8428	to bring signs with a tent pin 'to life': to place marks, sketch, scribble (when done on someone's skin it hurts)
𐤀𐤁𐤁𐤀	𐤀𐤁𐤁𐤀	תורה	torāh	8451	(cross)sign of secure bonding from the Other Whom we joyfully worship / (cross)sign of secure bonding with the Other/ with others, to be celebrated / lived out: Torah ¹²¹
𐤀𐤁𐤁𐤀	𐤀𐤁𐤁𐤀	תושׁיָהּ	tushiYāH	8454	finishing/sign of (attachment to) the source/well of YaH / God: wisdom, skill, success
𐤀𐤁𐤁𐤀	𐤀𐤁𐤁𐤀	תִּכְלֶת	tek ^h ēlet	8504	the signs around the blessing/reigning hand of the Shepherd/Leader: sky blue / violet ¹²² (a.o. the color of designated thread in <i>tsitsit</i>)

¹²¹ Normally seen as derived from *horah* - הורה - 𐤀𐤁𐤁𐤀 - 'He taught' (originally possibly *hurāh*; with striking resemblance to our *hurrah!*) – joyful worship/wonder about the covenant with the Other (God) Whom we worship / to live from joyful worship/wonder about the covenant with the Other (God). See also the articles-series about '**The Torah**': (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), at this 𐤀𐤁𐤁 Hallelu-YaH site, February-March 2012.

¹²² My dictionary says that the first two letters are possibly a later corruption, and that originally it was תִּכְלֶת (*shechelet*), that is, תִּכְלֶת. This gives an etymology of the color designation, via the reference to the color of the vault of heaven (the sign of the source of the tent cloth of the great Leader). This denotes that the color refers to the sky, that is, to God.


According to [the Hebrew Wiki](#) it corresponds to ████ – **azure blue** (with RGB coordinates: 0,127,255; CMYK: 255,255,0,0 – esp. the latter shows a special 'purity' of the color).

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	תָּמָה	tāmah	8539	to be amazed in wonder by a clear sign of abundance: to be astounded, be stunned, be amazed, be dumbfounded
𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	תָּמִיד	tāmid	8548	undersigned with liquid (ink) by hand (to make it definitive) / the completion/sign of a wet hand and entrance (cf. <i>jada</i> and footnote at <i>Qain</i>): covenantal marriage: continuous, loyalty ¹²³
𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	תָּמָר	tāmār	8558	sign of the abundance of God / sign of water of God: (date) palm tree ¹²⁴ (symbol for the Tree of Life)
𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	תַּנּוּן also: תַּנּוּיִם	tannin PS: t.nn.n A: tinnin	8577 vgl. 8565	what finishes/terminates all life: (mythical) dragon, seamonster(s), giant snake
𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	תִּקְוָה	tiqvāh	8615	worship/remember/celebrate the sign of the upward line (the cord of the Word by which you are led by God) in your life: to hope
𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	תְּרוּעָה	teru'ah	8643 vgl. 8451	the cross sign/completion of God's covenant, to see it and worship with joy: to shout, call out, blow horns/trumpets
𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	𐤔𐤕𐤌𐤕	תְּשׁוּבָה	teshubhāh	8666 cf. 7725	to honor/worship the sign of the source of security/belonging of/ connected to your house/family: (to) answer, return, conversion

Personally I find all these examples together (and there are *many* more!) too significant to say: it is just a coincidence, that the sum total of the elementary meanings of the constituting symbols is so much in agreement with the meaning of each word, even though some linguists contend that it is coincidence, because they cannot explain the relationship (yet). I see it as a characteristic example of how God made His written Word even accessible for the less literate people in those early days. As a scientist I can have questions (e.g. how did that wonderful coherence emerge precisely?). As a human being (creature) I'd rather stand in awe and worship God, knowing that we – with all our 'science' – 'know' only such a terrible small little bit of it all... In my opinion, the scientific questions do not need to stand in the way of the wonder we can experience as believers, on the contrary! The more science I study the more enthusiastic I become for the greatness and magnificence of the Creator! Hallelu-YaH!

¹²³ It is also a sign of abundance (that does not run out)! Here one probably has to think of the sexual bond that is to last forever.

¹²⁴ When one walked in the desert and thought to see water, it often was a *fata morgana*. When one saw a palm tree, it was certain: there is an oasis. Thus: a sign of water from God or from someone else. Remarkable in the word *tamar* is that the *tav* and *mem* are the suffix letters for the feminine and masculine plural. The date palm is dioecious: there are male and female trees. The word *tamar* thus represents the feminine and masculine plurality (fertility) that is in God. See also the article: '[The Palm Tree in the Bible \(7\) – More on the word Tamar & a new Palm Tree](#)',  Hallelu-Yah site, July 2014; and the other articles in [that series](#).

The enrichment of Biblical Hebrew from the old Semitic symbols

The letters and their meanings also intrigue me, in particular that *hei*. From linguistics I know that the *hei* has been added both as prefix and as suffix to root words, and yet *as believer* I find it wonderful how the *hei* plays a large role in words like 'to be'/'to live' - $\text{הי} \text{הי}$ (to rejoice and worship together in awe and secure attachment), and 'path of life' $\text{הי} \text{הי} \text{הי}$ - *halakhah* (to rejoice and worship together in the blessing hand of the great Leader; or to worship with joy the Leader Who stretches His blessing and protecting hand over your joyful worship).

Often the old Hebrew, I mean: old Semitic image of a word, brings me to mental associations that otherwise I would probably not have seen so easily. Take a word like *shem* שם - name. When you look at it, you see *the source of water, the source of abundance, or food and water*. Having a name, is related to having a well, which in that area is almost synonymous to enough food and water. When you even have enough for your offspring, or to renew your life - שם , then apparently you are *rich*, in Dutch young people currently say '*fat*' (and at that time too: *shamen* = *fat, rich*; look at a Dutch cow and the average one in Africa, to see what *rich* and *fat* have to do with each other).

Now the Jewish confession, the *Shema'* שמע , is often translated: '*Hear* (Israel...)', but one may as well read: *see the Name!* Or: *to see the Source of abundance!* (Or: *to see a full source of water*; see how blessed you are by God!) Indeed the glorious, promise-full **Name** of God appears already twice in the very first line! His glorious Name, that is: His presence is the promise, the source by which we can live from the *Shema'* - from seeing The Name, seeing the Source to draw living water from, and from hearing what He tells! The associated promise to Israel was that they would also have/see sufficient food and drink...¹²⁵ Surely a reason to listen well...

Speaking about seeing a source of water given by God, I am reminded of *shalom* שלום - the source of the great Shepherd, to be secured of water, or: with secure attachment and all that in abundance (or: and enough to drink). Isn't that **perfect**? What more would an early Semite (or any human in any age) want?

To enjoy fullness (ל) under a palm tree or palm-leaf covering (פ) with a ruler or a king (מ reigning hand), you do in a luxurious **pavilion**, or, if it is with The King or His priest (blessing hand) in the **tabernacle**: indeed in both cases in a $\text{מפך} \text{ל}$ *sok* - שך (or סך) (assimilation of *samek* and *shin* into *sin* here!). When we as His children (offspring - בן) can share in the fullness (have communion) of the great King like that, *He tabernacles* (*shakan* שכן) with/under/in us, and we experience in joyful worship something of His *Shekinah* (שכינה); the fullness (ל) of His glorious and wonderful blessing (ב) that He shares (ש) with His worshipping children (בן).

With regard to eating, it is important not to let our intake ruin our relationship with God, as happened with Eve and Adam in Genesis 3. What came forth from eating beyond God-given limits ($\text{ל} \text{נחש}$ - *nachash*) is what in Arabic is called *nachasa* 'to make s.o. unhappy' or 'to bring bad luck'. Hebrew maintains the term for 'snake' (Arabic: *حَنَش* - *chanash*), what looks like: 'eating the skin of your children'; snakes often attack children! Surprisingly, both Aramaic and Arabic also associate *nachash* with copper. Snake idols were among the first objects that were made out of copper/bronze.

Sometimes something nice can be found in one of those little words. A combination of two of those we encounter regularly, often translated as 'therefore', is: לכֵּן - *al-ken*. In the old script: לכֵּן - seeing the Leader Who blesses / exercises authority over the kids / the offspring. Yes, that is a reason to do something (e.g. in Genesis 2: 24: „*therefore a man will leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*”) Actually, the view on the Leader (God) (לכֵּן - לכֵּן) is already a sufficient encouragement and thereby translatable as 'therefore'. And His blessing over His children (לכֵּן - לכֵּן - often used as *affirmation*), His "*Yes and amen*" (cf. 2 Corinthians 1: 18-20) amplifies that.

By the blessing of God everything is completed; it becomes ripe, fully grown, mature, whole. We see this in the two letter old Semitic root לכֵּן or כֵּל [3605-6] - *kol* (Arabic: *كل* - *kull*) - in itself often translated as 'all', 'the whole', 'every...'. Based on this are words such as: כֵּלָה [3615-7] - *kālāh* and כֵּלָל [3634-6] - *kālāl / kelal* (the latter is Aramaic) - to complete, completeness fullness, כֵּלָה [3618] - *kallāh* - bride (as being a woman who is complete/mature/fully prepared, ready to enter into matrimony), כֵּלָח [3624] - *kelach* - (physical) maturity, to be on full strength, כֵּלִיל [3632] - *kālil* - whole, מִכְלָל [4359-60] - *miklal / miklul* - perfection, beauty / something that is complete.

¹²⁵ See also the series of short articles: 'The *Shema'* – the First Testament Declaration of Faith': (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), at this הלל Hallelu-YaH site, January - February 2012.

In this way I observe that the letters and words often support and affirm the Biblical message. Take the observation that God knows us already from before our tiniest beginning in the womb (Psalm 131, 139). I see that resonated in the fact that the unborn child is the starting point in the word for womb: *rechem* [7358/-6] - מִיָּמִין - literally: the other's skin (as protective wall), with water / in abundance [all around you]. Note that derived from this is the pronunciation variant: *racham* [7355/-6] - compassion, to love, cherish and protect, as in a womb, or with the warm and gentle feelings that you feel there; alternatively to be interpreted as the other's wet skin (of crying), asking for compassion. In that case it is related to נָחַם - *nacham* [5162] - in origin: [touching/caressing] the wet (from weeping) skin of your kids (in abundance): to comfort in sorrow.

Two important Biblical notions are יִרְאֵת יְהוָה - *yir'eat YaHUaH* (a.o. Psalm 19: 9; Proverbs 1: 29; 2: 5; 8: 13; 9: 10; 2 Chronicles 19: 9) and פֶּחַד יְהוָה *pachad YaHUaH* (a.o. 1 Samuel 11: 7), both of which are commonly translated by 'the fear of the LORD', which I always found a notion, difficult to combine with the character of God. We can pose the question: What do the original signs say here, in relation to the glorious Name יְהוָה? In the first case that is יְהוָה יֵרֵךְ - 'He, the Other, gives from beginning till the end', or: 'the hand of the Other, first and last'.¹²⁶ *YaHUaH* is there with His blessing and ruling hand from the beginning till the end - He does not forsake you! (Think of my discussion of the notion *wachad/'echad*.) As far as there is fear or anxiety involved from our side, it is like the fear of children who know they cannot do without their precious father and mother, and therefore cling to the hand of the father or mother, e.g. in a busy shopping mall. When we realize Who *YaHUaH* is, and how He deals with us in love, He becomes so precious to us that we don't want to lose sight of Him - not for any price! So, a better translation would be: 'our attachment to *YaHUaH*'. Therefore Proverbs 16:6^b also says: "by the *yirath YaHUaH* men depart from evil", for if you are intimately attached to Him Who gives you Life, then you don't want sin to be in the way of that relationship. As Jesus said: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be." There is also a relation with *ra'ah* - (fore)see (/provide). From His great riches God provides (*yireh*) for those who belong to Him (Genesis 22: 14). He also sees it when we reject Him consistently and then there is reason to fear... The root of *yirath* is translated in 2 Samuel 7: 23 and in Nechem-yah (Nehemiah) 1: 5 in some translations by 'awe-inspiring' (ISV) or 'awesome' (NET Bible, TS98). From a comparison with other Semitic languages it appears that the *yod* at the beginning originally probably was a *wav* (Fürst's dictionary confirms this), such that the basic meaning on the basis of the symbols becomes: the attachment to God first (and last). Then also the association with the word light *'or* comes forward (further on more about that). God is light, or a devouring/purifying fire (cf. Exodus 20: 18 and what follows). Concluding, in *yirath YaHUaH* there are the connotations: 'always start from our attachment to *YaHUaH*', 'attached to / aware of the greatness of *YaHUaH*' (reason for peace of mind when you belong to Him, or for fear if not) or 'awareness that *YaHUaH* is pure/purifying light and fire'. So much for the first notion.

Now the second. *Pachad* is אֶלֶם - the wind that moves a 'wall' of your tent or blows it open.¹²⁷ In the open plains of and about Israel storms can rage quite ferociously. That is a natural violence that can stir up anxiety in a simple Bedouin. Fortunately there is the *Ruach ha Qodesh* - the Holy Spirit/Wind. *Ruach* - רֹּחַ - the Other Who connects to your flesh or Who (as wind) is on your tent pins and walls, or (being God) Who offers security and connection to your tent walls or flesh. Let us have a look at the context in which these words appear in 1 Samuel 11: 7. "And the *pachad YaHUaH* fell on the people, and they came out as one man. (an '*ish 'echad*')." (I encourage you to read the whole passage in its context - it is an impressive story!) What or who unites people like that, to become '*echad* like God is? Anxiety? Dread (as some translate)? Mostly not; anxiety and fear regularly let us withdraw from others. However, the Holy Spirit *is* known for this, to unite people into *one*. In my humble opinion we should regard *Pachad* here also in this way: as a synonym for *Ruach*, emphasizing that the Spirit of God is not to be toyed with. When God comes with His presence, His Spirit, great things are going to happen (compare Exodus 19)! Then you will do better to join Him, obey and honor Him, than to go against Him! I would translate *Pachad* here with: 'the impressive Spirit of God'.

¹²⁶ In case the *tav* on the end is, as usual, interpreted as grammatical suffix only (*status constructus*), this becomes: 'He, the Other, gives first' or: 'the hand of the Other first'.
For a more extensive, classical study on *yirath YaHUaH*: John J. Parsons, '[The Fear of the LORD – Further thoughts on Parashat Eikev](#)', at the website *Hebrew for Christians*. On other grounds he too links *yirath YaHUaH* to the Spirit of God and to fulfillment with a deep reverence for Who God is in His great might and love.

¹²⁷ An alternative interpretation of *pachad* reads: to enter an opening in the boundary [the one around the Tree of Life; cf. *pasach* and *chesed*] – something quite fearful; there was a strong angel with a flaming sword.
Another one reads: the wind (*Ruach*) that enters the flesh; referring to the indwelling of the *Ruach* – literally: *God connected to one's flesh*.

The meanings of the letters as distinct from the phonetic function of the letters in the alphabet and in grammar (e.g.: the *hei* as suffix creating a feminine noun out of a verb), sometimes can be seen as responsible for the fact that a word gets two, almost opposite, meanings. For example the word שׁוֹמֵר in relation to the root שׁוֹמֵר : with the *hei* as -later- grammatical suffix it remains 'sin', but with the *hei* as pictogram for 'worship' it becomes 'sin **offering**'. This phenomenon I encounter more often. Apparently, some knowledge of the old Semitic script and the original meanings of the symbols, offers also clarity and understanding concerning some 'strange differences in meaning'.

The designation for God/god: 'Elohim I already discussed. A derived form of this, appearing 84 times (7x12: fullness!) in the Torah, is אֱלֹהֵיכֶם - 'Eloheykhem; old Semitically written: 𐤀𐤋𐤁𐤏𐤇𐤍 . With **YaHUaH**'s giving of abundance this emphasizes that He does so with authority (𐤅) or that He is the One Who gives us authority/power in abundance (𐤀𐤋𐤅) to be able to do what He tells us to. The grammatical interpretation of the *kaph* as suffix (God Who says as it were: "I stretch my blessing hand towards *you* [plural]!") already encompasses this element of God's empowerment, but in the old Semitic representation it is presented even stronger, I think. In the specific context of each of those 84 texts, this is most revealing! The Torah was not a law to fulfill in one's own strength, but an instruction to live from the intimate attachment to God and from His power!

Remarkable I find the **light** (אֹר - אור - 'or [215-8]) that God created at the very beginning, in Genesis 1: 3. According the old Semitic symbols this **light** can be translated as 'the first secure **connection** to the Other, i.e. to God, or to (one) another'.¹²⁸ God is pictured as 'dressed in this light' (Psalm 104: 1-2; 1 Timothy 6: 16¹²⁹). God provides security and connection / belonging. And that security and connection (psychologists speak of 'secure attachment') is a kind of 'light' – it radiates (compare the word *glory*). It is the basis or foundation that God lays for all the further creation. God eliminates or demolishes the disconnection, the non-life, the in-security and the fear of darkness. He provides **light**. What is referred to, here and elsewhere, as **light** is '**secure attachment**' to God. In his Gospel (John 1; 3; 9; 12) as well as in his first letter, John frequently speaks of this light, that Jesus *is* the **Light** (indeed: the/our first connection to God!) and of how we can and should walk in this light and spread it around us.¹³⁰ There it is affirmed that the **light** is indeed the **connection with God**, and being or walking in the light means being or walking in union or close fellowship with Him. Darkness can be created only by shutting God, as the Source of this light, out of our life. Note the number of times words like 'communion', 'fellowship', 'in', 'unity', 'covenant' – all revolving around the notion of connection behind the *wav* – appear in almost all of the Bible passages involved (Isaiah 42: 6 even equates 'light' and 'covenant' – implicitly: with God – in a typical Hebrew parallel).

Paul refers (in 2 Corinthians 4: 6-7) to this verse (Genesis 1: 3) when denoting that God has ignited this light in our hearts. Thereby we can observe the **radiant glory of God YaHUaH** in the face of Christ, just like the people of Israel could see some of the glory of God radiate from Moses' face, when Moses had been with God on the mountain or anytime later when he had been in the sanctuary of the tabernacle (cf. 2 Corinthians 3: 6-7; see also the short study '[Let the light shine](#)' at *Immanuel's place*).

In the discussion of the *samekh/sin*, I discussed the word *senekh*, explaining it to be the crown of a palm tree, and how God spoke to Moses from a fiery light from the top of it. I also discussed the Greek variant of the palm tree: *phoenix*. The etymology of *phoenix* could be explained very well by observing the back-transliteration into the original old Semitic signs. Remember that the great Temple Menorah was in fact an image of that palm tree with God's light on top of it. My eye fell on the word *lux*, Latin for 'light', and I transliterated it (in the same way as I did with *phoenix*): 𐤅𐤅𐤅 . It's that same **palm tree** again, securely **connected** to the **Leader** (or vice versa)... Coincidence...??

Though it may seem somewhat strange at first, all the above fits perfectly well with God **YaHUaH** being *wachad* ('*echad*') – a trustworthy and stable God Who unites like the stable pin at the doorpost

¹²⁸ The same old Semitic symbols (and Hebrew letters, apart from the Masoretic signs) also form the name of [the historic city of Ur](#), so by her founder or indirectly his parents (according [the apocryphal book Jubilees](#) Ur was founded by Ur, the son of Kesed – hence: *Ur Kesdim* in Genesis 11) called after that light, after this being attached to God. Around the end of the third millennium BC Ur was one of the greatest world cities – roughly till short after Abraham's departure to Canaan. Remarkable, that when a man of God leaves some place, that place, country or kingdom goes down in welfare and/or power.

The pronunciation of *Ur* reminds me of the Dutch 'oer' (original, of long ago), or rather: the other way round. Probably no coincidence, either...

¹²⁹ Cf. also: Exodus 10: 23; 13:21; 14:20; Deuteronomy 4: 12; Ezekiel 43: 2; Daniel 2: 22; Psalm 18: 28; 36: 9; 43: 3; 118: 27; Isaiah 9: 2; Micah 7: 7-10; Nahum 1: 3-7; Habakkuk 3: 2-4; Zachariah 14: 7; Acts 12: 7; 22: 6-11; Colossians 1: 12; Revelation 18: 1; 21: 11, 23-24; 22: 5.

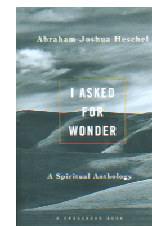
¹³⁰ Cf. also: Proverbs 4: 18; Isaiah 2: 5; 42: 6; 58: 5; Acts 13: 47; 26:18-23; 1 Corinthians 4: 5; 2 Corinthians 4: 6; 6: 14; Ephesians 3: 9; 5: 8; James 1: 17; and 1 Peter 2: 9.

connects the moving door to the wall.

The same concept of **YaHUaH** as One Who brings multitudes together and Who **unites** people we see in the word **Tsebha'oth** that is applied several times to Him – see my note on this significant word, further on, just below **Table 3**.¹³¹

*“There can be no nature without spirit,
no world without Torah,
no brotherhood without a Father,
no humanity without attachment to God.”*

Abraham Joshua Heschel¹³²



That attachment to God we cannot reach on our own. That shows us the old Arabic word **الو**, which probably goes back to the old Semitic **'alu** - **𐤀𐤋𐤁**; the meaning of this is: not being able to, be unfit.

The last two lines of Heschel remind me of the 'Our Father' prayer. 'Our Father' is in Hebrew just one word: **אֲבִינֵנוּ** - **Abhinu** (note that this word contains all three original old (even Proto-)Semitic vowels and does not really need any Masoretic vowel signs!); written in old Semitic: **𐤀𐤁𐤁𐤍𐤏𐤍** - literally: Father (First of the house/ family-at-large), He gives His children (offspring) secure bonding. And all that, in just five simple signs... Clearer and more concise than I could ever formulate it in English or Dutch.

What strikes me is that this older Hebrew is a very *physical* language, rooted strongly in important objects from a practical nomadic existence, full of reverence for God.

Often we really have to imagine the *physical* shepherding life to recognize a word. Take the Hebrew (and Arabic) word **מֶלַח** - **melach** [4414/-6] – salt (also: to dissipate, evaporate). Anyone who ever walked a day with a shepherd or cattle farmer will know that almost all kinds of animals will like to lick your hand, certainly at the end of a warm day. Why? Because they like the salty sweat on your skin. And immediately you see the relation of salt here with the shepherd's skin (**𐤍𐤋𐤁**), with the **mem** either as water (sweat that hasn't fully dried up yet) or as prefix meaning 'from'; salt being the stuff the cattle lick *from* the shepherd's skin when the water had evaporated!

The word **מֶלַח** - **mallach** [4419] - sailor is usually seen as related to the salt of the sea. But seen from the old Semitic it simply is a leader (skilled man) who has water on his skin – simple, isn't it...?

Another case in which some knowledge of old Semitic origins provides clarity, is where in the course of time one or more letters were lost. In the discussion of the letter **ש**, I already reflected on the word **שָׁד** **𐤑𐤔**, meaning both *breast*, *nipple*, and *violence* or *power*. Those two seem to be quite distant from each other... However, by observing the old root **𐤑𐤔𐤗** - **shud** - to hunt (easy to remember from the verb to shoot) next to **thad/dad, dod** and **dud**, it all became rather comprehensible. Omnipotence and from that: protection, as well as a source and nourishing and cherishing are descriptive of God **YaHUaH** in relation to us, such that He is denoted as **El Shaddai** – literally: God *my Shad*. Both encompass an element of God being and providing more than sufficient.

You may be aware that Jewish religious leaders liked to be called or at least often were called **Rab**, **Rabbi** (= my *Rab*) or **Rebbe** (the Jiddish form). This is an interesting word, though its use is not completely positive. Old Semitic it is **𐤓𐤁** - literally the Other (God/god) of the house, or the other/ Other's house/tent, a.o. for a temple or the sun (the house of the gods in the vision of many I that region). In Aramaic (not Hebrew!) it came to represent [possibly via temple] for great [7229]¹³³ and either from there, or from the meaning 'the Other of the house' for a foreman, chief, director etc. (and for a multitude – pronounced as: *rob* 0). From there developed the Jewish word **Rabbi** - literally: my chief/boss.

I do not rule out a possibly strong connotation with **𐤓𐤁𐤁** - **r'abh**, that may have been there, which can be interpreted as *other father* or *godfather*. This reminds me of Jesus' remark: not call anyone father, for One is your Father... to which both Jewish religion and the R-C church have been a counter-movement in the way they called their leaders. I start to notice more and more how post-exilic (Babylonian) Judaism and Roman Catholicism often are on the same (dark, Greek) trail... ☺ As here...

¹³¹ See also: Egbert Brink, '[Le peuple de Dieu, un ensemble assemblé](#)', blog at *La Revue Réformée*, N° 210; Faculté Jean Calvin, Editions Kerygma; ISSN: 1777-5698.

¹³² Source: Abraham Joshua Heschel, '[The Meaning of This Hour](#)', lecture at a conference of Quaker leaders in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, March 1938; expanded and published in 1943. Posthumously incorporated (by Samuel H. Dresner - Ed.) in: *I Asked For Wonder – A Spiritual Anthology*, Crossroad, 1983; ISBN: 978 0824505424 p. 128; as such quoted in: '[The Bloods of Your Brother](#)', blog by Skip Moen, 22 May 2011.

¹³³ Or as loanword from Sumerian, via Akkadian. In Sumerian **rabum** stood for 'great'. **Rabu** was the verb 'to make great' or to raise up (as: of children).

That house of the other אבּוּ we encounter as well in another word that is worth mentioning: אבּוּ - 'arab (from which also our word Arab). This is an interesting word because it has so many, seemingly totally different meanings, which, however, can all be traced back to that old Semitic ground form: *seeing the other's house* (various of those meanings also say something about how Israel saw the original Arab nomads [6152])¹³⁴:

When you saw the sun – that house of the gods – (i.e. when you could look at it without being blinded), the sun was close to the horizon (rising or going down) and so you were looking towards *the east* or especially: *the west* [6153 vgl. 6150] (among the Semites the Arabs were the ones living most south-west). When you were watching the house of the [human] other, you apparently went to visit him/her (the Arab nomads were very hospitable), which was *pleasant, sweet* [6149, 6156] (they made you feel *pleasant*). Or it became *evening* [6150, 6153] and you had to spend the night there. Or you went to obtain or give a *security or mortgage* [6148]. Or you *mixed (up)* [6151, 6154] or *intermixed* with others (according the Biblical narrative, the forefathers of the Arabs, such as Ishmael and Esau did not remain faithful to YaHUaH). Or through the covering of cloth (tent) or clay (house) the structure of sticks of the other's house became visible (*seeing the other's house*, very physical): *poplar* or *willow wood* [6155] (grows fast, is not strong/thorough). It could also be a *swarm* [6157] of mosquitoes or other vermin who came to 'see' or visit the houses (or bodies) of people. [There might have been even additional confusion with 'arab – that one pried at someone else's earthly tent, in ambush, but that is with *aleph*, not *ayin*.]

Many words also contain a wealth in information about those times and the way people lived back then. For example: for what purposes certain basic materials were used. From לוז [3869] - *luz* - almond wood, literally: '[the material of] the connection between a leader and his sword / a farmer and his scythe' we see that this wood was used to make handles. From זָהָב [2091] - *záhábh* - gold, '(the material of) the big knives in the tent/house of worship (the Tabernacle/Temple)' that people found that most characteristic for gold, that it was used especially for the knives in the temple. So, apparently, that was the most well known/characteristic usage of gold! Etcetera.

With silver - כֶּסֶף [3701] - *kéceph* - 𐤀𐤍𐤏𐤍 - I had to think for a moment. But when you think of the ritual importance – e.g. on Egyptian pictures – of some cooling (some wind: 𐤀𐤍𐤏𐤍) for persons of authority (𐤀𐤍𐤏𐤍), which was done often with a palm (𐤀𐤍𐤏𐤍) leaf, e.g. a leaf/frond of a date tree, or of a palm tree like the *Copernicia baileyana*. And when you see that, it is clear immediately. And so is the equivalent כֶּסֶף [3700] - *kácaph* - to pant, to long for (as for water) to blanch, to grow pale (a loose palm leaf grows pale quickly; first turning even more silver-gray, later beige-brownish).

Ever wondered about the etymology of **ebony**, that precious kind of wood? In old Semitic it was 𐤀𐤍𐤏𐤍 - Hebrew הֶבֶן [1894] - *hoben*. Apparently, it was used as a way to honor the house of one's kids. Ezekiel 25: 17 affirms that it was used as a gift to honor others, indeed...

Very interesting I also find the family of words that can be traced back to the roots בּוּר or בָּר - *bōr*. In the old script: 𐤁𐤏𐤕, that is: house of or connected with God (or some other high one). Many of these words are related to purity, to purify, etc. – e.g. בָּר - *bōr* [H1252-3] – pure, purity, purifying lye, and בָּרַר - *bārar* [H1305] – to purify, to let shine. The house of God was and is pure and shining / radiant *par excellence*! One of the chemicals likely already used around 2000 BC (and still being used) as well as one of the prominent borates is *borax*,¹³⁵ that is found in nature. It was often used and is still used to purify silver and gold and when hot-soldering/welding these metals, to let it flow more easily and prevent oxidation (cf. Isa. 1: 25; Job 9: 30). With this *borax* the precious metal became or remained pure and shining (certain silver-polishes still contain *borax*; a very thin layer of it makes the silver shine and oxidate/blacken less quickly after polishing). This same *borax* is still used in detergents and bleaching compounds as well. A millennia-old means to purify one's hands was what we Dutch

¹³⁴ Frederic Delitzsch, in: *The Hebrew Language – Viewed in the Light of Assyrian Research*, (Williams & Norgate, London & Edinburgh, 1883; p.9) looks at Arabic and sees the meanings 'to enter, to set (of the sun)' as derived from a root starting with *ghayin* instead of 'ayin. This could be right as well, since the *ghayin* represents the notion of covering or hiding from sight, as the sun is hidden from sight upon its setting.

¹³⁵ For the etymology of *borax* dictionaries refer to the Perzian and/or Arabic *borak*, but the root is much older and can just be found in the Bible...

Even [a rather critical website says about borax](#): "According to legend, Babylonians brought borax from the Far East more than 4,000 years ago to be used by goldsmiths, and writings have frequently cited ancient Egyptians as using it in metallurgy, medicine, and mummification, but none of this can be substantiated. The nitron baurak of the Greeks, the borith of the Hebrews, the baurack of the Arabians, the boreck of the Persians, and the burack of the Turks might all appear to express the same substance, borate of soda (i.e. borax). However, there is little evidence to show when or whether these names described the substance we now know as borax (Na₂B₄O₇·10H₂O). In fact, they are all transliterations of the Arabic word meaning to glitter or shine."

call *boorwater*; water in which an acid or salt of boron is dissolved (this is an effective old disinfectant and preservative; it is anti-bacterial, anti-fungal and works also against moulds, viruses and insects; cf. boron acid ointment to extract dirt from surface wounds; cf. 2 Sam. 22: 21; Psalm 18: 21, 25). Our word *borax* and the name of the chemical element *boron* were most clearly etymologically derived from the old Semitic root *bōr*. A nice aspect is also, that boron is a very special element, relatively scarce in our solar system; predominantly in traces from comets, so from outside. Remarkable as well is the form in which it appears, amongst others in the form of glass-like crystals. It is also used in glass to make it more heat-resistant (Pyrex glass) and plays a role in the production of lcd-screens and protective clothes (bullet-proof vests). The boron-compound triethylboron is applied in the ignition of rocket engines because it burns so incredibly hot and intense. The crystal-/ glass-like and the extra-terrestrial origin remind me again of the visions of people who reported to have seen something of the heavenly *house of God*, or of *the New Jerusalem* that is a sort of 'house of God' as well...

For some words that are used only once or a few times in the Bible, and where earlier translators have largely *guessed* a meaning from the context, the old Semitic often provides a good insight. Take for example the word בַּתָּה - *batah/battah* [1326-7]. The first form only occurs in Yesha-Yahu (Isaiah) 5:6; the second in 7:19. The standard BDB and Strong's dictionaries available in most Bible software relate it to destruction and an old (hypothetical!) root verb: 'to break into pieces'. The KJV translates 'waste' and 'desolate' respectively. I see בַּתָּה and remember that the בַּתָּה was a locked-up house - representing a daughter that needed some protection to remain a virgin, and so hypothesize that honoring (בַּתָּה) that, our word בַּתָּה might just very well mean 'untouched' ('virgin land', unspoiled nature, still wildly overgrown, desolate or whatever). The KJV translations still seem okay in this case, but I see no need for a supposed root 'to break into pieces' here. The contexts of the verses seem to justify my point. For example (Is.5:6; note that even the clouds are not to 'touch' it):

and I will lay it **waste** (בַּתָּה); **it shall not be pruned nor dug**; but briars and thorns shall come up. And I will command the clouds that **they rain no rain on it**.

Talking about virginity, I consider the dictionary's derivation of בתולה - *bethulah* [1330-1] much more complicated than that of the old Semitic form בַּתָּה - a daughter of (connected to) an honorable leader (or a daughter, sure to be admired/appreciated by a secure leader - a skilled/worthy man; the 'pin' can also stand for a certain body part of such a prospective admirer). The old Semitic is decent and not as explicit as modern youth culture and its language, but it wasn't as prudish as our culture was before the '60-s of the last century; it mentioned even the more 'private' things in somewhat 'covered' terms, and sometimes these could be interpreted in various ways, but the meaning came across clearly enough, even in a few signs.

In the discussion of the letters I mentioned a few meanings of the word 'aleph. Something struck me when I looked up the Arabic equivalent. The three-letter Arabic word equivalent with אֵלֶף is: الف - *ilf* (with as variant: الياف - *alif*) - intimate; good friend, loved one. Understandable from the old Semitic symbols: אֵלֶף - the mouth (and hand, with *alif*) of the first leader. Apparently, the early Arabs associated someone's mouth primarily with kissing, while the Jews thought primarily of teaching (only with the Hebrew variant אֵלֶף / אֵלֶף [441] - 'alluph - the mouth *connected* to the first leader - one encounters in the dictionary, next to the meanings 'boss' and 'tame/docile' also: '(close) friend'; the last two also with the Arabic الواف - *aluf*, that can also mean 'attached, faithful, dedicated'). That is clearly a somewhat different accent in those cultures...

By the way, I see much similarity between *ilf/alif* and the Dutch 'lief' (lovely, loving), in terms of the letters and the meaning (in particular in Flanders 'lief' is also used as a noun, for a loved one... Looks like good food for Mr. Mozeson)... By which I am back also - in a different way, namely via love - at the 'aleph as 'first'! Even the symbol אֵלֶף appears already to have that connotation of 'first' in the sense of 'most intimately loved' or 'the one you are most attached to', such that we can actually learn something of those early Arabs and can explain all those words like 'El (God), 'abh (father), 'am (mother) and 'ishah (woman/wife) along this line as well.

Sometimes the significance for Bible-explanation is limited, but a old Semitic explanation may remind us of more familiar vocabulary. That I encountered e.g. in אֵלֶף - *qatan* - small - to be explained literally e.g. as: the rising (growing) shell (clothes) of your children (growing, but still small). Those clothes were most easily made of *cotton*. Indeed: the two appear to be related, via the Arabic (and, I assume: old Semitic) *qutun*! Looking at how cotton grows, אֵלֶף, as being 'the growing/ raising shell of the seed', is a very good description of cotton growing in the cotton boll around the seed indeed, so in combination with the Arabic *qutun* and an Akkadian *kataanu* - small, thin, flat (of textile fibers!), I do not rule out this remarkable old Semitic explanation and origin!

Cotton was indeed already grown around 3000 BC in Egypt (probably still earlier already in India, China,

Peru), and so it must have been known at the time of the patriarchs in that region. By the way, Internet-blog author Balashon then asks: why is the current Hebrew word for cotton - כותנה - *kutna*, written so differently? With reference to Klein he lays a link between *kutna* and the Aramaic כִּיתָן - *kitan* - flax, linen (according Jastrow *kitan* is derived from the root כָּתַת - pounding, hammering, and this is how flax was prepared [?]) and the Hebrew כִּתוֹנֶת - *kutonet* - coat (from which: tunic), originally made of linen, according to Klein, while e.g. a Jewish *qittel* was actually made of cotton. An old Hebrew name for the cotton plant was גִּפְן צִמֶר - *tsemer gephen* - wool of the grape (possibly because the leaves looked like those of the vine [?]).

An even nicer example of this I found our word 'notes' (music) and 'note' (incl.: to note, block note, etc.). Did you ever know that this is probably from Proto-Semitic descent? In Arabic that original form still exists: نوت - *not* - musical note, and نوتة - *nota* - note, remark (in Dutch a *nota* is a bill; bills were among the earliest writings/inscriptions found so far). old Semitic: 𐤎𐤕𐤍 - what comes forth from using a pin (with sharp point) to put marks/signs; so: the writings; yes, especially that hastily scribbled 'note'.¹³⁶ ☺

Interesting is the Hebrew word for 'sun': שֶׁמֶשׁ - *shemesh*. When studying [the old Semitic form of it](#), I noticed that the *sin/samekh* and the *shin* were confused here already early in the development of the Semitic languages (e.g.: Hebrew: two *shin*'s, Maltese: two *sin*'s, Old South Arabian and reconstructed Proto-Semitic: a *shin* and a *sin*). The explanation for that can apparently be found in the meaning of the symbols. Both forms - with *sin/samekh* and with *shin* - seem to be a cry-out by someone who walks in the hot desert sun already too long: a call for a source/well (𐤍) and/or a palm tree (𐤍), and water (𐤍). At a well/oasis there were palm trees and where palm trees grew, there often was a well (or you could tap some palm juice), such that these two are indeed equivalent here and can enforce each other. Remarkable is that indeed this old word stood especially for *the heat* of the sun.

Possible interpretations... a note on how to arrive at them

The interpretations that I give in the above list with the meanings (Table 2), are *possible* interpretations. Historically, they are not necessarily the most original ones; to ascertain those with some confidence, a lot more research would be needed, if it is possible at all, after all these millennia. Yet I wanted to do my best to arrive at least at the most realistic interpretation attainable within the frame of this study. There are words of which it is not easy to determine such a *most* realistic interpretation, for example because there are multiple explanations possible that - on first sight - all look equally plausible. Such a situation demands a little deeper investigation, both of the usage of the words in the Bible, and of customs from those days and those circumstances.

Take for example the words 𐤇𐤏𐤍 [2616-2617] - *chacad*, *cheded*, and 𐤇𐤏𐤍 [2623] - *chacid*. The meanings according to the dictionary are: *chacad* - being loyal, faithful, merciful, friendly / being reproached or admonished; *cheded* - friendliness, faithfulness / shame; *chacid* - friendly, spiritually devoted. How do these correspond to the old Semitic forms: 𐤇𐤏𐤍 and 𐤇𐤏𐤍? By imagining myself even a little bit in that situation, I could read in 𐤇𐤏𐤍: move the border/skin (interpreted naively as: the outside of the trunk) of a palm tree by hand - hoping, of course, that it drops some of its fruits. If he does so, your action is successful. The palm tree was 'friendly', or 'faithful' to you, we might say. With some effort I can see the shaking as reproaching or admonition of the stubborn trunk, but the shame-aspect is not in it. If I dig a bit deeper, I discover from other word meanings and some study of palm trees, that the skin, outside or cover (𐤍) of a palm tree quite likely is not referring to the outside of the trunk, but to the 'skirt' of dried and into each other entangled palm branches/leaves, just below the top, above which are the living branches and the fruits. In addition, I can think somewhat more specific of palm trees like the date palm, which you almost *have to* climb to pluck the date clusters. In order to do so, you have to *remove* that obstructing 'skirt' of the (stubborn!) palm tree, before the sweet fruits become reachable (unless you visit it regularly and maintain it well, in which case it is a lot easier). The palm tree that allows that is *not stubborn* but again *graceful, friendly and loyal*. That removing of the 'skirt' of awkward dead palm leaves with their sharp edges, is easy to relate to the removal of stubbornness by admonition. The palm tree then looses a piece of shell/'clothing' (for which the 𐤍 often stands); it stands a bit 'naked' then, which also makes the connotation with shame a bit more obvious (apart from via admonition or reproach). And in that way it makes this explanation more plausible than the first one. Next to this, with a verb one has to take into account the inflections that actually appear in the Bible. These appear to go along quite well with this last explanation here. Still two other explanations are possible here as well: Houses of rich people, kings, etc. were usually surrounded by palm trees. 𐤇𐤏𐤍 might represent entering (𐤇) the circumference or border (𐤍)

¹³⁶ See also the brief article: '[A brief note](#)', at this 𐤇 Hallelu-YaH site, January 2012.

formed by those palm trees (𐤏), as a special favor granted. However, in this case, only the *hiph'il* form (make someone else enter) would be supported with a meaning associated to 'grace' or 'goodness'. And the 'shame' meaning is not or hardly supported. Lastly, the palm tree in 𐤏𐤏𐤍 is positioned between a wall and a door; it can be regarded as serving as a doorpost. The doorpost was usually bent at the top, such that both doorposts came together there. By this doorpost, a servant may have been standing, who welcomed everybody in. From this bent post or the bowing servant, *chesed* might have come to stand for having a bent neck, that is for nodding friendly to someone of lower standing. The bending of the neck or head can, of course, also be related to shame, such that this might provide another viable explanation.¹³⁷

To finish this part...

What is so nice about this way of reading/studying the Hebrew words, I consider that it is so much in tune with the life of the Bible and those times. Besides, using the pictures of the old Semitic script as a study aid, I find that I can much more easily remember the meaning of many Hebrew words. To illustrate that, I gave the above list of words and their *possible* interpretation/re-construction from the old Semitic pictograms.

Regularly I am still extending and updating this list (suggestions are most welcome!), and checking it with other Semitic languages, as Arabic, in which even the oldest Proto-Semitic is often better conserved. The study of culture, customs, habits and languages of those days also continues and may yield new or additional insights.

¹³⁷ See also the brief studies '[What God YaHUaH says about Himself](#)', January 2012 and '[Pesach \(2\) God opens the way to life](#)', April 2012, here at this [Hallelu-YaH website](#).

A number of significant Hebrew names

Also a large number of – esp. early Biblical – personal and geographical **names** are most significant in the old Semitic script. Below some examples:

Table 3. Hebrew names and their meaning according the old Semitic signs

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
		יָהּ	YāH	3050	He Who gives, who acts, such that you stand in wonder and awe / worship (Him) (or celebrate what He gives): YāH
		יְהוָה	YeHUāH	3068-3074	the God Who gives life ; Who lets us be / live ; worship and celebrate together in joyful wonder and in secure attachment: YāHUaH / YeHUaH
		אַבְרָם	'Abhrām	87	the father of many others / exalted father (see at <i>ram</i>): Abram ¹³⁸
		אַבְרָהָם	'Abhrāhām	85	the father of many others-who-worship (God): Abraham
		אָדָם	'Adam	120	the first who moved a lot / the first with blood (the first man 'of flesh and blood'): Adam
		אַהֲרֹן	'Aharon	175	the first who honors the other descendant (namely: Moses) (possibly also related to the old Egyptian <i>aha rw</i>): Aaron
		אוֹנָן	'Onān	209	powerful (1 ^e ; cf. 'on 202) descendant: Onan
		אֵלִיָּהוּ	'Eliyah	452	my God is YāHUaH / YaHUaH is God (the Prominent Leader, He gives joyful worship and fellowship): Elija
		אֶנוֹשׁ	'Enosh	582	first offspring connected to the Source (God - <i>El Shaddai</i>): Enosh ¹³⁹
		אֲסֻנַּת	'Āsnat	621	primary palm tree (i.e. fruitfulness, life giver) to complete offspring (wife of Joseph): Asnat ¹⁴⁰
		אֶסְתֵּר	'Estēr	635	the prominent one [with] the palm tree sign (sign of life/survival) of the Other (God): Esther ¹⁴¹
		אַרָם	'Arām	758	the ox of the others / the prominent <i>ram/re'em</i> (see there): exalted - Aram

A **grey letter** denotes that it is not always there. The explanations in **gray** are preliminary ideas; not yet verified and not so clear that it really should be *that* explanation. **Purple text**, a **purple A** or **Arab.** denotes Arabic; **Aramaic variants** are often set in **dark red**. Variants in other languages, such as **Akkadian (Ak)** or **Proto-Semitic (PS)** often in **green**.

The *ā* is the sound of the Hebrew *kamats ā*, as in *aahhh*. The *ē* that of the *tseree*, as in *play*, the long *i* is pronounced *ee* as in (*to*) *see*. The *u* represents the *oo*-sound as in *cool*, unless denoted otherwise.

The right column gives the explanation and the most common transliteration; the 4th column a more accurate transliteration.

¹³⁸ Some interpret אַבְרָם as אַבְרָאָם - *high* father (from: אָב - father, and רָאָם - *r'am/r'ém/ rá'am* [7213 –4] - literally, according to the old signs: 'other oxen' or 'Gods'oxen'; a *larger* variety, possibly a large bison or a *ram*, originally an auroch with impressive shoulder height up to 2 m.).

¹³⁹ Gen.4:26 when Enosh was born, it is also recorded that the people started to call on the Name of **YāHUaH** – the glorious Name expressing that God wants to be with His people. According to some MSS, *he*, Enosh, was the first to call on the Name of **YāHUaH**.

¹⁴⁰ It is not clear whether this is her Egyptian name, or a Semitic translation of it.

¹⁴¹ Commonly considered to be of Persian (a Semitic language as well) origin; if that is right, the observation that in this script this name is so fitting to Esther's life goal is a clear sign of God's sovereignty!

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤂	𐤁	גַּד	<i>Gad</i>	1410 cf. 1413- 1418	to enter/move with one's foot or staff: to invade (invasion) ; [this was often done in] a troop/ band ; Israel's son, the tribe and the god/idol Gad
𐤂𐤅𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤅𐤁𐤁	Γολγοθα גולגולת	<i>Golgotha Gulgolet</i>	G1115 1538	usual explanation: <i>galgal</i> - feet for a leader - wheel/to roll/round, with 𐤁 - thing/finished: round thing (death) ⇒ skull (place) (cf. Arabic: جالجله - <i>galgalah</i> - skull) / also : footing (pedestal) for <i>the</i> Shepherd/Leader on the cross: Golgotha
𐤂𐤅𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤅𐤁𐤁	גְּרִזִּים	<i>Gerizim</i>	1630	the pedestal/foot (the mountain) where God gave His riches in abundance; (in other words: where God gave the people of Israel His blessing, cf. Deut.11: 29; & 27: 12): the mountain Gerizim ¹⁴²
𐤂𐤅𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤅𐤁𐤁	הָאֵבֶל / הָבֵל / هابيل	<i>Hābhel / Hābil</i> ¹⁴³	1893 ⇒189 1 - 1892	worship to / rejoice in Father God (<i>what Eve did at the birth of him and his twin brother!</i>) / joy for the house of the shepherd: Abel ¹⁴⁴
𐤂𐤅𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤅𐤁𐤁	הַגֵּר	<i>Hagar</i>	1904	worshipping/honoring going with the other (Abraham & Sarah) (humbly at their feet and going with them, from Egypt): Hagar ¹⁴⁵
𐤂𐤅𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤅𐤁𐤁	הַדַּסָּה	<i>Hadassāh</i>	1919	joy in the gate to the continuing life (Tree of Life!) in worship: Hadassa
𐤂𐤅𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤅𐤁𐤁	חַוָּה Gr. EYA	<i>Chuāh Chawwāh jua</i>	2332 cf also 2331	flesh & skin over a stick (rib of Adam), brought to life / rejoiced in / cf. <i>chaiah</i> – life: giver of life: Eve ¹⁴⁶
𐤂𐤅𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤅𐤁𐤁	חַם	<i>Cham</i>	2526	(under) many (sheep)skins (you become): warm, hot; Cham
𐤂𐤅𐤁𐤁	𐤁𐤅𐤁𐤁	חַנָּה	<i>Channah</i>	2584	grace to rejoice in: Hannah

¹⁴² The offspring of the northern state of Israel still worship and offer sacrifices to God there...

¹⁴³ The Arabic spelling هابيل - *Hābil* has an additional *aleph* and *yod* in it. The *aleph* appears to be original. The Akkadian *ablu* - son may well be derived from Abel's name. From Akkadian it is clear that *il* is a variant of *El*, such that the Arabic confirms my explanation here.

Not without reason after his tragic death his name – stripped of the first joyful-worship sign (!), the 𐤁 – became a word for 'to bewail, lament, mourn': אָבַל [56] - *'abhal/'abhel*. I suspect that on any moment, for a clear distinction (or in the harmonisation to three letter words) the *'aleph* was dropped from Abel's name.

¹⁴⁴ With the births of many people, the Bible gives an explanation of his or her name, often spoken by one of the parents. It is often thought that Abel is an exception to this, but that appears not so. At the birth of Cain and Abel Eve explains the name of Cain *and* speaks her appreciation for **YaHUaH**, thereby explaining Abel's name as well. His later profession / the workplace in which he rejoiced is related to his name; see *'ābhēl* [58].

¹⁴⁵ Note that in Islam she is called *Hayar*, this difference is significant: there she primarily is not a slave who *went* with Abraham (at his feet, cf. Mary/Miriam w. Jesus) but a *'handmaiden'* - a *working* help at home (cf. Martha).

¹⁴⁶ See also under *chawah* – to breathe, to live – Eve was also the 'mother of all living'; in that sense she gave life to the entire world population.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤔𐤕𐤁𐤓	𐤔𐤕𐤁𐤓	חֲנוֹךְ	Chanokh	2585	grace connected to the reigning and blessing hand (of God): Enoch ¹⁴⁷
𐤕𐤁𐤓	𐤕𐤁𐤓	יָבָל	Yābāl	2989	he gave a tent/hut to the shepherd(s): ¹⁴⁸ Jabal
𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕	𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕	יְהוּדָה	Yehudāh	3063	contraction of YaHUāH wadāh – one who mentions/ thanks/ praises God YaHUaH ; side-connotation: entrance to YaHUaH : Judah
𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕𐤕	יְהוֹחָנָן	Yehochā-nān / Yahu-chanan	3076 3110	He gives secure belonging and grace / YaHU 's grace: Jochanan / John ¹⁴⁹
𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕	𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕	יֹבָל	Yubāl	3106 vgl. 3104	he gave the tent pin container (rams horn – also as musical instrument – to the shepherd(s)): ¹⁵⁰ Jubal
𐤕𐤁𐤓	𐤕𐤁𐤓	יוֹנָה	Yonāh	3123 - 3124	see <i>yonah</i> in the previous table, and the footnote with it
𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕	𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕	יוֹסֵף	Yosēph Yocēph	3130	prophetic : He gave life (connection with the Tree of Life) via an opening [i.e. a plan for the 7 years long famine] / he gave a connection with the palm tree mouth (the speaking of God): Joseph (commonly: another / one more please) ¹⁵¹
𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕𐤕	יַעֲקֹב	Ya'aqobh A: Ya'qūb	3290	the hand holding the heel (see in Table 2 at 'āqēb [6119]): Jacob
𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕	𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕	יָפֶת	Yephet	3315	He gives a sign of an opening / He gives an opening definitely: Japhet (= opened)
𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕𐤕	יִצְחָק	Yitschāq	3327	he laughs / makes to laugh (see at <i>tsāchaq</i> [6711]): Isaac
𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕𐤕𐤕	יְרוּשָׁלַיִם יְרוּשָׁלַם	Yeru-shala'im Yeru-shalēm	3389- 3390	God gives a covenant of peace (<i>shalom</i>): Jerushalem / Jerushala'im
𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕𐤕𐤕	יִשְׁמָעֵאל	Ishmā'ēl	3458	God ('El), He gave a water well to see / rescued (cf. Genesis 21: 19; thereby He heard and answered <i>Hagar</i> and <i>Ishmā'ēl</i>): Ishmael
𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕	𐤕𐤁𐤓𐤕𐤕𐤕𐤕	יִשְׂשָׁכָר	Issāskhār	3667	He (God) gave the dates ¹⁵² (/ the drink) in the powerful hand of the other (Rachel) (or: I (Leah) gave the dates in the powerful hand of the Other (God)) (Gen.30:14-18): Issaschar

¹⁴⁷ For Cain (Gen.4:17) it was great grace, yet to receive new, ongoing life (offspring).

From the great dedication towards God of a later Enoch – son of Jered (Gen.5:18-24) – later the meaning: dedication / to dedicate developed and was adopted into the verb *chanakh*.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Gen. 4: 20 "he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have cattle."

¹⁴⁹ John was unparalleled as the apostle and Gospel writer of bonding, love and grace!

¹⁵⁰ Cf. our verb *to jubilate*. He was the inventor of musical instruments, says Gen. 4: 21; the brother of Jabal.

¹⁵¹ In the usual explanation his name is seen as derived from *yācaph* – to change, to add, and explained as 'let him add' or: 'yet another' (Rachel was jealous at Leah with her sons, and at Joseph's birth she wanted also still another son like him). The origin of *yācaph* can very well be sought in the meaning: 'he gives an opening to

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤀𐤊𐤍	כלב	כָּלֵב	<i>Kālēbh</i>	3612	blessing hand (with authority) over Israēl – ‘the house of the Leader’: Caleb (= dog) ¹⁵³
𐤀𐤊𐤍	כנען	כְּנַעַן	<i>Kenā’an</i>	3667	the reigning hand of one child/offspring sees the other child/offspring: Canaan (would be dominated by his brothers Gen.9:20-25 ¹⁵⁴)
𐤀𐤊𐤍	לאה	לֵאָה	<i>Lē’āh</i>	3812	the Leader’s (God’s) / shepherd’s (Jacob’s) primary worshipper / Jacob’s primary wife / <i>Lo’-āh</i> (cf. [3808]): the one not worshipped/ loved / no joy/awe (and therefore looking weary): Leah
𐤀𐤊𐤍	לוט	לוֹט	<i>Lot</i>	3876	leader with a pin with covering (= uncircumcised) / the Leader secured his ‘earthen shell’: Lot
𐤀𐤊𐤍	לוי	לוֹי	<i>Lēvi</i>	3878 cf. 3867	the Leader provides security and attachment to me (my acts) / my connectedness with the shepherd / the shepherd’s (Ja’aqob’s) ‘pin’ is for me (said Leah, on his birth): Levi / Levy
𐤀𐤊𐤍	למך	לִמְךָ	<i>Lemekh</i>	3929	the Leader [gave him] much authority / leader with a lot of authority: Lamech
𐤀𐤊𐤍	מואב	מוֹאָב	<i>Mo’ab</i>	4124	coming forth from the connection with (or ‘pin’ of) father: son coming from incest by daughter of Lot with her drunken father (Gen.19:30-37; later: people serving idols and often fighting Israel): Moab
𐤀𐤊𐤍	מצרים	מִצְרַיִם	<i>Mitsraim</i>	4713- 4714	others with a lot of papyrus/reed/grain ¹⁵⁵ / heavily oppressing others / the others from whose midst Israel was squeezed out (by YaHUaH) (plural <i>-im</i>): Egypt
𐤀𐤊𐤍	מרדכי	מֶרְדֳּכַי	<i>Mordekhai</i>	4782	the abundance of God entered via my blessing hand: via him God blessed ‘Ester as queen and thereby the entire people: Mordechai

new life’, certainly in a context of getting more children, which from early on became *the* way in Israel to yet have some kind of eternal life (with the palm tree as symbol of the *Tree of Life*, and thus for ‘life eternal’).

¹⁵² The dates (Hebr. *duda’im*) of the date palm were (and still are) seen in the Middle East as very conducive for – in particular male – fertility and sexual urge (cf. Song of S. 7: 7-8); almost certainly these were the fruits for which Leah bought a night sleeping with Jacob, from Rachel. The ‘bunchy’ way they grow looks like a basket (2nd meaning of *duda’im*; cf. also Jer.24:1), which confirms this theory. Probably because of the connotation with eating (*shin* as breasts, teeth or bow) and/or fondling (*shin* as breasts) the *sin* and not the *samekh* was chosen here, when this letter sort of ‘spliced’ into these two.

¹⁵³ Like the Syro-Phenician woman later with Jesus, he also had a faithful and subjecting attitude towards God like a servile **dog** (*keleb* - blessing heart / blessing for the house of his master).

¹⁵⁴ In the notion in his name that one descendant sees the other, I see a link with the usual translation: ‘lowland’.

¹⁵⁵ Both Abraham and Jacob went to Egypt in a time of famine for wheat/grain! The Nile-delta was renowned for its successful reed-, grain- and papyrus culture, while cotton flourished as well in Egypt (possibly even was invented there). In **Arabic** Egypt is still **مصر** - *Mitsr*. The name **Egypt** is derived from the Greek Αἴγυπτος - *Aígyptos*, from *Hikuptah* (Memphis), a mutilation of the old Egyptian name *Chwt-ka-Ptach* - house of the *ka* (soul) of *Ptah*, the name of a temple for the idol/god *Ptah* in Memphis. The word *Coptic* is derived from an early Greek form as well.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤌𐤎𐤏𐤓	𐤌𐤎𐤏𐤓	מִרְיָם MAPIAM	Miriām Mariam	4813 G3137	the abundance of the Other (God) (see also at 'amar) gave a mother ('em): Miriam, Mary ¹⁵⁶
𐤌𐤎𐤏𐤓	𐤌𐤎𐤏𐤓	מֹשֶׁה	Mosheh originally(?): Mushah	4871- 4872	to worship or 'let live' water/abundance of the source: draw out: Moses ¹⁵⁷ (someone who worshipped the Source a lot!)
𐤌𐤎𐤏𐤓	𐤌𐤎𐤏𐤓	נֹד	Nod	5113	offspring/child connected to movement (/ who had his tent pins moved; who had to leave): Nod (area to which Cain, child of Adam & Eve, 'walked'; after murdering his brother)
𐤌𐤎𐤏𐤓	𐤌𐤎𐤏𐤓	נֹחַ ¹⁵⁸	Noach	5146	new life for the flesh; seed for all flesh (from him and the animals in the ark came all later people and animals forth) / descendant who went over the border (of death of the Flood) and got/found(ed) new life on the other side: Noah
𐤌𐤎𐤏𐤓	𐤌𐤎𐤏𐤓	נִמְרוֹד	Nimrod	5248	descendant – a mighty hunter (an other with a moving pin - an arrow or spear) / desc. who had many others move an arrow or spear – a leader of hunters: Nimrod ¹⁵⁹
𐤌𐤎𐤏𐤓	𐤌𐤎𐤏𐤓	עֵדֶן	'Eden	5731	seeing the movement (play) of your children (grandchildren, etc.) / having a view on the open door of one's children (good relationship) / having a view on the Door to Life: Eden ; delight

¹⁵⁶ The forms **MAPIA** and **MAPIAM** are the Greek forms as appearing in the New Testament. The first two letters (*Mar*) in Semitic languages also denote 'Lord'/'Master'/'Highest God', such that the explanation becomes that the Highest God provided her to be a mother.

Note that my explanation of her name is very different from the Jewish one. That one sees her name (without the 'aleph in it) as: *rebellion*... (from *marah*, which already underwent a drastic change of meaning itself)! The difference is quite embarrassing! By the way, that explanation *rebellion* stems from the explanation *bitter*, actually: *brine*, to be traced back to: (salt) water (𐤌) from God's (𐤎; i.e. the great) sea (𐤌𐤎). (She was – even according that explanation – salt, i.e. spicy/hot/lively/spirited at most, not bitter.)

Concerning the name of Miriam (Moses' sister): she was literally the other at the water, providing a mother... I consider these explanations really better fitting than those of 'rebellion' or 'bitterness'...

¹⁵⁷ Josephus Flavius had another explanation: „Hereupon it was that Thermuthis imposed this name *Mouses* upon him, from what had happened when he was put into the river; for the Egyptians call water by the name of *Mo*, and such as are saved out of it, by the name of *Uses*: so by putting these two words together, they imposed this name upon him.” (*Antiquities of the Jews* II: hst 9, pt.6; p.238; see also: *Against Apion* I:286). Josephus was partly right, for the first part of Moses' name (*mu*) indeed meant water in Egyptian, as affirmed by Philo of Alexandria (*De Vita Mosis* I:17). But the second part (s3) stood in Egyptian not for 'saved from' but for 'son', as in *Ramses* (son of *Ra*, the sun god), *Ahmose* (according Gerard Gertoux: son of *Jah*, honored there as moon god). In this way Moses was seen by the princes as son of the water-god, the Nile. The Egyptian explanation of his name differed from the Semitic one with a double meaning (bodily and prophetic given by his parents, led by God).

¹⁵⁸ It is at least remarkable that the name of Noah is composed of the same two letters as the original root of grace/compassion: 𐤎𐤏 - *chen*. God allowed him and his family to survive, while the rest of the world went down. This letter combination is contained in more spiritually and historically significant names: Enoch (/Chenokh - 𐤎𐤏𐤍 - grace reigns), Hannah (/Channah - 𐤎𐤏𐤍 - rejoice about grace / grace in feminine form), and Yahu-chanan/Yochanan/John in this list, and still many others.

¹⁵⁹ Strong's dictionary says: "probably of foreign origin"! BDB guesses: "'rebellion" or "the valiant"'; while the most obvious old Semitic explanation is so simple, and fitting and appropriate in the context...

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏	𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏	עַמּוֹן	'Ammon	1151 5983	offspring (son) of Ben-Ammi: the son (Ben) whom the youngest daughter of Lot had (she saw to it) come forth from incest with (/the 'pin' of) her drunken father (Gen.19:30-38; later: people that served idols and often fought Israel): Ammon(ites)
𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏𐤅	𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏𐤅	עַמּוֹרָה Γόμορρα	Ghamor-rāh	6017 G1116	(Semitic form with <i>ghayin</i>) covered (with debris/ in ruins) (and so not visible anymore), a place of idolatry with many gods and/or where the phallus was much worshipped as divine: Gomorrha
𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏 𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏	𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏 𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏	עֵשָׂו	'Ēsāw / 'Ēsāu	6215	looking like the trunk of the palm: reddish brown, coarse and hairy / he saw the date palm (fertility) as his security / he looks after the fertility of his 'pin': Esau
𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏𐤅	𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏𐤅	פֶּרֶע'ה ΦΑΡΑΩ	Phare'oh	6547	opening / channel (and mouthpiece) of the (Egyptian) god/idol Ra' to be worshipped/ honored: Pharaoh/Farao ¹⁶⁰
𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏	𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏	צֹר	Tsur	6697	(cf. list of normal words): Rock , also: Righteous God, Righteous One connected to God: Jesus (The Rock) ¹⁶¹
𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏𐤅	𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏𐤅	צִיּוֹן صهيون ΣΙΩΝ	Tsion Tsahyun Sion	6724- 6726	'the result of pressing with a stick' or: 'parched (dry) place': Tsion / Zion ¹⁶² can also be interpreted as: the Righteous One Whom we worship gives (there) connection/attachment/ a covenant to His children
𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏	𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏	צִלָּה	Tsillāh	6741	plants (e.g. mats weaved of reed) to honor a leader: sunshade, shadow: Zilla (2 nd wife of Lamech)
𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏𐤅	𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏𐤅	צִפְנָת פַּנְעַח	Tsaphenat Pa'neach	6847	grain opening for the offspring finishing/constructing – (pre)viewing an opening for offspring over the border (name given by Phara'oh to Joseph): Safenat Paneach ¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ The usual explanation from the Egyptian hieroglyphs *pr* '3' is that the title is derived from 'great house' (as in USA English 'the White House' coming to represent the President or Government).

One can pose the question how the Semitic interpretation could fit so well. An explanation is that the Semitic form is inspired by phonological likeness and an effort to give a reasonable explanation to those sounds. In addition, around the beginning of the second millennium BC Egyptian had not evolved as far from the Semitic languages, to which it was related in ancient times (Abraham and Joseph could somehow understand it and make themselves understood there!); this was amplified by trade. Many Egyptian words could therefore still be in some accordance with the build-up of words from basic notions and their sounds, even when quite another script was used there.

¹⁶¹ Cf. e.g.. Deut 32: 3-7; Jer. 23: 5; Zef. 3: 5; Acts 3: 14; 22: 14; 1 John 2: 1.

¹⁶² The symbols, grain - hand - stick - seed, remind us also of the threshing of grain – something not pleasant for the grainstems in the metaphor, but certainly useful in the end (cf. Isa. 64: 10; Jer. 4: 31; 26: 18; 31: 12; Micha 3: 12; 4: 10-13).

In Arabic (صهيون - *Tsahyun*) this word has an extra *āh/hē* – there it is a **holy/praiseworthy** pressing out, or it is the **life** being pressed out, and the Righteous One, **Whom we worship**, respectively.

¹⁶³ In history, many have wrestled with this name or title. A well fitting Egyptian name has not been found for long. Fürst cites Brugsch, who explains it as 'p-so-nto-p-ench = prince of the life of the world'. Brown, Driver, Briggs & Gesenius say it would be Egyptian for: '**the god speaks and he lives**'. Others, especially text-critical people who want to date the text later, relate it to Coptic, wherein it would look like '**A revealer of secrets**'. The Septuagint has its own interpretation: Ψονθομφανηχ - *Psonthomphanech* what has been explained by Judaist rabbi's as: *Soter Cosmon – the Savior of the World*. *Paneach* can be read as transliteration of the Egyptian *Pa-en-Ankh* – Father of Life (the *ankh* or *anch* was connected to the notion of

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Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
קַיִן	𐤒𐤆𐤍	קַיִן	Qayin	7014	descendant (child of Adam & Eve) with a 'rising side-branch' (i.e. mascul. member ¹⁶⁴); so: a male descendant ; / raised his hand ¹⁶⁵ against a descendant (of Adam & Eve): Cain
רִבְקָה	𐤓𐤁𐤒𐤕𐤁	רִבְקָה PEBEKKA	Ribhqaḥ	7259	God's house ascending to worship: Rebecca ¹⁶⁶
רֹּוּת	𐤓𐤕𐤕	רֹּוּת	Ruth	7327	God's covenant-sign / God sees the sign of the covenant: friendship: Ruth
רַחַב	𐤓𐤁𐤕	רַחַב	Rāchabh	7337	the other with the house on the wall (/with the 'fleshly'/carnal house) / God's shelter house: Rachabh ¹⁶⁷
רָחֵל	𐤓𐤕𐤕	רָחֵל	Rāchēl	7353	God's meat / skin (wool!) for the shepherd: ewe/sheep: Rachel
רְעוּאֵל	𐤓𐤕𐤕𐤕	רְעוּאֵל PAFOYHA	Reghu'ēl ¹⁶⁸	7467	friend (see [7466]) of God (see [410]): Reuel, Reu'el

breath of life).

In Hebrew the name can be related to the words: *tsaphan* = to hide, to cover, to hoard, to store, to treasure up (from *tsiphon* (with *wav* = o) = darkness); and *pa'neach* = (according to Fürst:) in *Pihel*: to discover, to brighten up, to make clear, what comes down to about the earlier explanation from Coptic.

Prof. Pascal Vernus, in his *Dictionnaire amoureux de l'Égypte pharaonique*, éditions Plon, 2009, (ISBN 978-2-259-19091-6), p. 513-4, explains the Egyptian name Zaphnath-paneah as corresponding with the Egyptian name **Djed-panotcher-ioufānkh** - Le-dieu-a-dit-qu'il-vivra - **The God has said that he shall live**. *Djed*, he says, is the past tense of the verb to speak; transformed to *Tsa* in Hebrew, for the *d* of *Djed* had disappeared from the pronunciation already for long. Normally, then follows the name of the God; *Panotcher* here is 'God' in general, to do justice to Joseph's monotheism. And *iouf* is put into Hebrew in the form *ph*; the prefix of the 3^e futurum, third person singular; the personal pronoun -*f*, he, refers to the carrier of the name. Finally: *ānkh*, translated to *neach* in Hebrew, is the verb to live, in the infinitive after the prefix *iouf*.

This explanation and translation I find very remarkable, because the God of the Bible is notorious: (1) for His **speaking** with authority, and (2) for His **living / being there** – the old verb *hawah* that is connected to the glorious Name **YaHUaH**.

The explanation from the old signs adds to that a remarkable association which any Semite could have with this name.

¹⁶⁴ In Arabic **أير** - '*air*' (old Semitic: the prominent/primary hand/arm/side-branch of the other) is a euphemism for the masculine member.

¹⁶⁵ In Arabic a *qin* (same old Semitic form as *Qayin*) is a (metal) smith – that is also someone who raises his hand to hit something hard; the same root is used for the verb 'to forge' as well.

¹⁶⁶ The regular explanation of her name is something like 'ensnarer' (on rather vague grounds). The symbols denote that God lived in her and that she regularly went up to worship Him. She came from a God fearing family – a.o. her brother Laban appeared to know **YaHUaH** as well.

¹⁶⁷ Via the light connotation with *rea/righ* [7453] - friend (as another who embraces you) there is also a link with a house of a friend, i.e. a friendly, welcoming, spacious house that is around you and protects you.

¹⁶⁸ The Greek form with *gamma* is a strong indication that the '*ayin* here was originally a *ghayin*.

(continued)

Old Semitic	Paleo-Hebrew	modern	translit.	Strong	possible interpretation from the old Semitic pictures, and meaning
		שְׁבָא صباح	Shebā' Tsebāch	7614	according to the old Arabic: (land of) reed house-primairy-wall (the primairy walls of houses are of reed): Sheba ¹⁶⁹
		שְׁלֹמֹה سليمان ΣΑΛΩΜΩΝ	Shelomoh Sulaimān Salomon	8010	seed/offspring, who came forth from shalom (wholeness, re-established by God – see [H7965] in table 2 and 2 Sam.12:24): Solomon ¹⁷⁰
		שִׁמְשׁוֹן	Shimshon	8123	source of abundance/water (refreshing in the pressure)/name who is a source of security for the next generations / sun-child: Samson [sic]
		שָׂרָה	Sārāh	8283	(1 st letter <i>sin</i> + <i>shin</i>) a source of support/fruitfulness as well as difficulty/temptation ¹⁷¹ for the other who worships (i.e. Abraham) ¹⁷² : Sarah
		תָּמָר	Tāmār	8559	sign of abundance of God: palm tree (symbol for the Tree of Life): Tamar ¹⁷³

The vast majority of the names I consider very well fitting; most often the explanation from the old Semitic symbols closely fits in with what is said in the context of the birth of that person or (with prophetic name giving) what was about to happen in the rest of the person's life.

¹⁶⁹ This concerns probably a part of the present Ethiopia together with Yemen. The description fits: for a very long time the houses there were made of reed (in the Tihama plain in Yemen and in certain areas of Ethiopia even up to the present day). The name is also translated as: Morning-land. The presented Arabic form is the older one. The more modern Arabic form is سبأ - *Sabā'*.

Probably the Biblical *Shebā'* is this *Tsebāch* / *Sabā'* - the land of the Sabeans, with its own Semitic language and script (a form of *Old South Arabic*).

Even the Quran has a description of the visit of the queen of this land *Saba'* to Suleiman (Shelomoh/Solomon), and her conversion to the monotheism i.e. to the God of Suleiman.

By the way, it is said that this صباح - *Tsabāch* / سبأ - *Sabā'* even is the basis of the name of the Dutch Caribbean island of *Saba*.

¹⁷⁰ I suspect that the *nun* at the end could be original, and that this later became an *āh/hē* to honor him – something similar for the 'aleph as 'prominent one' before the last *nun* (seed/offspring) in Arabic. The pronunciation *Shlomoh* advocated by Judaism is typical western (Syriac) Aramaic. This reinforces my doubt with respect to that *āh/hē*. An original form could have been **Shalman** or **Shulman**. It is written of him that God **YaHUaH** loved him and gave him the name *Yedid-Yah* - loved by **YaH**. Unfortunately, he diverted heavily from God later in his life.

Compare also the name שְׁלִמְנֶשֶׁר *Shalmaneser* [8022] or, more precise *Shulmanu-asharedu* or *Shulmanu-asharid* – the preeminent *Shulman* or the *Shulman* of Asshur, a popular name of kings of Asshur/Assyria (more often Assyria/Asshur (אַשּׁוּר) is written in Hebrew names as אֶסֶר as if it was just a *primary prince-dom*, maybe to avoid writing the name of the deity (idol) by the same name, or to avoid the association with אֶשֶׁר - 'esher - happy, blessed, successful).

¹⁷¹ At various instances Sarah got Abraham into trouble, a.o. with her suggestion for adultery with Hagar!

¹⁷² Or, closer to the usual interpretation: a 'palm tree of God' as a symbol of princely power, unassailability or authority (*Sar*), and then the feminine form of that (suffixed *āh*): princess.

¹⁷³ The first known **Tāmār** from the Bible was the wife of 'Er (Gen. 38). When he died, his brothers refused to fulfil their plight to have intercourse with her and to care for offspring as a substitute for 'Er; even their father *Jehudah* was lax. Finally *Tāmār* dressed herself as a whore, seduced *Jehudah* and cared for offspring that way (the twins *Perets* and *Zerach*). When *Jehudah* heard that his daughter in law had presented herself as a whore and was pregnant, he wanted that she be burned alive! However, she presented proof as sign that he himself was the one who had left his sperm in her. In that sense, her name: **sign of 'water' from the other** (with the connotation *Tree of Life* / *fertility*) got a very special additional meaning. Remarkably, she got to be included into the ancestry of *Yeshu'ah* (Mat. 1: 3)!

The life of that other *Tāmār* – daughter of David (2 Sam.13) – was **marked** (in a negative sense) by such '**water' from an other**. She was raped by her halfbrother 'Amnon.

Concerning the Names and titles of God YaHUaH still something else. The concept of YaHUaH as One Who **unites** we see in a word that is applied several times to Him, especially in a context where He brings together very large groups or multitudes of people: צְבָאוֹת - תְּשֻׁבָּה - *Tsebha'oth*, from צָבָא - תְּשֻׁבָּה - *tsabha* - **to bring together a multitude**, or such a **gathered multitude** as such; Julius Fürst¹⁷⁴ gave as first meaning of this word: “**to join together, to be assembled, to flock together, to be united, into a crowd, for the purpose of service**”. The term may refer to very large bunches of reed stems (תְּשֻׁבָּה) that were gathered for first generation houses/huts (צָבָא), or to the need to first (צָבָא) provide some covering against the sun (תְּשֻׁבָּה), before gathering a lot of people. The use in Genesis 2:1 and Nehemiah 9:6 defies the common ‘military’ translation as army/armies; in Isaiah 13:4 the addition of מִלְחָמָה is needed to make such a multitude into an army. So, we see that YaHUaH is a God Who **brings people together** – recognizable throughout the entire Bible!

¹⁷⁴ Julius Fürst (Samuel Davidson, transl.), *Hebrew & Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*, Bernhard Tauchnitz, Leipzig / Williams & Norgate, London/Edinburgh, 1885; p.1171 (p.1212 in the digital document).

The old West-Semitic script: script from the earliest times !

Many names, like מַהֲלַל־אֵל - *Mahalal-el* - much worship for the Leader of leaders: God - from Genesis 5, have traditionally been derived well. Many other names from the earliest ages - like *Enoch* (see explanation in Table 3), *Jered* (*the hand of the Other moves*; Genesis 5), and many others - often also speak of the faith of the parents and/or their deep reverence for God. In translations (and even in the Hebrew square script) unfortunately this can no longer be recognized.

I observe, that even the majority of the names from the earliest ages get a meaning in the old Semitic script that is understandable, fitting and significant in the context of the story (see e.g. the explanation for Eve, Cain, Enoch, Nod, etc. in Table 3). In other words: people gave their wife, children or land names that *were significant in meaning, when written down in the old Semitic script*. This is most interesting, for **this is a very strong indication that the old Semitic script - or at least the underlying notions - dates already from what have been named 'prehistoric' times!** (Thereby all of a sudden making those times less 'pre-historic'!) Like the well-known Bible scholar Professor P.J. Wiseman and others have convincingly shown concerning Genesis, Moses has mainly edited the already existing literature into one book.¹⁷⁵ Remarkable in the analysis of Wiseman et al. is the role of the word *toledoth* - תולדות - תַּלְדוּת; we see here the Leader/Shepherd (God) moving (leading all that happens), surrounded by *cross-signs* of security and belonging; all the while He is so actively involved in that, that it can be said that He 'writes' history (cf. *tavah* in Table 2). I look up to Him in total awe...

This also solves a problem that some linguists have with this script as a pictures-script, because at the time of Noah the script and its underlying notions were already there, while there were few inhabitants of the earth to maintain a large vocabulary in words or sounds. The development of the spoken language since Noah is strongly influenced by this script and most words have been developed gradually from this compact set of symbols...

And since about 1000 BC onward a large part of the world profited greatly in its development from this very ancient set of symbols...

This is a reason for me to call this script *old Semitic* or even *Proto-Semitic* and not just *Canaanite* or *Proto-West-Semitic*.

The old West-Semitic script: even more universal than expected

Very often, even Biblical names of which I didn't expect it, have a significant meaning when transliterated into the old Semitic pictures. For me, this is a strong reason to assume that typically **God's super-natural great design** is behind this. Look at a wonderful Name like *Immanu-El*. Linguistically, the '*Immanu*' is in fact almost entirely grammatical in-/deflection. And yet... יְבִי יְרֵמָה - what do we read here? "He sees a lot of seed/offspring, with secure bonding to the First/Highest Leader/Shepherd/ 'LORD'". Isn't that completely and very accurately right? For example the 'He sees a lot of offspring' we encounter almost literally in Yesha-Yahu (Isaiah) 53: 10. "Yet it was the will of **YaHUaH** to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief; when He makes Himself an offering for sin, He shall see his offspring, He shall prolong His days; the will of **YaHUaH** shall prosper in His hand." These kinds of coherences, things that fit 'just right' into the whole picture, make me really enthusiastic about the God of the Bible and about this very special, old script! ☺

The old West-Semitic script: script of religion and culture

In my research I encountered also two interesting articles by Prof. Seth Sanders.¹⁷⁶ In those he draws attention to the unique position of the old Semitic script as a script that was used for other things than for example the cuneiform, that was used especially for political and commercial (accounting) purposes and not always tied to mastery of the respective spoken language. However, the old Semitic script served a purpose that was related to the local culture of the own people in its full width. Many inscriptions have the character of modern graffiti: "I was here!", or of a local literature, as learning to know themselves as a people. They also contain many elements of worship towards the godhead





¹⁷⁵ See e.g.: Damien F. Mackey, *The First Book of Moses and the 'Toledoth' of Genesis* (also [in German](#)), and the numerous good references therein, in particular the works of P.J. Wiseman.

¹⁷⁶ Seth L. Sanders, '[What was the Alphabet for? The Rise of Written Vernaculars and the Making of Israelite National Literature](#)', *Maarav*, 11,1; 2004; p.25-56; and '[Writing and Early Iron Age Israel: Before National Scripts, Beyond Nations and States](#)', in: Tappy and McCarter, eds., *Literate Culture and 10th-Century Canaan*.

served by their own people. This corresponds closely with the written Word of the Bible – there, too, we see that mixture of worshipping God and as an adolescent learning to know themselves as people and learning to express themselves: “how do **we** do this?”

The old West-Semitic script: source of many scripts

In the introduction and with the discussion of the letters I already mentioned that the Greek script was developed from the Phoenician branch of old Semitic, and from that also our Latin script and the Cyrillic script developed.





Even before that – in the 13^e century BC – a cuneiform script arose in Ugarit (at the spot of or close to the Syrian village Ras Shamra; discovered there during excavations in 1929) that differs from the other forms of cuneiform scripts. Those other forms were pictographic and had many signs, but this one had less than 30. From the shape of the signs one can conclude that they were derived from the old Semitic script. For example, the *ah/hei* looked like this:  and the *samekh* like this:  – in which the likeness with the Phoenician versions ( and ) is clearly recognized. The language of Ugarit was a Semitic language strongly resembling Phoenician.


A note on the notions

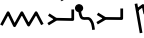
It is remarkable, that many of the notions can still be discerned in our current language (sometimes via their hellenized name). In a group of animals the **alpha**-male is the **first**, the leader. **Beta**-subjects have to do with concrete, physical things like **housing** construction (the first beta-study at university level in the Netherlands was civil engineering). **Gamma**-radiation **goes** through a lot of things. A river-**delta** is the **triangular entrance** of a river into the sea. Worshipping, celebrating and wondering we still do with our hands raised. Even linguistically a **pin** is something on which everything hinges or the thing that **keeps** other things **together** (*linking pin*). Dutch versions of words like **scythe** and **sword** (*zeis* and *zwaard*) start with a **z**. When we cannot get a good **grip** or **handle** on something, we say that we do not understand a **iota** of it. Words for important rulers like **king** start with a **k**. **Leader** starts with an **l**. The average, the value around which **most** observations are positioned, is denoted by **μ** - **mu**, and think also of our word **more** (and the German *Mer!*). **Seed** is – just like that old *nun* – still both that little plant stuff being sown into the ground, and human offspring. **Φ** - **Phi** (from *pu*, with some of *quph*) is the symbol for **flux** in electricity. In organic chemistry they speak of a **sigma**-binding. Et cetera...

Chinese connections...?

In this document so far, it has become clear that the old Semitic script had an enormous impact on the western scripts. But its tentacles do not only reach westward, or so it appears...

Before I started this study, I was not aware that the Bible refers to China or the Chinese. Yet it does. A prophecy in Yesha-Yahu (Isaiah) 49:12 mentions the very interesting word  [5515] -  - *Cinim* (in the Bible only occurring there, as *Erets Cinim*). Many relate this to the inhabitants of (Southern) China (some also those of (Western) America – the Indians). I found that Persian *Cin*, related to Sanskrit चीन - *Cinah*, refers to China. Since Marco Polo this is the root of broad western usage of ‘China’ as designation of that country.¹⁷⁷ The reference to Chinese in Yesha-Yahu’s book as *Cinim* is remarkable, because in a common view, the etymology of the name *China* goes back to the *Qin* dynasty, about 200 BC, centuries after Yesha-Yahu. So Yesha-Yahu’s text is indeed to be interpreted as prophetically inspired here (it speaks of the far future!), and/or he must have known of the far less prominent feudal kingdom *Qin* (*Tshin*) in *Shen-si*, one of the western provinces of China (from the beginning of the 9th century BC; reported by Keil & Delitzsch in their comment on the passage). What strikes me, is the *Qin* (*Tshin*) symbol: 秦, which depicts *two hands husking wheat – a grain or rice-plant carrying seed*. The middle part of old Semitic *Sinim* consists of two hands surrounding a seed: ... When we remember that *tsade* and *sin* were sometimes confused, and/or think of an old Semitic transliteration of the Chinese *Tshin*: , we have a papyrus, sedge or wheat-like plant, a hand and the grain or

¹⁷⁷ According to some scholars in Proto-Indo-European, Persian and Sanskrit belong to the descendants of this hypothetical language. I have not studied this in detail yet, but I did encounter several similarities between Proto-Indo-European and the notions in the roots of Proto-Semitic; the small set of reconstructed Proto-Indo-European words that I have seen, correspond in meaning very well to the combined meaning of the pictographic symbols in an old Semitic transliteration (e.g. Proto-Indo-European *ued* = to marry; in old Semitic signs (right to left):  – a bond/connection/covenant - [for] life/adoration/joy - to enter; yes, that’s what ‘to marry’ is all about: to enter into a joyful bond...).

seed, which is practically the same as what constitutes the Chinese symbol. *Tsinim* would be written:  - hands around the seed of a wheat-like plant in water. *Erets Tsinim* (ארץ צינים) - a very slight modification of the ארץ סינים of Yesha-Yahu 49:12, as occurring frequently, assuming an understandable change from the double *tsade*) would then be the *Rice-Husking Land* - which I see as an accurate description of China & S-E Asia indeed (where 'white' rice is used as the main diet; despising whole-grain rice!, making *Rice-Husking Land* indeed much more accurate than e.g. *Rice Land*).

There's more evidence that the basic notions are discernable in early Chinese. At the moment (Nov. 2011), I am in contact with a Sinologist to investigate this further. To be continued...¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁸ See also: C.H. Kang, Ethel R. Nelson, *The Discovery of Genesis – How the Truths of Genesis Were Found Hidden in the Chinese Language*; E.R. Nelson, R.E. Broadberry, *Genesis and the Mystery Confucius Couldn't Solve*; '[History of the Jews in China](#)', Wikipedia article; and '[De oudste teksten uit de bijbel in Chinese tekens](#)' (in Dutch), at the site of Kees Noorlander and '[Het mysterie dat Confucius niet kon oplossen](#)' (The Mystery Confucius Couldn't Solve; in Dutch) article by Miel Vanbeckevoort in *Het Zoeklicht* (*The Searchlight*; Dutch magazine).

Discussion and some first conclusions from this study

From this investigation some remarkable conclusions can be drawn:

- The old Semitic script, mother of almost all alphabet scripts in the world, had a pictographic/ideographic origin.
- The original symbols represent both a sound (phonemic value) as a basic notion; these basic notions function as building blocks in the build-up of the original language. Some of these building blocks (in particular the one represented by the *samekh/sin*) were identified and illustrated for the first time in a few thousand years – as far as I could trace.
- Personal and other names from the first chapters of Genesis reveal that the roots of the original symbols and/or the underlying building blocks in the earliest version of the Proto-Semitic language go back to the first chapters of Genesis, regarded in a Biblical timeframe.
- Knowledge of the set of basic notions under the symbols, in combination with knowledge of the local culture and nature often gives a good view at a likely etymology and meaning of most old Semitic (especially Biblical Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic) words (sometimes even Greek words as well), and greatly enhances our view on the Bible in its entirety as an amazing unity.
- The old Semitic script presented in the recognizable symbols something of the meaning of the constituted words, such that various associations and connotations were kept intact quite naturally. At the transition from the old Semitic to Paleo-Hebrew script this coherence was lost, at least in part. Even more has been lost at the transition to the square script, which is derived from the – spiritually seen – degenerated Imperial Aramaic script. Something similar counts for Arabic. Remarkable are the eras in which these degenerations took place: the onset of the first was around the time that Israel became a kingdom, a transition to which God agreed only reluctantly; the second after a period of severe spiritual decay, in the last centuries of the First Testament of the Bible.
- It is a great pity that the First Testament of the Bible is often regarded and studied as if it was written in the Hebrew square script. Reconstruction of the text in the original old Semitic form could clarify considerably the parts from before the time of Solomon, or even all from before the Babylonian exile. Some more thorough knowledge of the old Semitic script and the underlying basic structure should be a mandatory subject in theological training at universities. It provides such a clear light on the etymology and meaning of many words and on many relationships between what is expressed at different places in the text...

Noteworthy with all of this is that this old language was such a physical language, strongly related to important things from a practical nomadic existence full of reverence for God (in contrast to the later Greek which was more a language of the intellect with much more abstraction and less relation).

What I appreciate about the way of interpreting and reading the Hebrew words like it is demonstrated here is that it links so closely with the life in the time of the Biblical narrative, especially that of before the first millennium BC.

As noted earlier: the unity between the letters/signs (graphemes) as pictograms and ideograms (with meanings) and as letters of an alphabet has not yet been explained by linguists or archeologists. I cannot explain it fully either, but I do see it as a reflection of the great unity that is so characteristic for **YaHUaH**, the God of the Bible. In the Bible and its language there is a unity that surpasses our understanding. The more we discover, the more there remains to be discovered.























Reactions welcome

In case you might encounter or know a better explanation of any of the words or names presented here, or discover some other imperfection, or have any additional suggestions, I am more than open for your feedback. At the website www.Hallelu-YaH.nl you find a reaction form and mail address.

Appendix 1.

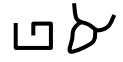







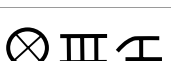



The very early Aleph-Beth: an alphabet... or perhaps a story...?

In the first part of this article we saw that the very old Hebrew/ old Semitic script existed of a series of pictures, each with a specific meaning. I summarize them here:

 <i>aleph</i> – ox-head: first / powerful one	 <i>chet</i> – (tent)wall; also: limit, skin, boundary	 <i>samekh</i> – palm tree, thorny plant, hardship, protection, high
 <i>beth</i> – tent-map; tent/ house/body	 <i>teth</i> – earthen basket, hull, wrapper, shell	 <i>ayin</i> – eye; to see (to), to (be) show(n)
 <i>gimel</i> – foot; also: to go, transport	 <i>yad/yod</i> – hand, arm	 <i>pei</i> – (mouth) opening
 <i>daleth</i> – door, opening; movement, to move	 <i>kaph</i> – raised, reigning or blessing hand, power, authority	 <i>tsade</i> – plant (papyrus, reed, sedge or wheat)
 <i>hei</i> – man with arms lifted; joy, wonder, worship	 <i>lamed</i> – shepherd's staff; shepherd, leader	 <i>qoph</i> – rising sun, to rise, circle
 <i>wav</i> – tent pin; also: little stick, security, bonding/connection	 <i>mem</i> – water; abundance, much, plural	 <i>resh</i> – face; (an) other (sometimes: God)
 <i>zayin</i> – scythe, sword, knife; to cut, metal	 <i>nun</i> – sprouting seed, offspring, life, 'what emerges from ...'	 <i>shin</i> – breasts, 2 teeth, or (shooting) bow; to eat, food, source
		 <i>tav</i> – sign, signature, fixed, finish/end

When put in a row next to or under each other like here, many see an *aleph-beth*; an alphabet.

However, this sequence of signs can also, and pretty easily, be read as **a simple story**:


















 <i>aleph beth</i> – The first of the house: our (fore) father (Abraham)	 <i>lamed</i> – the big Shepherd/ Leader (God), Who...
 <i>gimel daleth</i> – stood on his feet (/saddled his camels) and started to move ;	 <i>mem nun samekh</i> – promised him abundance of offspring and (unexpected!) fertility ;
 <i>hei</i> – he worshipped God and followed Him with joy ,	 <i>ayin</i> – God showed him:
 <i>wav</i> – God gave him security in a covenant (secure bond) ;	 <i>pei tsade</i> – an open place [land] to live, with plenty plants & shade / an open Papyrus-scroll (Torah!)
 <i>zayin chet teth</i> – he cut the border/skin of his wrapper/ shell	 <i>qoph resh shin</i> – he daily went up to the Other – His Source.
 <i>yad kaph</i> – put his hand/arm in the reigning/ blessing hand of	
	 <i>tav</i> – And so it really happened and was fulfilled / undersigned: God/Yesu'ah.

In that stone that has been found with the *aleph-beth* on it, as a linguist one can read an abecedary. As God-worshipping person – descendant/offspring of Abraham – one can also stand in wonder and see a summary of the story about our fore-father Abraham in it... It's just a matter of what you believe, or from which starting point you leave in the first place...

Appendix 2. The aleph-beth-ic acrostics: Psalm 34 as example

Psalm 34 is an alphabetic acrostic; each line starts with a letter of the *aleph-beth*. Let us have a look to what extent these lines also form an illustration of the 22 notions under the letters.

Below is the text in post-exilic Hebrew (of the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*), an English translation and a brief note on the original letters and notions.

1	לְדוֹד בְּשׁוֹנוֹתָיו אֶת־טַעְמוֹ לִפְנֵי אַבִּימֶלֶךְ וַיִּגְרֶשְׁהוּ וַיֵּלֶךְ:	A Psalm of David, when he feigned madness before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.	(headline)
2	אֲבָרְכָה אֶת־יְהוָה בְּכָל־עֵת תָּמִיד תִּהְיֶה לִּי בִּפִּי:	I will bless YaHUaH at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.	 the first; of utmost importance; He is The First!
3	בִּיהוָה תִּתְהַלֵּל נַפְשִׁי יִשְׁמְעוּ עֲנֻיִם וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ:	My soul makes its boast in YaHUaH; let the afflicted hear and be glad.	 in what or whom? in God Himself
4	גִּדְּלוּ לַיהוָה אִתִּי וּנְרוֹמְמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו:	O magnify YaHUaH with me, and let us exalt His Name together!	 let us go, to praise the 'going'; 'walks' of YaHUaH everywhere
5	דָּרַשְׁתִּי אֶת־יְהוָה וַעֲנֵנִי וּמִכָּל־מְגוּרֹתַי הִצִּילָנִי:	I sought YaHUaH, and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears.	 opened the door for the Light; He has opened a door for me
6	הִבִּיטוּ אֵלָיו וְנִהְרֹו וּפְנֵיהֶם אֵל־יִחַפְּרוּ:	Look to Him, and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed.	 full of wonder and enthusiasm  (red as the earth in which the pin stands) security!
7	זֶה עָנִי קָרָא וַיהוָה שָׁמַע וּמִכָּל־צָרוֹתָיו הוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ:	This poor man cried, and YaHUaH heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.	 I was cut loose; how precious!
8	חֲנֹה מִלְאֲךָ־יְהוָה סָבִיב לִירְאָיו וַיַּחֲלֹצֵם:	The angel of YaHUaH encamps around those who fear Him, and delivers them.	 as a protective tent panel against the burning sun and against the cold and rain
9	טַעְמוּ וּרְאוּ כִי־טוֹב יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־יִחְסֶה־בּוֹ:	O taste and see that YaHUaH is good! Happy is the man who takes refuge in him!	 a bowl/basket full!
10	יִרְאוּ אֶת־יְהוָה קְדָשָׁיו כִּי־אֵין מִחְסוֹר לִירְאָיו:	O fear YaHUaH, you his saints, for those who fear Him have no want!	 what to do; He will give
11	כְּפִירִים רָשׁוּ וָרָעִבוּ וּדְרָשִׁי יְהוָה לֹא־יִחְסְרוּ כָל־טוֹב:	The young lions suffer want and hunger; but those who seek YaHUaH lack no good thing.	 the powerful among the animals – God's power goes far beyond that!
12	לְכוּ־בָנִים שְׁמְעוּ־לִי יִרְאֵת יְהוָה אֲלַמְּדְכֶם:	Come, O sons, listen to me, I will teach you the fear of YaHUaH.	 to educate as with a shepherd's staff
13	מִי־הָאִישׁ הַחֲפֹץ חַיִּים אֲהֵב יָמִים לְרִאוֹת טוֹב:	What man is there who desires life, and covets many days, that he may enjoy good?	 abundance and joy
14	נָצַר לְשׁוֹנֶךָ מִרָע וּשְׁפָתֶיךָ מִדְּבַר מְרִמָּה:	Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit.	 what comes forth from one's mouth
15	סוּר מִרָע וַעֲשֵׂה־טוֹב בִּקְשׁ שָׁלוֹם וְרִדְּפָהוּ:	Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.	 cf. the Tree of Life: obey to eat from it
16	עֵינֵי יְהוָה אֶל־צַדִּיקִים וְאָזְנוֹ אֶל־שׁוֹעֲתָם:	The eyes of YaHUaH are toward the righteous, and his ears toward their cry.	 He has an eye and ear for them
17	פָּנֵי יְהוָה בָּעֲשֵׂי רָע לְהַכְרִית מֵאֶרֶץ זָכָרָם:	The face of YaHUaH is against evil-doers, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.	 like the wind He came and pushed the sea apart

18	צַעֲקוּ וַיהוָה שָׁמַע וּמִכָּל-צָרוֹתֵם הִצִּילָם:	When the righteous cry for help, YaHUaH hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles.	𐤒	He pressed them away from Egypt / it stands black on white
19	קָרוֹב יְהוָה לְנִשְׁבָּרֵי-לֵב וְאֶת-דַּבְּאֵי-רוּחַ יוֹשִׁיעַ:	YaHUaH is near to the brokenheart- ed, and saves the crushed in spirit.	☉	as close as the sunlight by day; He raises them up!
20	רַבּוֹת רָעוֹת צָדִיק וּמִכָּל יַעֲלִנּוּ יְהוָה:	Many are the afflictions of the right- eous; but YaHUaH delivers him out of them all.	𐤁	He, YaHUaH !
21	שָׁמַר כָּל-עַצְמוֹתָיו אַחַת מֵהֵנָּה לֹא נִשְׁבְּרָה:	He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken.	𐤄	like a mother against her heart (bosom), He cherishes and protects them
22	תָּמוּתָהּ רָשָׁע רָעָה וְשֹׂנְאֵי צָדִיק יִאָּשָׁמוּ:	Evil shall slay the wicked; and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.	+	death follows on sin and enmity against God
23	פֹּדֶה יְהוָה נַפְשׁ עֲבָדָיו וְלֹא יִאָּשָׁמוּ כָּל-הַחֹסִים בּוֹ:	YaHUaH redeems the life of His servants; none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned.		but at the cross He has redeemed us!

I get strongly the impression that the Psalmist has let himself be guided in the stream of his thoughts not only by the letters themselves, but also by the underlying notions.

Something similar we also encounter in Psalm 37, 111, 119 and 145 (in the version known to us the *nun* is missing), a little less in Psalm 112 (acrostics as well), and very clearly in [the very nice acrostic on the highly praised wife](#) in Proverbs 31: 10-31.

So, these acrostics contain important insight about the 22 letters and the underlying notions.

Appendix 3. The aleph-beth-ic acrostics: Psalm 111 as example

Psalm 111 is another alphabetic acrostic where each line starts with a letter of the *aleph-beth*. Let us again have a look to what extent these lines also form an illustration of the 22 notions under the letters.

Below is the text in post-exilic Hebrew (of the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*), an English translation and a brief illustration of the original letters and notions.

1	הַלְלוּ יְהוָה אוֹדָה יְהוָה בְּכָל-לֵב בְּסוּד יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַדָּה	Hallelu-YaH! (= Praise YaH!) I will give thanks to YaHUaH with my whole heart, in the assembly of the godly and the congregation	א a good beginning! ב the first, most important; He is The First! ג where? in that community / His great family!
2	גְּדֹלִים מַעֲשֵׂי יְהוָה דְּרוֹשִׁים לְכָל-חַפְצֵיהֶם	Great are the works of YaHUaH eagerly awaited by all who delight in them.	ד His 'goings' & foundations ה they love to enter therein
3	הוֹדֹ-וְהָדָר פָּעִלּוּ וְצִדְקָתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד	His work is majestic and glorious; and His righteousness endures forever.	ו more than worthy of our joyful worship! ז covenant bond!
4	זָכַר עֲשָׂה לְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו חֲנוּן וְרַחוּם יְהוָה	He has made His wonderful works to be remembered; YaHUaH is gracious and full of compassion.	ח metal = wondrous (in those days!) and lasting ט has a wide 'border', wants everybody 'on board'
5	טָרַף נָתַן לִירָאָיו יִזְכֹּר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ	He gives food to his faithful followers; He always remembers his covenant.	י a big cup/basket full! יא to do it; to give
6	כָּח מַעֲשָׂיו הִגִּיד לְעַמּוֹ לָתֵת לָהֶם נַחֲלַת גּוֹיִם	He has made known to His people the power of His works; giving them a land that belonged to other nations.	יב with an upraised hand of power יג as a shepherd providing good pasture/grassland יד multi-faceted! (judgment: of the flood)
7	מַעֲשֵׂי יָדָיו אֱמֶת וּמִשְׁפָּט נֶאֱמָנִים כָּל-פְּקוּדָיו	His acts are characterized by faithfulness and justice; all his precepts are supportive and reliable.	טו nourishing as grain to all future generations טז supportive/nourishing as dates from the date palm
8	סְמוּכִים לָעַד לְעוֹלָם עֲשׂוּיִם בְּאֵמֶת וַיִּשָּׁר	They are firm/supportive forever; they are done in truth and uprightness.	יז He sees to it! יח as the wind He came and made an open space
9	פְּדוּת שָׁלַח לְעַמּוֹ צִוָּה-לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ	He sent redemption unto His people; He has commanded His covenant forever;	יט He pressed them out from Egypt and gave nice land כ i.e. goes up, so: go up!
10	קָדוֹשׁ וְנוֹרָא שְׁמוֹ רִאשִׁית חֲכָמָה יִרְאֵת יְהוָה שֶׁכֶּל טוֹב לְכָל-עֲשִׂיהֶם תִּהְלֶתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד	His Name is holy and reverend. To care to stick close to YaHUaH is the beginning of wisdom; all who carry out His precepts acquire good understanding; He will receive praise forever.	כא the Other above all! ¹⁷⁹ כב from The Source one can draw pure water in fullness! כג by Yeshu'ah's Cross He is praiseworthy forever

I get strongly the impression that here as well, the Psalmist has let himself be guided in the stream of his thoughts not only by the letters themselves, but also by the underlying notions.

So, these acrostics contain important insight about the 22 letters and the underlying notions.

¹⁷⁹ יִרְאֵת יְהוָה - *yir'ath YaHUaH* - mostly translated by 'the fear of the LORD'. According to the old signs, the *יִרְאֵת* herein is: 'the hand of the Other from beginning till end / first and last' - for me this calls forward the connotation of a child that is dedicated not to lose his father/mother amidst a rush of other people because he is so very joyfully attached to that precious father/mother. It revolves about attachment more than fear!

Appendix 4.

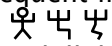


Hebrew: a developing language, already since earliest times


What I wrote in the introduction on the relatively young age of the Hebrew square script has big consequences for our study of the Hebrew language. The pronunciation known to the Masoretes in the Middle Ages, may differ vastly from to original pronunciation. Sometimes also the meaning of words has experienced considerable development.¹⁸⁰

The development of Biblical Hebrew: Hebrew language and Hebrew script has been complex and a lot remains so far unknown. What we can say about it predominantly has the character of hypotheses: more or less likely suppositions about how this development may have ensued. Regional and temporal variations sometimes give some hint. Some linguists see the old Semitic script as an alphabet script, in which the letters have only their symbolic letter function and no meaning on their own. The fact that the letters are symbols with a clear pictographic origin, makes us assume that they could represent a meaning of their own. This study investigates the hypothesis, that old Semitic could originally have been a pictographic/ideographic script, of which the meanings of the letters are recognizable in the meanings of a number of words that are formed with the aid of these letters.

In my study of this material I came across a lot of wild theories. Few seemed to have investigated so many sources – almost all inscriptions and languages from the old Middle East – so extensively, as the Australian (living in New Zealand) [Dr Brian E. Colless](#). He studied, analyzed and deciphered many archeological findings of scripts from the second millennium BC.¹⁸¹ He concludes that the earliest forms of the old Semitic script are not yet an alphabet script, but clearly sees logosyllabic and pictographic elements in it.¹⁸²

Remarkable I find that various scientists, on the basis of extensive analyses have concluded that the oldest forms of Hebrew find their very earliest origins probably in or around the city of Ur (remarkable, because according the Bible, this is the city where Abraham came from!).¹⁸³

Further development of the Hebrew script can be illustrated well by the development of the letters *hei* and *wav* – letters that were quite frequent in this language.¹⁸⁴ The shapes of the *hei* found in the oldest texts were variations on these:  – a lively rejoicing and worshipping figure. This symbol was probably named *ha*, *ah*, or also: *hillul*. From this shape and the words (in all Semitic languages) containing the *hei*, the basic meanings of this symbol can be reconstructed with quite some clarity: worship (*hillul* still is the Hebrew word for praising), joy, wonder, seeing (something beautiful), (obtaining) breath, living/thriving. In Paleo-Hebrew (at that time the script had become a clear alphabet-script) only the upper side of this symbol survived (put sideways):  – already a reduction and what looks like a measure of secularizing (our E later arose from this! – more about this in the discussion of each of all the symbols and letters). In Hebrew square script this letter has been replaced by the symbol: . Here we recognize nothing anymore of the original, lively rejoicing and worshipping figure.

A Jewish mystic explanation given for the  is that it represents a house with a high – heaven-directed – window. This seems to correspond to the god- and worldview of the Babylonian empire and its culture, that influenced the Jewish religious teachers from the time when this script emerged. After the

¹⁸⁰ In the first centuries AD the Rabbi's have adjusted and changed a lot. During [a Dutch seminar of the Jewish Levisson Institute at sunday 9 april 2006 about Father-Jews](#) Prof dr P. van der Horst said about the introduction of the matrilinear principle (in the first centuries AD) and the 'Biblical' arguments used by the Rabbi's there and then in Mishna and Talmudim: *"it is typically an afterwards searched biblical foundation for an already existing practice, like we encounter everywhere in the rabbinical literature, but which does not make sense from a historical viewpoint"*.

¹⁸¹ See a.o. his extensive web logs at sites.google.com/site/collesseum and cryptcracker.blogspot.com/.

¹⁸² In 'The Evolution of the Alphabet' (web document) Brian E. Colless notes: "It is not known precisely when the Canaanite *syllabary* was invented (attested at Umm el-Marra [Tuba?] around 2300 BCE), but it presumably came into existence *before* the alphabet, and it was another step in the evolution of writing, *leading up to* the alphabet." (emphasis added). Elsewhere in the same article he says: "What we have here is *a possibility that no scholar has ever contemplated before*: an alphabetic sign being used as a logograph, so that the whole word is read, not simply the initial consonant of the word." In other words: most scholars never looked well at the possibility of a logographic/ logo syllabic and/or pictographic/ideographic origin of the old Semitic script.

¹⁸³ In 'The Evolution of the Alphabet' (web document) the earlier mentioned Brian E. Colless also hints to this. I further note, after the quote from the previous footnote, that, according tradition, Abraham on his journey from Ur, came (first via the Euphrates and then) along Umm el-Marra and the vicinity of Aleppo (*Halab*).

¹⁸⁴ The *yod*, *hey* and *wav* are the letters that appear most frequent in the *Torah*; each about 10% of the total text – 10 times as much as e.g. the *gimel* or *zayin*.

Babylonian exile they did not believe anymore that God was still with His people here on earth (the original temple was destroyed and the ark had disappeared), but only distantly 'in heaven'. Hence, no lively and joyful interaction with God was left, only a looking forward to heaven. Notice in this change also the influence of Hellenism (the Greek thinking with vague mental concepts and despising of the body versus the very concrete old Biblical thinking in which the body had a beautiful place).¹⁸⁵

The *wav/vav* largely held its shape and meaning in the development from the old Semitic to modern square script - from װ to ן. The original shape is a clear representation of a tent pin and its underlying notion of providing security or safety by connecting or fastening. However, the usage of the *wav* in Aramaic and Hebrew has been limited quite drastically over the ages. Amongst others the *wav* as the first letter of a word has been replaced - mainly by the *yod*.

The Hebrew word *yayin* - grape/wine is a good example to illustrate this, not just the linguistic aspect, but also the spiritual notions behind it. In the old Semitic it was 𐤆𐤃𐤕 - *wayin* - a fruit (seed) on an branch (arm) of a vine (attaching stick in the ground) (our *wine*, German *Wein*, French *vin* and Dutch *wijn* all derive from this and still have a similar pronunciation). In some other Semitic languages (a.o. Arabic) it still is *wayn* (وَيْن), but in (post-exilic) Judaism it became *yayin*. A branch replaced the vine. We all know what Jesus said about grape branches/tendrils and the essence of being connected to the vine (in John 15 He compares Himself to a vine, He takes the initiative to connect and supply us with spiritual nourishment, such that we - as branches - can bear fruit). Why did He say this to that audience, and why did He use this metaphor? It is a spiritual metaphor, most relevant to Judaism in those days. Rabbinic Judaism (in association with their Aramaic speaking Babylonian 'friends'¹⁸⁶) had disconnected itself from their Source: God **YaHUaH**. And their language reflected that...

Another example is *wad'a* - knowing, which became *yad'a*; knowledge was no longer derived from a source but gained through one's own effort. Also in the verb *hawah* 𐤇𐤕𐤕 'to be'/'to live'/'to breathe': (living you do together in worship/wonder/joy and in secure attachment; note how the human figures are positioned around the *wav* as branches around the vine) the *wav* was replaced by a *yod*: *hayah* (it became a *working* or *giving* - the *yod* was the working, giving hand).

Remarkably, this lingual development is so much in line with their theological or social-psychological development: security and close connectedness with **YaHUaH** wasn't experienced anymore, because to their idea God was no longer *with* them, but far away, and the afterlife was no longer obtained by the grace of God, but by works of many *Mitswot* - laws. This process had taken place long before in Babylon (hence Aramaic), and Judah had allowed itself to become infected when in exile there.

In relation to the *wav* I should also point to my earlier discussion of the **light** (אור - אור - אור) that God created at the very beginning, in Genesis 1: 3. According the old Semitic symbols this **light** can be translated as 'the first secure **connection** to the Other, i.e. to God, or to (one) another'.

A quote:

"I have suggested here that the currently widespread beliefs, first, that Indo-European has no known relatives, and, second, that the monogenesis of language cannot be demonstrated on the basis of linguistic evidence, are both incorrect. Belief in these erroneous assertions is based largely on extra-linguistic criteria and a priori assumptions, rather than on a serious survey of the world's linguistic literature. A growing, though still small, number of linguists are coming to realize that all the world's languages do share a common origin, and they are beginning to work on that basis."

Merritt Ruhlen, '[The Origin of Language: Retrospective and Prospective](#)', Ch.13 in: *On the Origin of Languages: Studies in Linguistic Taxonomy*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1994; p. 261-276, p.272.

¹⁸⁵ How culture and language are influenced by changes in the dominant worldview of a population is a phenomenon that we encounter much more often in world history! The influence of psychological, sociological and cultural factors on the language is enormous, and is often underestimated by linguists!

¹⁸⁶ Obviously, this 'friendship' of love and hate between Rabbinic Judaism and Babylonia may well be interpreted social-psychologically as an early case of [Stockholm syndrome](#)!

Appendix 5.

Pictographic/ideographic and alphabet scripts: meaning versus sound

In the classification of scripts, there are a few distinct and mutually exclusive categories that linguists will discern.¹⁸⁷ The most important distinction is that between seeing letters ('graphemes') as signs with a **meaning or function**, or as only representing a **sound**:

- Pictographic/ideographic scripts; each 'letter' (grapheme) is a picture that stands originally for an **object or idea**. Words consist of one or more pictures, combining to the meaning of that word. These scripts are often seen as unrelated to the verbal speech (sound) of the words. I loosely include here the category of logosyllabaries, where each grapheme (representing a syllable) also contributes its meaning or modifying character to the constituted word.
- Alphabet scripts and simple sound-based syllabaries; each letter stands originally for **one specific sound** (consonant or vowel or some combination thereof) and existing words (assumed to be already existing in verbal speech) are written down, more or less according to their sounding (e.g. *implicitly* an alphabet script is *assumed* to be kind of a *phonetic* script in origin). Obviously, an alphabet script is closely related to the spoken language.

This either/or dichotomy stems from the invalid assumption that scripts are only later additions to already existing languages, and that their constituent building blocks in terms of meaning are unrelated to lingual (sound) elements. This dichotomy is falsified by the old Semitic script, which appears to have an underlying highly logical build-up or structure of basic notions with attached meanings and phonemes.

The big question: Was the old Semitic originally (only) an alphabet script?

Good starting points appear to be essential in the analysis of the material!

Since the signs of the Paleo-Hebrew, very similar to the signs of Phoenician, were clearly an alphabet, and actually a few old Semitic abecedaries have been found, it is generally *assumed* that the old Semitic script has always been an alphabet script and *only that*. In this document I question that assumption. In my view, we do not have to think in either/or terms, as here, too. In the above division the two categories are sometimes *assumed* to be totally disjunctive. Therefore, a category that is remarkably not discerned in the above division is the category where each letter is *both* representing a sound *and* a picture with meaning. Also, a script is seen as static, as if it could not evolve from one category to another. In this document I present and test the hypothesis that the old Semitic (or Early First Testament Hebrew) fell originally exactly in the pictographic/ideographic category or the category where each letter is *both* representing a sound *and* a picture with meaning. Possibly it evolved over the ages slowly from a pictographic/ideographic script (or/via a logosyllabary) to the later Paleo-Hebrew pure alphabet script.

Worldwide a lot of archeological and linguistic research is carried out on this subject, often by people who are better educated in this area than I am. How, then, can I dare to give my own vision here, and even one that is rather critical towards what some respected scholars say or said?

The answer to that question lies in the belief system that is taken as a starting point in the analysis of the actual findings. In my study I start from the Bible, from the God of the Bible, and from how I have come to know Him – His Character and His way of doing things. That means, amongst others, that I validate and check my interpretations on the basis of the Bible. Next, I have been in scientific research since 1980 and have experienced that any science has its 'schools' that often are rather 'solitary-minded' (meaning they are not open to another reading of the facts). Often only those conclusions are drawn that confirm the status quo of the own theory.

Concerning the old Semitic script as discussed here I made a few simple and factual observations, on which I have based my further analyses:

- The texts and fragments found so far date from the period 1900-1000 before Christ;¹⁸⁸ it cannot be verified where the source of this script lies. Many scholars *think* that the old Semitic script is inspired on Egyptian hieroglyphs or on the simplified Egyptian Hieratic script (Egypt and its hieroglyphs enjoy a lot of public interest). So far I have not encountered a single observation making this even slightly plausible. Apparently, such claims cannot be sustained (there even is a lot speaking against the hypothesis that this would be the case; remarkably the period in which this script


¹⁸⁷ The brevity of this text, aimed at a broad audience, will – by its nature – not do honor to all the nuances that are there for the specialists; I apologize to the linguist who may find some important detail not described totally accurately in all detail here.

¹⁸⁸ The related early Semitic signs found at Umm el-Marra are dated around 2300 BC.

would have emerged has shifted further back with every earlier find during the past century; the question who and where it was developed is still unanswered as well). The fact that some symbols show similarity with Egyptian hieroglyphs can also be an indication of mutual influence or a common more primitive source (from the time of Noah or even earlier). On the basis of the data currently available it cannot be excluded that the old Semitic script is older and has quite another source.

- The pictographic character of the symbols, and the fact that they were often written in an arbitrary orientation and shape, raises suspicion that *in origin* it was more likely a pictographic than an alphabet script. A lot of scholars have never even considered the idea that old Semitic letters represent an original notion, i.e. have meaning, and that one could reconstruct those meanings of the letters by objective scientific methods. They *assume* the letters are part of an alphabet script and as such are signs representing a sound, and without intrinsic meaning. However, this unscientific view ignores a few important factors: (1) there is no solid ground to reject the hypothesis that in its earliest origin (of which we have no conclusive clues yet) the old Semitic was not an alphabet but a highly pictographic/ideographic script – the pictures witness most clearly about this, (2) the involvement of God in the emerging of this script and in the earliest origin of the basic underlying structure of Proto-Semitic and Hebrew language; (3) finding a collection of all symbols at one object (pot shard, stone, rock, etc.) is no proof that this would be an abecedy, and that *therefore* the script *must have been* an alphabet script (what is sometimes seen as an abecedy may even be a famous story just as well, as I show in another appendix).

Though we have no certainty here (none of us were there, so all that anyone says about that era is a form of speculation¹⁸⁹), I do not rule out a possible pictographic/ideographic origin of the script, associated with the earliest roots of the proto-Semitic language. So I start from that hypothesis (till the evidence might prove otherwise). As said: the shape of the old Semitic signs seems to confirm this. That means that letters have a meaning on their own, and that by creating consecutions of such pictures, people in the earliest days could make words and sentences. The fact that in the fragments found, consecutive words in sentences often were not delimited, also seems to confirm this. It can be tested quite simply whether older and simple Biblical Hebrew words and phrases allow themselves to be read in this script as combinations of the individual pictures, and so not only as combination of the letter-sounds that maybe later got associated to the pictures. The hundreds of words and dozens of names I have been able to reconstruct so far offer a lot of perspective. (See Table 2 and Table 3, where I present a number of those simple, in particular older words and names with a *possible* reconstruction of their meaning, from the constituting old Semitic signs.)

- Of the Paleo-Hebrew script it can be observed clearly that it developed around 1000 BC gradually from the old Semitic script. It is remarkable that till about 100 BC, in many books of the Bible and other Biblical writings (even in the Greek Septuagint) the Name of God that was considered holy was still written in Paleo-Hebrew script (i.e. as: ). Apparently, this was then considered as more authentic and worthy for the wonderful Name of God. To me, this is an additional indication, that Paleo-Hebrew, and, for the older books of the Bible, the old Semitic script was very likely the script in which a large part of the OT was written originally.
- It is most fitting to the character and the way of acting of the God of the Bible that He made His Torah and a lot of other Bible-books initially available to the people in a script that was most easy to read, as is the case with a pictographically readable script.
- The Bible appears to give many clues to the explanation of the old Semitic symbols. When for a moment we start from the hypothesis that the old Semitic once in origin could have been a pictographic script, it appears that many Biblical data agree very well with this. Biblical words and phrases, and words from the other Semitic languages, can be used very well to help reconstruct and ascertain the precise original notions depicted by the old Semitic symbols, by looking at the symbols that once constituted these words. The connotations found in some old Semitic symbols and the words formed with them, appear to correspond extremely well with things the Bible teaches more explicitly (see e.g. what I wrote about the word 'light' as our first connection to God, and how Jesus and John speak about 'walking in the light' as walking, closely connected to God). The other way around it also appears that knowledge of the old Semitic symbols – the script in which the first parts of the Bible were most likely written – helps in our understanding of the Bible and in our wonder about the greatness of the God of the Bible. I hope to clarify that to you via this document.

I conclude firstly and most importantly that our understanding of the Bible and some knowledge of the old Semitic script can benefit a lot of each other mutually. So, that's why I suggested digging a bit further into it in the first place.

¹⁸⁹ We are – of course – obliged to let our speculations about that long ago era align as much as possible with what we still can observe of it, as via archeology and the remarkable letter signs that we find.

Appendix 6. The notions and the associated sounds show similarities with those from old Sumerian

In the beginning of this document I suggested that there are similarities to be observed between the old Semitic notions and the associated symbols and sounds, and the Proto-Sumerian notions and sounds (related to what has been named 'articulatory symbolism' in Proto-Sumerian). John A. Halloran gives in '[The Proto-Sumerian Language Invention Process](#)' a list of sounds with associated notions in Proto-Sumerian (with a more extensive discussion of each than in the brief citation below).

In the table below I couple these with the Semitic symbols and their notions (especially the Proto-Sumerian notions with added emphasis -boldface- are recognizable in the Semitic notions as identified here):

sound	Sumerian notion according Halloran	Semitic symbol and notion
/b:p/	cavity, receptacle, container ; to take, choose, allocate ; choice.	𐤁 - a house/tent/family, vase, in, to contain
/d:t/	edge; side; to approach; to leave; to interact with; to act, do, perform.	𐤃 - a door, to enter or go out, to move
/g:k/	throat; circle ; entrance; base ; long, narrow; to consume; to kill ; to utter.	𐤅 - a foot, basis, transport 𐤆 - a rising sun, to circle; 𐤇 - a reigning hand
/m/	female; to cause to be ; to be; to make go out ; to go; transportation; to speak.	𐤈 - water (this symbol is a.o. prominently contained in the notion 'mother'); grammatically used as 'bringing forth'
/n/	discrete individuality ; to be high; to be awesome.	𐤉 - seed, offspring, child, something brought forth
/ŋ/	self; kin ; to love , benefit.	
/l/	happiness; abundance; food production ; males .	𐤊 - shepherd, leader, to lead
/r/	to protect, shelter, support ; to send forth , emit, secrete.	𐤋 - the higher other/Other, God
/s/	skill; to be near ; to enclose , bind; to be full .*	𐤌 - source, breasts, to come forward*
/š/	quantity, portion ; grain; moistness ; to support, suspend .	
/h/	numerousness; saliva.	𐤍 - the notion, not the sound, corresponds to that of the 𐤈 - water, abundance
/z/	to cook , roast; meat (animal) ; teeth ; to cut ; breathing.	𐤎 - scythe, to mow, knife, to slaughter, costly, metal, olive oil



* This takes into account the possible (partly) exchange of the /s/ and /š/ (sh) sounds in the early development of Hebrew (as compared to e.g. Arabic).

In '[Sumero-Indo-European Language Contacts](#)' Aleksi Sahala of the University of Helsinki gives a number of Sumerian words that seem to have relatives in Proto-Indo-European (PIE) and other languages. What strikes me, is that a number of these can well be read concerning their meaning, after transliteration into the old Semitic symbols. Some examples:

- Sumerian **bur(u(d))** = breach, gap, hole; and PIE **b^her(ed^h)** = to cut, breach. Old Semitic: 𐤁𐤏𐤋𐤁 - to enter (forcefully) the house (originally of reed or earth!) of the other (with an arrow or spear) (derived: Latin *forāre* – pierce, bore through, NL.: *boren*, Old Norwegian: *bora*, Finnish: *pora* – to drill a hole).
- Sumerian **gan(a)** = PIE **ǵenh₁**, = to be pregnant, to let be born, to give life to. Old Semitic: 𐤒𐤏𐤊 - to carry seed/offspring or to put offspring on their own feet and let them live, or with *ghayin*: 𐤒𐤏𐤊𐤏 - to enclose seed or offspring with joy (derived: Hittite: *genzu*, Latin *genus*, *gignere*, Gothic: *kuni*). This also sheds light on a possible etymology of Greek *gyne* – woman (though Sahala relates that to the Sumerian *gēme*; both can also have a common origin!). In old Greek: ΓΥΝΗ, possibly derived from: 𐤒𐤏𐤊𐤏 or 𐤒𐤏𐤊𐤏 - carrying or enclosing the (male) pin and the seed/ the offspring with joy.
- Sumerian **girgir₂(a)** = (battle)wagon. PIE **k^wek^wlo-** = wheel. Old Semitic: 𐤒𐤏𐤊𐤏𐤊 - feet / transport for a higher other, almost synonymous to 𐤒𐤏𐤊𐤏𐤊 - transport for a leader, according my

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explanation (cf. Hebrew גלגל *galgal*; Greeks *kyklos*, English: *cycle*, Latvian: *kāklas*, Syrian: *gegil* - wheel).

- The Dutch word *koe* (*kuh*; German: *Kuh*, English: *cow*), is still almost equal to the Sumerian ***gud*** = cow, cattle; and the PIE ***g^wous*** = cow, ox (Sanskrit *go*). Noting all of these forms, I arrive at the old Semitic transliteration:   - feet to let a sharp stick enter (e.g. into the ground). The first domesticated oxen were used a.o. to plow the land, that is: to pull a sharp stick through the earth (compare Hebrew גרב - *gub* - to plow; the wild variant of the ox attacked by letting its horns - sharp sticks - enter into anything; cf. Hebrew גודר - *gud* - to attack). Remarkably, the two most essential elements, the feet (g/k sound) and the sharp stick (letter u or w; u-sound) have been rather persistent in the further development in the last 4000 years (this seems to affirm a theory as that of 'articulatory symbolism').

Appendix 7. Language interpretation, archeology and culture study: the example of the turning door

Our language is strongly influenced by the objects and activities that we encounter in daily life. In ancient times that was not any different. The old Semitic language is full of references to objects and activities from that era, especially those that one encountered a lot or that one revered. So, fundamental study of language is per definitin study of the culture.

Doors are a typical example of this. Doors have not existed forever; ancient villages have been excavated where the houses had no doors. That was a problem, for it was impossible to secure your house; especially when you were not home. One time, a door that can be simply opened and closed repeatedly was a special invention. The doors employed in the ancient Near East, had a specific construction. They did not have a hinge on the side, as present doors mostly have, but they existed of a board attached to a large pole. This pole stood in a sturdy hole in the ground, in which it could turn. For this purpose, in the durable variant a hole was made in a hard stone, that was build into the floor. The observation that this pole stood in the ground, made that the symbol of the Υ - *wav*, representative of a tentpin, vine, etc., was used for it.

A number of Semitic words and notions refer to this. An example is the verb $\Upsilon\Delta\Upsilon$ - *wada'* (later in Hebrew: $\Upsilon\Delta\Upsilon$ - *jada'*) - to have knowledge, literally: to see the pin of the door. (Or bodily: to see the pin and the opening/entrance, a euphemism for intercourse.)

In the old pictographs for a door - Δ and its variants, as shown earlier here - that pin is clearly visible (below, right); in the Samaritan script and some other variants of the Paleo-Hebrew it was even bigger/clearer: Δ . In the Greek Delta - Δ - it was invisible, but in our D it is somewhat visible again.

The word $\Delta\Upsilon\Delta$ - *delet* - door is originally: $\Upsilon\Delta$ - a Δ - door, entrance, board or 'moving, flat thing' with/on a Υ - stick-construction.¹

In the word $\Delta\Upsilon\Upsilon$ - *wachad* (later in Hebrew: $\Delta\Upsilon\Upsilon$ - '*echad* when it is about God, and $\Upsilon\Upsilon$ - *yachad* when people are the subject) that pin is central: the pin (Υ) of the board ($\Upsilon\Upsilon$) of the door (Δ), or the pin (Υ) between wall ($\Upsilon\Upsilon$) and door (Δ). That pin provided a stable connection, even with the turning of the door. It provided unity, while allowing the door some freedom of movement. This is characteristic for this Semitic and Biblical notion of being **one**.

The pin ended below in a round hole in a hard stone (basalt, granite and especially diorite were used a lot, for a long lifespan). How is such a hole formed in such a hard stone? In nature hard stones with a hole in them are rare, though they do appear (it is a volcanic stone). In the thinking from the early days only the hand of God could press such a hole in such a hard stone. So, such a stone was called: to press - hand - higher Other; in pictures: $\Upsilon\Delta\Upsilon$ - *tsir* [6735] (table 2. also gives the other meanings of this word).

The hole in that stone is worth mentioning as well. It was literally the opening in which the pin ended; pictographic: $\Upsilon\Delta\Upsilon$ - פות - *put*, or later also: פת - *pot* [6598] (1 Kings 7: 50). Yes... I would not be surprised if the Dutch word 'put' (pit) is connected to this. That seems certainly the case with our word 'pot' (jar). Train constructors still speak (in Dutch) about an 'aspot' (axle pot) as the metal 'pot' in which each end of an axle (Dutch: as) of a train or railway coach turn. Technical terms often had a very long life... However, the old $\Upsilon\Delta\Upsilon$ - פות - *pot* was at the time also als used euphemistically for the female vagina (Isaiah 3: 17), because that, too was seen as an 'opening in which a pin ended'. In Dutch this word is still used this way (and by extension for a lesbian woman).



A couple of doorpin-hole-stones - possibly of a
city-gate of the city of Ai
photo courtesy of ABR
many more photo's at [the Penn Museum](#)

¹ For an extensive discussion of this word in various Semitic languages, see also: A.L.H.M. van Wieringen, 'דלת (door), column', part of: [כלי Database - Utensils in the Hebrew Bible](#), online resource, Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap (OTW; Old Testament Workgroup), 2010-2011. There the meaning of delet as a writing board or a text column is discussed (both in case of a scroll and of a book it is a moving surface on a kind of stick-construction, I note, where the *tav* brings in the additional connotation of a (letter) sign, such that *lamed-tav* can as well be interpreted as writing leader = writer and $\Upsilon\Delta$ - *delet* as board or leaf written on by a leader).

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With big doors, at the topside such a hollow stone was used as well, later on all doors. This required a very sturdy doorpost. In the beginning a palm tree was used for this, or a pillar, that looked like it (in shape and standing firm). That palm tree (𐤏) watched as it were (⊙) the door (𐤀): 𐤀⊙𐤏 - *sa'ad* [5582-3] – in later Hebrew a word for: to support, sturdy, strong.

A door itself is a 𐤀 - door, a 'flat moving thing' or entrance, with a +𐤄 - stick-construction: +𐤄𐤀 - 𐤀𐤄 - *delet*.


See also my treatment of the word *tsādoq/tsādaq/tsaddiq* [6659-6664] and the associated footnote.

Some literature

In compiling this document I used a large variety of information on the history of the Semitic languages. In the last decades a lot has been written about it; as mentioned the aspects that are not fully clear yet have induced a lot of theories. The way I deal with this is that I look for a kind of dependable common denominator that does justice to the starting-points described in one of the appendices, in particular to the Bible narrative.

I especially based my work on analysis of the old Semitic script texts themselves: photographs and other pictures of text fragments found at archeological excavation and accurate information on those, which fortunately can be found more and more on the Internet: at the websites I will mention further on, and websites of universities and museums, and of some archeologists, like:

- [Wadi el-Hol and Early Alphabetic Inscriptions](#), [the Kilamuwa inscription](#), [the Amman Citadel inscription](#), and various others, at the extensive website of the [West Semitic Research Project](#), of the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, USA.
- Christopher Woods (Ed., with Geoff Emberling & Emily Teeter), [Visible Language: Inventions of Writing in the Ancient Middle East and Beyond](#), [Oriental Institute Museum](#) Publications 32, The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, Chicago, 2010; ISBN: 978-1-885923-76-9. (Especially the chapter: Joseph Lam, 'Invention and Development of the Alphabet', p.189-96, drew my attention.)
- [כְּתוּבַת הָעִבְרִית הַקְדוּמָה בְּיוֹתָר](#); see also: [Most ancient Hebrew biblical inscription deciphered](#), [Ancient Hebrew inscription backs up Bible](#), [New Evidence Suggests Bible Written 10th Century BC](#), and [Archaeology: What an Ancient Hebrew Note Might Mean](#) (and the articles mentioned therein), University of Haifa, Israel.
- [Stèle de Mesha, roi de Moab](#), at the website of the Louvre Museum, Paris, France.
- [The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Archive](#) has great facsimiles of some Paleo-Hebrew Bible scroll fragments, found at Qumran, like of [the Paleo Leviticus 11Q1 scroll](#).
- K. C. Hanson, '[K. C. Hanson's Collection of West Semitic Documents](#)', and '[K. C. Hanson's Collection of Mesopotamian Documents](#)', web documents (indexes to many great examples).

As said, another main source is **the Bible itself** (Westminster Leningrad Codex, Aleppo Codex and Septuagint; consulted mainly via the Bible software [*theWord*](#)), with etymological data and word-meanings from Hebrew dictionaries/lexicons as those of [*Gesenius \(/Tregelles, 1857\)*](#), [*Fürst \(/Davidson, 1885\)*](#), Strong, and [*Brown, Driver & Briggs*](#) (1906; the latter two also in abbreviated form via [*theWord*](#)), the [*Arabic dictionary by Wehr*](#)  (Spoken Language Services, Beirut/Londen / New York, 1960/1976), H. Anthony Salmoné, [*An Advanced Learner's Arabic-English Dictionary*](#), Librairie du Liban, Beirut, 1889 (Electronic version at Arabic Materials, Perseus Collection, Tufts University, USA), and concerning Akkadian: [*The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*](#), (Oriental Institute, Chicago IL, USA, 1956-2006; ISBN 0 918986 05 2; 21 volumes!).

Next to these I used information from numerous Internet- and other sources, such as:

- The [Collesseum](#) and the [Cryptcracker](#) of the Australian scientist [Brian E. Colless](#).
- [An overview \(slide-show\) of various text\(fragment\)s found](#), given by [Yoram Gnat](#) (יורם גנת) are very nice as a first introduction.


He also provides some nice fonts, derived from the inscriptions; presented here below in chronological order, such that some of the development becomes visible (cf. [this Hebrew slide of YG](#)):



Proto-Canaanite	ca. 1700 BC	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	𐤖	𐤗	𐤘	𐤙	𐤚	𐤛	𐤜	𐤝	𐤞	𐤟	𐤠	𐤡	𐤢	𐤣	𐤤	𐤥	𐤦	𐤧	𐤨	𐤩	𐤪	𐤫	𐤬	𐤭	𐤮	𐤯	𐤰	𐤱	𐤲	𐤳	𐤴	𐤵	𐤶	𐤷	𐤸	𐤹	𐤺	𐤻	𐤼	𐤽	𐤾	𐤿	𐥀	𐥁	𐥂	𐥃	𐥄	𐥅	𐥆	𐥇	𐥈	𐥉	𐥊	𐥋	𐥌	𐥍	𐥎	𐥏	𐥐	𐥑	𐥒	𐥓	𐥔	𐥕	𐥖	𐥗	𐥘	𐥙	𐥚	𐥛	𐥜	𐥝	𐥞	𐥟	𐥠	𐥡	𐥢	𐥣	𐥤	𐥥	𐥦	𐥧	𐥨	𐥩	𐥪	𐥫	𐥬	𐥭	𐥮	𐥯	𐥰	𐥱	𐥲	𐥳	𐥴	𐥵	𐥶	𐥷	𐥸	𐥹	𐥺	𐥻	𐥼	𐥽	𐥾	𐥿	𐦀	𐦁	𐦂	𐦃	𐦄	𐦅	𐦆	𐦇	𐦈	𐦉	𐦊	𐦋	𐦌	𐦍	𐦎	𐦏	𐦐	𐦑	𐦒	𐦓	𐦔	𐦕	𐦖	𐦗	𐦘	𐦙	𐦚	𐦛	𐦜	𐦝	𐦞	𐦟	𐦠	𐦡	𐦢	𐦣	𐦤	𐦥	𐦦	𐦧	𐦨	𐦩	𐦪	𐦫	𐦬	𐦭	𐦮	𐦯	𐦰	𐦱	𐦲	𐦳	𐦴	𐦵	𐦶	𐦷	𐦸	𐦹	𐦺	𐦻	𐦼	𐦽	𐦾	𐦿	𐧀	𐧁	𐧂	𐧃	𐧄	𐧅	𐧆	𐧇	𐧈	𐧉	𐧊	𐧋	𐧌	𐧍	𐧎	𐧏	𐧐	𐧑	𐧒	𐧓	𐧔	𐧕	𐧖	𐧗	𐧘	𐧙	𐧚	𐧛	𐧜	𐧝	𐧞	𐧟	𐧠	𐧡	𐧢	𐧣	𐧤	𐧥	𐧦	𐧧	𐧨	𐧩	𐧪	𐧫	𐧬	𐧭	𐧮	𐧯	𐧰	𐧱	𐧲	𐧳	𐧴	𐧵	𐧶	𐧷	𐧸	𐧹	𐧺	𐧻	𐧼	𐧽	𐧾	𐧿	𐨀	𐨁	𐨂	𐨃	𐨄	𐨅	𐨆	𐨇	𐨈	𐨉	𐨊	𐨋	𐨌	𐨍	𐨎	𐨏	𐨐	𐨑	𐨒	𐨓	𐨔	𐨕	𐨖	𐨗	𐨘	𐨙	𐨚	𐨛	𐨜	𐨝	𐨞	𐨟	𐨠	𐨡	𐨢	𐨣	𐨤	𐨥	𐨦	𐨧	𐨨	𐨩	𐨪	𐨫	𐨬	𐨭	𐨮	𐨯	𐨰	𐨱	𐨲	𐨳	𐨴	𐨵	𐨶	𐨷	𐨸	𐨹	𐨺	𐨻	𐨼	𐨽	𐨾	𐨿	𐩀	𐩁	𐩂	𐩃	𐩄	𐩅	𐩆	𐩇	𐩈	𐩉	𐩊	𐩋	𐩌	𐩍	𐩎	𐩏	𐩐	𐩑	𐩒	𐩓	𐩔	𐩕	𐩖	𐩗	𐩘	𐩙	𐩚	𐩛	𐩜	𐩝	𐩞	𐩟	𐩠	𐩡	𐩢	𐩣	𐩤	𐩥	𐩦	𐩧	𐩨	𐩩	𐩪	𐩫	𐩬	𐩭	𐩮	𐩯	𐩰	𐩱	𐩲	𐩳	𐩴	𐩵	𐩶	𐩷	𐩸	𐩹	𐩺	𐩻	𐩼	𐩽	𐩾	𐩿	𐪀	𐪁	𐪂	𐪃	𐪄	𐪅	𐪆	𐪇	𐪈	𐪉	𐪊	𐪋	𐪌	𐪍	𐪎	𐪏	𐪐	𐪑	𐪒	𐪓	𐪔	𐪕	𐪖	𐪗	𐪘	𐪙	𐪚	𐪛	𐪜	𐪝	𐪞	𐪟	𐪠	𐪡	𐪢	𐪣	𐪤	𐪥	𐪦	𐪧	𐪨	𐪩	𐪪	𐪫	𐪬	𐪭	𐪮	𐪯	𐪰	𐪱	𐪲	𐪳	𐪴	𐪵	𐪶	𐪷	𐪸	𐪹	𐪺	𐪻	𐪼	𐪽	𐪾	𐪿	𐫀	𐫁	𐫂	
Phoenician Ahiṣam	1300 BC	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	𐤖	𐤗	𐤘	𐤙	𐤚	𐤛	𐤜	𐤝	𐤞	𐤟	𐤠	𐤡	𐤢	𐤣	𐤤	𐤥	𐤦	𐤧	𐤨	𐤩	𐤪	𐤫	𐤬	𐤭	𐤮	𐤯	𐤰	𐤱	𐤲	𐤳	𐤴	𐤵	𐤶	𐤷	𐤸	𐤹	𐤺	𐤻	𐤼	𐤽	𐤾	𐤿	𐥀	𐥁	𐥂	𐥃	𐥄	𐥅	𐥆	𐥇	𐥈	𐥉	𐥊	𐥋	𐥌	𐥍	𐥎	𐥏	𐥐	𐥑	𐥒	𐥓	𐥔	𐥕	𐥖	𐥗	𐥘	𐥙	𐥚	𐥛	𐥜	𐥝	𐥞	𐥟	𐥠	𐥡	𐥢	𐥣	𐥤	𐥥	𐥦	𐥧	𐥨	𐥩	𐥪	𐥫	𐥬	𐥭	𐥮	𐥯	𐥰	𐥱	𐥲	𐥳	𐥴	𐥵	𐥶	𐥷	𐥸	𐥹	𐥺	𐥻	𐥼	𐥽	𐥾	𐥿	𐦀	𐦁	𐦂	𐦃	𐦄	𐦅	𐦆	𐦇	𐦈	𐦉	𐦊	𐦋	𐦌	𐦍	𐦎	𐦏	𐦐	𐦑	𐦒	𐦓	𐦔	𐦕	𐦖	𐦗	𐦘	𐦙	𐦚	𐦛	𐦜	𐦝	𐦞	𐦟	𐦠	𐦡	𐦢	𐦣	𐦤	𐦥	𐦦	𐦧	𐦨	𐦩	𐦪	𐦫	𐦬	𐦭	𐦮	𐦯	𐦰	𐦱	𐦲	𐦳	𐦴	𐦵	𐦶	𐦷	𐦸	𐦹	𐦺	𐦻	𐦼	𐦽	𐦾	𐦿	𐧀	𐧁	𐧂	𐧃	𐧄	𐧅	𐧆	𐧇	𐧈	𐧉	𐧊	𐧋	𐧌	𐧍	𐧎	𐧏	𐧐	𐧑	𐧒	𐧓	𐧔	𐧕	𐧖	𐧗	𐧘	𐧙	𐧚	𐧛	𐧜	𐧝	𐧞	𐧟	𐧠	𐧡	𐧢	𐧣	𐧤	𐧥	𐧦	𐧧	𐧨	𐧩	𐧪	𐧫	𐧬	𐧭	𐧮	𐧯	𐧰	𐧱	𐧲	𐧳	𐧴	𐧵	𐧶	𐧷	𐧸	𐧹	𐧺	𐧻	𐧼	𐧽	𐧾	𐧿	𐨀	𐨁	𐨂	𐨃	𐨄	𐨅	𐨆	𐨇	𐨈	𐨉	𐨊	𐨋	𐨌	𐨍	𐨎	𐨏	𐨐	𐨑	𐨒	𐨓	𐨔	𐨕	𐨖	𐨗	𐨘	𐨙	𐨚	𐨛	𐨜	𐨝	𐨞	𐨟	𐨠	𐨡	𐨢	𐨣	𐨤	𐨥	𐨦	𐨧	𐨨	𐨩	𐨪	𐨫	𐨬	𐨭	𐨮	𐨯	𐨰	𐨱	𐨲	𐨳	𐨴	𐨵	𐨶	𐨷	𐨸	𐨹	𐨺	𐨻	𐨼	𐨽	𐨾	𐨿	𐩀	𐩁	𐩂	𐩃	𐩄	𐩅	𐩆	𐩇	𐩈	𐩉	𐩊	𐩋	𐩌	𐩍	𐩎	𐩏	𐩐	𐩑	𐩒	𐩓	𐩔	𐩕	𐩖	𐩗	𐩘	𐩙	𐩚	𐩛	𐩜	𐩝	𐩞	𐩟	𐩠	𐩡	𐩢	𐩣	𐩤	𐩥	𐩦	𐩧	𐩨	𐩩	𐩪	𐩫	𐩬	𐩭	𐩮	𐩯	𐩰	𐩱	𐩲	𐩳	𐩴	𐩵	𐩶	𐩷	𐩸	𐩹	𐩺	𐩻	𐩼	𐩽	𐩾	𐩿	𐪀	𐪁	𐪂	𐪃	𐪄	𐪅	𐪆	𐪇	𐪈	𐪉	𐪊	𐪋	𐪌	𐪍	𐪎	𐪏	𐪐	𐪑	𐪒	𐪓	𐪔	𐪕	𐪖	𐪗	𐪘	𐪙	𐪚	𐪛	𐪜	𐪝	𐪞	𐪟	𐪠	𐪡	𐪢	𐪣	𐪤	𐪥	𐪦	𐪧	𐪨	𐪩	𐪪	𐪫	𐪬	𐪭	𐪮	𐪯	𐪰	𐪱	𐪲	𐪳	𐪴	𐪵	𐪶	𐪷	𐪸	𐪹	𐪺	𐪻	𐪼	𐪽	𐪾	𐪿	𐫀	𐫁	𐫂	
Hebrew Paleo Mesha	850 BC	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	𐤖	𐤗	𐤘	𐤙	𐤚	𐤛	𐤜	𐤝	𐤞	𐤟	𐤠	𐤡	𐤢	𐤣	𐤤	𐤥	𐤦	𐤧	𐤨	𐤩	𐤪	𐤫	𐤬	𐤭	𐤮	𐤯	𐤰	𐤱	𐤲	𐤳	𐤴	𐤵	𐤶	𐤷	𐤸	𐤹	𐤺	𐤻	𐤼	𐤽	𐤾	𐤿	𐥀	𐥁	𐥂	𐥃	𐥄	𐥅	𐥆	𐥇	𐥈	𐥉	𐥊	𐥋	𐥌	𐥍	𐥎	𐥏	𐥐	𐥑	𐥒	𐥓	𐥔	𐥕	𐥖	𐥗	𐥘	𐥙	𐥚	𐥛	𐥜	𐥝	𐥞	𐥟	𐥠	𐥡	𐥢	𐥣	𐥤	𐥥	𐥦	𐥧	𐥨	𐥩	𐥪	𐥫	𐥬	𐥭	𐥮	𐥯	𐥰	𐥱	𐥲	𐥳	𐥴	𐥵	𐥶	𐥷	𐥸	𐥹	𐥺	𐥻	𐥼	𐥽	𐥾	𐥿	𐦀	𐦁	𐦂	𐦃	𐦄	𐦅	𐦆	𐦇	𐦈	𐦉	𐦊	𐦋	𐦌	𐦍	𐦎	𐦏	𐦐	𐦑	𐦒	𐦓	𐦔	𐦕	𐦖	𐦗	𐦘	𐦙	𐦚	𐦛	𐦜	𐦝	𐦞	𐦟	𐦠	𐦡	𐦢	𐦣	𐦤	𐦥	𐦦	𐦧	𐦨	𐦩	𐦪	𐦫	𐦬	𐦭	𐦮	𐦯	𐦰	𐦱	𐦲	𐦳	𐦴	𐦵	𐦶	𐦷	𐦸	𐦹	𐦺	𐦻	𐦼	𐦽	𐦾	𐦿	𐧀	𐧁	𐧂	𐧃	𐧄	𐧅	𐧆	𐧇	𐧈	𐧉	𐧊	𐧋	𐧌	𐧍	𐧎	𐧏	𐧐	𐧑	𐧒	𐧓	𐧔	𐧕	𐧖	𐧗	𐧘	𐧙	𐧚	𐧛	𐧜	𐧝	𐧞	𐧟	𐧠	𐧡	𐧢	𐧣	𐧤	𐧥	𐧦	𐧧	𐧨	𐧩	𐧪	𐧫	𐧬	𐧭	𐧮	𐧯	𐧰	𐧱	𐧲	𐧳	𐧴	𐧵	𐧶	𐧷	𐧸	𐧹	𐧺	𐧻	𐧼	𐧽	𐧾	𐧿	𐨀	𐨁	𐨂	𐨃	𐨄	𐨅	𐨆	𐨇	𐨈	𐨉	𐨊	𐨋	𐨌	𐨍	𐨎	𐨏	𐨐	𐨑	𐨒	𐨓	𐨔	𐨕	𐨖	𐨗	𐨘	𐨙	𐨚	𐨛	𐨜	𐨝	𐨞	𐨟	𐨠	𐨡	𐨢	𐨣	𐨤	𐨥	𐨦	𐨧	𐨨	𐨩	𐨪	𐨫	𐨬	𐨭	𐨮	𐨯	𐨰	𐨱	𐨲	𐨳	𐨴	𐨵	𐨶	𐨷	𐨸	𐨹	𐨺	𐨻	𐨼	𐨽	𐨾	𐨿	𐩀	𐩁	𐩂	𐩃	𐩄	𐩅	𐩆	𐩇	𐩈	𐩉	𐩊	𐩋	𐩌	𐩍	𐩎	𐩏	𐩐	𐩑	𐩒	𐩓	𐩔	𐩕	𐩖	𐩗	𐩘	𐩙	𐩚	𐩛	𐩜	𐩝	𐩞	𐩟	𐩠	𐩡	𐩢	𐩣	𐩤	𐩥	𐩦	𐩧	𐩨	𐩩	𐩪	𐩫	𐩬	𐩭	𐩮	𐩯	𐩰	𐩱	𐩲	𐩳	𐩴	𐩵	𐩶	𐩷	𐩸	𐩹	𐩺	𐩻	𐩼	𐩽	𐩾	𐩿	𐪀	𐪁	𐪂	𐪃	𐪄	𐪅	𐪆	𐪇	𐪈	𐪉	𐪊	𐪋	𐪌	𐪍	𐪎	𐪏	𐪐	𐪑	𐪒	𐪓	𐪔	𐪕	𐪖	𐪗	𐪘	𐪙	𐪚	𐪛	𐪜	𐪝	𐪞	𐪟	𐪠	𐪡	𐪢	𐪣	𐪤	𐪥	𐪦	𐪧	𐪨	𐪩	𐪪	𐪫	𐪬	𐪭	𐪮	𐪯	𐪰	𐪱	𐪲	𐪳	𐪴	𐪵	𐪶	𐪷	𐪸	𐪹	𐪺	𐪻	𐪼	𐪽	𐪾	𐪿	𐫀	𐫁	𐫂	
Hebrew Paleo Siloam	700 BC	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																									

The Hebrew square script I added for reference. The grey symbols I did not recognize from the inscriptions. With the Phoenician 'aleph I added one alternative form.

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- Wiktionary – various information, a.o. many examples from the [Category: Proto-Semitic language](#), the [Category: Proto-Semitic derivations](#), and the [List of Proto-Semitic stems](#).
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- The [Jewish Encyclopedia](#) – a.o.: '[Tree of Life](#)' and '[Paradise](#)' with some interesting background info and the role of the Tree of Life (looking like a date palm) in it.
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- Andrew Kitchen, Christopher Ehret, Shiferaw Assefa and Connie J. Mulligan, '[Bayesian phylogenetic analysis of Semitic languages identifies an Early Bronze Age origin of Semitic in the Near East](#)', *Proc. Royal Soc. B* 2009, 276, p.2703-2710 (doi:10.1098/rspb.2009.0408; first published online: 29 April 2009).
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- Andras Rajki, [A. E. D. – Arabic Etymological Dictionary](#), 2002.

- [The Tower of Babel, A scientific database of Proto-Semitic roots](#), an international cooperation between Russian and other universities.
- [A broad overview of alphabets and their history, of Hebrew and Semitic languages and its history and chronology](#) at the Spanish *Proel* site (the site contains some inaccuracies and draws some connections that I do not see that way but it also gives a lot of factual information, a.o. useful black & white pictures of many of the texts and fragments uncovered so far).
- [A Brief History of the Hebrew Language](#), at the site *Hebrew for Christians* (strongly Jewish colored vision).
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- Aaron D. Rubin, '[Egyptian and Hebrew](#)' and '[Egyptian loanwords in Hebrew](#)', in: G. Khan et al. (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, Vol.1 A-F, Brill, Leiden/Boston, 2012/2013; p.791-793, 793-794.
- Reinhard G. Lehmann, '[„Who needs Phoenician?“](#) – Vom Nutzen des Phönizischen für das Verständnis der Sprache des Antiken Israel – Überlegungen und Beispiele', in: Markus Witte, Johannes F. Diehl (Hrsg.), *Israeliten und Phönizier – Ihre Beziehungen im Spiegel der Archäologie und der Literatur des Alten Testaments und seiner Umwelt*, (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 235; ISSN 1015 1850), Academic Press Fribourg / Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 2008; ISBN 978 3 7278 1621 5 / 978 3 525 53036 8; p.1-38.
- Reinhard G. Lehmann, '[Wilhelm Gesenius and the Rise of Phoenician Philology](#)' , in: Stefan Schorch und Ernst-Joachim Waschke, *Biblische Exegese und hebräische Lexikographie; Das „Hebräisch-deutsche Handwörterbuch“ von Wilhelm Gesenius als Spiegel und Quelle alttestamentlicher und hebräischer Forschung, 200 Jahre nach seiner ersten Auflage*, (part of: John Barton, Reinhard G. Kratz, Choon-Leong Seow, Markus Witte, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, Band 427; ISSN 0934 2575), De Gruyter, Berlin/Boston, 2013; ISBN 978 3 11 026612 2; e-ISBN 978 3 11 026704 4; p. 209-266.
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- Daniel A Foxvog, [Introduction to Sumerian Grammar](#) , his own website, edition: May 2012.
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- John A. Halloran, '[Sumerian lexicon 3.0](#)' , at www.sumerian.org.
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- Geoffrey Khan et al (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, Vol.1: A-F; Vol.2: G-O; Vol.3 P-Z, Brill, Leiden NL/ Boston USA, 2013; ISBN 978 90 04 17642 3.
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- C.J. Ball, *Chinese and Sumerian*, Oxford University Press / Humphrey Milford, London, 1913.
- C.H. Kang, Ethel R. Nelson, *The Discovery of Genesis – How the Truths of Genesis Were Found Hidden in the Chinese Language*, Concordia, Saint Louis MO, 1979; ISBN 0 570 03792 1. (At [this link](#) as well.)
- Ethel R. Nelson, Richard E. Broadberry, *Genesis and the Mystery Confucius Couldn't Solve*, Concordia, Saint Louis MO, 1994; ISBN 0 570 04635 1.
- [The website of 'Uncle Hanzi' \(汉字叔叔\) about the etymology of Chinese characters.](#)
- Scott B. Noegel, "'Sign, Sign, Everywhere a Sign": Sript, Power and Interpretation in the Ancient Near East', in: Amar Annus (Ed.), *Divination and Interpretation of Signs in the Ancient World*, The Oriental Institute of Chicago Seminars Nr.6, Chicago IL, USA, 2010; ISBN 978 1 885923 68 4; Series: ISSN 1559 2944; p.152-162.
- '[Language Acquisition: Nouns Before Verbs?](#)', *Science Daily*, 2013-03-25 (about a study at [Northwestern University](#): 'Nouns before verbs? Fresh insights and new cross-linguistic evidence', by S. Waxman, X. Fu, S. Arunachalam, E. Leddon, & K. Geraghty, to appear in: *Child Development Perspectives*).
- Miguel Carrasquer Vidal, '[The Greek alphabet](#)', undated document at Academia.edu.
- Łukasz Niesiołowski-Spanò, '[Early Alphabetic Scripts and the Origin of Greek Letters](#)', in: P. Berdowski, B. Blahaczek (Eds), *Haec mihi in animis vestris templa. Studia Classica in Memory of Professor Lesław Morawiecki*, Rzeszów, 2007 [2008], p.47-63 / p.172-188.
(Note: Gives a.o. an overview of b/w facsimiles of various old Semitic inscriptions.)

In the main text and in the footnotes of this document I have mentioned several other sources.

Next to the above I found a lot of materials containing some unique information but needing heavy sifting to find the grains amidst the chaff, as e.g.:

- The [Ancient Hebrew Research Center](#) (see a.o. www.ancient-hebrew.org/docs/28_chart.pdf). One of the first extensive sources that I encountered (with video lectures on YouTube also), it inspired me to search further. Its director, Jeff Benner, surely did some groundbreaking work. Unfortunately, some of the information appeared somewhat influenced by Jewish mysticism; therefore I view it *somewhat* critical. Sometimes they go too far in an effort to reduce everything into a system of two-letter roots. Their (former?) explanation of some symbols – the *samekh/sin*, *tsade*, *qoph* and *shin* – did not match my factual observations.
- Hubert Grimme, *Althebräische Inschriften vom Sinai – Alphabet, Textliches, Sprachliches mit Folgerungen*, Orient-Buchhandlung Heinz Lafaire, Hannover, 1923 (in particular Ch. III. 'Das Altsinaitische Alphabet', p.25-). Contains a number of (unclear b/w photographed and drawn) pictures of original inscriptions. Otherwise seriously (out)dated; saw the old Semitic script as developed from the Hieratic script, to which all observations were adapted. Some most surprising (read: fancy) chapters, a.o. on discovering a glimpse of what could have been Moses before his 40th year in the midst of the Sinai excavations.
- René Victorien Lottin de Laval, *Voyage dans la Péninsule arabique du Sinai et l'Égypte moyenne*, Gide, 1859.

- Charles Forster, [*Sinai photographed*](#), R. Bentley, Londen, 1862. Linguistically seen qualitatively very dubious and dated.

Interesting is also the relationship of the Semitic languages with the Proto-Indo-European and other primal languages and language groups and a possible single Proto-Human language that stood at the basis of all these language groups. People like Isaac E. Mozeson (see e.g. [*The Word: The Dictionary That Reveals the Hebrew Source of English*](#), SP Books, 2002) have been heavily criticized by linguists in the past because their ideas about a common origin of all languages were considered too unorthodox and because their 'explanations' were at times somewhat simplistic, suffering scientific accuracy. However, recently also in linguistic circles the idea has arisen that perhaps there once was one Proto-Human language after all. This has emerged from observed similarities between various proto-languages (a.o. Proto-Indo-European and Proto-Semitic). For more about this, see e.g.:

- Saul Levin, *The Indo-European and Semitic Languages; an exploration of structural similarities related to accent, chiefly in Greek, Sanskrit, and Hebrew*, State University of New York, Albany, 1971; ISBN 978 0 8739 5055 8 (775 p.).
- Saul Levin, *Semitic and Indo-European: Part 1. The principal etymologies: with observations on Afro-Asiatic*, (Part of the series: E.F. Konrad Koerner (Ed.), *Amsterdam studies in the theory and history of linguistic science*; Series IV, *Current issues in linguistic theory*, ISSN 0304-0763; Vol. 129); John Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, 1995; ISBN 90 272 3632 1 / 1 55619 583 4.
And Part 2: *Comparative Morphology, syntax and phonetics*; (*Current Issues in Linguistic Theory*, Vol. 226); John Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, 2002; 978 1588 11222 4.
- V. Orel (Jerusalem), '[Hamito-Semitic, Sino-Caucasian, Nostratic](#)', concept-article (pre-publication at www.nostratic.net, 2012).
In this current article the writer demonstrates convincingly that Hamito-Semitic, Sino-Caucasian and Nostratic (the ancestor of Indo-European); three big groups of world languages from long ago, must have had a common root.
- Merritt Ruhlen, '[Multi-Regional Evolution or 'Out of Africa'?: The Linguistic Evidence](#)', in: Takeru Akazawa and E. Szathmari (Eds.), (Symposium on) *Prehistoric Dispersals of Mongoloid Peoples*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992/96; p.52-65.
- Merritt Ruhlen, '[The Origin of Language: Retrospective and Prospective](#)', in: *On the Origin of Languages: Studies in Linguistic Taxonomy*, Stanford University Press. Stanford, 1994; Ch. 13; p. 261-276.
- John D. Bengtson and Merritt Ruhlen, '[Global Etymologies](#)', in: *On the Origin of Languages: Studies in Linguistic Taxonomy*, Stanford University Press. Stanford, 1994; Ch.14; p. 277-336 (also [at the site of Ruhlen](#)).
- Giovanni Semerano, *Le Origini della Cultura Europea*, 4 Vol's, Leo Olschki, Firenze, 1984-1994. (Italian. Sees an Akkadian origin of many European words.)
- Karel Jongeling, *Comparing Welsh and Hebrew*, CNWS / Leiden University, Leiden NL, 2000; ISBN: 978 90 5789 032 1.
(See also the web-article: '[The Hebrew-Celtic connection](#)' (also [here](#)), showing that Celtic – mostly seen as part of the Indo-European language group – probably derives from Phoenician. Indirectly, this also lays a link of influence by the Semitic language group towards the Indo-European language group).
- Frederic Delitzsch, [*Studien über Indogermanisch-semitische Wurzelverwandschaft*](#), J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung (Druck: G. Kreysing), Leipzig, 1873. (This old work by the son of the well-known Franz Delitzsch shows in a structured and convincing way that many roots from the Semitic languages are closely related to roots from Old German and Sanskrit. See also: Rudolf Heinrich Georg von Raumer, *Die Urverwandschaft der semitischen und indoeuropäischen Sprachen*; Part XV of: *Gesammelte sprachwissenschaftliche Schriften*, Frankfurt und Erlangen, 1863; p. 461-539; ———, [Fortsetzung der Untersuchungen über die Urverwandschaft der semitischen und indoeuropäischen Sprachen](#); ———, [Herr Professor Schleicher in Jena und Die Urverwandschaft der semitischen und indoeuropäischen Sprachen. Ein kritisches Bedenken von Rudolf von Raumer](#), Heyder & Zimmer, Frankfurt a.M., 1864.)



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