



## SAM Glossary of Hebraic and Biblical Terms

Compiled & Reviewed 2012 by Marsha Van

**Transliteration note:** There are many different ways to transliterate the sounds of Hebrew when writing it using English letters. Here are the most common ones. If you would like to hear the pronunciation of a word that is found in the Scriptures you might go to [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org) and search for that word. When you find a reference that includes the English word, click on that Strong's number and it will take you to a screen that includes an opportunity to hear the Hebrew word spoken.

### A

**Abba:** 'Father', Dad/ Daddy.

**Adam:** The first man  
Generically refers to "man" or "human"

**Adamah:** Earth, ground.

**Adon:** Master.

**Adon Olam:** Master of the Universe, Master of All, Eternal Ruler,  
referring to YHVH.

**Adonai:** My Lord, My Master, Lord of all  
Used by many Jewish people in place of God's name, YHVH, Yahweh

**Adonai Echad:** The Lord is one.

**Adonai Eloheinu:** The Lord our God

**Adonai Elohim:** The Lord God

**Adonai haElyon:** The Lord Most High.

**Adonai Shalom:** The Lord of Peace.

**Adonai Tzidkeynu:** The Lord our Righteousness.

**Adonai Tz'vaot:** The Lord of Hosts.

**Adonai Yeshuateynu:** The Lord our Salvation.

**Adonai Yeera:** The Lord our Provider.

**Afikomen:** That which comes later, dessert. During the Passover Seder half of the middle matzah that is broken off is wrapped in white linen, and hidden away to be brought out at the end of the meal (hence 'dessert'). It is a beautiful picture of Yeshua, who left the Holy of Holies ([heaven](#)), was broken, wrapped in white linen, buried, and brought back. He who finds Him receives the great reward of Eternal Life. We also see Yeshua represented in the matzo itself, being striped and pierced just as He was pierced for our transgressions and by whose stripes we are healed.

**Akeidah:** Binding. The story of the binding of Isaac (Gen. 22:1-24).

**Alphabet :** The Hebrew alphabet -- 'aleph' is first letter of alphabet, 'bet' is second.

**Aliyah:** Ascending, going up, as in ascending from slavery to freedom. 2) To make or go on aliyah is to immigrate to the land of Israel.

**Am/Ami:** People, My People.

**Amain/Omein/Amen:** So be it, it is true, truly, my it become true.

**Am Segulah:** A treasured people.

**Apocrypha:** (Gr). Hidden, concealed. A collection of Jewish extra Biblical writings from the 2nd temple time period containing historical information.

**Aviv/Abib:** Spring, young. The stage in the growth of grain when the seeds have reached full size and are filling with starch, but have not dried yet. 2) The name for the first month of the Hebrew calendar prior to the Babylonian captivity. The Babylonian name Nisan has replaced the name Aviv.

**Azazel:** Scapegoat. (Strong's 5799 – goat of departure) After laying his hands on the head of the scapegoat and confessing all the sins of Israel, the priest sent the goat into the wilderness signifying removal of the nation's sins.

## B

**Bar:** Son (Aramaic)

**Bar Mitzvah:** Son of the Commandments. 1) A community rite of passage bestowed on a person after completing community established tasks/requirements, indicating the persons readiness to assume moral and spiritual accountability. Usually marked with a ceremony. Traditionally for boys age 13 and girls age 12 for, but can be done at any age.

**Baruch:** Blessed.

**Bat:** Daughter.

**Bat mitzvah:** Daughter of the Commandments. 1) A community rite of passage bestowed on a person after completing community established tasks/requirements, indicating the persons readiness to assume moral and spiritual accountability. Usually marked with a ceremony. Traditionally for boys age 13 and girls age 12 for, but can be done at any age.

**Beit:** House.

**Beit HaMikdash/Beis HaMikdash:** The holy Temple in Jerusalem.

**Ben/Bein:** Son.

**Besamim:** Spices used in Havdalah (end of Shabbat service) for a sweet fragrance.

**Bracha/Brachot:** A Blessing/Blessings.

**Brit/B'rit:** Covenant.

**Brit Chadasha/Brit Hadasha:** New Covenant, aka New Testament.

**Brit Milah/Bris:** Circumcision .

## C

**Chag:** Festival

**Chag Sameach:** A greeting used to mean 'Happy Holiday' during the festivals. Can be personalized for the specific moedim: Chag Sameach Pesach, Chag Sameach Sukkoth, etc.

**Chai:** Life. A popular greeting is 'L'chayim' meaning 'to life.'

**Challah:** A braided sweet egg bread served traditionally in a loaf shape for the weekly Shabbat.

**Chametz:** Leaven. Leavening agents used in baking. Can also be a metaphor for sin.

**Chanukah/Hanukkah:** Dedication. Festival of Dedication, Festival of Lights. Commemorates both the battle triumph of the Maccabees in recapturing Jerusalem and the temple in 165 BCE, as well the legend of the miracle of the olive oil that burned for 8 days in the temple when there was only enough oil to burn for one day.

**Charoset/Haroset:** A mixture of apples, raisins, nuts, honey and wine served at Pesach (Passover) to represent mortar on the seder plate.

**Chayim:** Living.

**Chazak:** Be Strong. Chazak! Chazak! Venit Chazek! Be strong, be strong, be strengthened. This phrase is joyfully proclaimed upon completion of reading a book of the Torah.

**Chukkim:** Statutes. Torah commands whose reasons aren't fully explained in Torah -- we obey them without understanding their purpose simply because God commanded us to.

**Chuppah:** Covering, room. The bride and groom stand under the chuppah as they recite their vows. The chuppah symbolizes the new home that the groom (Messiah) will bring his bride home to.

**Clean and Unclean:** Tahor (clean) and Tamei/tameh (unclean). Tamei refers to the state of ritual impurity which occurs when a person comes in contact with the

realm of sin or death is. Does not mean a person has sinned. Tahor is a state of ritual purity. For one who is tahor to pass from a state of tamei (impurity) to tahor (purity), according to Torah, involved bringing the prescribed sacrifices and purification through tevillah (immersion), a washing by water in a mikvah (ritual bath in living waters).

**Cohen/Cohanim/Kohen/Kohanim:** Priest, priests. A Cohen is a descendant of Aaron the Levite and was responsible for temple service.

**Cohen HaGadol:** The High Priest.

**Counting of the Omer:** Counting the days between the day after the Shabbat during Passover (a Sunday) and Shavuot (Pentecost), which occurs on the fiftieth day (also a Sunday).

## D

**Days of Awe/Repentance:** (H) Yomim Nora'im. Traditionally, the ten days following Yom Teruah and preceding Yom Kippur; aka -"Ten Days of Awe." This is a time of self examination and repentance and drawing closer to YHVH, seeking His face and His will in our lives.

**Dreidel:** Sevivon. The four-sided top used in a Chanukah game, containing the Hebrew alephbet letters: Nun, Gimmel, Hey, and Shin. These letters stand for nes godal hayah sham ("a great miracle happened there").

## E

**Echad:** One, unity.

**Eloheinu/ Elohenu:** Our God

**Elohim:** God, gods, mighty one(s), judges.

**El Shaddai:** God Almighty

**Eretz:** Land.

**Erev:** Evening.

**Etrog:** Citrus fruit, usually a citron, used during festival of Sukkot as one of the four species.

## F

**Four Species:** (Heb) Arbah Minim. They are the fruit and branches bundled together to make a lulav, which is used during the festival of Sukkoth (Feast of Tabernacles or Booths).

## H

**HaBikkurim:** Feast of Early First Fruits. Observed the day after the Sabbath during Pesach (Passover), marks the beginning of the counting of the Omer, which ends on Shavuot (Pentacost)

**Haftarah/Hatarah:** (pl) Haftarot. Weekly reading from the Neviim (Prophets), read in addition to Torah, connected thematically to the Torah Parsha .

**Haggadah:** The telling (of the story). Often refers to the Exodus story, which codifies the order of the Pesach seder (Passover meal).

**Hag Hakatzir**

The Feast of Weeks the official beginning of the summer harvest season (wheat crop specifically) Shavuot

**Halachah:** The way to walk. Referring to our spiritual walk.

**Hallel:** Praise. 2) Songs of praise found in Tehillim /Psalms 113-118.

**Halleluyah:** Praise God.

**Ha satan:** Satan, the adversary.

**Havdalah:** Separation. A traditional observance marking the end of the weekly Shabbat/Sabbath with prayer, wine and spices.

**Hoshanna Rabbah /Hosha'ana Rabbah:** The great day of Sukkoth (Feast of Tabernacles), day of the water drawing ceremony

**Hosheanah:** Hosanna, save now

**Ha Yesod:** The foundation.

**Heave Offering:** A grain offering.

## M

## K

**Karaism/Karaites:** A Jewish sect that developed in the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE, which rejected rabbinical traditions of talmudic law, and based their walk on the literal interpretation of the Bible.

**Kadosh:** Holy, set apart.

**Kahal/Kehillah:** Congregation, assembly; community, gathering..

**Ketubah/ketuvah:** A marriage contract or covenant. The Torah is a holy ketubah between YHVH and His people.

**Ketuvim/K'tuvim:** The Writings, the section of the Tanakh (Old Testament) containing: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and The Chronicles.

**Kiddush:** Prayer of sanctification spoken over wine on Erev Shabbat or a festival.

**Kol:** Voice, all.

**Korban:** Sacrifice. Referring to sacrifices for the Temple.

**Kosher:** Foods that Torah calls 'clean' are kosher.

## L

**Lashon Hara:** Evil tongue. Harmful speech against others, defaming, badmouthing. Encompasses all forms of forbidden speech (gossip, slander, lying, etc.). According to the Torah, slander is a hideous crime, a slanderer is like one who denies God.

**Latkes:** Fried potato pancakes traditionally eaten during Chanukah with applesauce or sour cream on top.

**Lulav:** The lulav is a palm branch bundled with two other wood species and a citrus fruit, usually a citron, used during Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles).

**Maror:** Bitter Herbs. One of the items on the Passover Seder plate.

**Mashiach/Meshiach/Moshiach:** The Anointed One, Messiah. Refers to Yeshua (Jesus) HaMeshiach (the Messiah). Hebrew word for Messiah or Christ.

**Matzah:** 1) The unleavened bread eaten at the Pesach Seder and thereafter for the festival of Unleavened Bread in recollection of the hurried departure from Egypt. 2) Represented Yeshua's body at the last Pesach seder (Last Supper) prior to His death and resurrection.

**Mayim:** Water.

**Mayim Chayim:** Living water.

**Mazel Tov:** Good fortune. Commonly used today as 'congratulations.'

**Megillah/ Megillot:** 1) Scroll, scrolls or book. Typically refers to the book of Esther 2) Collectively, the five scrolls of the Tanakh (Old Testament) Song of Songs (Song of Solomon), Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther.

**Melech/Melechim:** King, kings.

**Menorah / Menorot:** A candle stick, chandelier, lamp, lamp stand. Usually refers to the 7 branched candlestick used in the Holy Temple or the 9 branch candlestick used during Chanukkah, called a Chanukkiah.

**Messianic:** 1) Having to do with the Messiah (Y'shua, Jesus). 2) A Hebraic expression of one's faith in Yeshua/Jesus.

**Mezuzah:** 1) Doorpost. 2) A parchment scroll with selected Torah verses (D'varim 6: 4-9 (11:13-21) placed in a casing and affixed to the exterior door posts.

**Midrash:** The "commentary" literature developed in classical Judaism that attempts to interpret Jewish Scripture in a thorough manner. An integral part of the Oral Tradition.

**Mikvah / Mikveh:** A place of gathering together of waters. 2) A ritual emersion pool for cleansing from ritual impurity or sanctification.

**Mishkan:** Portable Tabernacle (in the wilderness). Beit haMikdash, "the Temple."

**Mishpat/Mishpatim:** Judgement. Ordinance/ordinances, a law/laws that can be understood universally.

**Mishpochah:** Family, ancestors, lineage.

**Mitzriyim:** Egypt. Also refers to the world or world system.

**Mitzvah/Mitzvot:** A commandment (commandments), instruction in righteousness. Good deed.

**Moed/Moedim: Leviticus 23** A set apart or appointed time (times). A season or festival. Applies to the seven Biblical Holy Convocations and the weekly Sabbath, Pesach (Passover), Hag HaMatzot (Days of Unleavened Bread), HaBikurim (Feast of First Fruits), Shavuot (Feast of Weeks/Pentecost), Yom Teruah (Feast of Trumpets), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), Sukkoth (Feast of Tabernacles).

## N

**Nazirite/Nazarite Vow:** (sing) Nazir. Member of an ascetic sect within Judaism who took a vows of abstinence from any fermented food or drink, did not cut their hair, and were not permitted to come into contact with the dead. Their vows, could last anywhere from a brief time to an entire life.

**Nevi'im:** (sing) Nevi. The Prophets, the section of the Tanakh (Old Testament) containing: Joshua, Judges, Books of Samuel, Books of Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

## O

**Omer:** Sheaf. 1) A dry measure of 1 tenth of an ephah. 2) The first sheaf of grain cut during the barley harvest and presented in the Temple as an offering on

the day after the Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

## P

**Parashah/Parashiyot/ Parsha:** Portion; Section; Sidra. The weekly Torah readings.

**Pentateuch:** Greek name referring to the five books of Moses, synonymous to the Hebrew word Chumash.

**Pesach/Passover:** One of the seven Moedim (Holy Convocations) of YHVH. The Festival that commemorates the Exodus and liberation from Egypt, the Paschal offering, the passing over of the death angel of the Hebrew homes with the lambs blood on their doorposts. We view it as a betrothal feast toward the marriage feast of the Lamb.

**Purim:** Lots. The celebration of Jewish victory after the failed attempt to exterminate Jews from Persia -- story found in the book of Esther. Not a Biblically commanded holiday but still of prophetic significance.

## R

**Red Heifer (Parah Adumah):** Red heifer mentioned in Numbers 19 -- the ashes of this heifer were for purifying purposes.

**Rosh Chodesh:** Means 'head of the month' -- the new month begins when the moon is new, astronomically refers to the state of darkness, when the moon is not seen. Traditional Judaism uses the sighting of the sliver to determine the new month.

**Ruach:** Spirit, wind, breath, air, strength, breeze.

**Ruach HaKodesh:** The Holy Spirit.

## S

**S'firat HaOmer:** Counting of the Omer, a period of 50 days from HaBikkurim until Shavuot.

**Seder:** Order. Usually refers to the Pesach/Passover ordered meal using the Haggadah (A book, The telling of the Exodus story) as a guide.

**Sefer:** Book. Can be used generically for any books, or used more specifically as in "Sefer Torah" (books of

Torah).

**Segullah:** Treasured possession. God gave this affectionate name to the Israelites.

**Semetic:** Ethnically, refers to descendants of Shem, one of Noah's sons. In ancient times they included the Babylonians, the Syrians, the Arameans, and the Israelites. Modern day Semites would include the Arabs and the Jewish people. Linguistically, the Semetic language

**Siddur:** Prayer book.

**Sidra/Sedra:** Weekly Torah portion.

**Simchah:** Joy, happiness.

**Simchat Torah:** Rejoicing in Torah. A celebration of the ending and beginning of the Torah parshot annual reading cycle.

**Sukkah:** Booth or tabernacle. Temporary structure built for the celebration of Sukkot in recognition of the temporary dwellings built by our ancestors as they journeyed from Egypt to Kanaan (Canaan). Paul/Shaul the tent maker may have been a sukkah or tallit maker.

**Sukkot/Sukkoth:** Feast of Tabernacles, Feast of Booths, Feast of Ingathering. Commemorates God's protection on Israel when she lived in tents under His protection. Prophetic significance as a picture of the world to come (and the Marriage Feast of the Lamb!)

## SH

**Shabbat:** Sabbath (Friday sunset to Saturday sunset). Seventh day of the week. God blessed and sanctified the seventh day of the week as a day of rest. A covenantal sign between God and Israel: Ex 31:13 Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you.

**Shabbat Shalom:** Peace of the Sabbath, peaceful Sabbath, Sabbath peace (a Sabbath greeting).

**Shalom:** Peace. Also used as a greeting to say hello or goodbye.

**Shalom Elechein /Shalom Alaykhim:** Peace to you, peace be with you (a greeting).

**Shamayim:** Heavens. Can mean either the sky, the firmament (as in the first verse of Bereishit), or the place YHVH resides.

**Shavuah Tov:** Good week. A popular greeting when Shabbat ends.

**Shavuot:** Weeks. (Gr) Pentecost. The Festival commemorating God's giving the Torah at Mt. Sinai to Yisrael; Observed on the fiftieth day after the Sabbath during Pesach. Also commemorates the Ruach (Holy Spirit) falling on the apostles in Jerusalem.

**Shekinah/Shechinah:** Divine presence of God. Hebrew term for the Divine Presence; the Holy Spirit. It is seen as the aspect of the feminine element in deity; A word not found in Scripture, but used Hebraically to express the dwelling Presence of God and specifically when it dwelt (rested) between the Keruvim (Cherubim) over the Seat of Atonement of the Ark of Testimony in the Kodesh HaKodeshim (Holy of Holies).

**Shema:** Hear and do. From Deuteronomy 6:4: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD" showing the uniqueness of the God of Israel.

**Shofar:** A ram's horn (frequently translated 'trumpet').

## T

**Tabernacle:** Mishkan. The Mishkan was the tent commanded by God for the Israelites to set up in the wilderness after they left Egypt. In this tent or Tabernacle sacrifices were offered, God's special glory dwelt, worship took place, and Israel met with God in a unique way.

**Tahor:** Ritual Purity; Clean. Passing from a state of tameh (impurity) to tahor (purity) according to Torah involved bringing the prescribed sacrifices and purification through tevillah (immersion), a washing by water in a mikvah.

**Tallit/Tallis:** Prayer shawl with tzitzit (fringes), based

on the command in Numbers 15:37-40

**Talmid/Talmidim:** Student/disciple, students/disciples. Learner. A talmid was a student who was also a disciple. He did not just learn the facts, he also learned about life from his teacher.

**Talmud:** Study, learning. The book of the Talmud is venerated by Rabbinic scholars sometimes elevated above Torah.

**Tameh:** Ritual Impurity; unclean. Being in the state of ritual impurity. Passing from a state of tameh (impurity) to tahor (purity) according to Torah involved bringing the prescribed sacrifices and purification through tevillah (immersion), a washing by water in a mikvah.

**Tanakh/Tenach/TNK:** Old Testament Scriptures, divided into three sections: Torah, Nevi'im, and Ketubim -- hence acronym: TNK- TaNaKh.

**Techelet/T'chelet/Tekhelet** The blue cord on each corner of the tzitzit, "Bid them that they make them throughout their generations fringes in the corners of their garments, and that they put with the fringe of each corner a thread of blue." Numbers 15:38 Traditional Judaism doesn't add the blue cord to their tzitzit, arguing they aren't sure about identifying the chilazon, a snail of Tyre from which the Phoenicians traditionally extracted the blue dye. Second century sages felt this was too expensive a dye to use, so they waived the biblical requirement, lest people use a cheaper dye instead and break the oral law. Written Torah never commanded the blue dye come from this particular snail, in fact, any blue dye would fulfill this command.

**Tefillah:** Prayer.

**Teshuvah:** Return. Return to God/Torah. Teshuvah is the way to repent: to stop and turn in the direction of God. There is a Season of Teshuvah before the fall feasts.

**Tevillah:** Immersion in living waters, mikveh.

**Torah:** Instruction/law. Books of the Law/ Pentateuch. Refers to the books of Moses/Moshe, the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Torah is also

used to describe the whole of the Tanach (Old Testament) and can also refer to the whole Bible.

**Tzitzit/Tziziot:** Fringes, containing a blue thread, worn on the corners of clothing/garments/prayer shawls in observance of the commandment in Numbers 15:37-40.

## U

**Urim and Tummim:** Light and Perfection. The Urim and Thummin were devices of the Old Testament Israelite high priest's equipment, and were sometimes used by God to communicate His will. How exactly this occurred we don't know.

**Ushpizin:** Company, visitors.

## V

**Ve'Ahavta:** And You Shall Love. Prayer from Devarim 6:5-9, part of the Shema.

## Y

**Yahveh/Yahweh/YHVH/YHWH:** Sacred Name of God revealed in Scripture. (See [How Shall We Call Him](#) )

**Yeshua/Yashua/Yahushua:** Salvation. Hebrew form of Jesus.

**Yom Kippur / Yom Kippurim:** Day of covering (s), Day of Atonement, a fast day, a holy convocation. It is observed ten days after Yom Teruah (Blowing of Trumpets) in accordance with the command given in Leviticus 23:27.

**Yom Teruah:** Day of blowing. Yom Teruah is the Biblical name for Rosh Hashanah aka Feast of Trumpets. Observed on the 1st day of the 7th Hebrew month, in accordance with the command he given in Lev. 23:24-25. This is a no-work day.

**Yovel:** Jubilee. The year at the end of a fifty-year cycle. Every 50th year agricultural land in Yisrael is to remain unplanted, while land ownership is to be totally redistributed into equal family shares. The word yovel refers to the blowing of shofarot (trumpets) to announce the year.

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