

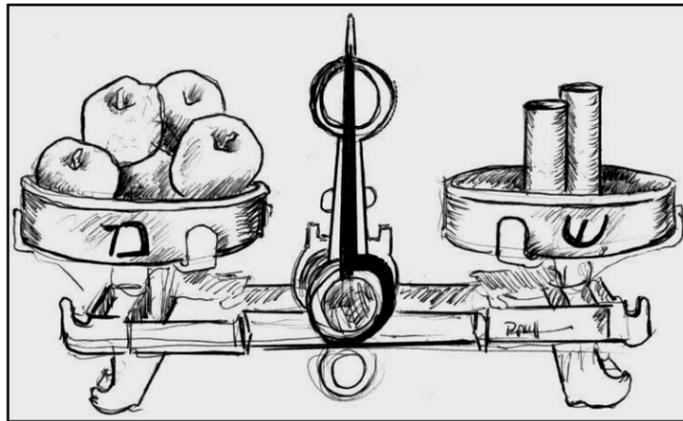
Hebrew for the Goyim

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Peace. The whole world talks about peace. Many work and others even pray for peace. It seems a worthy goal to study *the letters* in the word *peace* (*shalom* שלום) and hopefully better understand exactly what we're striving for.

Alef-Bet. For an extensive guide to each letter of the alphabet, I refer to our book, *Hebrew for the Goyim*. This particular lesson focuses only on the three core letters in the word *shalom*, translated *peace*. We will discover that *shalom* is not a permanent state of total rest, calm, quiet, silence and serenity. It is not total absence of war. In fact, *sometimes war is required in order to restore peace*. A Roman historian even said, "He who desires peace must prepare for war." Peace is about the idea of balance. Peace is a breathing, living, changing, ever shifting state of affairs. In searching for peace, sometimes we're hot and sometimes we're cold. The illustration below will help explain the idea of *shalom*. *Shin* (ש) fire) is on the right dish, *mem* (מ) water) is on the left. *Lamed* (ל) ox goad) is the gage in between.

- The are two one-pound weights on the right side
- There are two pounds of apples on the left. We know that because the gage (*lamed*) shows a balance.
- If the weight pan on the right were lower, a customer knows the apples are short. Balance is off. *Shalom* is off.
- If the merchant had *unjust* weights (say each 1 pound weight was really 1.3 pounds), it would be "off balance" even if the customer didn't know it. The scales tip. No balance - no real *shalom*.



Deeper meanings. *Shin* refers to fire, good in winter but devastating in a drought. *Mem* refers to water, essential for life but too much can kill life. *Lamed* is like the shepherd's crook, which may prod a sheep in one direction or pull it back from going in another - all according to the wisdom of the good shepherd. Just like Mr. Mayogi told Daniel-son in *The Karate Kid*, balance is everything. So it is with the word *shalom*.

- **Shin.** Shin is masculine.¹ It's about fire. Shin looks like *flames*

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and speaks of *transformation* or *change*. *Fire changes things*. The word *fire* (*esh* -ש) joins *shin* and *alef* (א), sign of God and Power. God is called a consuming "fire" (ש) Deut. 4:24). The word *sun* (*sbemesh* שמש) has two *shins*. The Phoenician letter *shin* looks like teeth (W) and *shin* (ש) is the Hebrew word for *tooth* (שן). Chewing *changes* the form of food. Jeremiah (23:29) speaks of God's powerful *words* as "*fire*, like a hammer *breaking* a rock in pieces." Words speaking of "chewing" ideas contain *shin*. Ideas *change* things.

Shanab (שנה-year), *shinuy* (שינוי-change) and *shaab* (שעה-hour) are words about transformation and change. God, however, instructs, "I, Yahweh, do *not* change." (שנתני - Mal.3:6) God's Inner Changeless Core is constant. When Moses entreated God, what we call *change* occurred. Things changed.

The prophet Isaiah told Hezekiah, "Set your house in order for you *shall die and not live*." (II Kings 20:1) but the pendulum swung when Hezekiah prayed - he was given fifteen more years. *Shalom* was restored.

- **Mem.** Mem is feminine. It's about water. *Mem* (מ) pronounced "mu") was originally a drawing (Egyptian hieroglyphics) of triple wavy lines and was a *sign* referring to H₂O - the most basic substance needed for survival. *Mem* is a symbol of the **onomatopoetic sound** "mmmm" referring to woman, to that which is maternal, productive and creative. Every pre-born child is surrounded with living water - if the waters "break," birth must be quick if the baby is to live. This *mem* symbol is found in the heart of the words *mother*, *mom*, *origin*, *womb* (*em*-אם) and *Mama* (אמא). Mem at the *end of a syllable* (ם) influences it to become a collective, universal word. It *changes* the meaning, enlarging an idea to become a general, unified idea.

- **Lamed.** Lamed looks like a shepherd's crook. It is a sign of direction. Lamed can nudge and push along a sluggish sheep, or pull it back from falling over a cliff. It is a teacher, a mentor, a balancing tool. *Lamed* between the ש and מ is like a steering wheel directing and redirecting to keep balance between extremes.

Shalom. *Shalom* contains these three letters. It forms a root (*shilem* שלם), which means *completeness, fulfillment, wholeness, restoration, recompense, reward, to be in covenant with*.

- *Shalem* was an early town in Israel (Genesis 33:18). There is disagreement as to whether *Shalem* is different from *Salem* (Genesis 14:18), which refers to Jerusalem (Ir city יר of *Salem* שלם). Jerusalem has known anything but peace, but it still continues to exist. Sometimes out of balance. Sometimes in.
- The word שלם refers to *safety*, to being *complete* or *entire*.
- After the baby of King David and Bathsheva's adulterous affair died, David went to her, now his wife, and the child born this time was named Solomon (שלמה), indicating peace with God. In fact, they had another son, Absalom (שלום peace אב father), who brought anything but peace to David.

- Mosaic *peace offerings* (שלמים) were a recompense, a sacrifice, a *price paid* for restoration to God.
- God required *just* weights (as in drawing above). They were called stones (אבן) of peace (שלמה) and justice (צדיק). In other words, to have peace with God and neighbors, your weights must be just and right!
- Joab, David's General, was not known for peace. He even killed in war without the King's approval. Once Joab walked up to Amasa and gave him a greeting of peace, "Hasbalom (השלב) ata (אתה)?" "How is your peace?" "How's it going with you?" Then Joab stabbed him. David condemned Joab for "putting the blood of war on peace." Even wars must be waged with justice.
- Ancient Israel understood what no peace with God was like. Israel sacrificed and worshipped idols in an area called Shittim and a plague killed over 24,000 people before it stopped. Another time Israel was about to be slaughtered and prayed to God, "Why?" When they repented and turned back to the LORD, He heard. After Gideon made a sacrifice and supernatural fire consumed it, Gideon built an altar and called the place Yahweh (יהוה) *Shalom* (שלום). A price was paid for peace in both the sacrifice to God and the loss of 24,000 people.

Peace in Our Time: As long as any of us remember, people have talked and prayed for "peace." Will peace just show up one day - regardless of what goes on. Can we just shake hands, sign some papers and voila - peace! History is full of foolish folks who don't know that *peace always comes with a price*. After hunkering down with Hitler in Germany, Neville Chamberlain "triumphantly" returned home in the 1930's - wildly waving a piece of paper signed by Hitler. "**We have achieved peace in our time,**" he cried out to a cheering crowd of fellow Englishers. Meanwhile, Hitler was topping off the tanks of his Panzer Divisions and preparing for war. So it has been and so it will be in the world. One country wants peace. Another prepares for war. One mad man is killed.

Another rises up. One war finishes. Another begins.

Modern Israel has known precious little but war since 1948. The prophet Jeremiah sounds amazingly 21st Century when he wrote about prophets and priests (may we add presidents and politicians) who "*burt my people*" saying, "Shalom, shalom - but there is no shalom." How can there be peace in Israel when enemies call for their destruction. How can one make peace with a next door neighbor who is named *Hamas* (חמס Terror)? *Shalom* will never come to any individual or any nation who hates the Jews. Why? Because God does not hate the Jews. God has a future and a hope for the Jews. He *also* has a future and hope for Arabs, Africans, Asians, Americans and all people of good will who seek His face.

That future was promised to Abraham, "You will be a great **goy**" (Genesis 12:2) and **all the "goyim" of the earth will be blessed** through you. Zechariah prophesied about that future, "*Behold your King is coming to you, just, having salvation (ישועה), lowly and riding on a donkey....he will speak peace (שלום) to the goyim*" (9:9-10) That future and hope is extended to **all goyim** (nations) because the *price* for peace with God was paid. That's why Scripture says, "Having been justified by faith, now we have *peace with God* through our Lord, Messiah Jesus. In fact, Jesus clearly indicated that world peace and the peace He offers is *not the same*, "My peace I leave with you....*not* peace like the world gives."

We must work for peace. We must pray for peace. Sometimes we must fight for peace. But don't count on lasting peace. Only when the Prince of Peace comes will peace endure. Meanwhile, like the scale in the picture above, peace on planet earth is a perpetual balancing act.

¹ Note: Early languages were not unisex. Gender differences in the original letters are important codes to finding the deeper meanings in Hebrew letters and words. When searching for these codes, recall that early signs later evolved into letters, but originally stood for big, universal ideas.

UNRWA Employees

U.S. Representative Steven R. Rothman of New Jersey has proposed Congressional legislation to "Ensure Terrorists are Not Employed by or Receive Benefits from UNRWA". The following paragraph is from the text of the proposed bill:

"UNRWA has employed staffers affiliated with terrorism, including Said Sayyam, the Hamas Minister of Interior and Civil Affairs, who was a teacher in UNRWA schools in Gaza from 1980 to 2003; Awad al-Qiq, the headmaster of an UNRWA school in the Gaza Strip who also led Islamic Jihad's engineering unit that built bombs and Qassam rockets; Nahed Rashid Ahmed Atallah, a prior senior UNRWA employee from 1990 to 1993 who was responsible for the dissemination of assistance to refugees while he was also an operative of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine; and Nidal Abd al-Fattah Abdallah Nazzal, a Hamas activist employed as an ambulance driver by UNRWA, who confessed in 2002 to transporting weapons and explosives to terrorists in an UNRWA ambulance;"



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