

Beginning at the Beginning

by Brad Scott

I am going to begin by assuming that you have read the [About WildBranch Ministry](#) section, and you are now ready to launch into some fundamentals. The title I have chosen is not an indication that we are going to study the book of B^ere'shiyt (Genesis), but rather to begin at a very crucial verse. The very first verse of the Scriptures. *"In the beginning 'Elohiym created the heaven and the earth."* This is the verse that 'Elohiym chose to begin all creation with. (Before we begin, this would be a good time to review an article called [The Aleph-Bet](#) then come back to the teaching section. If you have already read it, then let's go on.)

About Brad

In the About section I briefly mentioned that many ministries that teach the "Hebrew Roots Perspective" tend to use terminology that has not been clearly defined. Sometimes this leads to a misunderstanding. Many Christians assume that a kind of dualness is being taught, i.e. there are Jewish ways of viewing the Scriptures and there are Christian ways of understanding Scripture. But, there is only one way to see the printed Word, and that is from the minds of the people who YHVH chose to pen the Scriptures. The interpretation of the Constitution is a great example. This wonderful document that we can look at and read today had a beginning. Over two hundred years ago, brilliant men, based upon the teachings of the Tanakh, produced this work. (See the book "The Myth of Separation" by David Barton.) They carefully chose all their words after much debate. The record of these debates is called the Constitutional Convention Records. You can find these documents in most larger libraries. You can read what they meant by what they said in these documents. However, after two hundred years of language evolution in our country, many of our most intelligent scholars can all look at the same English words and draw dramatically different conclusions. Why is this? Because language has changed, and our culture has changed dramatically.

What do these mean to us today? Is the constitution designed to be a "living" document? Is it supposed to change with the times?

Dr. Walter Williams, Professor at Georgetown University, said it masterfully when he said, "How would you like to play poker with me and use living rules?" So I would also ask of the Scriptures. Are they designed to change with the times? When they are translated into another language, is the fundamental meaning to *evo/ve* with the times? We believe the answer is **NO!** I hope to show you that the meaning of New Testament words are found in their beginning, the Tanakh. I will show you that most of the New Testament phrases and wording is right out of "Jewish" thought and culture. So, let's begin by defining some terminology.

What do we mean by the "Jewish" or "Hebrew Perspective?"

Let me begin by giving the simple answer. When we use this term, we mean the way that the writers of the Scriptures looked at life, the world we live in, and the life to come. Almost from the beginning 'Elohiym divides the inhabited world into His way and all other ways. He separates good from evil, right from wrong, holy from unholy, clean from unclean. 'Elohiym told *Adam* and *Chava*, from the beginning, to eat from all the trees. Do not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He put a difference between His way and another way. He instructed *Adam* as to what sacrifice to bring and what not to bring. *Adam* told (logical assumption if you add revelation of *Ivrim* (Hebrews) 11:4) his sons 'Elohiym's commands. *Noach* was told which animals were clean and which ones were not clean. At the

tower of Babel, YHVH then scatters the people by language, not race. He chooses Avraham from everyone else to be the Father of a countless nation. He reveals that everyone who clings to Avraham will be blessed (B^ere'shiyt 12:1-3). He disseminates His word through Avraham and his son Yitz'chak. He continues to use His language (Hebrew) to reveal His precious words. He reveals a difference between *Yitz'chak* and Yishma'el. From this point forward, He divides the world into Israel and the nations; His ways and the ways of the nations; His ways and all other ways. The ways of the nations are always contrasted to the ways of YHVH. Sha'ul (Paul) mentions several times that there is male and female, slave and free, Y^ehudah and nations. Why is this? Because the nations look at all aspects of life, the world we live in, and life to come, much differently than the people that were chosen by YHVH to disseminate His adoption, the glory, the covenants, the torah, the service of YHVH, and the promises (Romans 9:4-5). You might stop and ask yourself "Why is over 90% of the Scriptures written by Hebrews? Why did 'Elohiym choose to take upon the flesh of the Hebrews? Why did Yeshua' observe only Hebrew feasts? Why were all His disciples Hebrews? Why did the gospel go to the Y^ehudim first, then to the Greek (Romans 1:16)? Why was the disciple to replace Judas another Hebrew? Why was the apostle to the gentiles a Hebrew?" Could it be that the Hebrew people spoke His language, celebrated His feasts, knew His commands, were familiar with His covenants and His ways?

When we talk about seeing the Scriptures from an "Hebraic Perspective", we are talking about the ways of YHVH already clearly defined in the Tanakh, but virtually ignored by Western Christians. The necessity of knowing how the New Testament writers looked at life and the various idioms and peculiar phrases, is imperative to interpreting everything they spoke about. Most of what Yeshua' said meant something totally different in the ears of the New Testament writers than it does to our ears. This just so happens to reveal much of the meaning behind the use of the phrase, "*he that hath an ear, let him hear ...*". This is just one example of what is called *idiom*. The word *idiom* comes from the Greek word *idios*. It means something peculiar, unique, or private to a particular person or thing. In our context it means something privately understood.

The way this phrase is translated into the Greek and then into the English reveals that it came from the Hebrew. Idioms are important because the New Testament is packed full of them. Idioms are individual words or groups of words that cannot be understood by translating each word individually. Let me illustrate another way. Suppose someone from Japan came to America to learn all about us. Let us say that he obtained an English-Japanese dictionary, and proceeded to translate our English words to Japanese equivalents. After six months he goes back to his country. He is asked, "So, what are Americans like?" "Well, you know, they are a strange bunch of people." "What do you mean?" they respond. "Well, some people have egg on their face, some people actually eat their hearts out, some people cannot see the forest for the trees, some cannot seem to even face the music, and worst of all most of them think they can kill time." Can you begin to see how translating these common phrases one word at a time will get you nowhere? In order for this man to accurately represent what we are trying to say, he would have to spend some time with us to get to know our ways. The culture of the writers of the New Testament is just like this, and even more so.

We will begin an adventure into the world of the New Testament writers. We will define dozens and dozens of these idioms. I promise you that it will radically change your perspective, your studies, and your life.

Shalom Alechem!