



September 2021 | תשרי תשפ"ב | Newsletter #5



Holidays and Jewish Texts

סוכות Sukkot

The holiday of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) is named for the *sukka*/booth in which we sit during the holiday. The word *sukka*/סוכה is derived from the root סכך, like the words סכנה, סכר. This root indicates covering and concealment.

So how does this linguistic root inform the modern *sukka* that many build today outside their homes and synagogues? Traditionally, a *sukka* is a structure that shields people or animals from the sun. In the Bible, we find Jonah taking shelter from the heat of the day in his *sukka*, "He sat in the east of the city and made a booth there and sat under it in the shade." (Jonah 4:5)

In the Book of Exodus, we find the verb form סכך, in this case meaning 'shield' in the description of the Holy Ark. "The *cherubim* shall have their wings spread out above, shielding the cover with their wings." (Exodus 25:20). In modern Hebrew, the verb continues to be used in a similar manner. "He shielded his head with his hands." "With her wings, she shielded her baby birds."

This year, when you find yourself in a *sukka*, take a moment to reflect on how the path from Biblical to Modern Hebrew is wonderfully unbroken.

[Visit our Hebrew site to check out more content about Sukkot](#)

From Our Archive

"Shana Tova" has been a greeting since the 1920s

In the sixth booklet of *Zikhronot Va'ad HaLashon* (The Language Committee Memoriums), published in 1928, a list of blessings and expressions of manners was published: common blessings, blessings for Shabbat and the holidays, for meals, weddings, aliya to the Torah, the sick, a new outfit, and more.

Va'ad HaLashon published the list to make blessings and expressions available to people who used the Hebrew language - most of whom were not native Hebrew speakers. Noticeably, many of the expressions and blessings are based on or familiar from Hebrew sources over the generations.

Especially over the holidays during the month of Tishrei, it is fascinating to see which blessings and expressions have remained until today.

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|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ברכות ובטוויי גמולס- | |
| קבוצת רעילות: | |
| ה ע ו ג ז | ה פ ד ר ז |
| שלוש שלום וברכה: קבוצת (אבות) | שלוש |
| שלוש וברכה (אבות) | שלוש עליכם |
| אליכם שלום: | בקר ברוח |
| ברוך ומברך: | ברוך ויפה |
| יוסף ברוך: | ערב ברוך |
| ברוך מברך: | ברוך קרובה |
| קרובה ברוך: | ליל שלום |
| שלוש וברכה: | ליל מנוחה |
| מנוחה ושלום: | ברוך לילך |
| לילך ברוך: | משוב מלין |
| וברכתם פתחו: | שנה ארכבה |
| ברכה ונשיחה: | שנה מנוחה |
| חיותה ונשיחה: | השנה שנה |
| שנה השנה: | |
| בשבת: | |
| שבת שלום ומנוחה, שבת שלום והיפתו: | שבת שלום: |
| במקצאי שבת: | |
| שלוש וברכה: | שבוע שלום: |
| שבוע טוב וברכה: | שבוע טוב: |
| לראש השנה: | |
| לאשר לחיים: | לשנה טובה תחבבו ותחשטו: |
| אין לשר: | בחיבה וחימת מובן: |

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What's in a Name?

Tal טל



"Tal" translates into English as dew; the drops of water that form on the ground and on cool surfaces, on plants or objects, when atmospheric vapor condenses during the night. From its initial introduction as a first name, probably in the second half of the twentieth century, the name "Tal" was given to both boys and girls. The name was especially popular in the 1970s, 80s and 90s.

In contemporary Hebrew, a component of *tal* is included in a variety of names that comprise two components. The name "Tal" is often combined with elements from the world of nature - Meital (*mayim*/water), Revital (*revaya*/saturation), Ortal (*or*/light). These names are usually given to girls, reminiscent of the biblical names Avital and Hamutal.

The popularity of the name Tal is most likely connected to its use as a modern Hebrew family name, such as Rosenthal, Ehrental, Blumenthal; usually chosen as an abbreviation of a German name with the component "Thal"-valley in German.

Visit our Hebrew site to search for other Hebrew names!

Did you know?

The two meanings of חדש חדש



In the Hebrew language, the word **חדש/חודש** is a period of time - thirty days or one month out of twelve.

The root of the word *chodesh* is **חדש** (new). It connotes the moon in its **התחדשות/renewal**, that is to say, when it begins to be seen again. From this meaning, the word *chodesh* became the word indicating the day that we see the birth/*molad* of the moon through the 30 day cycle from one *molad* to the next.

The first day of the month, Rosh *Chodesh*, became a sacred day and is marked by a festive meal.

The connection between the new moon and the new month (*chodesh*) is also expressed in the word **ירח/yareach** (moon), a synonym for *chodesh*. In English (as well as in other European languages) the words that indicate the month and the moon are interconnected.

To learn more about exciting Hebrew words click here.



News, Updates and Events

In Ben-Yehuda's Salon

Furniture from Eliezer Ben-Yehuda's salon, from the permanent exhibition at the Academy of the Hebrew Language, was lent to and **exhibited at the Rishon LeTsyion Museum**. The furniture, Damascus arabesque with seashells, was apparently gifted to Ben Yehuda by Arab friends in Jerusalem.

By installing these pieces of living history into the exhibit, the home of Hemda and Eliezer Ben-Yehuda comes to life. We learn from the Museum's exhibition brochure that Hemda Ben Yehuda cultivated a salon, nicknamed *Bet Va'ad LaHakhamim*, in the family home in Jerusalem. This salon thrived as a pilgrimage site for intellectuals and proponents of the national revival and the renewal of the Hebrew language.



The exhibition highlights the personal connections and courageous friendship between Ben-Yehuda and his family and the people of Rishon LeTsyion. In particular, David Yudilovich, the first teacher of Hebrew in the *moshava* (settlement) is featured as Ben-Yehuda's friend and active partner in the struggle for the revival of the Hebrew language.

On September 2, the Academy of the Hebrew Language awarded the Ze'ev and Tsippora Ben Hayim Prize to Dr. Alexey Eliyahu Yuditsky for his achievements and innovations in multiple research areas: Greek and Latin transcription, the scrolls of the Judean desert, the language of the sages and language traditions.

Professor Yehudit Henshke, Chairwoman of the Prize Committee, presented the judges' reasoning for their choice. The President of the Academy, Prof. Moshe Bar-Asher, congratulated Dr. Yuditsky and Tali Ben-Yehuda, the Academy's Director General, presented him with the prize. Those attending had the privilege of hearing Dr. Yuditsky's lecture, "One who loves discipline, loves knowledge".

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