

The Scriptures Preface

The purpose of this translation

Introduction

In the past few centuries the Spirit of Elohim has moved scholars, calling and equipping them, to search and to do research in the Scriptures: Hebrew, Greek and related subjects. This research has led to the increase of knowledge, as was indeed prophesied (Dani'el / Dan. 12:4).

This great move of the Spirit among these scholars has greatly blessed millions of sincere believers. They were indeed bringing to light (out of the treasure) hidden truths, renewed truths and old truths (Mattithyahu / Mt. 13:52). All this treasured knowledge was given through these scholars to all of us, and we are greatly indebted to all of them.

This present work of translating the Scriptures had its origin in the year 1971 when a few of us began to search and to do research, after having been called - explicitly called. Soon after this work started "called out" believers from all over the world joined in to help.

While there have been many fine translations which have been a source of blessing to so many, we have felt the need for a translation of the Scriptures which:

1. Restores the Name of the Almighty to its rightful place in the text (see THE RESTORATION OF THE NAME, below).
2. Is recognisably Messianic in that it affirms the Hebraic roots of the Messianic belief by its appearance, by the use of Hebraic forms of certain words and titles, and by its usage of the same division of the pre-Messianic books of Scripture (the Tanak or "Old Testament") that was current at the time of our Messiah.
3. Restores the meaning to so many words which have become popular to use, but do not accurately reflect the meaning of the original - for example, church, glory, holy, sacrifice, soul, etc.
4. Seeks to be as far as possible a "literal" translation, wherever possible rendering key words uniformly (exceptions being noted in footnotes or the Explanatory Notes of the printed version).

The Restoration of the Name

"The Scriptures" differs radically from most other translations in that it does not continue in the tradition of substituting the Name of the Father and of the Son with names ascribed to gentile (pagan) deities. All the names of deities which in the past have been ascribed to the Father, the Son, and even used when engaged in worship, have been avoided.

One of the post-exilic-apostasies of Orthodox Judaism was the avoidance of the Name of the Almighty, the so-called Tetragrammaton, (the four lettered Name, Yahuweh/יהוה).

Because of this and a similar and continued suppression and substitution of the Name by the Church, much harm was done to the True Worship. When anyone enquires about this

he is told: “The Name has been translated into English as LORD, as was similarly done in other languages.” This argument does not hold water. *Guiseppe* in Italian corresponds to Joseph in English; however, *Guiseppe Verdi* cannot be translated as Joseph Green in English, even if that is what it means in English! The proper name of any individual is not translated; it is always transliterated or transcribed in order to approximate its original pronunciation. We repeat: the proper name of any individual is simply not translated, more especially when we are dealing with the most important Beings in all the universe: the Most High (Yahuweh/יהוה) and His Son (Yahushua/יהושע)!

We thought of rendering the Father's Name (Yahuweh/יהוה) as Yahuweh (pronounced with the accent on the “u”). On the other hand, John H. Skilton, *The Law and the Prophets*, pp. 223, 224, prefers “Yahoweh”. The Assyrians transcribed the Name as “Ya-u-a”, so Mowinckle and other scholars prefer “Yahowah”. Some scholars prefer “Yehowah”, because that is the way the Massorettes vowel-pointed it. (Whether this vowel-pointing of the Name was done in truth, or whether it was done to “disguise” the Name, in accordance with the instruction given in the Mishnaic text of *Tamid* vii.2 (=Sota vii.6), we do not know for certain. There is also the Rabbinical interpretation of the Massoretic text saying that the vowels e,o and a were added to the Name as a *Qerē perpetuum* which means that the reading of *Adonai* or *Elohim* is to be used instead. However, there is no definite proof that the Massorettes originally did it for this reason). Then again, many scholars favour the rendering “Yahweh”. In any event, we decided to avoid controversy over the precise pronunciation and to render it in Hebrew characters as Yahuweh/יהוה.

Such a rendering has solid historical precedent in the earliest copies of the Septuagint (LXX), and has the merit of being true to the text, neither adding nor subtracting by means of substitutions (however well-intended). It has also the additional merit of allowing the individual reader to progress in his own quest for accuracy of pronunciation, as he seeks to obey the scriptural injunctions to call on the Name (Shemoth / Ex. 3:15; Yeshayahu / Is.12:4; Yirmeyahu / Jer. 10:25; Tehillim / Ps. 105:1,3;), to make it known (Shemoth / Ex. 9:16; Yeshayahu / Is. 64:1,2; Yehezqēl / Ez. 39:7;), and to not obliterate or forget it (Debarim / Dt. 12:3,4; Yeshayahu / Is. 65:11; Yirmeyahu / Jer. 23:27; Tehillim / Ps. 44:20)! In the same way the Messiah's Name in Hebrew, Yahushua/יהושע, was chosen in order to avoid controversy. All the available authoritative sources and references are in agreement and clearly admit that our Messiah's Name was Yahushua/יהושע (see for instance even Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, under *Iesous*). However, while some believe that this spelling should be pronounced in the traditional way, i.e. “Yehoshua” others influenced by the Murashu Text suggest the pronunciation “Yahushua”. So we decided to print the Name of the Messiah (Yahushua/יהושע) in Hebrew characters as we have done with the Name Yahuweh/יהוה.

While the short post-exilic form “Yeshua” (ישוע) is popular with many (indeed the Shem Tob_Hebrew text of Mattithyahu renders it as such, as also the Hebrew translation of the “*New Testament*” by F. Delitzch), Dr. Solomon Zeitlin refutes this form as the Name of our Messiah, favouring instead the form Yahushua/יהושע (see *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Jan.1970, p.195). Also see *Post-exilic Apostasy* in the Explanatory Notes. At this stage we need to explain the word “Elohim” used in this translation. English translations have traditionally rendered it as “God” or as “god(s)” in most instances.

However, the Hebrew word “elohim” is the plural form of “eloah”, which has the basic meaning of “mighty one”. This word is not only used for deity, but is used in Scripture for judges, angels and idols (Shemoth / Ex. 7:1; 9:28; 12:12; 22:8,9; Tehillim / Ps. 8:5; 82:1,6) besides being used frequently for the Almighty. The shorter forms, “el” and “elim” have the same basic meaning and similar usage. (Needless to say, the same applies to the Aramaic equivalents, such as “elah” and “elahin”). By transliterating these expressions instead of translating them as “Mighty One” we discovered a richness in them, and therefore retained them, with the exception of a few instances (noted in footnotes), where the translation of “mighty one” or “mighty ones” seemed more appropriate.

The Order and Titles of the Books

The changes in the order and titles of the books are not visible in this electronic format however.

In accordance with our aim to affirm the Hebraic roots of our Belief we have:

1. Transliterated the names of the books of the Tanak (*Old Testament*), and where appropriate have done the same in the Messianic Scriptures (*New Testament*). For your convenience the traditional English names of the books, together with the transliterated forms are to be found in the Table of Contents. Also, in the Table of Contents alongside of the English forms of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, we have used the forms 1 Mosheh, 2 Mosheh, etc. as per the usage of some German translations, which thereby display the unity of the five books, and their common Mosaic authorship.
2. Followed the traditional Hebraic order of the Tanak, (*Torah, Nebi'im, Kethubim*) viz.

First, **The Torah** - *Teaching / Law*

We have rendered it by the Hebrew word itself, *Torah*, i.e. the five books of Mosheh (Moses), also known as the *Humash*, or (*The Pentateuch*), *Law or Teaching*. They consist of the following 5 books:

Berēshith	(Genesis, 1 Mosheh)
Shemoth	(Exodus, 2 Mosheh)
Wayyiqra	(Leviticus, 3 Mosheh)
Bemidbar	(Numbers, 4 Mosheh)
Debarim	(Deuteronomy, 5 Mosheh)

Then, **Nebi'im** - *Prophets*

These books are known as The Prophets, *not* because of the element of prediction (a considerable amount of their content is *historical* rather than predictive!), but because of being *written* by prophets. They are divided into two categories, the Former Prophets, and the Latter Prophets, referring to their time of writing. The Latter Prophets were further divided into Major Prophets, and Minor Prophets (known as *The Twelve*). Please note that we have restored the book of Dani'el to it's rightful place among the Prophets*, as also did Josephus. We have placed it between Yehezqel / Ezekiel (the third of the Latter Prophets), and Shnēm Asar / *The Twelve* (the fourth of the Latter Prophets), instead of including it among The Kethubim (Writings), as is usually done. They consist of the

following 9 books, i.e. 8 books, plus* Dani'ël:

The Former Prophets (4 books)

Yehoshua	(Joshua)
Shophetim	(Judges)
Shemu'ël (1 & 2)	(Samuel)
Melakim (1 & 2)	(Kings)

The Latter Prophets (4 books, plus Dani'ël)

Yeshayahu	(Isaiah)
Yirmeyahu	(Jeremiah)
Yehezqël	(Ezekiel)
Shnēm Asar	(The Twelve)
*Dani'ël	(Daniel)

Shnēm Asar is one book, containing the works of twelve prophets

Hoshëa	(Hosea)
Yo'ël	(Joel)
Amos	(Amos)
Obadyah	(Obadiah)
Yonah	(Jonah)
Mikah	(Micah)
Naḥum	(Nahum)
Ḥabaqquq	(Habakkuk)
Tsephanyah	(Zephaniah)
Ḥaggai	(Haggai)
Zekaryah	(Zechariah)
Mal'aki	(Malachi)

Then, the **Kethubim** - *Writings*

They are the remaining books of the Tanak (Old Testament). These consist of the following: (10 books, i.e. 11 less Dani'ël)

Tehillim	(Psalms)
Mishlë	(Proverbs)
Iyob	(Job)
Shir haShirim	(Song of Songs)
Ruth	
Ėkah	(Lamentations)
Qoheleth	(Ecclesiastes, Convener)
Estër	(Esther)
Ezra - Neḥemyah	(Nehemiah)
Dibre haYamim (1 & 2)	(Chronicles, Annals)

Thus, the Torah, Nebi'im, and Kethubim go to make up the TaNaK, which is commonly known as the "Old Testament". There are 24 books in all, according to the Hebraic reckoning (as given above), although the same books are reckoned by others to add up to

39, by counting the individual segments (such as 1 Shemu'ël, 2 Shemu'ël, Ezra, Nehemyah, etc.)

The Text

The TANAK_ (Pre-Messianic Scriptures, commonly called *The Old Testament*)

The Tanak_ in this translation is based on the Massoretic Hebrew and Aramaic text of the Scriptures, printed in the 1937 edition of Rudolph Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica*. This is based on the ben Asher text of Leningrad, B 19a. Generally speaking, there are few problems with the Massoretic text, because the Massorettes copied the Scriptures in great fear of making mistakes and altering the text. They used the device of the *Kethib_* and *Qerě* by means of which they indicated in the margins their preferred readings.

However, they did make a few changes in the text itself which have been recorded for us, but unfortunately not all in one manuscript. In 134 places the Sopherim (Scribes) removed the Name Yahuweh/יהוה, and substituted the term *Adonai*. In a further 8 places the Name Yahuweh/יהוה, was substituted by the term *Elohim*. These have been collected by Dr. C.D. Ginsberg in his *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible*, (Ktav Publishing House Inc. New York), and are also recorded in Appendix 30-34 of Dr. E.W. Bullinger's *The Companion Bible* (Zondervan).

We have accordingly restored the text to its original readings in these 142 places, and have also restored the text in accordance with the "Eighteen emendations of the Sopherim", which are also recorded for us by Dr. C.D. Ginsberg. A list of these 160 places is provided in the Explanatory Notes of the printed version for your convenience.

The MESSIANIC SCRIPTURES (commonly called *The New Testament*)

An increasing number of scholars have, especially lately, taken a stand against the popular belief that the "New Testament was inspired in the Greek language". With this we heartily agree. There are close to 28 000 Greek manuscripts or fragments containing all or part of the Messianic Scriptures. The alarming fact is that "every one of these handwritten copies differs from every other one"! This being the case then, which one was the Greek manuscript breathed-out by the Almighty? For example, in the text of Ephesians 1:18, one Greek manuscript reads, "the eyes of your heart being enlightened", whereas a different Greek manuscript reads, "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened". Now which word represents the actual word which the "Almighty inspired to be written - "heart" or "understanding"? Believing as we do, that the very words of Scripture themselves are inspired (in the original manuscripts, of course), presents the problem of deciding between the two readings. But, if the original text was not Greek, but Hebrew or Aramaic, the different Greek readings are easily explained as being translations. In Hebrew idiom the heart is the seat of the mind or thoughts, whereas in Greek idiom (as with English) the heart is the seat of the emotions. Thus one translator rendered the Hebrew word for "heart" by the Greek word for "heart", while the other rendered it by the Greek word for "understanding". Both renderings then are valid; one as a "literal" translation of the Hebrew word (carrying also the danger of being misunderstood as "emotions" by the Greek or English reader); the other as a translation of the Hebrew concept. Thus variant Greek manuscripts may not necessarily be in conflict with one another if we consider them to be translations of an inspired Hebrew or Aramaic original. So, there is a good case to be made for the view that the originals were

inspired in a Semitic language and not in Greek, as is commonly supposed. This means of course, that we are attempting to faithfully put before the reader an English text that accurately reflects the inspired Semitic originals, when in fact the oldest and vast majority of texts we have available are Greek! To the extent that we have succeeded in this, we can only give praise to the Most High. However we are well aware of our shortcomings, and the possibility, even the probability that we have fallen far short of our goal. In this respect, let it be said that we do not view our work as in any way final or definitive. Rather, we hope that it will encourage others to re-examine what they may have always taken for granted, and to research these matters for themselves. (We extend an ongoing invitation to any who can give input that will improve future editions of The Scriptures, especially in regard to the matter of Semitic originals). In addition to the above, there is the matter of substituting the Name of the Father and the Son with other terms, especially in light of the scriptural prohibition against adding to or diminishing from the words of the Most High (Debarim / Dt. 4:2;12:32; Mishlě / Pr.30:4-6). And if it be further admitted (see for example, Explanatory Notes, under Jesus) that the Greek text uses terms that come direct from pagan deities for both the Father and the Son, then it becomes abundantly clear from Scripture itself (Shemoth / Ex. 23:13; Yehoshua / Jos. 23:7; etc.) that such texts could not possibly be the inspired originals, but rather they are translations, ultimately descending from the Semitic originals. What text then were we to use? Since the originals are no longer extant, there was no alternative but to make use of the existing Greek manuscripts, carefully considering the additional testimony of Semitic texts such as the Peshitta (Aramaic), the Shem Tob (Hebrew), etc. Even here, however there are problems, in that for each of the main streams of textual types (e.g. Byzantine / Textus Receptus vs. Alexandrinus, Sinaiticus, and Vaticanus) there are those who contend that a particular type and that one alone represents the true original. We determined however, not to become embroiled in such controversies, since our position advocates a Semitic original, true to the Tanak / Old Testament. Hence whatever readings we have adopted will inevitably offend those contending for any one of the main textual types as the true original. We cannot therefore claim that our text represents a translation of any particular underlying text.

As a *modus operandi* then, we have started out using the Textus Receptus, modifying our rendering as seemed appropriate in light of those other texts which we consulted, such as the Nestle-Aland text and the Shem Tob text, noting certain differences in the footnotes, where necessary.

In harmony therefore with the above principles, we restored the Names of the Father and of the Son, and the names of all the Hebrew individuals, in accordance with the Hebrew, especially as found in the Tanak / *Old Testament*. We also restored the names of the places in Yisra'el, for after all, we are dealing with a Jewish worship; we are dealing with the Elohim of Yisra'el; we are dealing with Yahushua / יהושע, the Sovereign of the Yehudim - as He is called in no less than 23 places in the Messianic Scriptures (*New Testament*).

Transliteration

In rendering Hebrew names we tried to be as exact as possible. However, with a few names there was a problem, e.g. the name Dani'el is spelt in three different ways, but all three of these spellings result in the same pronunciation. Therefore it was decided to

strive for consistency and render such names according to a single spelling, in order to retain the original pronunciation as best we could. We departed from this, however, in two cases, viz. in that of the ‘theophoric’ names (those containing part of the Name Yahuweh/יהוה), where we felt compelled to add the suffix *-yah* or *-yahu*, exactly as it appears in the Hebrew text, and in the case of certain terms such as *Ēlohim*, where we opted to use an Anglicised form, *Elohim*, instead.

Also, where it proved impossible for us to trace an original Semitic form of certain names, we have retained the Anglicised form that has become traditional, such as Mark, Luke, etc. For your guidance we have inserted a Table of Pronunciation at the end of the Preface.

Final Word

We stand in awe and fear before the Most High, knowing that every word rendered in this version, *The Scriptures*, shall be accounted for. Much is going to be required from those to whom much has been given (Luke 12:48). As previously stated, we do not offer our labours to the public as the “last word” on these matters, and welcome feedback and useful input from any who have insight or information relevant to the improvement of this translation. With this new translation, *The Scriptures*, we wish to reach out a hand of love toward all believers of all backgrounds, pleading that we join hands and turn back to Yahuweh/יהוה, Who will then turn back to us (Zek̄aryah 1:3 and Hoshĕa 6:1-3). Let us do so by turning to Yahushua/יהושע, Who came to save us from our sins, thereby reconciling us with His Father. Let us heed Messiah’s call in Revelation 18:4 to come out of Babel and stop sharing her sins. This call is Messiah’s call to “Come out of her”, to come out of this world of sin in which we live, and be set apart by Yahuweh/יהוה, and unto Yahuweh/יהוה. It is an invitation to people of all nations, tribes, kindred and tongues: to repent of sin, to accept Yahushua/יהושע as Saviour, Master and Sovereign. Let Yahuweh/יהוה rule us, let Yahushua/יהושע be our Sovereign, let Yahushua/יהושע graft us into the Olive Tree, the true Yisra’el who truly believe and truly obey Yahuweh/יהוה!

Pronunciation Table

English letter	-	B _̄ and b _̄
Hebrew	-	ב
Hebrew name	-	Bet(h)
Pronunciation	-	bh, as -v in view
English letter	-	D _̄ and d _̄
Hebrew	-	ד
Hebrew name	-	Dalet(h)
Pronunciation	-	dh, as -th in this and that
English letter	-	Ḡ and ḡ
Hebrew	-	ג
Hebrew name	-	Gimel
Pronunciation	-	gh, a soft g
English letter	-	H̄ and h̄

Hebrew	-	ח
Hebrew name	-	Ḥet(h)
Pronunciation	-	ḥ as -ch in the Scottish loch
English letter	-	Ḳ and ḳ
Hebrew	-	כ
Hebrew name	-	Kaf
Pronunciation	-	kh, as -ch in the Scottish loch or g in Afrikaans gee
English letter	-	Q and q
Hebrew	-	ק
Hebrew name	-	Qof
Pronunciation	-	k in kitten
English letter	-	Ě and ě
Hebrew name	-	The vowel tsěřě
Pronunciation	-	ey as in they
English letter	-	I and i
Hebrew name	-	The vowel ḥireq
Pronunciation	-	i as -ee in tree

Please note that the ' within a Hebrew name represents an aleph, a smooth breathing, and for practical purposes may be considered a 'silent' letter.

Similarly, the ׀ represents the letter ayin, a rough breathing, and it too, may for practical purposes be considered a 'silent' letter. So ׀Amorah (Gomorrhah) may be read as Amorah, and in fact we have rendered it as such. Thus aleph and ayin take on the sound of the vowel that they 'carry'.