

The Hebrew Corner

Would you like to learn 50,000 words of the Old Testament in its original language, Hebrew?

Well, here goes then, VUH. The Hebrew word וְ (pronounced VUH) appears over 50,000 times in its various forms in the Hebrew Old Testament (also known as the Tanach). This is a multi-purpose conjunction, consisting of the single Hebrew letter ו (vav), which can be translated in English as and, but, yet, so, then, also, and even, to name a few. How וְ is translated depends heavily on the context in which it is used. It never appears by itself but always is attached to the beginning of another word to connect it to a previous word or phrase, and can often take on another pronunciation depending on the word it is attached to, and so it can be pronounced VAH, VEH, or even OO. It is used to join names of people, place names, phrases, concepts, etc. The וְ in its various forms in the Tanach connects the moon to the sun (Isaiah 24:23), smoke to fire (Psalm 18:9), a friend to a brother (Proverbs 17:17), dreams to

visions (Job 7:14), mercy to truth (Proverbs 16:6), and man to God (Genesis 2:19). On the other hand, the land of Egypt is contrasted with the promised land (Deuteronomy 11:10,11), six days of labor is contrasted with the Sabbath day of rest (Exodus 20:9,10), righteousness is contrasted with sin (Proverbs 14:34), and the end of the wicked is contrasted with the salvation of the righteous (Psalms 37:38,39), all using the various forms of י.

In a way, the י symbolizes the character of Jesus (in Hebrew, Yeshua). He is the connector between God and his people, and between believers to keep us connected together in a unified body. The י also can illustrate the power of a single believer among the entire body to affect the circumstances that that individual might encounter, as the י, although consisting of a single letter, has a great deal of influence upon the expression of meaning, and the flow of the text within the Tanach.

So we see that a small Hebrew word has quite a bit to say to us. For those who would like to learn some Hebrew, you are off to a good start. VUH!