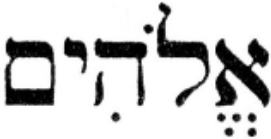


Elohim

My goal in this email is to help you understand the challenge of “just thinking about” the Hebrew word “Elohim.”

- Elohim is the “Creator of the Skies and Dry Land in Genesis.”
- Yeshua, the original Jesus, preaches about the “Kingdom of Elohim.”

In most English translations, “God created the Heavens and the Earth,” and “Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God.” So, it appears that simply using “God” accurately translates Elohim into English.

| <u>Hebrew Word</u> | <u>Contextual Meaning in Genesis 1 & 2</u> |
|---|--|
|  | 1. The unnamed entity that created the Skies, Dry Land, and their hosts. |
| <u>Transliteration</u> | 2. An entity that is unlike humans, and compared with all else, is incomprehensible. |
| ELOHIM | 3. An entity that uses the TOV Standard to measure what He creates or makes. |
| <u>Translations</u> | |
| God, god, gods, goddess & goddesses. | |

1. On the top left you can see the Hebrew word. Hebrew is read from right to left.
2. Beneath the Hebrew word is the transliteration of it. The transliteration is an English word, so it is read from left to right – ELOHIM. I just replaced each Hebrew letter or symbol with letters of the English alphabet that are similar to those of the Hebrew word.
3. Beneath the transliteration are five options for translating it, which are found in a standard Hebrew-English Lexicon. Pay close attention to the differences between them. The Hebrew word has been translated by all of those words. The problem with using any of those translations is that the five English words have been used to describe hundreds of different divine entities in other stories.

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Now let's move over to the left side of the graphic. These are contextual meanings derived from the context in Genesis 1 and 2.

1. Elohim is an **unnamed entity**. In the second chapter in Genesis, we will find Yahweh Elohim. So technically Genesis 1 should begin with, "*In the beginning an unnamed Elohim created . . .*" This reflects a theme that is found throughout the first story. The focus is on the functions of the things in the story. Elohim is identified by His functions, too.
2. Elohim is an entity that is unlike humans, and compared with all else, is incomprehensible. Try to wrap your mind around that when you have the urge to create a theology for Elohim.
3. Elohim is an entity that uses the Tov Standard to measure everything He creates or makes. For something to measure Tov it must "protect lives, preserve lives, make lives more functional, and/or increase the quality of life!"

This is why I use the transliteration Elohim, instead of attempting to create an impossible translation. I suggest that you make "Elohim" a regular part of your vocabulary, too.

Shalom,
Jim Myers, President
Biblical Heritage Center, Inc.

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