

האיש ואשתו או אדם וחוה

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ויעש יהוה אלהים לאדם ולאשתו כתנות עור-וילבשם (בראשית ג: כא)

We read in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis:

ויאמר אלהים, נעשה אדם בצלמנו כדמותנו; וירדו בדגת הים ובעוף השמים, ובבהמה ובכל-הארץ, ובכל-הרמש הרמש על-הארץ. ויברא אלהים את-האדם בצלמו, בצלם אלהים ברא אתו: זכר ונקבה ברא אתם. ויברך אתם אלהים ויאמר להם אלהים פרו ורבו ומלאו את-הארץ וכבשה;

“And God said: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.

And God blessed them; and God said to them: Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen 1:26-28).

In the Greek version of these verses the Hebrew word **אדם** (*adam*) was translated to “humankind”, while in the English translation of these verses it appears as “man.”

Yet four chapter later we find:

זה ספר תולדת אדם: ביום ברא אלהים אדם, בדמות אלהים עשה אתו. זכר ונקבה בראם; ויברך אתם, ויקרא את-שמם אדם ביום הבראם.

“This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him;

Male and female created He them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created” (Gen 5:1-2).

While we are told here that God gave this creature of His, the name **אדם** (*adam*), we still need to remember that this **אדם** (*adam*) is also understood by the Greeks as a “human being” and by the English as “man.” Furthermore, it is unlikely that both the male and female human beings that were created by God had the same name: **אדם** (*adam*), and we may suspect that the name of the female creature of God is erroneously missing here.

We are not told why God named the human being that he created **אדם** (*adam*). However, as we read in the second chapter of the Book of Genesis:

וַיִּצַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם עֹפֶר מִן-הָאֲדָמָה, וַיִּפַּח בְּאַפָּיו נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים; וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה.

“And *YHWH* God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Gen 2:7).

As the Hebrew word for “ground” or “earth” is **אדמה** (*adama*) it is not unlikely that the first living things that God formed from this material will be named **אדם** (*adam*).

We also read in this chapter:

וַיִּבֶן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הַצֶּלַע אֲשֶׁר-לָקַח מִן-הָאָדָם, לְאִשָּׁה; וַיִּבְאֶה אֶל-הָאָדָם. וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם, זֹאת הִפְעַם עִצָּם מֵעֲצָמֵי, וּבֶשֶׁר מִבְּשָׂרִי; לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה, כִּי מֵאִישׁ לָקַחָהּ-זֹאת.

“And the rib, which *YHWH* God had taken from the man, made He a woman, and brought her to the man.

And the man said: This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (Gen 2:22-23).

Here the Hebrew word that was translated to English as “woman” is **אשה** (*ishah*). Yet it appears that **אדם** (*adam*) defines her as **אשה** (*ishah*) because she was formed from his rib and he now refer to himself (for the first time) as **איש** (*ish*). It is not clear why here the man refers to himself as **איש** (*ish*)

The Greek translator wrote here: “this one shall be called Woman for out of her husband she was taken.” While here the Greeks translated the Hebrew word **איש** (*ish*) to “husband” yet in the next two verses, the Hebrew **הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ** (*haadam veishtho*) - “**the man and his wife**” appear as “Adam and his wife” or “man and his wife.”

While we already read: **לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה** - “this one shall be called *ishah*” (Gen 2:23), we find in the next chapter **וַיִּקְרָא הָאָדָם שֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ, חַוָּה: כִּי הוּא הִיְתָה אֵם כָּל-חַי** - “**And the man called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living**” (Gen 3:20).

It appears that while Adam was assigned to give names to “**every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air**” (Gen 2:19-20), he also named his wife (twice) as **אשה** (*ishah*) and as **חַוָּה** (*khavah*) - “Eve”, and himself as **איש** (*ish*).

Yet while the combination of **אדם** (*adam*) and **חַוָּה** (*khavah*) - “Eve” is in only one other verse (Gen 4:1), the association between **איש** (*ish*) and **אִשְׁתּוֹ** (*ishtho*) - “**his wife**” is found in multiple

verses (Gen 2:24; 7:2; 26:11; Num 5:12, 15, 30; 30:17; Deu 24:5; Jud 13:2; 21:21, 22; 1 Sam 25:3; 30:22; Jer 3:1; Ruth 1:1, 2).

We read in the Book of Genesis:

מִן-הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּהוֹרָה, וּמִן-הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר אֵינָנָה טְהוֹרָה; וּמִן-הָעוֹף-וּכְלֵי אֲשֶׁר-רָמַשׁ עַל-הָאֲדָמָה.

שְׁנַיִם שְׁנַיִם בָּאוּ אֶל-נֹחַ, אֶל-הַתְּבֵה-זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה: כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-נֹחַ.

“Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of everything that creeps upon the ground;

There came in two and two to Noah into the ark, male and female, as God commanded Noah” (Gen 7:8-9; see also: Gen 7:3, 16).

Yet six verses earlier we find:

מִכָּל הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּהוֹרָה תִּקַּח-לָךְ שִׁבְעָה שִׁבְעָה-אִישׁ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ; וּמִן-הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא טְהוֹרָה הוּא, שְׁנַיִם-אִישׁ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ.

“Of every clean beast you shall take to you seven and seven, each with his mate; and of the beasts that are not clean two [and two], each with his mate” (Gen 7:2).

The translation here of the Hebrew **אִישׁ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ** which literally means: “a man and his wife” (e.g. Gen 2:24; 26:11; Num 5:12, 15, 30; 30:17; Deu 24:5; Jud 13:2; 21:21, 22; 1 Sam 25:3; 30:22; Jer 3:1; Ruth 1:1,2), to the English: “**each with his mate**”, indicates that the translator believed that an erroneous word replacement had occurred here. In the Greek translation of this verse we find “male and female” as is also suggested by the comparison between these verses.