

Hebrew Day and Month Names

The language of Hebrew (both ancient and modern) tends to be rather simplistic in its structure and use. This article discusses the names (or rather the lack thereof in most cases) of the weekdays and the months.

Home Page Display of Dates

Aside from the normal secular date, we have added the weekday name according to Hebrew custom (with Hebrew meaning and pronunciation shown in red) and the current Hebrew date.

All of this is displayed automatically. Between the secular and Hebrew dates is a "Makheetzah" which is a dividing curtain or wall separating the holy from the secular (or common). This Makhitzah also graphically displays in red the current day of the week.

Hebrew Weekdays

Except for the Sabbath day, the individual days of the week have no names, just numbers. The middle column in the table below gives the actual transliterated pronunciation of the names. Yom is pronounced "Yome". The "Kh" is a guttural sound often spelled as "Ch". There is no "Ch" sound in Hebrew as there is in English. Modern Hebrew, however, can create a "Ch" sound by putting an accent mark (´) in front of the Hebrew letter "Khet" (or "Chet"). This is used only in rare cases in order to properly pronounce such words or names as Church or Churchill (referring to the person Winston Churchill.)

Secular Weekday Name	Hebrew "Name"	Hebrew Meaning
Sunday	Yom Reeshone	First day
Monday	Yom Shaynee	Second day
Tuesday	Yom Shlee´shee	Third day
Wednesday	Yom Revee´ee	Fourth day
Thursday	Yom Khah´mee´shee	Fifth day
Friday	Yom Ha´shee´shee	Sixth day
Saturday	Shabbat	Rest

Babylonian vs. Biblical Calendars

This table is divided into two sections because of the changes made in the calendar as a result of the Babylonian exile. After the Jews were exiled from Judah to Babylonia in 586 B.C.E., they adopted Babylonian names for the months of the year. Nevertheless, they still have important meanings in whole scheme of things. Not only do most of the names of the Babylonian months have appropriate meanings, but there is also an important theme that applies to these months (Babylonian or Biblical).

Mo. #	Babylonian Calendar	Meaning of Babylonian Months	Theme of Month (Babylonian & Biblical)	Biblical Calendar	Meaning of Biblical Months (Harvesting Schedule)	Biblical Feasts
1	Nisan	Their flight	Redemption, Miracles	Aviv	Ripening of grain [Barley, Wheat]	Passover, Unleavened Bread, First fruits
2	Iyyar	(natural) healing	Introspection, Self improvement	Ziv	Splendor or Radiance [Flowers] (Barley harvest)	
3	Sivan	Bright - their covering	Giving of Torah	3rd	(Wheat harvest)	Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)
4	Tammuz	Hidden - giver of the vine (A Phoenician deity)	Sin of the Golden Calf, guarding of the eyes	4th		
5	Av	Father	Av the Comforter	5th		
6	Elul	A vain thing - nothingness	Repentance	6th	(Fruit harvest)	
7	Tishri	Beginning (from reishit)	Month of the Strong or Month of the Ancients	Ethanim	Ever-flowing streams	Rosh HaShannah, Yom Kippur, Succot
8	Kheshvan	Eighth	The Flood (of Noach)	Bul	Produce (in the sense of rain)	
9	Kislev	Security, trust	(Restful) Sleep	9th		
10	Tevet	Good (from "Tov")	Divine Grace	10th		
11	Shevat	meaning unknown	Tree of Life	11th		
12	Adar	Strength	Good Fortune	12th		
13	* Adar II					

* Additional month added during Leap Years. About every 3rd year. There are 7 leap years in a 19 year cycle.

Biblical References to the Babylonian Months

Nehemiah 2:1 - And it came to pass in the month **Nisan**, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him; and I took up the wine, and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad before in his presence.

Esther 3:7 - In the first month, that is, the month **Nisan**, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, that is, the month **Adar**.

Esther 8:9 - Then were the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, that is, the month **Sivan**, on its twenty third day; And it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded to the Jews, and to the satraps, and the governors and the princes of the provinces which are from Hodu* to Kush**, one hundred twenty and seven provinces, to every province according to its writing, and to every people in their own language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language.

* India

** That is, the upper Nile region

Nehemiah 6:15 - So the wall was finished in the twenty fifth day of the month **Elul**, in fifty two days.

Zechariah 7:1 - And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius, that the word of the Lord came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, which is **Kislev**;

Nehemiah 1:1 - The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month **Kislev**, in the twentieth year, when I was in Shushan the capital,

Esther 2:16 - So Esther was taken to king Ahasuerus to his royal palace in the tenth month, which is the month **Tebeth**, in the seventh year of his reign.

Zechariah 1:7 - On the twenty fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month **Shebat**, in the second year of Darius, the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying:

Esther 3:7 - In the first month, that is, the month **Nisan**, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, that is, the month **Adar**.

Esther 3:13 - And the letters were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month **Adar**, and to plunder their goods.

Esther 8:12 - On one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month **Adar**.

Esther 9:1 - And in the twelfth month, that is, the month **Adar**, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's command and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them, though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over those who hated them;

Esther 9:15-21 - For the Jews who were in Shushan gathered themselves together also on the fourteenth day of the month **Adar**, and slew three hundred men at Shushan; but on the plunder they did not lay their hand.

16. But the other Jews who were in the king's provinces gathered themselves together, and stood for their lives, and had rest from their enemies, and slew of their foes seventy five thousand, but they laid not their hands on the plunder,

17. On the thirteenth day of the month **Adar**; and on the fourteenth day of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

18. But the Jews who were at Shushan assembled together on the thirteenth day of the month, and on the fourteenth day; and on the fifteenth day of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

19. Therefore the Jews of the villages, who lived in the unwalled towns, make the fourteenth day of the month **Adar** a day of gladness and feasting, and a holiday, and of sending portions one to another.

20. And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters to all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, both near and far,

21. To establish this among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month

Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly,

Ezra 6:15 - And this house was finished on the third day of the month **Adar**, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.

The Biblical Months - The Month of Aviv

Exodus 13:4 - This day came you out in the month **Aviv**.

Exodus 23:15 - You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread; you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, in the time appointed in the month **Aviv**; for in it you came out from Egypt; and none shall appear before me empty;

Exodus 34:18 - The Feast of Unleavened Bread shall you keep. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, in the time of the month **Aviv**; for in the month **Aviv** you came out from Egypt.

Deuteronomy 16:1 - Observe the month of **Aviv**, and keep the Passover to Yahweh your Elohim; for in the month of **Aviv** Yahweh your Elohim brought you out of Egypt by night.

The Month of Ziv

1Kings 6:1 - And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth* year after the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month **Ziv**, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of Yahweh.

* **Hebrew; Septuagint four hundred and fortieth**

1Kings 6:37 - In the fourth year was the foundation of the house of Yahweh laid, in the month **Ziv**;

The Month of Bul

1Kings 6:38 - And in the eleventh year, in the month **Bul**, which is the eighth month, was the house finished in all its parts, and according to all its specifications. And he was seven years in building it.

The Month of Ethanim

1Kings 8:2 - And all the men of Israel assembled themselves to King Solomon at the feast in the month **Ethanim**, which is the seventh month.

The Origins of the Secular Names for the Days of the Week

We saw how the Hebrew weekdays have no names (**except Shabbat**). The secular weekday names, however, have very different and unbiblical origins. Every day name is associated with a planet and a pagan god.

Abbreviations of Languages Used	
Dan. - Danish	L. - Latin
D. - Dutch or Belgic	Sax. - Saxon or Anglo-Saxon
Fr. - French	Sp. - Spanish
G. - German	Sw. - Swedish
Ir. - Irish, Hiberno-Celtic, and Gaelic	W. - Welsh
It. - Italian	

The information (shown in black) in the "Origins of Name" column comes from Noah Webster's original 1828 American Dictionary of the English Language.

Weekday	Planet God Name	Origins of Name
Sunday	Sun <i>Sun god</i>	[Sax. <i>sunna-dæg</i> ; G. <i>sonntag</i> ; D. <i>zondag</i> ; Dan. <i>søndag</i> ; Sw. <i>sondag</i> ; so called because this day was anciently dedicated to the sun, or to its worship.] The first day of the week.
Monday	Moon <i>Moon god</i>	[Sax. <i>monandæg</i> ; D. <i>maandag</i> ; G. <i>nontag</i> ; <i>moon</i> and <i>day</i> ; being formerly sacred to that planet.] The second day of the week.
Tuesday	Mars <i>Tiw</i>	[Sw. <i>Tisdag</i> ; Dan. <i>Tirsdag</i> ; D. <i>Dingsdag</i> ; G. <i>Dingstag</i> ; Sax. <i>Tiwæsdæg</i> or <i>Tuesdæg</i> , from <i>Tig</i> , <i>Tiig</i> , or <i>Tuisco</i> , the Mars of our ancestors, the deity that presided over combats, strife and litigation. Hence <i>Tuesday</i> is court day, assize day; the day for combat or commencing litigation. The third day of the week.
Wednesday	Mercury <i>Woden</i>	[Sax. <i>Wodensdæg</i> ; Woden's day; Sw. <i>Odenstag</i> or <i>Onsdag</i> ; from <i>Wodin</i> or <i>Odin</i> , a deity or chief among the northern nations of Europe.] The fourth day of the week.
Thursday	Jupiter <i>Thor</i>	[Dan. <i>Torsdag</i> , that is, <i>Thor's day</i> , the day consecrated to <i>Thor</i> , the god of thunder answering to the Jove of the Greeks and Romans, L. <i>dies Jovis</i> ; It. <i>Giovedì</i> ; Sp. <i>Jueves</i> ; Fr. <i>Jeudi</i> . So in G. <i>donnerstag</i> , D. <i>donderdag</i> , thunderday. This <i>Thor</i> is from the root of W. <i>taran</i> , thunder; <i>taraw</i> , to strike, hit or produce a shock; Gaelic, Ir. <i>toirn</i> , a great noise; <i>toirneas</i> , thunder. The root of the word signifies to drive, to fush, to strike. In Sw. <i>thorndon</i> is thunder.] The fifth day of the week
Friday	Venus <i>goddess Frigg or Freia</i>	[Sax. <i>frig-dæg</i> ; G. <i>freitag</i> ; D. <i>vrydag</i> ; from <i>Frigga</i> , the Venus of the north; D. <i>vrouw</i> , G. <i>frau</i> , Ir. <i>frag</i> , a woman.] The sixth day of the week, formerly consecrated to Frigga.
Saturday	Saturn <i>Roman god Saturn</i>	[Sax. <i>Sæter-dag</i> ; D. <i>Saturdag</i> ; Saturn's day.] The last day of the week; In Hebrew Shabbat (Sabbath) is “The day of Rest”.