

ARABIC COGNATES OF HEBREW  
WORDS IN JER 31:21–22

**Masoretic Text**

followed by

Tom McDaniel's Translation

הַצִּיבִי לָךְ צִיָּנִים שְׁמִי לָךְ תִּמְרוּרִים

Set up for yourself *stone-markers*,

make for yourself *stone-signs*;

שְׁתִּי לַבַּיִת לְמִסְלָה הַדֶּרֶךְ הַלְכָתָּ/הִלַכְתָּי (K/Q)

pay attention to the roadway — the road *you* traveled.

שׁוּבִי בְּתוֹלַת יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁבִי אֶל-עָרֶיךָ אֱלֹהֵי:

Return, O *Virtuous* Israel, return to your *negligent* city.

עַד-מָתַי תִּתְחַמְקִין הַבַּת הַשׁוֹבְבָה

How long will you remain *stupid*, O faithless daughter?

כִּי-בָרָא יְהוָה חֲדָשָׁה בְּאָרֶץ

Yea, Yahweh created a new thing on the earth:

נְקֵבָה תְּסוּבֵב נָבֵר

*the female enamours the male.*

**Septuagint**

ἦσον σεαυτήν Σιων ποίησον τιμωρίαν

Prepare yourself, O Zion; execute “*vengeance*”

δὸς καρδίαν σου εἰς τοὺς ὤμους

place your heart upon the *shoulders*

ὁδὸν ἣν ἐπορεύθης ἀποστράφητι παρθένος Ἰσραηλ

(using) the road by which you went, return, O virgin of Israel,

ἀποστράφητι εἰς τὰς πόλεις σου πενθοῦσα

return to your cities, O *Mourner*

## ARABIC COGNATES OF HEBREW

ἕως πότε ἀποστρέψεις θυγάτηρ ἡτιμωμένη  
 How long, O *wayward* daughter, will you turn away?  
 ὅτι ἔκτισεν κύριος σωτηρίαν εἰς καταφύτευσιν καινήν  
 for the Lord has created *safety* for a new *plantation*:

ἐν σωτηρίᾳ περιλεύσονται ἄνθρωποι  
 in *safety* men shall go about.

The Arabic cognates of twenty-nine of the thirty-three words in these two verses have long been cited in the standard lexicons of Biblical Hebrew.

MT		ARABIC
הַצִּיבִי	نصب	( <i>naṣaba</i> ) <sup>1</sup>
לָךְ	ل	( <i>la</i> ) <sup>2</sup>
צִינִים	صوان	( <i>ṣawwān</i> ) <sup>3</sup>
שָׁמִי	شام	( <i>šām</i> ) <sup>4</sup>
תִּמְרוֹרִים	تومور	( <i>tu'mûr</i> ) <sup>5</sup>
שְׁתִּי	_____	_____ <sup>6</sup>
לִבֶּךָ	لب	( <i>lubba</i> ) <sup>7</sup>
מְסִילָה	مسيل	( <i>masîl</i> ) <sup>8</sup>
דַּרְךְךָ	درك	( <i>daraka</i> ) <sup>9</sup>
הַלְכָתִי	ولق	( <i>walaqa</i> ) <sup>10</sup>
שׁוּבִי	ثاب	( <i>tâba</i> ) <sup>11</sup>
בְּתוּלָת	بتولة	( <i>batûlat</i> ) <sup>12</sup>
יִשְׂרָאֵל	شري	( <i>šaraya</i> ) <sup>13</sup>
"	الاه	( <i>ilâh</i> ) <sup>14</sup>

שְׁבִי	ثاب	( <i>tāba</i> ) <sup>24</sup>
אֵל	אלי	( <i>ʿilay</i> ) <sup>15</sup>
עֲרֹךְ	_____	_____ <sup>16</sup>
אֱלֹהִים	اولى	( <i>ʿulay</i> ) <sup>17</sup>
עַד	عدا	( <i>ʿadā</i> ) <sup>18</sup>
מָתִי	متى	( <i>matay</i> ) <sup>19</sup>
תַּחֲמֹקִין	حمق	( <i>ḥamuqa</i> ) <sup>20</sup>
הַ(ל)	ال	( <i>ʿal</i> ) <sup>21</sup>
בַּת	بنت	( <i>bint</i> ) <sup>22</sup>
שׁוֹבָבָה	ثاب	( <i>tāba</i> ) <sup>24</sup>
כִּי	کی	( <i>kai</i> ) <sup>23</sup>
בָּרָא	برأ	( <i>baraʿa</i> ) <sup>24</sup>
יְהוָה	_____	_____ <sup>25</sup>
חֲדָשָׁה	حدث	( <i>ḥadaṭa</i> ) <sup>26</sup>
בְּ	ب	( <i>bi</i> ) <sup>27</sup>
אֶרֶץ	ارض	( <i>ʿard</i> ) <sup>28</sup>
נִקְבָה	نقب	( <i>naqb</i> ) <sup>29</sup>
תְּסוּבָב	_____	_____ <sup>30</sup>
גִּבּוֹר	جبر	( <i>jabr</i> ) <sup>31</sup>

NOTES

1. The verb “to set up, to erect” (BDB 662; Lane 1893: 2799).

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2. The preposition “to” with a suffix (BDB 510; Lane 1893: 3006).
3. The noun “road sign made of stones” and “flint-stone” (BDB 846; Lane 1872: 1739).
4. The verb “to put, place, set” and “to insert, sheathe” (BDB 962 and Lane 1872: 1634). This Arabic cognate, “to hide, to conceal, to insert or to sheathe,” is quite remote.
5. “A sign consisting of a pile of stones” (BDB 1071; Lane 1863: 98<sup>c</sup> and 97<sup>b</sup>).
6. The verb “to put, place, set” (BDB 1011). There is no known Arabic cognate for תִּשֵׁ.
7. The noun “heart, understanding, intelligence” (BDB 523; Lane 1885: 2643).
8. The noun “highway” and “a stream bed” (BDB 700; Lane 1872: 1486).
9. The noun “road” and verb “to march, to overtake” (BDB 202; Lane 1867: 874).
10. The verb “to walk” and “to walk quickly” (BDB 229, 410; Hava 894).
11. The verb “to return” (BDB 996; Lane 1863: 361).
12. The noun “virgin” (BDB 143; Lane 1863: 150).
13. The verb “to contend or persist” (BDB 975; Lane 1872: 1545).

14. The noun or name “god, God” (BDB 41–42; Lane 1863: 82–83).
15. The preposition “to, unto, as far as” (BDB 39; Lane 1863: 85).
16. The noun “city” (BDB 746), Sabean cognate, “a fortified height,” but there is no Arabic cognate of עִיר.
17. The demonstrative pronoun “these” (BDB 41; Lane 1863: 86).
18. The noun “perpetuity, distance, remoteness” (BDB 723; Lane 1874: 1978–1979).
19. The interrogative adverb “when, until when” (BDB 607; Lane 1893: 3017).
20. The verb “to turn here and there” (BDB 330), noting that BDB has no cognate for חָזַק.
21. The definite article and/or the vocative “O” (BDB 38, 208 [I]; Lane 1863: 74).
22. The noun “daughter” (BDB 123; Lane 1863: 261).
23. The conjunction “in order that” (BDB 471; Wehr 995).
24. The verb “to create, to form, to fashion” (BDB 135; Lane 1863: 197).
25. The tetragrammaton (BDB 330).
26. The adjective “new” and the noun “novelty, innovation” (BDB 294; Lane 1865: 527).

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27. The preposition “in” (BDB 88; Lane 1863: 141).
28. The noun “earth” (BDB 75; Lane 1863: 47–49).
29. The verb “to perforate” and the nouns “hole, female, mind” (BDB 666; Lane 1893: 2834–2835).
30. The verb “to surround” (BDB 685).
31. The nouns “man, a young man” and “king, slave, servant” (BDB 149; Lane 1865: 374–375).

**KJV**

Jer 31:21 Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, *even* the way *which* thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities. 22 How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man.

**NJB**

Jer 31:21 Set up your signposts, raise yourself landmarks, fix your mind on the road, the way by which you went. Come home, Virgin of Israel, come home to these towns of yours. 22 How long will you hesitate, rebellious daughter? For Yahweh is creating something new on earth: the Woman sets out to find her Husband again.

**Other Translations of Jer 31:22b**

The Woman sets out to find her Husband again (*JB*); the woman must encompass the man with devotion (*NAB*); a woman turned into a man (*NEB*); A woman shall court a man (*Torah*); the woman shall embrace the man (*Peshiṭta*); the

female will surmount the warrior (Holladay, 1966: 239); *die Verwünschte wandelt sich zur Herrin* [the cursed one changes to a queen] (Rudolph 1968: 199); The woman must protect the soldier (Lundbom, 1975: 33); a female shall encompass a hero (Holladay, 1989: 154); a good woman will be a protecting wall of wisdom (*Yebamoth* 62b).

### McDaniel's Note on 31:22b

The enigmatic phrase **נְקִיבָה תְּסֹבֵב נְבִיר** simply means “the female enamors the male.” But sensitivity to Jeremiah’s use of *double entendre* and personification, suggests that the “Virgin/Virtuous” Israel will be the “*intelligent (female)*” (**נְקִיבָה / נְקִיבָה**) who will lovingly and eloquently wax poetic (**תְּשַׁבֵּחַ**) in praise of the Almighty (**נְבִיר**). Jeremiah’s expectation was that Lady Israel—who was loved by her God with an everlasting love—would rapturously reciprocate vocally and unequivocally with paeans of love, thereby creating the role reversal between the Lover and the Beloved. See the following online study:

<http://daniel.eastern.edu/seminary/tmcdaniel/cbbp-chapter19.pdf>  
<http://daniel.eastern.edu/seminary/tmcdaniel/CBBP.pdf> (pp.

158–186)