**Gen.1:26-28**

**A literal rendering from the Hebrew:**

**26.** And said Elohim, ‘Let Us make Man (or “mankind”) in Our image like Our likeness, and let them rule (*râdâh*) upon (or, “among”, or, “against”) the fish of the sea, and upon the flying creature of the heavens, and upon the cattle (s.) and upon the whole earth, and upon every creeping thing creeping over the earth.’

**27.** Then created Elohim (dir. obj. marker) the Man in His image. In the image of Elohim He created (dir. obj. marker) him; male and female He created (dir. obj. marker) them. NB: this construction, instead of including the pronominal direct objects as verbal suffixes, makes them stand out.

**28.** And blessed (dir. obj. marker) them Elohim and said to them Elohim, ‘Bear fruit and increase and fill (dir. obj. marker) the earth. And subdue (*kâbash*) it, and rule (*râdâh*) upon the fish of the sea and upon the flying creature of the heavens and upon everything alive creeping over the earth.’

**Direct Objects and use of *êth*:**

The function word אֵת precedes direct objects of Biblical Hebrew

verbs if those direct objects are individuated (i.e., if they are

strongly characterized as distinct entities or individuals—which

means that they are also often marked with the article). *Cook & Holmstedt’s Heb. Grammar*

**Heb. Words for “Rule”:**

***Râdâh*** – Brown, Driver, Briggs offers “have dominion, rule, dominate”. They relate it to the late Hebrew and early Syriac meaning of “chastise”, and to an Arabic word meaning “tread, trample”. Among its 25 occurrences are examples of controlling adversaries – like Psa.110:2. NOTE: the lowliness of the cursed Serpent rather invites his being trampled (Gen.3:14).

***Mâshal*** – BDB offers “rule, have dominion, reign”. They give no etymology, but there is a different word using the same stem that means “represent, be like”. From this primary meaning another word uses this same stem and means “use a proverb, speak in parables”. Did the original idea of fitness for rule include that one could discern and speak proverbs? – the ideal of course being early Solomon. Perhaps it was discernment in general that was deemed necessary in a ruler. Interestingly THIS is the word used of the light ruling upon day and upon night in Gen.1:17-18 (1st occ.). Its next occurrence has Adam ruling over Eve in Gen.3:16.

***Kâbash*** – BDB gives it a meaning of “subdue, bring into bondage” and relates it to the Late Hebrew meaning of “press, oppress”. They also relate its meaning to an Aramaic word meaning “tread down, beat, make a path, subdue”, and an Arabic word meaning “press, squeeze, knead, attack, assault.” Some people derive the archaic expression “put the kibosh on (someone or something)” to a similar Yiddish word. The 1st occ. of *kâbash* is Gen.1:28. This word occurs only 14 times so looking them all up is not so burdensome. There is a definite context of enemies and enmity in them. I also found it interesting that where the text had to do with conquering enemy peoples, it used the expression “subdue the land” (*hâ’ârets*) – 4 times, plus Gen.1:28 makes 5.

***`Âtsar*** - Although this word means “restrain” that was evidently part of the kingly role in Israel – see Saul’s commission in 1 Sam.9:17. Further, this word’s first 3 occs. deal with barrenness, or restraint of the womb – an interesting application in view of the command to “be fruitful”.