



WOW: Word Of the Week

Shalom!

December 27, 2023

Welcome to the last WOW of 2023! Also the last WOW in the current series. Beginning in the spring of 2020, I have written and recorded almost 200 “Word Of the Week” studies.

The genesis of these is explained on the website index page. During my years in local church ministry, I was responsible for a Wednesday devotional thought. My favorite way of developing studies that were brief and memorable was to identify a WOW – Word Of the Week. Any notes from those devotionals have long since disappeared, but at the urging of several, I began writing weekly WOWs almost four years ago.

With the coming of 2024, I am going to take a sabbatical. As Jan and I explore the next stage of our lives, I do not know how long this sabbatical will last. (I have written elsewhere of our 25 years in full-time local church ministry, 15 years combining ministry and my work in the universities, and 15 years of mission work after “retiring.”)

Past WOWs are available on the website, along with numerous “bits from bob” articles. (Right menu box, www.bobyoungrsources.com) On the website, WOW videos are organized alphabetically. (<https://bobyoungrsources.com/videos.php#wow>)

A final WOW for now. Shalom! Shalom is often translated peace. As such, the word reflects a hope for the end of war and conflict. The root meaning is well-being, wholeness, completeness, having no lack. In Exodus 21-22, the reference is to restoring loss or injury. The word is used when Joseph inquires about his father’s health (Gen. 43:27-28). In Hebrew, shalom can refer to health, general well-being, wholeness of body and mind, inner completeness and tranquility.

In modern-day Israel, shalom is used to greet someone and also to say goodbye. May you be well, may health and prosperity be yours. Or if you like, “peace.”

I am reminded of Paul’s second letter to the Christians in Thessalonica: “Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times and in every way.” (2 Thess. 3:16).

Thus it is that I conclude 2023 and this present series of WOWs with this word: shalom. Peace. May you be well. “Dear friends, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul” (3 John 2). Indeed, my shalom to you is more spiritual than physical. May you be well spiritually!