MOUNCE'S

COMPLETE EXPOSITORY
DICTIONARY *of*
OLD & NEW TESTAMENT WORDS

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Zondervan, nor do we vouch for the content of these sites and numbers for the life of this book.

For my sons,

Tyler and Hayden

whom God called to himself at an early age,

blessed them with spiritual sensitivity beyond their years,

and in whatever they do, will be ministers of their Lord,

"proclaiming the excellencies of him who called them

out of darkness into his marvelous light."

My son, if your heart is wise,
　my heart too will be glad. (Prov. 23:15)

Sons are a heritage from the LORD,
　children a reward from him.
Like arrows in the hands of a warrior
　are sons born in one's youth.
Blessed is the man
　whose quiver is full of them. (Ps. 127:3-5)

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Introduction

When God chose to reveal himself and his will, he usually did so with words. And what precious words they are. Because every word is "breathed out by God" (2 Tim. 3:16), "every word of God proves true" (Prov. 30:5). While words have meaning primarily in the context of sentences and paragraphs, we still tend to cling to individual words. They guide us; they help us; sometimes they tease us when their meanings are elusive and flexible, especially when they come from other languages and from people immersed in different cultures. *Mounce's Expository Dictionary* (*MED*) will help you learn the meaning of the words God has used.

What are the distinctives of this book? (1) The integration of Old and New Testament words. The OT was written primarily in Hebrew, with parts in Aramaic; the NT is in Greek. But because the Old and New Testaments are one revelation, these words are tied together and can only be explained together. You cannot understand the NT concept of "mercy" (GK *1799*) without understanding the OT word *ḥeṣed* (GK 2876).

(2) Words are defined in biblical context. As I discuss in "How to Do Word Studies" (pages xvii-xxx), words have "bundles of meanings." They have a range of meanings, and it is the context of the sentence primarily that determines what any one word means in any one verse. While looking at the meaning of the parts of a word (its "etymology") can be interesting, the meaning of many words has moved beyond the sum of its parts. And apparent etymologies can be deceptive; a "butterfly" is not a dairy product with wings.

(3) The "Golden Nugget." Whenever possible, we have tried to give you something special, something that makes for a good illustration; "Paul tells Timothy not to become entangled in civilian affairs (2 Tim. 2:4); the word 'entangled' is used elsewhere of a rabbit entangled in a briar bush." We have also tried to list those most familiar verses; "This is the same word that Jesus uses when he says, 'For God so loved the *world* that he gave his only Son' (Jn. 3:16)."

(4) *MED* is not keyed to just one English translation but works with many, ranging from the King James Version to present-day translations.

(5) *MED* uses two numbering systems, one developed by Edward W. Goodrick and John R. Kohlenberger III ("GK"), and the older system developed by James Strong ("S"). While the latter is better known, the former is more complete and ties *MED* in with many of the best study tools.

(6) Hebrew and Greek words are organized around the English words generally used to translate them, and all Hebrew and Greek words are given in their original script as well as in English transliteration. While you can enjoy learning some aspects of the original languages, you do not need to have a working knowledge of Greek and Hebrew to use this book. (If you have not studied Hebrew or Greek, I would encourage you to read "How to Do Word Studies," pages xvii-xxx.)

(7) There are actually three dictionaries in this book. The first is the main set of word studies, organized by their English translation. It includes all Greek words occuring ten times or more, all Hebrew words occuring fifty times or more, and other words occuring less if they are theologically or exegetically significant (excluding some proper nouns, adverbs, conjunctions, and particles). The second is a Hebrew-English dictionary alphabetized by Hebrew order, cross-referenced to the first part. We have included all Hebrew words that occur fifty times or more, and any theologically significant word that occurs fewer times (excluding proper nouns, adverbs, conjunctions, and particles). Frequencies

are taken from John Kohlenberger's list. The third is a Greek-English dictionary alphabetized by Greek order, also cross-referenced to the first part. It includes all the Greek words that occur in the NT. Frequencies are taken from the GNT-T module of the Accordance software program, which I developed.

(8) *MED* has an effective and accurate cross-reference system. If a Hebrew or Greek word is translated basically by one English word, it will be discussed at that location. If, however, a Hebrew or Greek word is translated by multiple English words, we have chosen one English word and there you will find the primary discussion. If you go to the other English words, there will be a short definition and a cross-reference to the main article. If a translation uses an English word that is generally not used by the other translations, there will just be a cross-reference, such as, "Longsuffering, see *patience*."

(9) Under every English entry we list first the OT Hebrew words (if applicable) and then the NT Greek words (again, if applicable). Within each of these categories words are generally sorted by verb, noun, adjective, adverb, and then other forms. If you are studying the actual Hebrew or Greek word, you can also locate them in the second or third dictionary. There you will see the full range of meanings for that word, and can then follow the cross-references to the fuller discussion in the first part of *MED*.

(10) The articles are written in such a way that if you want to do further study, you can move smoothly to other major word studies. For Hebrew words we recomend the five volume *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, edited by Willem A. VanGemeren (Zondervan, 1997). For Greek words we highly recommend the *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology: Abridged Edition*, by Verlyn D. Verbrugge (Zondervan, 2000). This is an abridgment of the excellent three-volume *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, edited by Colin Brown (Zondervan, 1978). If you want to venture more deeply into Greek beyond word studies, being able to use it without spending years in all the detailed work, may I recommend my own *Greek for the Rest of Us* (Zondervan, 2003).

I have spent much of my professional life writing books so that people can understand their New Testaments better. I am glad to have completed this trilogy: *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, *The Interlinear for the Rest of Us*, and *Greek for the Rest of Us*. My special thanks to the forty-two Ph.D. students and scholars who wrote these articles, the three assistant editors without whose work this book could not have been finished in my lifetime (Verlyn Verbrugge, Miles Van Pelt, Matt Smith), and to my father, Robert Mounce, who shared much of the burden. Thanks to Jack Kuhatschek, the Zondervan editor who first approached me about the project and provided invaluable assistance in defining the basic approach of the book, to my friends Ed and Tacie Taylor of Stonehaven, and special thanks to my wife Robin and our three children, Tyler, Kiersten, and Hayden, who patiently waited for me to finish reading "one more article" before resurfacing for the evening.

May God richly bless you as you strive to know him and his Word better.

Bill Mounce
February, 2006

Abbreviations

BDAG	*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*
ESV	English Standard Version
GK	Goodrick/Kohlenberger numbers (Greek in italics, Hebrew in roman)
Gr.	Greek
Heb.	Hebrew
KJV	King James Version
LXX	Septuagint (the Greek translation of the OT)
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NIDOTTE	*New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*
NIDNTT-A	*New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology: Abridged Edition*
NIV	New International Version
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
RSV	Revised Standard Version
S	Strong's number (Greek in italics, Hebrew in roman)

Hebrew Verbal Stems

Q	Qal	P	Piel	H	Hiphal	Hit	Hitpael	Qp	Qal passive
N	Niphal	Pu	Pual	Ho	Hophal	Hi	Hithpael		

Books of the Bible

Gen.	Genesis	Isa.	Isaiah	Rom.	Romans
Exod.	Exodus	Jer.	Jeremiah	1 Cor.	1 Corinthians
Lev.	Leviticus	Lam.	Lamentations	2 Cor.	2 Corinthians
Num.	Numbers	Ezek.	Ezekiel	Gal.	Galatians
Deut.	Deuteronomy	Dan.	Daniel	Eph.	Ephesians
Jos.	Joshua	Hos.	Hosea	Phil.	Philippians
Jdg.	Judges	Joel	Joel	Col.	Colossians
Ruth	Ruth	Amos	Amos	1 Thess.	1 Thessalonians
1 Sam.	1 Samuel	Obad.	Obadiah	2 Thess.	2 Thessalonians
2 Sam.	2 Samuel	Jon.	Jonah	1 Tim.	1 Timothy
1 Ki.	1 Kings	Mic.	Micah	2 Tim.	2 Timothy
2 Ki.	2 Kings	Nah.	Nahum	Tit.	Titus
1 Chr.	1 Chronicles	Hab.	Habakkuk	Phlm.	Philemon
2 Chr.	2 Chronicles	Zeph.	Zephaniah	Heb.	Hebrews
Ezr.	Ezra	Hag.	Haggai	Jas.	James
Neh.	Nehemiah	Zech.	Zechariah	1 Pet.	1 Peter
Est.	Esther	Mal.	Malachi	2 Pet.	2 Peter
Job	Job	Matt.	Matthew	1 Jn.	1 John
Ps.	Psalms	Mk.	Mark	2 Jn.	2 John
Prov.	Proverbs	Lk.	Luke	3 Jn.	3 John
Eccl.	Ecclesiastes	Jn.	John	Jude	Jude
Song.	Song of Solomon	Acts	Acts	Rev.	Revelation

Hebrew Transliterations

Consonants

א	Alef	ʾ
ב	Bet	b
ג	Gimel	g
ד	Dalet	d
ה	He	h
ו	Waw	w
ז	Zayin	z
ח	Het	ḥ
ט	Tet	ṭ
י	Yod	y
כ	Kaf	k
ל	Lamed	l
מ	Mem	m
נ	Nun	n
ס	Samek	s
ע	Ayin	ʿ
פ	Pe	p
צ	Tsade	ṣ
ק	Qof	q
ר	Resh	r
שׂ	Sin	ś
שׁ	Shin	š
ת	Taw	t

Vowels

בַּ	Pathach	a
בֶּ	Seghol	e
בִּ	Hireq	i
בָּ	Qamets Hatuf	o
בֻּ	Qibbuts	u
בָּ	Qamets	ā
בֵּ	Tsere	ē
בֹּ	Holem	ō
בָּה	Qamets He	â
בֵּי	Tsere Yod	ê
בִּי	Hireq Yod	î
בּוֹ	Holem Waw	ô
בּוּ	Shureq	û
בֲּ	Hateph Pathach	a
בֱּ	Hateph Seghol	e
בֳּ	Hateph Qamets	o
בְּ	Vocal Shewa	e

Greek Transliterations

α	Alpha	a
β	Beta	b
g	Gamma	g
δ	Delta	d
ε	Epsilon	e
ζ	Zeta	z
η	Eta	ē
θ	Theta	th
ι	Iota	i
κ	Kappa	k
λ	Lambda	l
μ	Mu	m
ν	Nu	n
ξ	Xi	x
ο	Omicron	o
π	Pi	p

ρ	Rho	r
σ, ς	Sigma	s
τ	Tau	t
υ	Upsilon	y or u
φ	Phi	ph
χ	Chi	ch
ψ	Psi	ps
ω	Omega	ō
γγ		ng
γκ		nk
γξ		nx
γχ		nch
ῥ		rh
		h

Two Ways to Use This Book

English Only

There are two basic ways to use this book. The most common way for people who do not know Greek and Hebrew is to work purely from the English. You are reading a verse, you see an English word, and you want to know what the Greek or Hebrew behind the English word means.

In many cases this will work fine. For example, you want to know what "prophet" means. You go to the first of the three dictionaries in this book, find the entry "PROPH-ET," and you can read the entry for the Hebrew *nābîʾ* and the Greek *prophētēs*. If you want to learn about "Propitiation," you can read about the verb *hilaskomai* or the noun *hilasmos*.

However, what if you want to learn about "Purpose"? There are three Greek nouns that we list under this entry: *boulē*, *eudokia*, and *prothesis*. As you will learn in the next section ("How to Do Word Studies"), these three Greek words have some overlap in meaning, but each one has its own range of meanings. In other words, *boulē* may have a meaning that *prothesis* doesn't, and vice versa. If you don't know the Greek (or Hebrew) word behind the specific English word in the specific verse you are studying, you wouldn't know which set of definitions apply in your situation.

Greek and Hebrew Tools

There is another way to do word studies based on the actual Greek or Hebrew word that has been translated in your specific verse, and you don't have to know Greek or Hebrew to do it. I would highly recommend doing your word studies this way. *If you are going to do biblical word studies, you should be studying the actual words God used*, and God didn't speak in English back then.

In my book the *Interlinear for the Rest of Us*, it is easy to look up a verse, find the English word, and under it you will see its "GK number." Use this number to look up the word in the Hebrew-English or the Greek-English dictionaries in this book, see the basic range of meanings, and if the word is discussed in more detail in the first dictionary in this book, it will be cross-referenced.

For example, you are reading Acts 2:23. Here is the Reverse Interlinear:

This	man	was	handed	over	to	you	by	God's		set		purpose	
τοῦτον ←			ἔκδοτον ←				↦	⸤τοῦ	θεοῦ⸥	ὡρισμένῃ	⸤τῇ	βουλῇ⸥	
r.asm			a.asm					d.gsm	n.gsm	pt.rp.dsf	d.dsf	n.dsf	
4047			1692			1087		3836	2536	3988	3836	1087	

Under the word "purpose" you see that it is Greek word 1087. (You will quickly learn that word 3836 is the definite article ["the"], which is often untranslated, and the second word is the one you are looking for.) If you know Greek, you will recognize that the Greek word is βουλῇ and it is a noun, dative singular feminine. You go to the Greek-English dictionary, read the article, and see that it is cross-referenced to "purpose." Now when you come to "PURPOSE" in the first dictionary, you know that the word you are studying is βούλη (*boulē*), GK *1087* (S *1012*). Its GK number is *1087*, and its Strong number is *1012*. There are also computer programs that provide this same information, and I will discuss this in the next section.

There is no Hebrew counterpart to the Reverse Interlinear, so for the OT you will have to use a computer program or an exhaustive concordance.

This second way of doing word studies requires one extra step, but you are assured that you are then studying the correct Greek or Hebrew word. This is by far the better way to study God's words.

How to Do Word Studies

(The following discussion is drawn from my text, *Greek for the Rest of Us*. It centers on Greek, but there is a discussion of Hebrew word studies at the end.)

Words have a "semantic range." "Semantic" refers to a word's meaning; "semantic range" refers to the range of possible meanings a word possesses. Think of all the ways we use the word "run."

> I scored six runs today.
> Could you run that by me again?
> My computer runs faster than yours!
> He runs off at the mouth.
> I left the water running all night.
> He ran to the store.
> The car ran out of gas.
> The clock ran down.
> Duane ran for senate.
> Her nose ran.
> I ran up the bill.

In describing this concept to students I prefer the phrase "bundle of meanings." A word usually does not possess just one meaning; it has different meanings, hence "bundle."

This is true in any language. For example, the semantic range of the preposition ἐν (*en*) is quite large. Just look at how it is used in the following verses, all from Matthew. (All translations are from the RSV; the format is that of a standard interlinear.)

Matt. 1:20 τὸ   γὰρ **ἐν** αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου.
       the   for   *in*   her   conceived   of   spirit   is   holy
       for that which is conceived *in* her is of the Holy Spirit

Matt. 2:1 Τοῦ ... Ἰησοῦ γεννηθέντος **ἐν** Βηθλέεμ ... **ἐν** ἡμέραις Ἡρῴδου
      the   Jesus   was born   *in* Bethlehem   *in* days   of Herod
      Jesus was born *in* Bethlehem … *in* the days of Herod.

Matt. 3:9 καὶ μὴ δόξητε   λέγειν **ἐν** ἑαυτοῖς
      and   not   presume   to say   *in*   yourselves
      and do not presume to say *to* yourselves

Matt. 3:11 Ἐγὼ ... ὑμᾶς βαπτίζω **ἐν** ὕδατι
      I   you   baptize   *in*   water
      I baptize you *with* water.

Matt. 4:23 θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν **ἐν** τῷ λαῷ.
      healing   every   disease   and   every   infirmity   *in*   the   people
      healing every disease and every infirmity *among* the people

Matt. 5:34 μὴ ὀμόσαι ὅλως· μήτε **ἐν** τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὅτι θρόνος ἐστὶν τοῦ   θεοῦ
      not   swear   at all   either   *in*   the   heaven   for   throne   it is   of the   God
      Do not swear at all, either *by* heaven, for it is the throne of God.

Languages are not codes. There is not a one–to–one correspondence between languages, and this applies especially to vocabulary. Rarely if ever can you find one word in one language that corresponds exactly to another word in another language, especially in its semantic range. English has no single word that matches the range of meanings for *en*. The semantic range of a Greek and English word may overlap, but they are not identical.

So how do we translate the Bible when we do not have English words that correspond exactly to the Greek? We have to interpret, which is why all translation is interpretive; no Bible translation is neutral. For example, in 1 Tim. 6:13-14 Paul writes,

> In the presence of God who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I *charge* you to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. (RSV)

The Greek word behind "charge" is *parangellō*, which means "to command, insist, instruct, urge." Quite a wide range of meanings for which there is no single counterpart in English. The translator must decide whether Paul is "commanding" Timothy (who is a member of his inner circle, fully trusted, and probably his best friend) or "urging" him. This is an interpretive decision that must be made by the translator. The RSV chose "charge," the NLT "command," and the NKJV rightly (in my opinion) selected "urge."

But let's say that you want to know what Paul means when he "charges" Timothy to keep the commandment unstained. It doesn't do any good to look up the English word "charge," because "charge" can't mean "urge" (and "urge" can't mean " charge"). If you really want to decide for yourself what Paul is saying, you have to know the Greek word behind the English, learn its semantic range, and see the decision faced by the translators.

How do you do this? There are four steps. 1. Decide what English word to study. 2. Identify the Greek word. 3. Discover its semantic range. 4. Look for something in the context that helps determine what the biblical author meant by this word in this particular verse.

Step 1. Choose the English Word

Rom. 10:9-10 is one of the most succinct and crucial passages in the Bible on the nature of salvation (ESV translation).

> If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

The key term in the entire passage is what? It's "Lord," isn't it? The essence of salvation is the confession, "Jesus is Lord," accompanied with the acceptance of the resurrection. So what does "Lord" mean?

This is actually the first step in doing a word study: you've decided on a significant word. If you try to do word studies on every word you read, not only will you run out of time, but you'll get bored. So how do you pick the right words? There is not a clear-cut answer to this question, but here are some suggestions.

- Look for *repeated* words. This normally indicates a recurring theme, and perhaps the central theme in the passage. This includes the use of synonyms.

- Look for *theological* terms. This will be more obvious in teaching passages (e.g., in Paul) than in narrative (e.g., in the gospels).
- Sometimes a verse will "hang" on a word. It is a word that is central to the meaning of the verse, and without it the sentence will not make sense. In Rom. 10:9 it is "Lord."
- As you compare translations, you may find a significant word that is translated *differently* among the different translations.

What do you think "Lord" means? Let's find out.

2. Identify the Greek Word

It may be at this point your search is done. You may look up the English word "Lord," and there is only one Greek word translated "Lord." But what if there is more than one Greek word translated as "Lord"? You could read all the entries and have a basic understanding of what the "word group" means. But if you want more, you need to know which specific Greek word lies behind the English word in this specific verse. How do you do this?

Interlinear for the Rest of Us

There are several tools that will show you the Greek behind the English. You will excuse me if I am a little biased, but my favorite is a book I wrote, *The Interlinear for the Rest of Us* (Zondervan, 2006, originally entitled, *The NIV English-Greek New Testament: A Reverse Interlinear*, Zondervan, 2000). The whole point behind this book is to give people who do not know Greek access to the Greek words behind the English, the Greek word's parsing, and its GK number.

I created the term "reverse interlinear" because the book does one thing significantly different from standard interlinears. Most interlinears keep Greek word order and include a word-for-word English translation under each Greek word. Because English word order is often fundamentally different from Greek, the interlinear English translations generally do not make sense. *IRU* keeps the English word order and alters the Greek to match the English text of the NIV. This way you can read the English and drop down to the Greek whenever you wish.

If you look up Rom. 10:9 in *IRU*, here is what you will find.

⁹	That	if	you	confess		with	your	mouth,		"Jesus	is
	ὅτι	ἐὰν	→	ὁμολογήσῃς	ἐν	σου	⌞τῷ	στόματι⌟		Ἰησοῦν	
	cj	cj		v.aas.2s	p.d	r.gs.2	d.dsn	n.dsn		n.asm	
	4022	1569		3933	1877	5148	3836	5125		2652	

Lord,"	and	believe	in	your	heart		that	God		raised
κύριον	καὶ	πιστεύσῃς	ἐν	σου	⌞τῇ	καρδίᾳ⌟	ὅτι	⌞ὁ	θεὸς⌟	ἤγειρεν
n.asm	cj	v.aas.2s	p.d	r.gs.2	d.dsf	n.dsf	cj	d.nsm	n.nsm	v.aai.3s
3261	2779	4409	1877	5148	3836	2840	4022	3836	2536	1586

The inflected form is κύριον, it is a noun (see the "n" in "n.asm"), and its GK number is *3261*. The conversion chart at the back of *IRU* tells you its Strong's number is *2962*.

Software

Another easy way to get at the Greek behind the English is to use a good software program. There are several I could use as illustrations, but my favorite is Accordance (Macintosh computers only). If you have purchased the appropriate modules (NIV-G/K, NAS95S, or KJVS), you simply find a verse and move the cursor over the English word. The Greek word behind the English, its definition, GK number, and lexical form (in Greek and transliteration) appear in the amplify window.

If you use a Microsoft Windows computer, there are several good options. BibleWorks is especially good for showing you the original languages, as long as you use the KJV and/or the NASB texts with codes. Zondervan's new Pradis also does an excellent job.

Concordances

You could also find the Greek word behind the English the old fashioned way, using an exhaustive concordance. Let's do this using the NIV text and the *NIV Exhaustive Concordance*.

What is a *concordance*? A concordance is a book that lists all the words in the Bible in alphabetical order, and under each word shows you the verses in which that word occurs. So, for example, if you looked up "love," you would find that the word occurs 551 times in 505 verses.

What is an *exhaustive* concordance? It is a concordance that lists *every* word in the Bible and lists *every* verse in which each word occurs. There are shorter concordances, published as separate books or in the back of your Bible, but they do not show every word, and usually do not show you every verse in which the words occur. The serious student needs a serious concordance. Get an exhaustive.

But many exhaustive concordances give you one more invaluable piece of information. They show you the GK (or Strong's) number of the Greek word used in the sentence. So let's say you want to find the Greek word behind the English word "love" in Matt. 19:19, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Look up the word "love" in *The NIV Exhaustive Concordance* and look through the entries until you find Matt. 19:19. This concordance lists the entry as, "and 'l your neighbor as yourself.'" (The editor made a decision as to which words to the left and the right of the selected word to include, and also abbreviated "love" to "l" and bolded it. This is standard practice.) If you look to the right of the entry, you will see that "love" in this verse translates the Greek word with the GK number, "*26*."

This is the key piece of information for word studies. If you wish, you can go to the back of the concordance and look up the number in the Greek lexicon (not the Hebrew, which is the first of the three dictionaries in the back of this concordance). There you will find that the dictionary form of the Greek word *26* is ἀγαπάω, which is transliterated as *agapaō*. This step is not always crucial for word studies, but you may enjoy knowing the information.

If you use the KJV, there are several exhaustive concordances available. In my opinion, the best is the *Strongest Strong's,* not because Zondervan (my publisher) published it, but because it is the best. They worked from the best English KJV text, and they provide the best helps in the back of the book. The original Strong's concordance is published by several publishers, as is Young's. There is an exhaustive concordance for the NASB and the RSV as well. Most use Strong's numbers; the *NIV Exhaustive* and I

use the GK numbers (and there are conversion charts in the back so you can move from GK to Strong and back again).

Step 3. Discover its Semantic Range

Before you can discover what the word means in a particular context, you have to learn its range of meaning, its "semantic range." As I have been saying, we are looking for the semantic range of the Greek word, not the English, since they are almost always (if not always) different. So we are going to learn the semantic range of the Greek word *kyrios*.

This is where the Hebrew-English and Greek-English dictionaries in *MED* come into play. Each entry shows you the entire semantic range of the Hebrew or Greek word. Here is the entry for κύριος:

> **[3261]** κύριος *kyrios* 717x *a lord, master,* Matt. 12:8; *an owner, possessor,* Matt. 20:8; *a potentate, sovereign,* Acts 25:26; *a power, deity,* 1 Cor. 8:5; *the Lord, Jehovah,* Matt. 1:22; *the Lord* Jesus Christ, Matt. 24:42; Mk. 16:19; Lk. 10:1; Jn. 4:1; 1 Cor. 4:5; freq.; κύριε, a term of respect of various force, *Sir, Lord,* Matt. 13:27; Acts 9:6, et al. freq. [2962]. See *Lord.*

You can see the range of meaning, running from a term of polite address, to a servant's respectful address to his master, to a term for deity. This word is discussed in *MED* under the English translation "Lord" in the first part of this book.

Let me introduce you to another marvelous tool. It used to be called an "Englishman's Concordance." The new one by John Kohlenberger is titled *The Greek-English Concordance to the New Testament* (Zondervan, 1997), and especially if you read the NIV, this is the one to use. With this text you look up a Greek word based on its lexical form (or GK number), and you can see every place the Greek word occurs in the NT, *but the verses are listed in English*.

There is a considerable difference between this type of concordance and others. In a regular concordance, if you look up "Lord," the entries list all the places where the English word "Lord" occurs. However, there may be several different Greek words that are translated "Lord," and *kyrios* may not always be translated with "Lord." For example, *sarx* is translated in Galatians by the NIV as "body" (1x), "flesh" (1x), "human effort" (1x), "illness" (2x), "man" (1x), "no one" (1x), "ordinary way" (2x), "outwardly" (1x), "sinful nature" (7x), and "that nature" (1x). (In some of these occurrences, *sarx* was combined with another word when translating.)

But with an "Englishman's" concordance, you know you are looking at every place the same Greek word occurs, regardless of how it is translated. (In a regular Greek concordance, the verses would be in Greek.) As you scan through the entries, you can see how the NIV has translated *kyrios*.

There are also specific books that help you see the semantic range of a word and, to a greater or lesser degree, will tell you more about the word, especially its usage throughout the Bible and other ancient writings. My favorite one-volume word study book (after *MED*, of course) is Verlyn D. Verbrugge's *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology: Abridged Edition*. It lists words alphabetically and by their GK number, and the discussion is excellent. Verbrugge's work is an abridgment of the three-volume set, *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology,* edited by Colin Brown. This too is an excellent discussion of the words in the NT that often moves, as the name

implies, into the word's theological significance; however, it is generally too advanced for many people. Zondervan published a fourth volume that contains all the indexes.

Geoffrey W. Bromiley's one volume *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: Abridged in One Volume* is, as the name says, an abridgment of the multi-volume *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament,* edited by Kittel and Friedrich. We affectionately call Bromiley's abridgment *Little Kittel* or *Kittelbits.* Whatever its name, Bromiley did a masterful job of cutting out discussion that is mostly irrelevant for most people. It lists words alphabetically based on their transliteration. But be sure to use the index; it doesn't discuss every Greek word, and you could spend a long time looking for an entry that isn't included. The full multi-volume series of *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament,* while it looks good on your shelf, is of little value for most people. There are also multi-volume word studies by Wuest (*Word Studies in the Greek New Testament*), Vincent (*Word Studies in the New Testament*), and Robertson (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*).

If the word is an important theological term, it may be discussed in reference works like the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (rev. ed.)*,* edited by Walter A. Elwell (Baker, 2001). This is a marvelous book, and everyone ought to have a copy of it for their study. (I don't say that very often.)

4. Context

Once you have located the Greek word and learned its semantic range, it is time to decide what it means in the particular verse you are studying. The question is, how do you decide?

In short, the answer is "context." You look for something in the immediate context that gives a clue as to the precise meaning of the word. I like to think in terms of a series of concentric circles. The word in the verse is the smallest circle. The next circle out is the verse, then the paragraph, the book, etc. The point is that you look for something in the verse that will define the word. If there isn't anything, then look at the paragraph. If there is nothing to help you in the paragraph, go to the book as a whole. But you want to stop as soon as you can. The further you go out from the center, the less assuredness you have that you are defining the word properly. But if you have to keep going out from the center, then you have to.

Why do you want to stop as soon as possible? Because different people can use the same word differently. Even the same person can use the same word differently in different contexts, as our previous example of *sarx* in Paul shows. Paul and James use "justify" in significantly different ways, even though they both mention Abraham and the same verse in Habakkuk (discussed below).

I saw a sign the other day that said: "GO CHILDREN SLOW," where each word was stacked above the next. One of the sillier signs I have ever seen, it seemed to me. What does it mean? Does it mean, "Go, the children are slow," or, "Go children, but slowly," or, "Go slow, there are children." Obviously, it is the latter, but why is it obvious? Because we understand the sign within its *context* of being a road sign, and we probably notice that we are driving through a neighborhood full of children. And yet, in order to get to this understanding, we had to alter the word order and recognize that there is a grammatical error in the sign ("slow" should be "slowly" since it is an adverb).

Another good one is, "Speed radar controlled." Silly sign #2. The radar doesn't control my speed. My foot does. (Of course, it could be argued that the threat of a ticket proven by a radar gun is the ultimate cause of my speed.) How about the most common

sign, "Stop." Shouldn't it be "Stop and then go"? And my other favorites from New England: "Lightly salted"; "Blind drive"; "Thickly settled."

The point is that common sense tells us these signs are to be understood within their context. The same is true for word studies. How does the context help us decided what a word means? Let's look at some examples as we move out from the center of the concentric circles.

Verse. 1 Thess. 4:3. "For this is the *will* of God, your sanctification." What is God's will for your life? To be sanctified; to be holy.

Paragraph. 1 Tim. 2:14-15. "and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet woman will be *saved* through bearing children, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty" (RSV). What does "saved" mean? V 14 suggests we are dealing with spiritual salvation ("transgressor") and not physical safety.

Book. 1 Tim. 1:10. At the end of a list of sins, Paul states that these are "contrary to *sound* doctrine." What is "*sound* doctrine"? Most translations miss the fact that the word is a medical metaphor meaning "healthy," and that it contrasts with the heresy being spread in Ephesus, which Paul elsewhere describes as sick and morbid (1 Tim. 6:4), infectious abrasions (1 Tim. 6:5) spreading like gangrene (2 Tim. 2:17). Sound doctrine is that which is opposed to the false teaching.

New Testament. In Rom. 4:2-3 (ESV) Paul says,

> For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."

("Justify" and "righteous" are the same concept.) What does "justification" mean? How are we justified? If you look at Jas. 2:21-24 (ESV) you will see that he says,

> Was not Abraham our father *justified by works* when he offered up his son Isaac upon the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God. You see that a person is *justified by works* and not by faith alone.

As you look at the whole of the NT a fuller picture emerges as to the meaning of "justification." Paul is discussing how justification is granted; James is discussing how justification is shown to have occurred. What at first appears to be a contradiction are actually complementary teachings.

Bible. Acts 4:8. "Then Peter, *filled* with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers of the people and elders ....'" But I thought Peter was filled at Pentecost (Acts 2:4). What does "filled" mean in v 8? If you look through Acts you will see this statement of "filling" repeated, always followed by mention of what the person said or did. But if you look at the book of Judges in the OT, you will see the same metaphor used the same way of the Spirit possessing the person in a powerful but temporary way in order to accomplish a specific task. While the Holy Spirit comes in his fullness at a believer's conversion, Luke uses the terminology of Judges to describe a work of the Holy Spirit in which he grips a person in a special way to enable that individual to say or do something special.

As you continue out to the outer circles, be careful. Once you get out of the Bible and are looking at how the word is used in secular thought, it becomes more and more likely that the words are going to be used differently. And especially if you are looking at how the word was used five hundred years before the writing of the NT, you must recognize

that words can totally change their meaning over this time span. For example, a century ago, if you were to "skim" a book, this meant you would read it carefully. "To prevent" was "to go before," which obscures Paul's meaning in the KJV of 1 Thess. 4:15.

> For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not *prevent* them which are asleep.

The dead in Christ will go *first*.

References from texts outside the Bible can sometimes give us helpful illustrations. For example, Paul tells Timothy not to become "entangled" in civilian affairs (2 Tim. 2:4). The verb *emplekō* (*1861*) can mean much more than "to be involved" (contra the NIV), and this unfortunate translation has caused unnecessary grief for many pastors who were forced by their churches to have little or no contact with secular society, including a second job. (The blame for this does not lie with the NIV but with the unfortunate and unbiblical notion that a church must keep its pastor poor—but I digress.) *emplekō* means "to be involuntarily interlaced to the point of immobility, be entangled; to become involved in an activity to the point of interference with other activity or objective" (BDAG, 324). The word is used by Hermes (*Similitudes*, 6.2.6-7) of a sheep and by Aesop (74) of hares caught in thorns. These make great illustrations, but it is dangerous to define a biblical word based on them since they are so far removed from the biblical writer.

So let's get back to our word study on "Lord" in Rom. 10:9. Is there anything in the immediate context that will help us define the confession "Jesus is Lord" more precisely? The connection between the confession and belief in Jesus' resurrection suggests "Lord" means much more than "sir"; someone raised from the dead is more than a "sir."

As you move out into the paragraph, in v 12 Paul says that Jesus is "Lord of all," asserting his universal lordship. It is especially significant that in v 13 Paul quotes Joel 2:32, because in its OT context Joel is speaking of Yahweh, God. Douglas Moo writes, "In the OT, of course, the one on whom people called for salvation was Yahweh; Paul reflects the high view of Christ common among the early church by identifying this one with Jesus Christ, the Lord" (*The Epistle to the Romans,* Eerdmans, 1996, page 660).

In Rom. 1:4 Paul states that Jesus "was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord," connecting Jesus' lordship with his resurrection as in 10:9 and with his identification as the Son of God. As we see who Jesus is as Lord, we see that he is also God's Son. As God's Son, the OT references to God can be applicable to Jesus. It is a small step from this to agreeing with Thomas' confession: "My Lord and my God!" (Jn. 20:28).

As you expand further out into the NT, we find similar confessions: "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10-11, NIV; cf. 1 Cor. 12:3).

Salvation requires having a correct understanding of who Jesus is, and that understanding causes you to submit to his lordship. Jesus was raised from the dead, he was raised to a position of lordship over all, and in his lordship we see that he is in fact the Son of God. Christianity is grounded in the historical event of the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Who we are as disciples is intimately tied up with who he is as Lord, our Lord and our God. This is what "Lord" means in Rom. 10:9.

Septuagint

As you get further into word studies beyond this book, you will often see writers paying special attention to how a word is used in the Septuagint, often abbreviated LXX. This is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures that was probably started about 250 B.C. and finished somewhere around the time of Christ. There are certain words that are important in the OT, especially theological words. When the Septuagint was translated, the translators chose a Greek word for each of these Hebrew words. When it comes to defining these Greek words in the NT, it is the word's background in the OT via the Septuagint that is the most important background in defining the Greek word, not its general usage in the first century.

For example, how was the LXX to translate the Hebrew word *ḥesed*, which describes God's love for his covenantal people, when there is no such word in Greek? When the LXX translators finally settled on *eleos*, *eleos* automatically carried the specific meaning of *ḥesed* into the use of *eleos* in the NT. This is our earlier illustration that you must know the meaning of the OT word *ḥesed* in order to understand the NT idea of mercy.

Given the fact that *kyrios* is used by the LXX to translate *YHWH*, "Yahweh," it is hard for me to imagine that the Jewish Paul meant anything less than confessing the deity of Christ in Rom. 10:9.

Cognates

A cognate is a word that is related to another and actually shares the same root. In English, the words "prince" and "princess" share the same root, although their specific forms are altered because they are masculine and feminine gender, respectively.

Sometimes Greek cognates have similar meanings. However, at other times there are definite nuance differences between cognates. For this reason it is important not to assume that all cognates have the same meaning, and when doing a word study try to stick to your specific word. But if you can't get a clear meaning, then look at the cognates and see if they are used with the same or with different meanings as the word you are studying.

Common Mistakes

Before ending this discussion of word studies, I must cover common mistakes made in doing word studies. For a more detailed discussion of these issues you can read *Exegetical Fallacies* by D. A. Carson (Baker, 1991).

Anachronism

The first is the bad habit of defining a Greek word using an English word derived from that Greek word. My favorite example is when someone talks about the "power" of God, and adds that this word "power" is *dynamis*, from which we get our word "dynamite," and then goes on to say God's power is dynamite. This is backwards and wrong. English wasn't a language until the second millenium A.D. Regardless of where our words came from, the definitions don't work backwards. Supposedly there is a reason that a specific Greek word was used as the basis of an English word, but as the years go by that English word can take on a meaning totally different from its Greek origin. God's power is never pictured in Scripture as something that blows rocks apart.

Etymological Fallacy

"Etymology" refers to how the word was created. What would you say if a pastor or Bible study leader told you that the "butterfly" is an animal made of butter that can fly? Or perhaps that a pineapple is a type of apple grown on pine trees? After the laughter died down, and if the speaker were serious, you would point out that this is not what the word means. The etymology, the pieces that were originally used to make up the word, does not define the word today, any more than a butterfly is a milk by-product. (I doubt "butterfly" actually is derived from "butter" and "fly," but it makes for a memorable example.)

The worst example I know of is the Greek word for "repent," *metanoeō*, which some people define as "to change your mind," but not necessarily your behavior. "Repentance," they say, "involves an intellectual shift in understanding, but repentance does not require a change of action." They often base their position on the meaning of the two parts that were used to create *metanoeō*; *meta* means "after," which implies change, and *nous* means "mind"; hence, repentance means to change your mind but not necessarily your behavior. Certainly, *metanoeō* can mean "to regret" (cf. Lk. 17:3-4; 2 Cor. 7:9-10), but the NT's understanding of repentance is not drawn from the etymology of one word but from the biblical *concept* of repentance, especially from the background of conversion in the OT. See the article on *metanoeō* in Bromiley's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: Abridged,* where he writes, "The concept of conversion stresses positively the fact that real penitence involves a new relation to God that embraces all spheres of life and claims the will in a way that no external rites can replace.... It means turning aside from everything that is ungodly" (pp. 640, 641).

Is it ever the case that a word carries the meaning of its parts? Sure. *eiserchomai* is made up of the preposition *eis*, meaning "into," and *erchomai*, meaning "to go." *eiserchomai* means "to go into." But it is not the word's etymology that determines its meaning. Because context makes it clear that *eiserchomai* to mean "to go into," we can see it has retained the meaning of its etymological parts.

It is also true that some prepositions (*ek*, *kata*, *apo*, *dia*, *syn*) have what is called a "perfective" function. When added to a word they can intensify its meaning. *esthiō* means "I eat"; *katesthiō* means "I devour." Some perfective forms, however, have lost this intensified nuance, and the compound form has the same basic meaning as the simple word. For example, Paul tells Timothy that the teaching of the opponents in Ephesus produces only "speculations," *ekzētēsis*. It is difficult to determine whether Paul intended the intensified "extreme speculations" (or perhaps "useless speculations"), or just "speculations," which is the meaning of the simple *zētēsis* ("investigation, controversy, debate"). As always, context is the guide as to whether or not the intensified meaning is present.

Connected to the etymological fallacy is the fact that words change their meaning over the years. Just think of the lyrics to the old song that ends, "We'll have a gay old time," or the KJV use of "prevent" in 1 Thess. 4:15 (cited above). What a word meant when it was first created, or what it meant a thousand years ago, may be at best irrelevant today. A word's meaning today is seen in how it is used today, not in how it used to be used.

- "Hussy" is from the Middle English word "huswife," meaning "housewife."
- "Enthusiasm" meant to be inspired or possessed by a god.
- "Nice" originally meant "foolish" in Middle English (from the Latin *nescire,* "to be ignorant").
- "Gossip" is from *godsib,* a word that refered to godparents, and came to be used of the type of chatter that stereotypically occurs at christenings (see *God, Language*

and Scripture by Moisés Silva, Zondervan, 1995). Today, when I preach about gossip, christenings are nowhere in my mind, and its etymology is irrelevent in an attempt to define the Bible's prohibition of slander.

Words have a range of meaning, but that range is not determined by the parts that made up the word or even by how it was used hundreds of years earlier.

A Few Other Errors

Don't put too much weight on a word, thinking that the word, all by itself, is full of meaning. Granted, there are a few technical terms that have a specific meaning in almost any context. But for the most part, we do not communicate with individual words but with phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. Focus your study on the larger unit, hesitating to place too much emphasis on an individual word.

Linked to this is the fact that theological concepts are larger than a word. Regardless of how many times you have heard the word *agapē* defined as the sacrificial love of the unlovely, the kind of love that is bestowed on the undeserving, that simply is not what the word in and of itself means. It is not the word that conveys this meaning, but it is the concept of biblical love as illustrated by God that infuses *agapē* with this particular meaning in the biblical context.

Hebrew Words

Hebrews poses its own challenges to doing word studies. Here is a little bit of Hebrew that may help.

Roots and stems. Many nouns and verbs share the same consonants. For example,

melek	king	➤	*mālak*	to reign
dābār	word	➤	*dābar*	to speak
mišpāṭ	judgment	➤	*šāpaṭ*	to judge

Notice how each pair shares a common set of consonants and related definitions. The reason for this relationship is due to the fact that they share a common root. It is important to understand the distinction between a root and those words derived from that root. It is a distinction between root and stem.

Hebrew roots are typically composed of three consonants. *A root represents the origin or simplest form from which any number of Hebrew words are derived.* From a root, therefore, any number of nouns or verbs may be derived. *A stem is the most basic form of any word derived from a root.*

For example, from the root *mlk* comes the nouns *melek* (king), *malkâ* (queen), and *malkût* (kingdom), and the verb *mālak* (to reign, be king). Once again, notice how each different word shares a common set of consonants and related definitions. This relationship is based on the sharing of a common root.

Word studies, cognate words, and cognate languages. Word studies will often take these related forms into consideration. The meaning of many Hebrew words is clear. However, the meaning of some words is less clear, and writers will often turn to related Hebrew words to help determine the meaning of these words.

If related Hebrew words do not help, writers will often resort to looking at related or cognate languages (e.g., Akkadian, Arabic, Aramaic, Egyptian, Ugaritic) in order to

determine what a particular Hebrew word may mean. The further we move away from Hebrew, the less certain we are of the meaning of the Hebrew word.

Person, gender, and number. In English, a verb by itself does not have person, gender, or number (e.g., "study"). (Greek verbs, likewise, do not designate gender.) It must be supplied by the addition of a personal pronoun (e.g., "she studied"). However, in Hebrew, most verbs have person, gender, and number. These verbal characteristics are indicated by certain patterns of inflection. For example, the verb *kātab* means "he wrote" and the verb *kātbâ* means "she wrote." The different ending indicates person, gender, and number.

Even though most Hebrew verbs are capable of indicating person, gender, and number by themselves, verbs may also occur with independent personal pronouns. For example, *kātabtî* and *ʾᵃnî kātabtî* are both translated "I wrote." Because Hebrew verbs by themselves indicate person, gender, and number, the addition of an independent personal pronoun such as *ʾᵃnî* typically expresses some type of emphasis.

Here's the point. If you are using a tool such as a software program like Accordance to look at a Hebrew word, you will quickly notice that when you move the cursor over what appears to be a single word, the software is telling you the one form is actually multiple words. In fact, a single cluster of Hebrew letters, something that looks like a single word to most of us, may in fact represent an entire clause consisting of multiple lexical items or words. For example, the single Hebrew construction *wayyeʾᵉhābehā* (e.g., Gen. 24:67) actually consists of three different lexical items. The initial letter (*w*) is the Hebrew conjunction translated "and." The last letter (*h*) is a third person, feminine singular, suffix translated "her." The middle section of this Hebrew construction (*yʾhb*) contains a verb that we can translate as "he loved." When we put it all together, this single Hebrew construction represents an entire English clause translated "and he loved her." This example represents a common feature of the Hebrew language. That is, Hebrew nouns and verbs can take a number of prefixes (such as conjunctions, prepositions, or the definite article) and/or suffixes (such as pronominal suffixes with objective or possessive translation values) that have their own distinct lexical values.

Doing Hebrew Word Studies

John Kohlenberger has written an excellent interlinear, *The Interlinear NIV Hebrew-English Old Testament* (Zondervan, 1979). This can help you find the Hebrew word behind the English, but because of the issues I have been raising, this may not be the best choice for you.

You can use an exhaustive concordance that lists the number of the Hebrew word at the end of the entry, as we learned in Greek. Some of the software programs also give you access to the Hebrew behind the English.

If you want to do serious word study, we are pleased to have the five-volume *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis,* edited by Willem A. VanGemeren (Zondervan, 1997). VanGemeren organized the Hebrew words based on their GK number, so once you have the number it is easy to find the word. This is as advanced as you will need, and it is a trustworthy resource. You can also use Kohlenberger's *The English-Hebrew Concordance to the Old Testament* (Zondervan, 1998) that, like its Greek counterpart, will list in English every verse that uses a specific Hebrew word, in order to discover the word's semantic range. *The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament,* edited by R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Moody, 1980), is not as detailed but may be helpful.

Verbal Stems

The following is a little more advanced, but it does explain some of the abbreviations in the Hebrew-English dictionary in this book such as "P" and "N." In the Hebrew verbal system, there are seven major stems: the Qal, Niphal, Piel, Pual, Hiphil, Hophal, and Hithpael. The Qal stem is the basic or simple verbal stem. From the Qal stem all other verbal stems are formed. Verbal stems tell us two things about the action or meaning of a verb: the type of verbal action and the voice of verbal action.

In Hebrew, there are three basic categories of verbal action: *simple* action (e.g., to break), *intensive* action (e.g., to smash into pieces), and *causative* action (e.g., to cause to break). There are also three basic categories of verbal voice: *active, passive,* and *reflexive.* With the reflexive voice, the subject of the verb is both doing and receiving the action of the verb. In the example "David dressed himself," David is both performing and receiving the verbal action. Understanding the basic significance of a verbal stem is necessary if you are going to follow the discussion in a commentary or even some word studies.

1. Qal. The Qal is the simple or basic verbal stem. Qal verbs are active in voice, though a few passive forms do exist. The Qal stem also exhibits the simple or unnuanced type of action. For example, "he heard."

2. Niphal. The Niphal stem is used to express simple action with either a passive or reflexive voice. In other words, whatever a verb means in the Qal stem, it becomes passive or reflexive in the Niphal stem. An example of a translated Niphal verb is "he was heard" (passive) or "he heard himself" (reflexive).

3. Piel. The Piel stem is sometimes used to express an intensive type of action with an active voice. In other words, the simple action of the Qal stem will take on some type of intensive nuance in the Piel stem. For example, a verb meaning "he broke" in the Qal stem can mean "he smashed into pieces" in the Piel stem.

4. Pual. The Pual is the passive form of the Piel. The Pual stem, therefore, is used to express an intensive type of action with a passive voice. For example, the Piel verb meaning "he smashed into pieces" would be translated in the Pual stem as "he (it) was smashed into pieces."

5. Hiphil. The Hiphil stem is used to express causative action with an active voice. For example, a Qal verb meaning "he was king" or "he reigned" would be translated "he caused to reign" or "he made (someone) king" in the Hiphil stem.

6. Hophal. The Hophal is the passive form of the Hiphil. The Hophal stem, therefore, is used to express causative action with a passive voice. For example, the Hiphil verb translated "he made (someone) king" would be translated "he was made king" in the Hophal stem.

7. Hithpael. The Hithpael stem is used to express an intensive type of action with a reflexive (or sometimes passive) voice. For example, a Qal verb meaning "he hid" would be translated "he hid himself" in the Hithpael stem.

	simple	*intensive*	*causative*
active	Qal	Piel	Hiphil
passive	Niphal	Pual	Hophal
reflexive	Niphal	Hithpael	

Verbal stems and verbal meaning. Many verbs in Hebrew are "regular." That is to say, their meanings follow the pattern summarized above when they appear in the different stems. For example, a Hebrew verb in the Qal meaning "to break" will mean "to

smash into pieces" in the Piel stem. In this and many other instances, the relationship between the meanings of a verb in different stems is apparent in light of the discussion above.

However, the meaning of a verb in the Qal may be significantly different when that same verb appears in another stem. For example, the verb *bārak* means "to kneel" in the Qal, but in the Piel stem it means "to bless." Always consult a dictionary to be certain of a verb's meaning in a given stem.