

The presently-much-heard phrase "competence in ministry" depends, for the meaning of its first word, on the meaning of its second word, whose meaning is a dialog between ideas and feelings, which depend more on images and experiences than on ideas. This thinksheet, accordingly, is not about ideas of ministry, but about the image/feeling semantic dimension. A further reduction of field is that instead of dealing with all biblical words pertinent to this dimension of ministry-meaning, this thinksheet deals only with the least prominent of the three important NT roots for ministry (diacon., then doul., then--the root in this thinksheet--hypeeret.): the second is usu. connected with the other Eng. term for this meaning-area, "ser-vice/servant," and the first governs both Eng.-language terms in tr. from the Greek Bible, with the dominant meaning "wait on/waiter," but etym. uncertain (from "dust" and therefore a domestic servant?). The third, studied below, comes into Eng. as "minister" rather than "servant."

1. OT images of "ministry" are all forms of serving; wood-splitter; soil-tiller; judge-pleader-decider-striver-contender; hand [which Eng. also uses as a synecdoche] --a total of 6 Heb. roots gen. Englished into "ministry." Heb. roots Englished into "servant/service" add these images: help, side, [again] hand; to stand before [and so watch for signals from and/or represent], to work by, to do a deed; to be a house-son [i.e., born to domestics in a particular patriarchy]; hireling....LXX rendering of all this into Greek about covers the lexicon of the sememe; "heavy" is pais (child, boy, servant), as tr. for ebhedh, the word in Isaiah's "servant" poems and therefore "heavy" with Jesus and NT).

2. NT images of "ministry"--i.e., Greek terms that tend to get Englished by the stem "ministr."--are ship's crewman (lit., "under-rower," on which cp. in the same field the NT gift of captainship = pilotry = management [gyberneesia, 1Cor.12.28]; and for a current political use of the image, the election slogan of France's president: "Giscard a la barre!" [G. at the helm!]); servant; assistant; laborer; minister; ministrant; choirleader; worker; supplier; connector [lit., "hold alongside"]; worker as a priest; worshipleader; giver; public worker--a total of 9 stems. "Slave" is not one of these "ministry" images, but it is of course a servant image--as are domestic [i.e., household servant, on the root from which Eng. gets "ecumenical"]; attendant [on the root from which Eng. gets "therapy"]; hireling [lit., "pay-worker"]. "Enslaved [in contrast to free or manumitted] servant" is doul., which is extensive.... Interesting note: The only one of our biblical words to be transliterated into Eng. is the only one freely used to render as both "minister" and "servant," viz. "deacon." ...Further note: In NT the notion of "caring" is related to "ministry" and "service." Its usu. root is mel; with meta- it means being concerned about one's own being bad news [and therefore means "repentance"]; with epi- it means concern for others, and in Eng. is pejorative in "caretaker" [which Jn.XXIII and Donald Coggan, incumbent Abp. of Canterbury, were called, the latter in countering quoting the Pastorals relative use: "Take care of the Church of God."]. ...Further note: While these terms in general denote an inferior role/status, with menile-servile duties, who/what is being served relativizes the social level: the second assistant parlormaid in Victorian England, or the servant of God anytime-anywhere.

3. The first of the image-terms in #2 (above) is hypeeret., which occurs in NT thus: as vb., only Ac. [3 times, though 5 times in LXX Apocrypha]; as personal noun [the abstract n. not occurring], twice in Mt.-L., 9 times in Jn., 4 times in Ac., and once in Paul [+ 4 times in Apocrypha]. The personal n., hypeeretees, lit., "under-rower," is a development from the non-NT personal n. eretees, "rower," usu. pl. [and some-times for tipplers!], from which the abstract n. hypeeresia, "body of rowers," thus "ship's crew" [thus, generalized, "team"]--not in NT, but here in AF: 1Cl.17.5 and Dg.2.2. Vb. hypeereteoo: go to sea, render service, serve, be helpful, be subordinate, do [military] service: Ac.13.36, 20.34, 24.23....Add. on hypeeretees: "servitor" of the Mithras cult or (L.12) "of the Word" (Vulg. "ministri sermonis") [objective genitive] [cp. in AF, 1Tr.23: "...of the Church of God"]; the app. as X's servants: Ac.26.16, 1Cor.4.1; Pythag. saying [WEE tr.]: "Honor along with God, as God's servant, whoever works for your good"; a person's "man"; a professional's assistant, or assistant of a board or court or retinue or synagogue; believers generally (1Cor.4.1).*

*4. To complete the NT ref., this under-functionary ("servant," "helper," "assistant") is seen as under the Sanhedrin or other board or court (Mt.5.25, 26.58; M.14.54,65; Jn.7.32,45f, 18.3.12,22, 19.6; Ac.5.22,26 [with doul., Jn. 18.18] cult official, e.g. synagogue attendant (L.4.20); M., of Paul (Ac.13.5); King's retinue (Jn.18.36).

The Bible has no verbal images of ministry / service* not on this thinksheet. (*Latin, adding no images.)