

Different human traditions see, live in, experience the world differently. [I define a religion-culture as a way of seeing, living in, and experiencing reality.] These various ways shine through the earth's languages. Of these, the most important one for Christians as well as Jews is Hebrew....The question I'm addressing in this thinksheet is *What clusters [Gestalten] of human experience can we grasp by examining Hebrew expressions occurring in the Bible over 500 times?* References are to Geo. M. Landes' pamphlet "A Student's Vocabulary of Biblical Hebrew" [Scrib/61], for the use of which one needs to know, of Hebrew, only the alphabet in order to use a Hebrew lexicon or Strong's concordance [lexicon after concordance].

ROOTS OCCURRING OVER 500 TIMES AS VERBS [pp.3f]

These are--with the exceptions of "be, happen" [item 5] and "know" [7]--all BODY-ACTION words. Where, in addition to the physical meaning, a metaphorical meaning is common, I've italicized the metaphorical meaning both in this and in the middle list.

PARTS of the body:

- (ear) "hear, *obey*" [27]
- (eye) "see" [23]
- (mouth) "eat" [1], "speak" [2, 4, 20, 22 also *meet*]
- (hand) [All of these words--11, 13, 14, 16, 19, 24, 25, 26--and even 8--are better viewed as of the whole body, though the hand dominates.]

The WHOLE body:

- "sit" [10] / "stand" [18] / "rise" [21]
- "take" [11] / "give" [15]
- "put, place, set" [24]; "lift up, bear, carry" [14]; "bear, bring forth" [8]
- "stretch out, let go, *send*" [26]
- "do, make" [19]; "hit, smite" [13]
- "turn, return" [25]; "pass over, *transgress*" [16]
- "die" [12]

ROOTS OCCURRING OVER 500 TIMES AS OTHER THAN VERBS [pp.25f]

Again, BODY-ACTION dominates. But first let's look at the rest: no pattern here, so here's the frequency order: "be red, ruddy" [1], "perfect (the beauty of)" [3], "produce abundantly" [9], "be occupied, worried by" [13], "third" (= "divide into three parts, do or be at the third day, do for the third time) [18].

PARTS of the body:

heart [4], lungs [5], eyes [7], hand (on which see in the section "Roots...as Verbs")

The WHOLE body:

- "walk straight, lead on, *reprove*" [2]; "stride" [6]
- "come up to, *ally oneself with, be a match for*" [8]
- "take" (15th of; be in battle array [11]) / "give" (1/10th of, tithe) [15]
- "seize at the heel, *beguile*" [14]
- "be sickly, decrease" [10]

WORDS OCCURRING OVER 500 TIMES WITHOUT ROOTS USED IN THE BIBLE [p.35]

Fascinating clusters here!....BODY: "hand" [21], "voice, sound" [30], "head" [31]....BASAL REALITIES: "God" [9], "man" [6], "I" [11] / "you" [13], "name" [32]....NATURE: "earth" [12], "water" [28], "mountain" [19], "day" [22]....NUMBERS: "one" (strong, as in the Shema) [4]....RELATIONS: "father" [1], "brother" [3], "lord, master, the Lord" [2]....QUESTIONS (all on the root *ma* ["mama"??]) [27, a-c]: "what?" "how?" "wherewith?" "how much?" "how many?" "how long?" "why?"....NEGATION: (weak) [8], (strong) [25], "non-existence" [5]