

Hebrew Parallelism also known as Synonyms

The Bible establishes synonyms which is important to understand when searching the meaning of a symbol. I have recently learned that these Biblical synonyms are called Hebrew Parallelism and it is important to understand that the Lord establishes this truth and not man.

Here are some examples where the Lord through His word is showing us synonyms for the same word.

Psa 33:6 By the **word** of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the **breath** of his mouth.

Word = Breath or is a synonym for

Psa 33:7 He gathereth the **waters** of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the **depth** in storehouses.

Waters = depth or is a synonym for see also in Gen. 1 water and deep in the beginning

Psa 33:8 Let all the **earth** **fear** the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the **world** stand in **awe** of him.

Earth = World Fear = Awe

Psa 33:9 For he **spake**, and it was *done*; he **commanded**, and it stood fast.

Spake = commanded

Deu 32:2 My **doctrine** shall drop as the **rain**, my **speech** shall distil as the **dew**, as the **small rain** upon the **tender herb**, and as the **showers** upon the **grass**:

Rain = Showers Dew = Small Rain Doctrine = Speech Herb = Grass

Joh 10:1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

Thief = Robber

Isa 8:16 Bind up the **testimony**, seal the **law** among my disciples.

Testimony = Law

Lev 11:23 But all *other* flying creeping things, which have four feet, *shall be* an **abomination** unto you.

Lev 11:24 And for these ye shall be **unclean**: whosoever toucheth the carcase of them shall be unclean until the even.

Abomination = Unclean

Some places in the Bible it will mention a word but when talking about the same instance it will add to that word thus giving it other meanings for the same word or synonyms.

Act 11:9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou **common**.

Act 10:28 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man **common** or **unclean**.

Common = unclean

Exo 10:13 And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all *that* night; *and* when it was morning, the east wind brought the **locusts**.

Psa 78:46 He gave also their increase unto the **caterpillar**, and their labour unto the **locust**.

Psa 105:34 He spake, and the **locusts** came, and **caterpillars**, and that without number,

Locust = Caterpillar

In Exodus we are told only of the “locusts” but Psalms enlarges and uses the word caterpillar. Thus using the same parallelism we have seen previous in this study specifically seen in Acts 10.

When understanding the workings of the Lord in this manner it helps to establish that when the Lord is speaking of the Palmerworm, locust, cankerworm, and caterpillar in Joel 1:4 the Lord is establishing through His word that these are the same thing they are synonyms for the same thing.

Psa 105:34 He spake, and the **locusts** came, and **caterpillars**, and that without number,

Psa 105:35 And did eat up all the **herbs in their land**, and devoured the **fruit of their ground**.

Locust = Caterpillars

Herbs of Land = Fruit of Ground

Exo 10:13 And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all *that* night; *and* when it was morning, the east wind brought the **locusts**.

Exo 10:14 And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous *were they*; before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such.

Exo 10:15 For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they **did eat every herb of the land**, and **all the fruit of the trees** which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt.

Exodus 10 never makes mention of Caterpillars, why? Does the Bible contradict itself, which one ate the fruit of the ground and the herbs of the land? How could it have been the caterpillar when Exodus said that it was the Locust? Either it is a contradiction or the Lord is trying to tell you it is the same entity by using different symbols. Exodus does not

make mention because they are the same entity while Psalms enlarges on the information and symbols. Both devoured the herb of the land and the fruit of the ground. The Bible uses this same sort of parallelism in other places.

[Rom 9:15](#) For he saith to Moses, I will have **mercy** on whom I will have **mercy**, and I will have **compassion** on whom I will have **compassion**.

[Exo 33:19](#) And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be **gracious** to whom I will be **gracious**, and will shew **mercy** on whom I will shew **mercy**

Romans and Exodus are talking about the same event but does the Bible contradict itself? No. In Exodus God uses the word gracious/mercy but in Romans He uses the word mercy/compassion. All are synonyms for the character of Christ. Further proof text will confirm it as well.

[Nah 3:15](#) There shall the **fire** devour thee; the **sword** shall cut thee off, it shall eat thee up like the cankerworm: make thyself many as the **cankerworm**, make thyself many as the **locusts**.

Fire = Sword Cankerworm = Locusts

After all it is God's angels that have a flaming sword (Gen. 3:24). A person would read the following texts (Rev. 11:5, Heb. 12:29, Ps 148:8, Jer. 20:9, Jer. 23:29, Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 1:16, 2:16, 19:15,21) to show that the word of God is referred to as fire and a sword.

[Nah 3:17](#) Thy **crowned** *are* as the **locusts**, and thy **captains** as the great **grasshoppers**, which camp in the hedges in the cold day, *but* when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their place is not known where they *are*.

Crowned = Captains Locusts = Grasshoppers

These texts above are by no means exhaustive of the topic of locusts, cankerworm, palmerworm, and caterpillar but it is merely to reveal light for further study. The Lord establishes synonyms for he works off them to hide his truth but:

[Deu 29:29](#) The secret *things belong* unto the LORD our God: but those *things which are* revealed *belong* unto us and to our children for ever, that *we* may do all the words of this law

So when looking at a word like "shaft" and it does not have many proof text verses to grasp the meaning of the word it is appropriate to look at the Hebrew and find out what the synonyms are for that word for when the Bible was translated the translators picked one of those synonyms to put into the text.

[Isa 49:2](#) And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished **shaft**; in his quiver hath he hid me;

Shaft is only found 4 times in the entire Bible.

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From [H2686](#); properly a *piercer*, that is, an *arrow*; by implication a *wound*; figuratively (of God) thunder *bolt*; (by interchange for [H6086](#)) the *shaft* of a spear: - + archer, **arrow, dart, shaft, staff, wound.**

If you choose a synonym for the text, such as arrow, then the synonym for the symbol must make sense in the text and then you must proof text the synonym (arrow) and if the Bible meaning or definition of the synonym that was found by proof text makes sense and does not contradict the meaning of the text in question Is. 49:2 then you have found another synonym for the text.