מלט

Introduction

Grammatical Type: vb niph.
Occurrences: Total 63x OT, 3x Sir, 6?x Qum, 0x inscr.

Sir (numbering of Beentjes 1997): 11.9 (MS B, absent from MS A), 16.13 (A), 33.1 (B [reconstructed], E, F).

Qum: CD 7.14; 19.10; 4Q370 1.6; 4QpIs 2–6 ii 9 (=4Q161; יִמָּלֵט); 4Q223-224 2 iv 22 (=Jubilees 38.5);

Text doubtful:
A. Most commentators have argued that at 2Kg 10.24 the verb should be read as a piel not as a niph (e.g. Burney 1903:305).
B. The reading at Sir 11.9 MS B (numbering of Beentjes 1997; some editions give it as 11.10) of מַלְטָנו and taken to be a niphal rather than a piel (Skehan & Di Lella 1987:237).

B.1 At Am 2.15b the passive of δισῴζω in the LXX implies the reading of the niphal מַלְטָנָה (cf. Vg, Tg, Pesh), but this may be a characteristic alteration by the Versions to assist the sense (cf. B.2). The piel, if retained, would have to be interpreted as intransitive, or to share the same object מַלְטָנָה with the verb in the next line.
B.2 Although at Ps 33.17 the passive of σῴζω in the LXX implies the reading of a niphal מַלְטָנָה (cf. Tg) rather than the piel, the verb may not require revocalisation. There may be an implied indefinite object, and the Peshitta does include an object in its translation (see piel Versions, Peshitta).

Qere/Ketiv: none.

1. Root and Comparative Material
A. The root mlṭ only appears in verbal forms in the Heb of the OT, lacking any nominal forms. In the OT it is found in the niph (63x), piel (28x), hiph (2x) and hitpael (2x), whilst in Sir it only occurs in the niph (3x) and piel (1x). In Qum it is found in the niph (6x?) piel (6x?) and hiph (1x?). In RH מַלְטָנָה continues to have the meaning ‘to rescue’ in the piel (e.g. b.Taan 23a), and ‘to be saved, escape’ in the niphal (EstherR intro.) and hiph (Yalqut to Dt 854) (Jastrow:789). There does not appear to be a hiphil form in RH.
A.2 Gesenius (1835:1105) seeks to equate the basic meaning of מַלְטָנָה “laevis, glaber fuit”, from which he believed the meaning “evasit, elapsus est” developed, with that of מַלְטָנָה, to which he refers the reader. It is generally agreed (although see B.1) that the roots of מַלְטָנָה and מַלְטָנָה are related (e.g. KB:529, see also 762a; Fohrer 1964:972; Jenni 1968:106-07, 122; Sawyer 1972:108; Hasel 1976:735; id. 1989:593; Klein 1987:509; Hubbard 1997a:950). Jenni (1968:106-07, 122) further notes that in addition to the more frequent meanings of ‘to rescue’, the roots share the meaning of ‘to bear
offspring’ (piel at Jb 21.10, piel at Is 34.15, and hiph at Is 66.7). Hubbard (1997b:621) observes that, while מְלַט has no nominal forms, words of the root פָלַט exist predominantly in nominal forms. Petermann (1873:23) also records Sam niph immalat. Sawyer (1972:98) detects a “complementarity” between the roots פָלַט and מְלַט (see Lexical/Semantic Field(s) A.2).

A.3 Hasel (1989:592) notes that מְלַט is attested only in South Semitic (see A.5), and this lack of comparative material for מְלַט implies that it is derived from פָלַט (Hasel 1989:593; Hubbard 1997:950).

A.4 In Targumic Aramaic there appears an itpeal of מְלַט at Pr 19.5, but this is probably a loan-word from Heb. Jastrow (789) records a manuscript variant that reads נתפליט, which need not indicate an original פָלַט that became corrupted under the influence of מְלַט in the Hebrew text, but may be a correction by a scribe to the usual Aramaic lexeme.

A.5 The only other cognates to the Heb are in the Ethiopic languages. In Geez the verb mlṭ means ‘abkratzen, abstreifen’ (Dillmann:154), and the Harari (ā)malṭā (Leslau 1963:107–108), Tigre malṭā (Leslau 1958:30) and Amharic እላላለታ (1969:97) all denote ‘to escape’. Leslau does also see a connection with the verbs Harari malaṭa ‘to strip off’ (1963:107) and Amharic mallāta ‘to become bald’ (1969:97). This would be interesting if he is correct in this, not only for the suggestions made by some regarding the meaning of מְלַט hitp at Jb 19.20 (see מְלַט hithp Root and Comparative Material B.1), but also in view of the possible meaning for the verb in the same semantic field.

B.1 Ruprecht (1979:421) expresses uncertainty whether מְלַט developed from פָלַט, or whether it is in fact cognate with Arb mlṣ. Williams proposes that the phonetic difference of the first consonant suggests that the relationship between the two roots can probably better be described in terms of mutual “infection” at some stage rather than in terms of being cognate (see the entry on פָלַט Qal, Root and Comparative Material, A.10). However, given the predominance of מְלַט in forms where פָלַט is rare, one has probably derived from the other, and the phonetic differences might be due to the addition of different consonants and not to a shift between them.

B.2 Jastrow (789) compares מְלַט to balātu which is itself cognate with Akk balātu ‘to recover, live’. balātu is often thought to be cognate with פָלַט, although it has been suggested that the Akk is an East Semitic innovation from West Semitic rather than the other way round (Hasel 1989:592; Hubbard 1997b:621). It is not clear, however, in the case of מְלַט, how a first radical ‘m’ became a ‘b’ or vice versa. It is easier to see in the case of פָלַט and balātu.

B.3 The Arb and Eth roots are sometimes suggested (e.g. Zorell:441) as the root of Heb מְלַט. The derivation of מְלַט from Heb פָלַט seems more likely, and the Eth would be secondary forms. Although Brockelmann (1928:391a) attests Arb malīta ‘glaber fuit’ (‘was bald’), this seems not to be cognate. See פָלַט hithpael Versions B.1.

B.4 The Palmy mlṭ ‘fleece’ (CIS ii 3913 ii 11, 67) probably has no relation to the Heb vb (Hubbard 1997:950; cf. Hasel 1989:592). Perhaps it is cognate with the Arb verb (see B.3).

B.5 There is one proper noun in Hebrew that may be cognate with the Heb verb מְלַט. At Neh 3.7 the name מְלַטיה (LXX: μαλτιας) may be a compound of the divine name and the verb מְלַט (HAL:558). HAL (558) also speculates whether מְלַטיה is cognate with μαλτία ‘Malta’ and denotes ‘Zufluchtsort’. Further literature is cited by HAL.

2. Formal Characteristics
A.1 On the niphal at Jr 48.19 see BL:511y.

B.1 The uncertainty over the precise derivation of מֶלֶס produces uncertainties over its formal characteristics. It is not clear how the mem in the first radical came about.

3. Syntagmatics

A.1 The subject of מֶלֶס niph is primarily either a human or an animal. It may be ‘a man’ (Jdg 3.29; 1Sm 30.17 [תֶּם]; 1Kg 18.40; 2Kg 10.24), בָּרַח ‘enemy’ (1Sm 19.17), נֶפֶ לְ ‘one son’ (1Sm 22.20), מֵהֶם ‘they’ (2Kg 19.37; Is 37.38), נֶפֶ לְ ‘we’ (Is 20.6), מֵהֶם ‘the captives of the righteous [or ‘enemy’ ‘tyrant’ from v. 25]’ (Is 49.24), נֶפֶ לְ ‘the prey of the tyrant’ (Is 49.25), בָּרַח ‘city’ (Jr 46.6), מֵהֶם ‘city’ (Jr 48.8), מֵהֶם ‘the doer’ (Ezk 17.15), מְמַעְלֶה ‘all those that call on the name of the Lord’ (Jl 3.5), נֶפֶ לְ ‘fugitive’ (Am 9.1), מְמַעְלֶה ‘evil doers’ (Ml 3.15), מֵהֶם ‘seed of the righteous’ (Pr 11.21), מְמַעְלֶה ‘breather of lies’ (Pr 19.5), מֵהֶם ‘the one who pleases God’ (Qoh 7.26), מְמַעְלֶה ‘people’ (Dn 12.1), מְמַעְלֶה ‘the army of the King of Aram’ (2Ch 16.7), מְמַעְלֶה ‘criminal’ (Sir 16.13), מְמַעְלֶה ‘the one who fears the Lord’ (Sir 33.1) and מְמַעְלֶה ‘breather of lies’ (4Q370 1 i 6). The subject may also be denoted by מְמַעְלֶה ‘every one’ (4Q223-224 2 iv 22: restored), מְמַעְלֶה ‘you’ (Jr 34.3; 38.18, 23), מְמַעְלֶה ‘we’ and מְמַעְלֶה ‘our life’ (Ps 124.7), מְמַעְלֶה ‘I alone’ (Jb 1.15, 16, 17, 19), מְמַעְלֶה ‘he’ denoting מְמַעְלֶה ‘the walker in wisdom’ (Pr 28.26), מְמַעְלֶה ‘these’ denoting Edom, Moab and most of the Ammonites (Dn 11.41).

The subject of מֶלֶס niph may also be proper nouns מֶלֶס ‘Ehud’ (Jdg 3.26), מֶלֶס ‘David’ (1Sm 19.10, 18; 22.1; 23.13), מֶלֶס ‘Rechab’ and his brother Baana (2Sm 4.6), מֶלֶס ‘Ben Hadad’ (1Kg 20.20), מֶלֶס ‘Zedekiah’ (Jr 32.4), מֶלֶס ‘Ishmael’ (Jr 41.15).

A.2 מֶלֶס niph may be followed by the preposition מֵלֶס ‘for the sake of’ + noun מֶלֶס ‘soul, life’ (Gn 19.17).

A.3 מֶלֶס niph may be followed by nouns with he locale denoting towards something: מֶלֶס ‘to the hill’ (Gn 19.17, 19), מֶלֶס ‘to Seir’ (Jdg 3.26). It may also be followed or preceded by place names without he locale: מֶלֶס (2Kg 19.37; Is 37.38), מֶלֶס ‘Zion’ (Zc 2.11).

Motion towards something may also be expressed after מֶלֶס niph by the adverb מֶלֶס ‘to there’ (Gn 19.20, 22), or the preposition מֶלֶס ‘to’ (1Sm 22.1; 27.1; CD 7.14).

A.4 Motion away from something may be expressed after מֶלֶס niph by מֶלֶס ‘from’ (4Q223-224 2 iv 22) + the nouns מֶלֶס ‘Keilah’ (1Sm 23.13), מֶלֶס ‘hand’ (1Sm 27.1; Jr 34.3; 38.18, 23; Dn 11.41; 2Ch 16.7), מֶלֶס ‘the camp of Israel’ (2Sm 1.3), מֶלֶס ‘sword’ (1Kg 19.19[2x]), מֶלֶס ‘the men’ (2Kg 10.24), מֶלֶס ‘the hand of the Chaldeans’ (Jr 32.4), מֶלֶס ‘before Jochanan’ (Jr 41.15), מֶלֶס ‘snare’ (Ps 124.7), and מֶלֶס ‘from’ + 3p s fem suffix (Qoh 7.26).

A.5 מֶלֶס niph follows the verbs מֶלֶס + לֶס ‘to be able’ (Gn 19.19) and מֶלֶס ‘to hurry’ (Gn 19.22).

Mלֶס niph, joined by waw, comes after the verbs מֶלֶס ‘to flee’ (1Sm 19.10; 30.17), מֶלֶס ‘to flee’ (1Sm 19.12, 18; 22.20), מֶלֶס ‘to go’ (1Sm 22.1) and מֶלֶס ‘return, repeat’ (Sir 33.1).

A.6 On one occasion the means of escape (מֶלֶס niph) is specified as מֶלֶס ‘upon a horse’ (1Kg 20.20). מֶלֶס niph is also followed by מֶלֶס ‘eight men’ to denote those accompanying the subject of the verb (Jr 41.15).

A.7 The reason for the action expressed by מֶלֶס niph is indicated by מֶלֶס ‘cleanliness of your hands’ (Jb 22.30).
4. Versions
   a. LXX: ἀνασώζω (Jr 46[26].6; Zc 2.11);
      [[[τισαθαίνo (?1Sm 20.29[R])]]]
      διαλανθάνω (2Sm 4.6);
      διασώζω (Gn 19.19; Jdg 3.26 [2x], 29; 1Sm 19.10[B], 17, 18; 20.29; 22.1 [+ καὶ ἐρχόμαι], 20; 23.13; 2Sm 1.3; 2Kg 10.24; Is 37.38; Ezek 17.15; Am 9.1; Jb 22.30; Dn 11.41 [Theod]);
      διαφέγω (Pr 19.5);
      ἐκσπάω (1Sm 19.10[A]);
      ἐκφεύγω (Sir 11.9[10]?; 16.13,);
      ἐξαιρέω (Qoh 7.26; Sir 36.1);
      λαμβάνω μισθὸν πιστόν (Pr 11.21);
      ῥύομαι (Ps 124[123].7);
      σῴζω (Gn 19.17a? [O, PsJ, Sam A];)
      ὑψόομαι (Dn 12.1 [some Theod MSS?!]);]

Minor Greek Versions [MRN]:

   b. Peshitta: ʿrq (1Sm 23.13; Is 37.38; 2Ch 16.7);
      ἰγαπόται (1Sm 19.10; 27.1; 2Sm 1.3; 4.6; Jr 41.15; Am 9.1; Zc 2.11; Qoh 7.26; Dn 12.1);
      ethpaal ψψ (1Sm 19.12; Is 20.6; 49.25; Jr 48.8; Ezek 17.15 [1x for 2x], 18; Jl 3.5; Mi 3.15; Ps 22.6; 124.7b; Pr 11.21; 19.15; 28.26; Dn 11.41);
      ethpaal ψψ (Gn 19.17a? [+ direct object npSk]; Sir 16.13,);
      plτ (Gn 19.17b, 19, 20, 22; Jdg 3.26b, 29; 1Sm 19.17, 18; 22.1, 20; 27.1; 30.17; 1Kg 18.40?; 19.17 [2x]?, 20.20; 2Kg 10.24; 19.37; Jr 32.4; 34.3; 38.18, 23; 46.6; 48.19; Ps 124.7a; Jb 1.15, 16, 17, 19; 22.30; Est 4.13; Sir 36.1)
      Omitted: Jdg 3.26a?; 1Sm 20.29; 27.1; Sir 11.9[10]

   c. Targum: חָוַס (Gn 19.17a [O, PsJ, Sam A]);
      בלש (Pr 19.5);
      בלש (Gn 19.19 [O]);
      בלש istaphal (Gn 19.20 [O], 22; Jdg 3.26 [1x for 2x], 29);
      בלש (Pr 11.21);
      בלש (Gn 19.17a [Neo], 17b [O etc?]; 1Sm 19.10, 20.6, 17, 18; 20.29; 22.1, 20; 23.13; 27.1 [3x]; 30.17; 2Sm 1.3; 4.6; 1Kg 18.40; 19.17 [2x]; 20.20; 2Kg 10.24; 19.37; Is 20.6; 37.38; 49.25; Jr 32.4; 34.3; 38.18, 23; 41.15; 46.6; 48.8, 19; Ezek 17.15, 18; Jl 3.5; Am 9.1; Zc 2.11; Mi 3.15; Ps 22.6; 124.7 [2x]; Jb 1.15, 16, 17, 19; 22.30; Qoh 7.26; 2Ch 16.7);
      Pr 28.26?
      Expansive Text: Tg Sheni Est 4.13.

   d. Vulgate: consequor salutem (Ezk 17.15);
effugio (Jdg 3.26; Is 20.6; Jr 32.4; 34.3; 38.18, 23; Ezk 17.15, 18; Jb 1.16, 19; Pr 19.5; Qoh 7.26[27]; Sir 11.9[10]; 16.13[14]);
eripio (Ps 124[123].7);
evado (Jdg 3.29; 1Sm 22.20; 30.17; Jr 48.19; Jb 1.15; 2Ch 16.7);
fugio (1Sm 19.17; 22.1; 23.13; 27.1 [2x]; 2Sm 1.3; 4.6; 1Kg 18.40; 19.17 [2x]; 20.20; 2Kg 10.24; 19.37; Is 37.38; Jr 41.15; Zc 2.11[7]; Jb 1.17);
libero (Ps 124[123].7; Est 4.13; Sir 36[33].1);
salvo (Gn 19.17, 19, 20, 22; 1Sm 19.10, 12, 18; 27.1; Is 49.25; Jr 46.6; 48.8; Jl 3[2].5[32]; Am 9.1; Ps 22[21].6; Pr 11.21; 28.26; Dn 11.41; 12.1);
salvus factus sum (Ml 3.15);
salvum esse posse (Is 49.24);
vado (1Sm 20.29).

A.1 There does not appear to be any semantic difference intended in many of the choices of the Versions, alternative translation equivalents being chosen rather for the sake of variatio. One may note, for example, in the same verse the rendering of מלח by both διασῴζω and σῴζω (Ezk 17.15), or of מלח by σῴζω and then by ἄνασお互い by מלח (Jl 3.5), or of מלח by היפ by WEIGHT by יסificio (Am 9.1). This happens not only with compound forms, but at Jb 22.30 מלח is translated by διασお互い and מלח piel by ρύομαι, although there may here be an attempt to distinguish between the different verbal forms. In the case of the Vulgate, it alternates its rendering of the repeated phrase in Job chapter 1 containing מלח. מלח is first translated by evado (Jb 1.15), then effugio (Jb 1.16), next fugio (Jb 1.17), and finally again effugio (Jb 1.19).

A.2 It is surprising how frequently מלח is translated by fugio and effugio ‘to flee’ in the Vg. If there is a distinction to be drawn between verbs denoting ‘to flee’ and מלח denoting ‘to reach safety’ (see Exegesis A.2), it was not observed by the Vulgate.

A.3 The LXX to Pr 11.21 preserves the forensic context of the Hebrew (see Exegesis A.4) with its paraphrastic translation of the niph by λαμβάνω μισθὸν πιστόν ‘to receive a sure reward’. Does this also imply an eschatological flavour that is not explicit in the MT? The addition of clarifying adjectives (in this case πιστός) is a feature of the LXX translation of Proverbs (see Cook 1997a:106; 1997b:414; cf. McKane 1970:45–47).

A.4 Although the reading ἐκσπάω ‘to draw out’ is only found in one Codex (Alexandrinus) of 1Sm 19.10, it is a verb used in the LXX to translate the niph, hiph and hoph of מלח. A verb such as ρύομαι may be used of physical ‘plucking out’ but is also found in non-biblical Greek with the sense of ‘to save’, whereas ἐκσπάω only seems to be used of a physical action. In 1 Sm 19.10 it is used with reference to מלח ‘soul, life’, for which one can better understand a physical action than had the context been the saving of a person.

A.5 The rendering of מלח niphal at Gn 19.17 by חווש ‘to have consideration for’ in TgO and PsJ appears to be part of an exegetical tradition that criticizes Lot for taking more consideration for property than for people’s lives (Grossfeld 1988:81, n. 7). It is an interpretation that can also be found in Rashi and the Talmud (b.Hul 91a on Gn 32.24).

B.1 Some LXX manuscript traditions contain what appear to be either inner-Greek corruptions or alternative translations, and should not be taken as semantic evidence. διαφήμομαι (cf. Vg[OL] vadam; also the better attested Gk variant ἄπελευόμενοι) at 1Sm 20.29 (R) is probably an alternative reading rather than a
corruption of διασωθήσομαι, which is preserved in some traditions. Likewise, υψωθήσεται at Dn 12.1 seems to be an interpretative rendering for מָלַט niphal, which is translated by σωθήσεται. The verb υψόω is a popular lexeme in the LXX of Daniel.

5. Lexical/Semantic Field(s)
   A.1 [See ישׁע hiphil, Lexical/Semantic Field(s)]
   A.2 There appears to be an opposition of usage or “complementarity” between מָלַט and פָּלַט, although it is not entirely exclusive. Sawyer (1972:98) records that מָלַט has no passive, whereas the niphal of מָלַט is its most frequent form. There are no nominal forms of מָלַט, whilst פָּלַט has three. פָּלַט ‘to deliver’ occurs mainly in the Psalms, but in the mere five occurrences of מָלַט in the Psalms it is in three instances in the common syntagm with נֶפֶל ‘life’. The subject of פָּלַט is always God, and this is rarely the case with מָלַט. He also notes that in the prayer context with which he is concerned מָלַט does not occur in set pieces but only in conversational style, but that פָּלַט occurs seven times in the same context.
   A.3 מָלַט niph is found in parallelism with לָּקַח qal pass ‘to take’ (Is 49.24, 25), נָעַשׁ ‘to do’ (Jr 46.6; 48.19; Am 9.1), נָס niph ‘to go unpunished’ (Pr 11.21; 19.5), and בָּרַח (Sir 11.9).

B.1 The existence of מָלַט as a possible byform of פָּלַט has been accounted for by the large number of lexemes in the field of ‘salvation’ (Sawyer 1972:99, cf. 41–42), which is perhaps due to the strong feelings surrounding the field (Sperber 1923:67) as well as the exigencies of Hebrew poetic structure.

6. Exegesis
   A.1 The verb מָלַט niph is most often used in the context of war, denoting escape from one’s enemies. It often, therefore, denotes escape from a life-threatening situation (Hubbard 1997:950), whether it be someone escaping after committing a murder (2Sm 4.6), or escaping from one’s enemies (1Sm 23.13) or escaping divine vengeance as Lot from Sodom and Gomorrah (Gn 19.17, where there may be assonance between the vb מָלַט and the name לוֹט; see Gunkel 1966:212), or Noah from the flood (4Q370 1.6). It may mean either ‘to slip away’ (e.g. 1Sm 20.29) or ‘to escape’ (e.g. Jdg 3.29). In the few instances where מָלַט niph has a passive denotation (Ps 22.6; Pr 11.21; 28.26; Jb 22.30; Dn 12.1) it means ‘to be delivered’. Dn 12.1 reflects a usage in LBH where the deliverance is specifically of future salvation (cf. LXX to Pr 11.21).
   A.2 In Jdg 3.26 Ehud appears to make a successful escape from his enemies, implying that מָלַט niph denotes specifically an escape rather than the flight. This interpretation is supported by syntagmatics (Hasel 1989:596–97; Hubbard 1997:950–51; cf. Lexical and Semantic Field(s) A.2). מָלַט niph appears a number of times with the verbs נָעַשׁ (1Sm 19.10; 30.17) and נָס (1Sm 19.12, 18; 22.20), denoting ‘to flee’, and the more general מָלַט niph ‘to go’ (1Sm 22.1). In every case מָלַט niph comes second in the pair, suggesting it connotes a completion of the act of fleeing or going. This is most explicit in Sir 11.9 (MS B: v. 10 in Gk, Lat and Eng versions), where the reader is told that he will not מָלַט niph if he מָס niph (cf. the preceding ‘futility curse’ in the previous line).
   A.3 In Wisdom literature מָלַט niph is often used in the theodicy of the writers. The verb denotes the escape from the punishment that will befall the wicked (Pr 11.21) or the perjurers (Pr 19.5; in parallelism with נָס niph ‘to be exempt from punishment’). מָלַט niph also denotes the avoidance of the trap of the adulteress (Qoh 7.26).
   A.4 As with certain other lexemes in the semantic field (Sawyer 1972:57–58), מָלַט niph appears to have forensic connotations. Although Sawyer primarily discusses
the influence on the field by semantic interference from forensic terms, מָלֵט niph seems to be a case where a lexeme from the field has a forensic denotation that is also salvific (cf. הצליע). In Pr 11.21 the deliverance of the Lord appears to establish the innocence of the righteous. In Pr 11.21 מָלֵט niph is the antithesis of לְאִיִּנָּקֶה, and therefore, McKane suggests, is indicative of “an escape from an unfavourable legal verdict” (1970:437). McKane also speculates that other salvation expressions in the context (i.e. לְאִיִּנָּקֶה in vv. 4 and 6 and מָלֵט niph in v. 8) may have a forensic nuance (1970:437), the Lord’s rescue of the righteous being envisaged as a forensic intervention. מָלֵט niph in Pr 19.5 is used of escaping perjury, again in parallelism with niph הצליע (cf. McKane 1970:529). Are there contacts in this with oracles of judgement (e.g. Jr 32.4; 34.3; 38.13, 23; Ezk 17.15, 18)?

A.5 The preposition מִן ‘from’ indicates the direction from which a person escapes (e.g. 1Sm 23.13; 27.1). The place to which someone escapes can also be indicated with מָלֵט niph, by the he locale (e.g. Gn 19.17, 19), the preposition לָא (e.g. 1Sm 22.1; 27.1) or simply the name of the place (e.g. 2Kg 19.37; Is 37.38). The niph appears to be the only form of מָלֵט that can be used of motion towards a place as well as away from one, and in this it is not to be distinguished in the niphal at least from פְּלֵט.

B.1 [nil]

7. Conclusion

מָלֵט niph is primarily used of ‘to escape’. It is rarely indicated whether God is presumed to be bringing about the escape, but this may be implied in some Psalms and in Proverbs (see Exegesis A.1, A.3, A.4). Whereas other forms of מָלֵט are only used with מִן, מָלֵט niph is also used with the he locale or לָא, suggesting that the verb connotes movement towards a place of refuge and not just escape from a place. It is possible that the lack of a פְּלֵט niph (except for one uncertain occurrence in LBH at 1QH 11[=3].10) has brought about a compensation in semantics in the form of a מָלֵט niph.

Bibliography


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