עָזַר

(For fuller discussion of the lexical field as a whole see the ‘Overview of SAHD entries for “Deliverance” words’ on this site)

Introduction

Grammatical Type: verb qal, niphal, hiphil.

Occurrences: Total 81x OT, 1x Sir, 19x Qum, 0x inscr. Lipiński (2001:12) lists 80 occurrences.

Qum: 1QH a 10.34; 13.6; 15.23; 1QS 3.24; 1QpHab 5.11; 1QM 1.6; 13.10; 13.15 (frg. reconstr.); 4Q177 4.12, 14; 4Q299 59.4; 4Q379 32.5; 4Q381 15.i.3; 4Q382 17.2; 4Q460 8.6; 4Q470 3.4; 4Q495 2.2; 4Q502 24.2.

Text doubtful:

A.1 In several of the Qumran texts listed above it is uncertain whether the form is a verb or noun: 1QS 3.24; 1QM 13.10; 4Q382 17.2; 4Q495 2.2.

B.1 It is difficult to make sense of the ptp עֹזֵר in Jb 30.13 ‘they have no helper’. GKC sees it as an intrusion from 29.12 and recommends reading עָזַר ‘restrain’ in its place, which is supported by Gerleman (BHS), Dillmann, Peake, Driver-Gray, Dhorme, Beer (BHK), Hölscher, Kissane, Larcher, Rowley, de Wilde, Sicre, Díaz, Gray. However, there is support for the root עָזַר in the Vg, Syr and Tg (the latter part of the verse in LXX bears no resemblance to the MT). Clines retains עָזַר and makes the best sense of the passage by interpreting it as irony, ‘they need no help’ (cf. KJV, Delitzsch, Tur-Sinai): ‘Commonly... the absence of a helper is a matter of regret; but here the absence of a helper is a matter of indifference, for these young men have all the power they need in themselves.’ (Clines, 931, 1004.)

B.2 There have been several attempts to resolve the difficulty presented by Ps 10.14b, in which יוֹתָם ‘orphan’ lacks a clear connection with what follows. BHS suggests adding ג, in line with close parallels (e.g. Ps 30.11; 54.6). Gunkel and Seybold rearrange the double-verse completely, keeping יוֹתָם with עָזַר: ‘Du siehst doch Leid und Kummer, ja du schaust auf den Armen und die Waise. Dir stellt man es anheim, legt es in deine Hand – du bist doch der Helfer!’ (Seybold, 54). However, it is possible to maintain the MT, regarding יוֹתָם as a casus pendens without the retrospective pronoun (GKC 143b, cf. Hossfeld / Zenger, 85; Craigie, 121).

Qere/Ketiv:

A.1 2Sm 18.3 Kt hiph infinitive construct, Qr qal infinitive construct with plene spelling (cf. 1Ch18.5; 2Ch14.10; 25.8), following many MSS. Driver (328) suggests that the yodh may have found its way into the word from the previous word רָצִין, although confusion between a waw and a yodh is a common scribal error.

A.2 2Ch 28.23 Kt hiph ptp, Qr qal ptp, assuming dittography of the ג from the preceding word עָזַר.

1. Root and Comparative Material
A.1 The verb occurs predominantly in the qal but also several times in the nihal. The two lophih forms are unlikely (see ‘Qere/Ketiv’ A.1 and A.2 above). There are two nominal forms of this root in Biblical Hebrew: עֵזֶר and עֶזֶרְהָ, both of which also occur in Qumranic literature. The variants עָזֶרְהָ and עֶזָרְהָ are also found in poetry (see GKC §80g and JM §93j respectively).

A.2 PNs derived from the root are numerous in the Hebrew Bible and also in Hebrew inscriptions. They include five occurrences of עֶזֶרְהָ (Josh 17.2; 2Sam 23.27; 1Ch7.18; 11.28; 27.12) and one as a place/clan name (Ju 8.2); five occurrences of עֵזֶר in the HB (Ne 3.19; 12.42; 1Ch4.4; 7.21; 12.10), and 30 in inscriptions (AHI 1:458; 2: 204-205); five occurrences of עָזֶר (Jr 28.1; Ezk 11.1; Ne 10.18); six occurrences of עֲזָרְהָ (1Ch 12.6; 25.18; 27.22; Ezr 10.41; Ne 11.13; 12.36); one occurrence of עֵזֶר (1Ch 27.26); three occurrences of עֶזֶרְהָ (Je 36.26; 1Ch 5.24; 27.19); 35 occurrences of עֲזָרְהָ in the HB (1Kg 4.5; 2Kg 14.21; 15.1, 6, 7, 8, 17, 23, 27; 1Ch 2.8; 3.12; 5.35 [x2]; 36, 37, 39, 40; 6.21; 9.11; 2Ch 15.1; 21.2; 22.6; 23.1; 26.17, 20; 28.12; 29.12; 31.10, 13; Ezr 7.1, 3; Ne 3.23, 24; 8.7; 10.3), and 30 in inscriptions (AHI 1:459; 2: 205); six occurrences of עֵזֶר (1Ch 3.23; 8.38; 9.14, 44; 2Ch 28.7; Ne 11.15), and two in inscriptions (AHI 2: 205) and עֶזֶרְהָ in one inscription (AHI 2: 205); 14 occurrences of עֶזֶרְהָ (Gn 15:2; Ex 18:4; 1Ch 7.8; 15:24; 23:15; 17 [x2]; 26:25; 27:16; 2Ch 20:37; Ezr 8:16; 10:18, 23, 31) and עֲזָרְהָ (cf. AHI 2: 133); one occurrence of עֲזַרְתּוּמִ ponto. עֲזַרְתּוּמִ ponto. (1Ch 25.4, 31); three occurrences of עזִיבָר (AHI 1: 369); three possible occurrences of עֵזֶרְוָ (AHI 1: 370); one occurrence of עֶזֶרְהָ in the HB (1Ch 12.6) and two in inscriptions (AHI 1: 371; 2: 166); 1 occurrence of עֶזֶרְהָ in Chronicles (AHI 2: 220).

A.3 The root also occurs in the place name עֵז רָת נב (1S 4.1; 7.12) and עֶזֶר (Nu 21.32; 32.1. 3. 35; Josh 13.25; 21.39; 2Sm 24.5; Is 16.8, 9; Je 48.32 [x2]; 1Ch 6.81; 26.31).

A.4 The root ‘dr is common to all Semitic languages, except Akkadian (see (h) below) and Ethiopic (Leslau 1958:39). There are two distinct Semitic roots which may have converged in the Hebrew רו: ‘dr > Heb. רו I ‘help, assist’ and גֹּד > Heb. רו II ‘to be strong’ (Bergmann: 872); ‘to be abundant’ (stative), ‘to come together’ (Lipiński: 12). There have been several attempts to identify the second as an underlying root for some occurrences of the qal ptcp and the subst. רו, following Ginsberg (1938: 210 n.5), cf. Miller (1970: 159-175); Baisas (1973: 41-52). This would suggest a translation ‘hero’ or ‘warrior’ rather than ‘helper’ in the following texts: Ezk 12.14; 30.8; 32.21; Ps 89.20; 1Ch 12.1.19. However, as Bergmann indicates, the proximity of meaning between ‘help’ and ‘be strong’ or ‘come together’ is such that the consonantal fusion in Hebrew of Ugaritic ‘ג, ד and צ, could also have resulted in a fusion of meaning. Moreover throughout 1Ch 12 ‘heph’ (for David) is a prominent theme, as it is elsewhere in Chronicles (cf. Williamson 1982:104-106) and it is unlikely that the meaning is different in vv. 1 and 19.

a) The first root is attested in Amorite ‘dr and subst. ‘helper’, ‘gdrum ‘help’, and ‘Adra, the name of a divinity (Gelb, 15, 259-260); and possibly also the second, חצ?ר (Gelb 21, 256).

b) There is a possible occurrence of ‘dr qal act. ptcp in a Phoenician inscription, although the context and interpretation are uncertain (DNWSI 2:836).

c) There are a couple of attestations of the root in Punic inscriptions ‘dr qal (DNWSI 2:836) and ‘dr subst. ‘help’ on a memorial stele (DNWSI 2:837). There are also occurrences of לזרח as a subst, with uncertain interpretation; pl. abs. ‘subsidy, aid’; sg. abs ‘help’ ‘group of benefactors’ (DNWSI 2:668).

d) ‘dr is found in several Palmyrenean inscriptions (DNWSI 2:836) and also in Syriac.

e) The Hatran texts contain an occurrence of ‘dr ‘help’ (in a general sense of ‘assist’) in 107.3: this is now accepted as the correct interpretation (see Aggoula 1991: 67 [against his earlier view in 1969: 97-98]; DNWSI 2:836 [where other interpretations are recorded]; Healey 2009: 276).
f) In official Aram. the subst. ‘dr ‘help, assistance’ is found (DNWSI 2:830-1) and also ‘zr qal (DNWSI 2:836).

g) The verb ‘dr ‘to help, rescue’ is found in Ugaritic texts (DULAT 1.153: UT:1831), e.g. Aqhat III vi 11 (18.i.14): wy’drk byd bttl. [‘nt] ‘let him preserve you from the hand of the virgin [Anat]!’ (Gibson 1978, 110-111), in parallel with plt (cf. Ps 37.40). There is also a Ugaritic PN b’lm ‘lord of help’ (UT165:1=KTU 6.16.1).

h) In the Akk. of the El-Amarna tablets there is the Canaanite/Amorite loan-word iziru ‘help’ (CAD 7, IJ 319a: AHw: 408b): ‘let him give you soldiers and chariots as help for you so that they may protect the city’ (EA 87.13); and ‘I have provided help for Tyre’ (EA 89.18). There are also the tepq ḫazīrum ‘helper’ (from Can/Am) and the PNṣ ḫa-a-zi-ri, DN-ḥa-zīr/zi-ir, DN-ḥa-an-zi-ir and ḫa-zī-ru-um; (AHw:339a).

i) Sabean also has ‘dr ‘help’ (Biella, 355; Conti Rossini 203a).

j) The second root can be seen in the Ug. noun ǵzr ‘youth, hero, warrior’ (DULAT 1.329), cf. Arab. ḡazīr (Lane 2255).

B.1 The Arabic cognate ‘aḏara has a different meaning ‘to pardon or excuse from guilt’ (Wehr 600), akin to the reflexive Sabean stem, which Lipiński considers to be etymologically related to ‘help’ (Lipiński:12, cf. BDB 740). However, this does not seem to be a significant feature of the Arabic meaning and it is more likely to be a homonym.

2. Formal Characteristics

A.1 Pē-guttural, triliteral root
A.2 hiphil doubtful

B.1 [nil]

3. Syntagmatics

A.1 The verb ḡz qal is very often, and especially at Qumran, found with a divine subject: אֱלֹהֵיְיִשׁ עֵנוּ ’the God of your father’ (Gn 49.25); ‘God’ (Ps 46.6; 2Ch 26.7); ‘your God’ (1Ch12.19); יְאָבִישי ‘my God’ (IQH’ 10.34; 15.23; 4Q381 15.i.3); חזק ‘Lord’ (1Sm 7.12; Isa 44.2; Ps 37.40; 86.17; 118.13; 2Ch 18.31); יַחְד ‘YHWH speaking (Is 41.13, 14, cf. Is 41.10); חַד ‘the Lord YHWH’ (Isa 50.7,9); יַחְד ‘YHWH my God’ (Ps 109.26); יַחְד ‘YHWH our God’ (2Ch14.10); יַחְד ‘God of our salvation’ (Ps 79.9); יַחְד ‘their gods’ (Dt 32.28 – subject given in v.27); יַחְד ‘your ordinances’ (Ps 119.175); יַחְד ‘God of Israel’ (4Q502 24.2); יַחְד ‘the God of Israel and the angel of his truth’ (IQS 3.24); וְיַחְד ‘the angel of his truth’ (4Q177 4.12); a divine subject is also understood from the context in several passages (1Sm 7.12; Is 41.10; Ps 119.86; Jb 26.2; 1QH 13.6; 4Q470 3.4). Divine (and related) subjects of the action represented by the qal infin. constr. of רָע qal are: Michael, one of the chief princes’ (Dn 10.13); ‘your hand’ (Ps 119.173; יַחְד ‘God’ (1Ch 15.26); יַחְד ‘YHWH’ (2Ch 14.10); יַחְד ‘YHWH our God’ (2Ch 22.8); יַחְד ‘Prince of light’ (IQM 13.10 = 4Q495 2.2).

A.2 רָע qal is also found with human subjects: אָבִיךָ ‘all the warriors’ (Josh 1.14), יָמה ‘[King] Horam’ (Josh 10.33); יָבִיא ‘Abishai’ (2Sm 21.17), Joab and Abiathar (1Kg 1.7), יָבִא ‘king’ (1Kg 20.16), יָבִיא ‘Egyptians’ (Is 30.7), יָבִיא ‘each man’ (Is 41.6); יָבִא ‘they’, referring to the secure nations (Ze 1.15); יָבִיא ‘the gods of the kings of Aram’, understood from the context (2Ch 28.23).
A.3 The verb עזר takes as direct objects: דלפקו, לארם [King] Hadadezer (2Sm 8.5; 1Ch 18.5); רועה, ‘the king’ (2Ch 26.13); שלמה, ‘Solomon’ (1Ch 22.17); раз, ‘all the sons of light’ (Q 3.42; 4Q177 4.12); 5ms sf. ‘him’, referring to David (2Sm 21.17) and to King Ahaz (2Ch 28.16); דבר, ‘one who has no strength’ (Jb 26.2); sg. sf. ‘me’ (Isa 50.7,9; 4Q381 15 i 3): cf. the appearance of עזר after the verb ישע, which is sometimes taken as evidence of an original intransitive sense (Sawyer 1965:481, n.3).

A.4 The qal infinitive construct of עזר occurs as genitive of the noun כח ‘power to help’ (2Ch 25.8).

A.6 The qal infinitive construct of עזר with מ is governed by the following verbs: אש, ‘come’ (2Sm 8.5 = 1Ch 18.5; 1Ch 12.18,23; Dn 10.13); הנה, ‘to be’ (Ps 119.173): הצב, piel ‘command’ (1Ch 22.17); שלח, ‘making war’ (2Ch 26.13); שלח ‘to send’ (2Ch 28.16).

A.7 The qal infinitive construct is preceded by a variety of constructions: עזר ‘with us’ (2Ch32.8); עזר ‘mighty’ (4Q460 8.6); עזר ‘he has appointed’ (IQM 13.10 = 4Q495 2.2).

A.8 The qal active participle עזר occurs with the subjects: אלהים ממלך ארם ‘the gods of the kings of Aram’ (2Ch 28.23); בצלאל ‘every survivor’ (Jr 47.4).

A.9 The qal active sg. participle עזר occurs numerous times as a substantive:

b) It is often followed by מ, indicating the relationship to the one being helped (Ps 30.11; 54.6), or simply by pronom. suffixes: 1sg. sf. ‘my helper’ (4Q379 32.5); and in the plural with 1sg. sf. ‘my helpers’ (Ps 118.7) with the prep. ב (beth essentialae) and with 3ms sf. ‘his helpers’ (Ezk 32.21).

c) The singular form stands as a collective noun for allies (1Kg 20.16).

d) The qal active sg. participle עזר frequently forms a clause with מ, ‘there is/was no helper’ (Is 63.5; Ps 22.12), in conjunction with ע, ‘for’ (2Kg 14.26; Ps 72.12; La 1.7; Dn 11.45; IQM 1.6), with the following expressions: עזר ‘Israel’ (2Kg 14.26); 3ms sf. (Ps 72.12; Jb 29.12; Dn 11.45; IQM 1.6); 3fs sf., referring to Jerusalem (La 1.7). The phrase also occurs as a description of the עזר, ‘the poor’ (Ps 72.12), and עזר ‘the orphan’ (Jb 29.12).

e) The qal active sg. participle עזר serves as a predicate of the verb עזר ‘to be’ (Ps 10.14; 30.11), and as a nominal subject of עזר ‘to stumble’ (Is 31.3); in the plural (+ 3fs sf,
referring to Egypt) of מברך ‘to be broken’ (Ezk 30.8). In the plural it also acts as *nomen regens* with בֵּן ‘Rahab’ (Jb 9.13); מִפְלֵךְ ‘war’, qualifying יֵשְׁרֵי ‘mighty warriors’ (1Ch 12.1). The ptcp is preceded by the preposition לְ following שָׁלֹם (1Ch12.19). The qal passive sg. participle יָשִּׂר ‘to fall’ (Is 31.3). The plural ptcp occurs as *nomen regens* with רֶשֶׁע ‘wickedness’ (4Q299 59.4).

**A.10** The verb רֶשֶׁע qal occurs with the following adverbial expressions: רְַדָּנָה ‘until now’ (1Sm 7.12); בְּיָמָיֶי שֻׁפָּה ‘on a day of salvation’ (Is 49.8); רְַדָּנֶה ‘for evil’ (Zc 1.15); הֶבֶלְוָרִיק ‘vanity and emptiness’ (Isa 30.7).

**A.11** The verb רֶשֶׁע qal is prefixed with the interrogative pronoun מְ ‘how?’ (Jb 26.2).

**A.12** The verb occurs with the following prepositions:

a) מִ ‘from’ after the verb, denoting protection ‘from’, + אוֹיֵב ‘enemy’ (Ezr 8.22), כִּי ‘all the spirits’ (4Q177 4.12); denoting rescue / liberation ‘from’ the enemy / situation, + יָדְַבְךְַמְמַנְּו ְ ‘the hand of someone stronger than him’ (1QHא 10.34); + שחת ‘pit’ (1QHא 13.6);

b) The verb is also preceded by the preposition מִ ‘from’, denoting the source of the help + עִיר ‘city’ (2Sm 18.3);

c) על ‘against’ after the verb, indicating the threat / danger / enemy from which protection or rescue is needed: הַג דוּד ‘troop’ (1Ch 12.22); פ לִשּׁתַים ‘Philistines’ (2Ch 26.7); רְַדָּנֶה ‘the enemy’ (2Ch 26.13); גיבורי the man of the lie’ (1QpHab 5.11);

d) על־ד בַּר ‘on account of’ + יָדְַבְךְַמְמַנְּו ְ ‘the glory of your name’ (Ps 79.9).

**A.13** Occurrences of רֶשֶׁע niphal:

a) The subjects are all human (like the objects of the qal), and appear in both general and military contexts: the psalmist (Ps 28.7); warriors from the Reubenites, Gadites and half-tribe of Manasseh (1Ch 5.20 – subj. given in v. 18); מַשְׁכִילֵי יָעָם ‘wise of the people’ (Dn 11.34, subj. given in v. 33);

b) The niph occurs once with the preposition מִ ‘against’ + 3mpl sf ‘them’, referring to enemies (1Ch 5.20 enemies mentioned in v.19);

c) The niphal infin. occurs in conjunction with the verb אָרְצֵה hiph. ‘to be extraordinary’ and is followed by the preposition מְ ‘until’ + רֶשֶׁע ‘to be strong’ (2Ch 26.15).

**B.1**

**4. Versions**

*a. LXX:*

- qal – ἀνίστημι (2Ch 20.23);

- ἀντιλαμβάνω [middle] (Ps 118[117].13; 1Ch 22.17; 2Ch 28.23);

- βοηθέω (Gn 49.25; Dt 32.38; Josh 10.4, 6, 33; 1Sm 7.12; 2Sm 8.5; 18.3; 21.17; 1Kg 1.7; 2Kg 14.26; Is 31.3[1x]; 41.6, 10, 14; 44.2; 49.8; 50.9; Ezk 30.8; Ps 10[9].14[35]; 22[21].12; 37[36].40; 46[45].6; 54[53].6; 79[78].9; 86[85].17; 107[106].12; 109[108].26; 118[117].7; 119[118].86, 175; Jb 26.2; La 1.7; Dn 10.13; 11.45; Ezr 10.15; 1Ch 12.1, 19, 20; 18.5; 2Ch 19.2; 26.13; 28.16);

- βοηθεία (Jr 47[29].4 noun for verb);

- βοηθός (Is 50[57].63.5; Ps 30[29].11; 72[71].12; Jb 29.12; 1Ch 12.19 noun for verb);

- ἱσχύω (2Ch 25.8);

- [[καρδία]]) (1Ch 12.18);
κατισχύω (1Ch 15.26; 2Ch 14.10; 2Ch 26.7; 28.23);
[[κήτος]] (Jb 9.13);
συμβοηθός (1Kg 20[21].16 noun for verb);
συμμαχέω (Josh 1.14; 1Ch 12.22);
συνεπιτίθημι (Zc 1.15);
συνεπίσχοω (2Ch 32.3);
σώζω (Ps 119[118].173; Ezr 8.22; 2Ch 14.10; 18.31; 32.8);
ὠφελέω (Is 30.7);
Omitted: Is 41.13 (haplography of ‘do not fear’); Ezk 32.21; Jb 30.13; 1Ch 12.23

niphal – βοηθεώ (Ps 28[27].7; 2Ch 26.15);
κατισχύω (1Ch 5.20);
συνάγω (ἰσχύς) (Dn 11.34 [+ עֵזֶר]);

Minor Greek Versions [MRN]:

b. Peshitta:

qal–
‘dr (Gn 49.25; Dt 32.38; Josh 1.14; 10.4,33; 1Sm 7.12; 2Sm 8.5; 21.17; 1Kg 1.7; 20.16; 2Kg 14.26; Is 30.7; 31.3[x2]; 41.6, 10; 44.2; 49.8; 50.7,9; 63.5; Jer 47.4; Zc 1.15; Ps 22.12; 37.40; 46.6; 79.9; 86.17; 107.12; 109.26; 118.13; 119.173,175; Jb 26.2; Ezr 8.22; Dan 10.13; 1Ch 12.18,20,22; 15.26; 18.5; 22.17; 2Ch 14.10; 18.31; 19.2; 32.3,8);
‘dwr (Isa 41.13, 14; Ps 10.14; 31.11; Ezr 10.15; 1Ch 12.19; 2Ch 14.10; 25.8 noun for verb);
‘dvrn (Jb 30.13 noun for verb);

m’drn (nom. agentis) 2Sm 18.3; Isa 31.3; Ezek 30.8; Ps 54.6; 72.12; 118.7; Jb 9.13; 29.12; Lam 1.7; Dan 11.45; 1Ch 12.19);
Omitted: Josh 10.6; 119.86; Ezek 32.21; 12.1, 23; 2Ch 20.23; 26.7,15; 28.16, 23

niphal – ntr (2Ch 26.13);
‘dr (Dan 11.34)

Omitted: Ps 28.7; 1Ch 5.20

c. Targum:

TgO
qal – דִּבֶשׁ subst. (Gen 49.25);
דִּבֶשׁ pa. (Dt 32.38);
**Tg Neo**

qal – סעש subst. (Gen 49.25); סעש pe. (Dt 32.38);

**TgF**

qal – סעש subst. (Gen 49.25) (ms P); סעש pe. (Dt 32.38) (ms PV);

**TgG (ms. DD)**

qal – סעש subst. (Dt 32.38);

**TgPsJon**

qal – סירע subst. (Gen 49.25);

**TgJon**

qal – הגבר (Is 63.5); סיע pa. (Zc 1.15);

**TgPs**

qal – סיע pa. (Ps 37.40; 46.6; 86.17; 118.13; 119.173,175); סיע pe. (Ps 10.14; 28.7; 30.11; 54.6; 72.12; 79.9; 107.12; 109.26; 119.86);

niphal – סיע pe. (Ps 118.7);

**TgJob**

qal – סיע pa. (Jb 9.13; 26.2);

**TgLam**

qal – סיע pa. (Lam 1.7)

**TgChr**

qal – סיע pa. (1Ch 12.1,18,19,22,23, 18.5; 22.17; 2Ch 18.31; 19.2);
niph – סיע pa. (1Ch 5.20);

ethpa. (2Ch 26.15);

Omitted: 2Ch 20.23

d. Vulgate:

_qal – adiutor_ m. (Gn 49.25; Jb 26.2; 1Ch 12.19 pl. for sg);

_adiutorium_ n. (Dn 10.13);

_adiuvo_ (1Kg 1.7; Is 41.13; Zc 1.15; Ps 37.40[36.40]; 46.6[45.6]; 79.9[78.9]; 85.17; 109.26[108.26]; 119.86,175[118.86,175]); Ezr 10.15; 1Ch 12.19; 15.26; 22.17; 2Ch 14.10[11]; 25.8; 26.7);

_adsum_ (2Ch 28.23);

_auxiliator_ m. (Is 31.3; 44.2; 50.7; 50.9; 63.5; Ezk 32.21; La 1.7; 2Ch 32.8);

_auxilior_ (Josh 10.33; 1Sm 7.12; Is 41.10, 14; 49.8; Is 30.7; 41.6; 1Ch 12.18[17]; 23[22]; 2Ch 14.10[11]; 18.31; 28.23);

_auxilium_ n. (Jer 47.4 pl noun for sg ptc; Dn 11.45; 1Ch 18.5; 12.21; 2Ch 19.2; 2Ch 28.16);

_auxilium praesto_ (Isa 31.3);

defendo (Ezr 8.22);

dimico (1Ch 12.20[19]; 2Ch 26.13);

decernens sententia (2Ch 32.3);

_opitulo_ (Dt 32.38);

[[porto (Jb 9.13)]]

_praesidium fero_ (Josh 10.4, 6; 2Sam 8.5);

_praesidium sum_ (2Sm 18.3; 21.17);

_pugno_ (Josh 1.14);

_pugnator_ m. (1Ch 12.1);

_salvo_ (Ps 119.173[118.173]);

_suscipio_ (Ps 118.13[117.13]);

Omitted: 2Ch 20.23

niphal – _adiuvo_ (Ps 28.7),

_auxilior_ (2Ch 26.15);

_auxilium praeb _(1Ch 5.20);

_sublevo_ (Dn 11.34)
A.1 The LXX uses a variety of terms to translate ἀναστήσω, although it prefers βοηθέω and cognate nouns. The translators often use words which have a more nuanced meaning than a general sense of ‘help’, e.g. ἰσχύω (2Ch 25.8) in an antonymous pair with τροποστοθα, or συμμαχέω (Josh 1.14; 1Ch 12.22), to emphasise the association of allied help. The salvific aspect of divine help is highlighted by σῴζω (Ps 119[118].173; Ezr 8.22; 2Ch 14.10; 18.31; 32.8), further cementing the relationship between ἀναστήσω and other verbs within the semantic field of salvation.

A.2 The primary verb used to translate ἀναστήσω in the Peshitta is ‘dr. There is a surprising number of occasions where the verb is omitted altogether in the Syriac translation.

A.3 In the Targumim, the translation of ἀναστήσω is usually עָזַר or עָלָה, which both carry a general sense of help in terms of aid, assistance and support. It is intriguing that in two cases ἀναστήσω is translated by עָמַד (Dt 32.38 TgF; Ps 22.12), the verb which is consistently used to translate עָזַר. In this context the translation draws attention to the notion of defence and representation in a socio-legal context that is marked by עָזַר.

A.4 The Vg has a strong preference for adiuvo and auxillor and their cognate nouns to translate ἀναστήσω. Like the LXX, some of the translations indicate more specific vocabulary for the particular context of ‘help’, e.g. pugno (Josh 1.14) and præsidium fero (Josh 10.4, 6; 2Sam 8.5) in military contexts.

B.1 [nil]

5. Lexical/Semantic Field(s)

A.1 The verb ἀναστήσω occurs in parallel with רָכַב piel ‘to bless’ (Gn 49.25), נָשָׁהךְךְּרֹאִים ‘to be a refuge’ (Dt 32.38); חָשַׁל waw ‘to save’ (Ps 109.26); ἀναστήσω ‘answer’ (Is 49.8); ἰσχύω το ‘redeem’ / ‘liberate’ (1QH 10.34);

A.2 The qal act ptcp as subst. occurs in parallel with the qal act ptcp of סעָד ‘to support’ (Is 63.5, Ps 54.6, cf. Ezk 30.6, 8);

A.3 ἀναστήσω is preceded by the following verbs connected with waw: חָשַׁל ‘to rise up’, (Dt 32.38); חָשַׁל ‘to go up’ (Josh 10.4, 33), חָשַׁל ‘to make them strong’ (4Q470 3.4); and connected with חָשַׁל ‘also’: ἰσχύω p.i ‘to make firm’ (Isa 41.10); חָשַׁל p.i ‘to rescue’ (Ps 37.40);

A.4 ἀναστήσω is followed by the verbs חָשַׁל hiphil ‘to attack’ (Josh 10.4); חָשַׁל p.i ‘to comfort’ connected with waw (Ps 86.17) and the noun חָשַׁל + חָשַׁל + ‘unto destruction’ (2Ch 20.23). The qal infinitive construct is connected with waw to חָשַׁל ‘to fight our battles’ (2Ch32.8); and connected with חָשַׁל ‘also’: חָשַׁל ‘to support’ (Isa 41.10);

A.5 It is found in close association with חָשַׁל ‘to trust’ (Ps 28.7); חָשַׁל hiphil ‘to deliver’ (Ps 72.12; 79.9); חָשַׁל p.i ‘to rescue’ (Jb 29.12);

A.6 The following verbs occur as antonyms to חָשַׁל: חָשַׁל ‘those who hate me’ stands in antithetical parallelism with חָשַׁל ‘my helpers’ (Ps 118.7); חָשַׁל p.i ‘to betray’ (1Ch 12.18); חָשַׁל hiphil ‘to overthrow’ (2Ch 25.8); חָשַׁל + חָשַׁל ‘to take a stand against’/‘oppose’ (Ezr 10.15).

6. Exegesis

A.1 ἀναστήσω qal ‘to give political / military aid or support’ (human and divine)

a) ἀναστήσω occurs frequently in military and political contexts, denoting ‘co-operation or coming to assistance’ (Bergmann 1976: 257-8), e.g. Josh 1.14; 10.4,6,33; 2Sm 8.5; 18.3; 21.17; Is 30.7; Dn 10.13; 1Ch 12.18,20,21,22; 18.5; 2Ch 26.13; 28.16. In a number of cases there is an emphasis on the presence of the helper alongside the one being helped, with the preposition πρό (1Ch 12.22; 2Ch 32.8) or the arrival of help, when the infin constr is preceded...
by a verb of motion, e.g. קָרָא ‘come’ (2Sm 8.5 = 1Ch 18.5; 1Ch 12.18.23; Dn 10.13). There is a ‘grisly play’ on this meaning in 2Ch 20.23, where the Ammonites and Moabites turn on one another, ‘assisting’ their own destruction (Johnstone: 103). A similar play on עָזַר is found in Zech 1.15, describing God’s anger against the proud nations that are ‘at ease’, who helped ‘for evil’ (בּוֹלְנִי) rather than good.

b)  עָזַר can also denote the continuous action of giving support in the form of a political alliance (Is 31.3; Dn 11.34).

c)  יָשַׁע is described frequently as giving military strength and support, e.g. to individuals (Ps 118.7.13; 1Ch 12.19; 2Ch 18.31; 26.7) or to tribes or nations (1Sm 7.12; Is 49.8; Ps 46.6; 1Ch 5.20; 2Ch 14.10) against their enemies (with the preposition מִן ְ e.g. 1Ch 5.20; 12.22; 2Ch 26.7). Such help is associated with trust in God (1Ch 5.20). Similar to human contexts of עָזַר, the presence of the one helping alongside the one in need is an important feature of the action (e.g. 2Ch 32.8). In 2Ch 25.8, Amaziah is told that God has the power to ‘help’ or to ‘overthrow’ (והלך hiph, lit. ‘cause to stumble’), suggesting that divine help in this context would secure military victory. Other gods are also described as ‘helping’ in battle in the sense of securing victory, although the reality of their help is presented as disastrous (2Ch 28.23).

A.2  עָזַר qal ‘to give help or assistance’ in a general sense (human and divine)

a)  עָזַר is used in a broad range of contexts to mean ‘help’ or ‘assist’, including situations where encouragement is needed (e.g. Is 41.6) or assistance for a particular task (e.g. building the temple, 1Ch 22.17, stopping the flow of springs, 2Ch 32.3).

b)  When there is a divine subject, עָזַר can describe a general act of favour (Ps 86.17), an abstract sense of help, strength and sustenance in life (Ps 54.6), or particular acts of strengthening (Jb 26.2). In one case it describes the physical strengthening of the Levites so that they could carry the Ark (1Ch 15.26). As elsewhere, the aspects of God’s comforting presence and relational proximity are highlighted in some contexts, e.g. Gn 49.25; Is 41.10 ‘do not fear, for I am with you... I will strengthen you, I will help you’, cf. Is 41.13,14; 44.2.

c)  The divine action of help and support can also be ascribed to the commandments (Ps 119.175).

A.3  עָזַר qal ‘to come to aid’ / ‘help’ in a threatening situation

a)  Particularly in the Psalms, עָזַר is used in a variety of general contexts of need (e.g. Ps 119.86, 173). It often occurs alongside other verbs from the semantic field of ‘salvation’, indicating some ‘semantic interference’ between ‘help’ and ‘save’, and thus its inclusion in this lexical group. It appears to function in at least one case as a super-ordinate, e.g. in Ps 79.9: ‘Help (עָזַר) us, O God of our salvation... deliver (לְשַׁע hiph) us, and forgive (כָּפְר pi) our sins for your name’s sake’. It also shares the conceptual association of trust and refuge that is found particularly with כָּפְר hiph (e.g. Dt 32.38; Ps 28.7, cf. Ps 18.3; 91.2).

b)  The development of this semantic association can be traced in Biblical Aramaic and Qumranic Hebrew, in cases where עָזַר is followed by the preposition מִן ‘from’. In some cases the sense is that of protection from danger /enemies (e.g. Ezr 8.22; 4Q177 4.12) and in others, of removal from the danger (e.g. 1QH+ 10.34; 13.6). The latter sense is frequently found with other words within this lexical group occurring with מִן.

c)  עָזַר occurs alongside the verb כָּפְר pi in the context of יָשַׁע rescuing the righteous from the wicked (Ps 37.40).

d)  The verb עָזַר is used in a report of the psalmist’s cry to God for help in the context of a serious illness (Ps 30.11). Here the ptcp as subst. is used with the preposition מ, highlighting the relational aspect of the verb.

e)  עָזַר occurs in parallel with כָּפְר hiph in the context of false accusation (Ps 109.26), which overlaps with A.4 (see below).
A.4 עָזַר qal ‘to help, protect or defend someone’ in a socio-legal context

a) In contexts which describe helping those in need, such as the poor and the orphan, the verb עָזַר overlaps with the semantic field of בּוּר and יָמָן (cf. Ps 22.12). This role of defending or protecting those in need of defence can be taken by God, e.g. Is 50.7,9. The linguistic context describes the disgrace and shame that accompanies being declared guilty (note the occurrence of בּוּר in v.8).

A.5 עָזַר (qal act ptcp as subst) ‘helper’ or ‘ally’

a) In military and political contexts, the ptcp of עָזַר is often used to denote an individual’s or nation’s allies, e.g. 1Kg 20.16 (coll. sg. עָזַר following sg noun עָזָר after numeral, cf. JM §142eN); Is 31.3; Jr 47.4; Ezk 30.8; 32.21; Jb 9.13; 1Ch 12.1,19. There is some degree of overlap in meaning between these and the occurrences in b) below. As mentioned above in the section on Root and Comparative Material, there is no need to identify a second Semitic root עזָר as the particular root for the following occurrences: Ezk 30.8; 32.21; 1Ch 12.1,19. For example, the expression נַחַלָה עָזַר יָרְאָה, lit. ‘helpers of war’ in 1Ch 12.1 qualifies the noun ‘mighty warriors’ (שם רָפָּה), describing the ones who came to David to help him. As Ges18 states (947), all of these instances can be adequately explained from the root ‘qār > עָזַר."

b) When the subst ptcp is used with the negative particle גַּר it can have the general sense of ‘helper’ – one who comes to another’s aid, in a political/military or individual context, e.g. 2Kg 14.26; Is 63.5; Ps 22.12; 107.12; Jb 30.13; Lam 1.7. This expression is also found with עָזָר hiph: מָלֵא עָזָר (e.g. Ps 18.42). It is clear that the person/nation concerned in these situations is isolated and has no one nearby to assist them in a time of need. Several times this occurs in parallel with the ptcp עָזָר, indicating the element of sustenance provided by the assistance (Is 63.5; Ps 54.6, cf. Ezk 30.6-8).

A.6 עָזַר (qal act ptcp as subst) ‘defender’

a) Related to A.4 above, עָזַר frequently occurs with the negative particle גַּר to describe those who have no social security or legal representative. Such is the responsibility of God (Ps 10.14) and the king (Ps 72.12, c.f. e.g. Jr 50.3; Lam 3.58). In Job’s self-defence he includes the description of himself as one who rescues the poor and the orphan, who has no helper (Jb 29.12).

A.7 עָזַר qal ‘to endorse a person or a decision’

There are a couple of uses of עָזַר which express a slightly different sense of support. The first occurs uniquely with עָזַר (lit. ‘to support after’) in the context of supporting Adonijah’s desire to be king and has the sense of ‘siding’ with someone (1Kg 1.7), cf. Ges18 ‘sie standen m. ihrer Hilfe hinter Adonija’. It is contrasted with the phrase in the following verse: עָזַר (lit. ‘they were not with Adonijah’ (v.8). The second occurs in the context of a decision made by the assembly, to denote the support or approval of the decision (Ezr 10.15). It stands in opposition to עָזַר + גַּר ‘to take a stand against’. It is interesting to note that the Vulgate has interpreted a third occurrence in the same way, with decernens sententia in 2Ch 32.3.

A.8 עָזַר niph ‘to be helped’

The meaning of עָזַר niphal represents the passive of the sense expressed in A1 and A2. It describes divine help (unspecified) in Ps 28.7, divine military aid (1Ch 5.29), and the help that Uzziah received to achieve his power and strength, which the writer suggests was divinely assisted (אַחֲרֵי 2Ch 26.15). It also describes military support for the wise in Dn 11.34.

B.1 Protection is not an essential part of the verb’s meaning (contra Lipiński).
7. Conclusion

A.1 The broad meaning of עָזַר qal is to help or assist, found frequently with both human and divine subjects in a wide range of different contexts in predominantly late texts.

A.2 The purpose and nature of the help varies enormously, from attacking to comforting, according to the situation, and in some cases the focus of the verb seems to be on arriving in order to help. This suggests that a central part of the verb’s meaning is concerned with being present with the person/nation being assisted, in order to strengthen or ‘side with’ them. This is supported by several occurrences of עָזַר in parallel with רֹזֶע ‘to support’ (Is 63.5, Ps 54.6, cf. Ezk 30.6, 8).

A.3 When the verb has a human subject, it is often used in a military or national context, which connects with the substantive uses of the verb עָזַר to refer to allies.

A.4 עָזַר is also used in a socio-legal context, with both human and divine subjects, to refer to the activity of protecting or defending someone.

A.5 In a few contexts עָזַר is used to indicate the action of endorsing a person or a decision.

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