

## [מוֹשָׁעָה]

(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: n f?

Occurrences: Total 1x OT (Ps 68.21), 0x Sir, 0x Qum, 0x inscr.

Text doubtful: none.

Qere/Ketiv: none.

### 1. Root and Comparative Material

A.1 [See [ישע]]

B.1 [nil]

### 2. Formal Characteristics

A.1 Only the plural form מוֹשָׁעוֹת is attested. It is not certain either from the form or from the syntagmatic context whether it is masculine or feminine. However, *HAL* suggest that it is feminine, the singular form being \*מוֹשָׁעָה (see BL:490e).

B.1 Briggs & Briggs propose that the lexeme is an Arm inf from the verb ישע, citing the LXX rendering (1907:110). The plural form, however, makes this unlikely.

### 3. Syntagmatics

A.1 The pl is found preceded by ה' and in predicative position to אֱלֹהִים ‘God’ (Ps 68.21). The *lamed* expresses a relational sense of God to מוֹשָׁעוֹת, perhaps a *lamed* of specification (see Waltke and O’Connor: § 11.2.10 d). Alternatively, the *lamed* might indicate the possessive, and the expression אֱלֹהֵי מוֹשָׁעוֹת would be comparable to the construct chain frequent in the Psalms of אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁע (e.g. Ps 18.47; 24.5).

B.1 Gunkel sees the ה' as a dittography after אֱלֹהִים (290).

### 4. Versions

a. LXX: σωζω as articular infinitive (Ps 68[67].21);

Minor Greek Versions [MRN]:

b. Peshitta: *mpsyn*’ (Ps 68.[20]21);

c. Targum: תקוה ופּוּרְקָן (Ps 68.21);

d. Vulgate: *salus* (Ps 68[67].21 [s for pl]).

A.1 The LXX, Pesh and Vg clearly understand the root meaning as ‘to save’. Although in the Tg the verse is greatly expanded, the phrase תקוה ופּוּרְקָן ‘protection and deliverance’ renders a similar sense, the double translation perhaps aiming to cover the full range of the semantics of the lexeme.

B.1 [nil]

## 5. Lexical/Semantic Field(s)

A.1 [See [ישע]]

A.2 The noun [מוֹשָׁעָה] is a hapax legomenon, found at Ps 68.21. [מוֹשָׁעָה] seems to be in parallelism with both יְשׁוּעָה ‘salvation’ in the previous verse and לְמִן תּוֹצֵאוֹת ‘escapes from death’ later in the same verse.

B.1 [nil]

## 6. Exegesis

A.1 [מוֹשָׁעָה] appears in a Psalm that describes in broad terms God’s saving acts, including the deliverance from Egypt, defeat of the enemies, conquest of the land and protection from evil. The obvious connection of [מוֹשָׁעָה] with the verb ישע, its parallelism with יְשׁוּעָה and the context indicate that it is a noun denoting ‘deliverance’.

A.2 HAL (532) glosses [מוֹשָׁעָה] as ‘Hilfeleistung’, and BDB (448) preserves the plural form in its gloss ‘saving acts’.

B.1 [nil]

## 7. Conclusion

A.1 The evidence from the context, the parallelisms, the Versions and the likely root יָסַע all point to [מוֹשָׁעָה] denoting ‘deliverance’ or ‘saving act’, with reference to victories over enemies and even over death/Mot.

A.2 מוֹשָׁעוֹת is probably the plural form of a feminine noun \*מוֹשָׁעָה.

## Bibliography

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Waltke, B.K., and M. O’Connor. 1990. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns).

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