

נצל hiphil

(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: vb hiph.

Occurrences: Total 191x OT, 6x Sir, 22x Qum, 0x inscr.

Sir (numbering of Beentjes 1997): 4.10; 8.16; 12.15; 40.24; 51.2, 8.

Qum: CD 14.2; 16.6; 1QH x[=ii].31; xi[=iii].5; xiii[=v].13; 1QM 14.11 (derived from Jr 46.6); 1QpHab 8.2; 12.14; 4QpHos^a ii 9 (=Ho 2.11), 11 (=Ho 2.12); 4QpIs^b 3.1 (מציל); 4Q158 1–2 8; 4Q171 1–2 ii 9; 3–10 iv 21; 4Q174 9–10 6; 4Q185 1–2 ii 3; 4Q491 8–10 i 9; 4Q498 iv 1 (מצייל?); 4Q504–506 1-2 ii 16, vi 12, vii 2; 11QPs^a 18.17 (=Ps 154, Syr Ps 2). מציל.

Text doubtful:

A.1 [nil]

B.1 The Versions to 2Sm 20.6 present a variety of translations, probably owing to the oddity of נצל hiph being followed by the object עין alone. The LXX has σκιάζω ‘to shade’, the Pesh *hṯt* ‘to pluck out’, and Targum paraphrases the whole expression as ויעיק לנו ‘and distress us’. Some would opt for the meaning of the LXX, interpreting shading the eyes as a sign of anxiety, but Driver proposes that, with the Pesh, the physical sense of ‘to tear, strip off’ (cf. Gn 31.9, 16) is probably prevalent here, even if this is the only extant case of this particular idiom (1890:262).

B.2 It seems likely that the section including נצל hiph in Ezk 7.19 is a secondary interpretation of the passage, based on Zp 1.18. The section is lacking from the LXX, the Targum and some Latin manuscripts, making this all the more likely (Zimmerli 1979:199). Since, however, the passage concerned appears in the MT, it will be included in the results of this entry.

B.3 The surprising use of *lamedh* to denote the direct object after נצל hiph at Jn 4.6 (see Syntagmatics B.1) led Ehrlich to emend the verbal phrase to לְהַקֵּל (1912:270), although the verb נצל hiph is intelligible in the context and provides a suitable pun on the noun צל. The LXX translates with the verb σκιάζω, suggesting it read the (obscure) Hebrew stem צלל III ‘to overshadow’ (BDB 853), but the LXX, as also the Targum, are probably influenced by the preceding clause. The confusion or interpretation of נצל as σκιάζω is also to be found at 2Sm 20.6 in the hiph (cf. also Versions, LXX B.6).

B.4 At Sir 4.10 the Greek presents a different ethical maxim from the Hebrew, and either the Greek or the Hebrew could be seen as an insertion of a well-known proverb. Skehan & Di Lella (1987:164, 167–68) favour the Greek text, whilst Smend (1906:38) and Box & Oesterley (1913:328) favour the Hebrew. There is little to choose between them.

B.5 It has been suggested that at 4Q498 iv 1 the verb נצל is perhaps to be read (e.g. Hossfeld & Kalthoff 1986:576), but the fragment is very small and the only letters preserved of the word are ציל[.

Qere/Ketiv: none.

1. Root and Comparative Material

A.1 In BH נצל is attested in the piel, niphil, hiphil, hophal, and hitpael. In RH it is attested in the piel, meaning ‘to empty, ransack’, the niph ‘to be decayed’ and ‘to be rescued, saved’, the hiph ‘to save, rescue’ and the hoph ‘to be saved’ (Jastrow:929). There is a nominal form הַצֵּלָה ‘deliverance’ found in LBH once (Est 4.14), and later in RH, where it may denote rescue (e.g. of lives; b.Meg 16b) or relief (e.g. b.Git 56a; Jastrow:363). Curiously Klein lists a different set of themes in RH. Whilst he agrees that there is a piel, denoting ‘he stripped, rescued’, he does not mention the niph, hiph or hoph, but records a pual ‘he was rescued’ and a hitpael ‘he stripped himself’ or ‘he excused himself, apologized’ (1987:424) [MRN]. From the same root RH has a noun לַצָּן ‘decayed matter’, which Jastrow (929) derives from the sense of something that is thrown away, even though he glosses the niphil verb as ‘to be decayed’ (and cf. Syr, A.4 below).

A.2 In Heb inscriptions the name הצליהו is found in one Lachish letter (D-1.001.1=RR-Lak(6):1.1.1), in one seventh or sixth century ostrakon from Horvat Uza (D-37.001.4), in a seventh-century ostrakon from the Judaeian Hills (D-99.006.18), in an unprovenanced late seventh-century juglet inscription (99.010.1) and in eleven seals and seal impressions from various locations (D-100.186.2; D-100.419.1; D-100.420.1; D-100.474.2; D-100.549.1; D-100.628.2; D-100.668.2; D-100.892.1; D-100.900.2; D-101.205.2; D-101.258.2). There are two instances of the name הצלאל in Ammonite (Avigad 1997:928; Aufrecht 1989:78.2).

A.3 In Arm the verb נצל in the peal means ‘to save’, in the aph it also means ‘to save’ and in the ittaph ‘to be saved’ (Jastrow:929). In the Elephantine legal documents the verb may mean ‘to recover, reclaim’ (DNWSI:753; cf. Sawyer 1972:107), but generally means ‘to take, to retake, to remove’. It may have the meaning of ‘to save, preserve’ at Ahiq 81, but the context is damaged and uncertain (see DNWSI:753–54).

A.4 A Syr verb *nṣal* meaning ‘let drop, poured’ and in the ethpeel ‘to be dropped, applied (as medicine)’ (Payne Smith:349) can (it is said) mean ‘to free, save’ in the pael *naṣṣel*. The nouns *nṣālā* ‘pouring, dripping’, *naṣlā* / *neṣlā* ‘drinking vessel’, *naṣlūtā* ‘percolation’ (Payne Smith:349) and *nūṣālā* ‘trickling down, oozing forth’ (Payne Smith:333) are also attested.

A.5 The Arb *naṣala* has a variety of meanings: ‘abfallen, ausfallen, niederfallen; ausgehen, schwinden (Farbe), verblassen; loskommen, sich befreien’. In the Vth stem it denotes ‘sich befreien, sich entledigen; sich lossagen’ (Wehr³1971:1281). There is also a nominal derivative *naṣl*.

A.6 In Eth *tanaṣla* denotes according to Dillmann (698) ‘*evulsum vel abruptum excidere e suo loco*’, which suggests that the verb has a violent tenor to its meaning. Leslau says that the verb simply means ‘be detached’, noting that KB’s transcription *tanaṣsa* (following Buhl:517) is incorrect and that its connection with ‘horseshoe’ is not true (1958:34–35). The verb *naṣala* in Tigrina means ‘sich aus dem Handgriff lösen’ (Littmann & Höfner 1958:344b) or ‘separate, detach’ (Leslau 1958:35), and the Tigre intransitive verb *naṣla* denotes ‘to drop off, to fall off, to break’ and the transitive *tanaṣala* ‘to tear off’ (Littmann & Höfner 1958:344b). Amh has a verb *naṭṭala* ‘make single, unfold’ (Leslau 1958:35). For the idea of deliverance one may compare the Soq noun *’ešel* ‘help’, noting the alternance of *’-n* (Leslau 1958:35).

A.7 In the light of the existence of the Egyptian *nd* ‘to save [from]’ Sawyer (1972:107) suggests a common Hamito-Semitic origin in which the element of separation (Egyptian *m*) was prominent.

A.8 It is noticeable how few of the cognates have developed the meaning of ‘to save’ or ‘to deliver’. This only appears in Arm, Syr, possibly Egyptian and in a noun in

Soq. We may also presume that this meaning was known in Ammonite in view of the root's appearance in a name.

B.1 Jastrow (929) invites comparison with אצל, but there seems no reason to connect these lexemes semantically or etymologically.

2. Formal Characteristics

A.1 The qal is not attested for the verb נצל, but in ancient Hebrew there are two active forms (piel, hiphil), one passive (hophal), one passive/reflexive (niphil), and one reflexive (hitpael).

A.2 The form להנצילם found at CD 14.2 is not typical of Qumran Hebrew (cf. CD 16.6). The *nun* is sporadically preserved in BibAram, TgAram and CPAram, but not in manuscripts of MH. Rabin suggests that this indicates the scribe's mother tongue to be Aramaic (1954:68 n.).

B.1 [nil]

3. Syntagmatics

A.1 The subject of נצל hiph may be עדה 'congregation' (Nu 35.25), אשה 'wife' (Dt 25.11), תהו [+ negative] 'useless things (sc. idols)' (1Sm 12.21), מלך 'king' (2Sm 19.10), צדק 'charity' (Sir 40.24 [Bmg: צדקה]), המה 'they' (denoting פסלים, 1QpHab 12.14);

a proper noun: ישׂראל 'Israel' (1Sm 7.14), שאול 'Saul' (1Sm 14.48), דוד 'David' (1Sm 30.8 [2x], 18 [2x]);

a subject implied where someone speaks of himself: דוד 'David' (1Sm 17.35)

God: אלהים 'God' (Gn 31.9 [Sam reads יהוה], 16 [Sam reads יהוה]), יהוה 'Lord' (Ex 18.8, 9, 10 [2x]; Dt 23.15; Jdg 8.34; 1Sm 12.11; 17.37 [2x]; 26.24; 2Sm 22.1; 2Kg 18.30, 32, 35; 11QPs^a 18.17), אל 'God' (Sir 4.10; 1QpHab 8.2), הוא 'He' denoting God (2Kg 17.39), אלהי הגוים 'Gods of the nations' (2Kg 18.33; 19.12).

A divine subject is also implied where the speaker is יהוה (אלהים) (Ex 6.6; Jdg 6.9; 1Sm 10.18), the subject of the verb from earlier is יהוה (Ex 12.27; 1Sm 7.3), or a plea is addressed to יהוה (Jdg 10.15; 1Sm 12.10; 4Q504–506 1-2 vi 12).

A.2 נצל hiph takes as direct object:

a) things: מקנה 'possessions' (Gn 31.9), עושר 'wealth' (Gn 31.16?), בית 'house' (Ex 12.27), נפש 'soul' (Josh 2.13; 1QH xiii[v].13; 11QPs^a 18.17), גבול 'territory' (1Sm 7.14), ישׂראל 'Israel' (1Sm 14.48), כל (1Sm 30.18), שׂלל 'spoil' (1Sm 30.22), שמרון 'Samaria' (2Kg 18.34), ארץ 'land' (2Kg 18.35), ירושלים 'Jerusalem' (2Kg 18.35), עיר 'city' (2Kg 20.6), צמר ופישת, רגל 'foot' (Sir 51.2).

b) humans: עם 'people' (Ex 5.23; Ex 18.10b; 4Q504–506 1-2 vi 12), רצח 'murderer' (Nu 35.25), איש 'husband' (Dt 25.11), בני ישׂראל 'Israelites' (Josh 22.31), נָשָׂיו 'his two women' (1Sm 30.18), אָמָה 'handmaid' (2Sm 14.16), חוסי בו 'those who take refuge in him' (Sir 51.8).

A.3 נצל hiph may be followed or preceded by the preposition מן 'from' + noun אב 'father' (Gn 31.16), עבדה 'slavery' (Ex 6.6), חרב 'sword' (Ex 18.4), מות 'death' (Josh 2.13), פי 'mouth [of a lion]' (1Sm 17.35), כל צרה 'all trouble' (1Sm 26.24; 4Q504–506 1-2 vii 2), איב 'enemy' (2Sm 22.18), איש 'man' (2Sm 22.49), קנאה 'zeal' (1QH x[ii].31) בית המשפט 'house of justice' (1QpHab 8.2), שחת 'the pit' (Sir 4.10), שאול 'Sheol' (Sir 51.2), or + participle שׂנא 'the hater' (2Sm 22.18).

It appears that מן alone (i.e. without another preposition or a noun denoting 'hand') + נצל hiphil is in prose texts mostly used of inanimate objects, whilst in verse

texts (especially Ps and Pr) it is used of both animate and inanimate. Sometimes מן alone is in parallelism with מיד (e.g. Ps 31.16). The prose texts that have מן alone used of humans are Gn 31.16, 2Sm 22.18 (2x) and 1Ch 16.35.

A.4 A stereotyped expression seems to be נצל hiph followed by the preposition מן 'from' plus the noun יד 'hand' (Gn 32.12; 37.21, 22; Ex 2.19; 3.8; 18.9, 10a; Nu 35.25; Dt 25.11; 32.39; Josh 9.26; 22.31; 24.10; Jdg 6.9; 8.34; 9.17; 1Sm 4.8; 7.3, 14; 10.18; 12.10, 11; 14.48; 17.37 [3x]; 2Sm 12.7; 2Kg 17.39; 18.29, 33, 34, 35 [2x]; Is 36.19, 20 [2x]; 43.13; 47.14; Jr 15.21; 20.13; 21.12; 22.3; 42.11; Ezk 13.21, 23; 34.27; Ho 2.12; Zc 11.6; Ps 18.1; 31.16; 82.4; 97.10; 144.7, 11; Jb 10.7; Dn 8.4, 7; 2Ch 25.15; 32.13, 14 [2x], 15 [3x], 17 [2x]; 4QpHos^a ii 11 [=Ho 2.12]), or כף 'hand' (2Sm 14.16; 19.10; 22.1 [2x]; 2Kg 20.6; Is 38.6; Ps 18.1; Ezr 8.31; 2Ch 32.11). נצל hiphil + מיד is always used with a nomen rectum denoting a person, animal or God, except at Is 47.14 where it is used of a flame (perhaps the result of personification or metre). Ex 18.10 also has יד מתחת used of a person. נצל hiphil + מכף is always used with a nomen rectum denoting a human, and is found in parallelism with מיד at Ps 18.1.

At Sir 51.2 נצל hiph is followed by מיד plus the nomen rectum שאול, which is often personified. It is in parallelism with משחת + השך (i.e. without יד), which is perhaps a stereotyped rendering modelled on נצל, since מן alone + שאול after the verb נצל hiphil can be found at Ps 86.13 and Pr 23.14.

A.5 נצל hiph is followed by the preposition מן 'from' + preposition תחת + noun יד (Ex 18.10b), by the preposition מן 'from' with the sense 'part of' + שָׁלַל 'spoil' 1Sm 30.22), and by the preposition בין 'between' (1Sm 14.6)

A.6 נצל hiph precedes the verb שוב hiph inf cstr (Gn 37.22) and follows the verbs נשג hiph 'to overtake' (1Sm 30.8) and יכל 'to be able' (2Kg 18.29) and (in a noun clause) the preposition עזר + עזר '(was) a help(er)' (Ex 18.4).

A.7 The imperative of נצל hiph is followed by particle נָ (Gn 32.12), which often indicates inferiority.

B.1 At 2Sm 20.6 נצל hiph is followed by the object עין. If this means 'to escape from before the eyes' it is very odd syntax, and should rather be understood as 'to pluck out the eyes' (cf. Pesh) or should be emended (see Introduction, Text Doubtful B.1).

B.2 At Jn 4.6 the verb נצל hiph is followed by the direct object indicated by *lamedh* (ל), which is otherwise unattested with this verb. Ehrlich, therefore, proposed to emend the verb (see Text Doubtful), although it may be the result of dittography. If it is dittography it is an ancient error, being attested also at Murabbaat and implied in some of the Versions (Sasson 1990:292). It is unlikely that the construction is a literary device of the author to emulate the structure of verse 1 (so Sasson 1990:292).

B.3 Sasson argues that the subject of the verb in Jn 4.6 is God rather than קיקיון 'the gourd', since נצל hiph is suited to divine deliverance and inanimates do not "control this verbal form" (1990:292). These arguments are not conclusive, since the subject of the verb need not be God, and at Sir 40.24 (another LBH work) an inanimate is the subject, even if we decide that the 'useless things' at 1Sm 12.21 denote animate deities.

B.4 נצל hiph is followed by מן 'from' at 1QH xi[=iii].5, but the text is damaged and therefore the syntagmatic relationship is uncertain.

4. Versions

a. LXX:

ἀπελάυνω (Ezk 34.12 [B]);

ἀφαιρέω (Gn 31.9, 16; 1Sm 7.14; 30.18a; Ho 2.11);
 βοήθεια (?Sir 8.16);
 ἐκσπάω (1Sm 17.35; Am 3.12);
 ἐξαιρέω (Gn 32.12; 37.21, 22; Ex 3.8; 18.4. 8, 9, 10 [1x]; Nu 35.25; Dt 23.15;
 25.11; 32.29; Josh 2.13; 9.26; 24.10; Jdg 6.9; 9.17; 10.15; 18.28; 1Sm 4.8; 7.3; 10.18;
 12.10, 11, 21; 14.48; 17.37 [2x]; 26.24; 30.8 [2x], 18b, 22; 2Sm 14.6; 22.1; 23.12; 2Kg
 17.39; 18.29, 30 [2x], 34, 35 [2x]; 19.12; Is 31.5; 42.22; 43.13; 44.17, 20; 47.14; 50.2;
 57.13; Jr 1.8, 19; 15.21; 20.13; 21.12; 22.3; Ezk 7.19 [Theod MSS]; 33.9, 12; 34.10, 27;
 Ho 2.12; 5.14; Mc 5.7; Zp 1.18; Zc 11.6; Ps 31[30].3, 16; 33[32].19; 59[58].2;
 143[142].9; 144[143].11; Jb 5.4, 19; 10.7; 1Ch 16.35; 2Ch 25.15; 32.17 [2x]; Sir 51.8);
 καθαρίζω (?Ps 39[38].9 [S¹]);
 [καρτερέω] (Sir 12.15);
 κατευθύνω (?Jr 21.12);
 λοιμεύομαι (?Pr 19.19);
 μακρὰν ποιέω (Pr 2.16);
 [μάλλον ἢ μήτηρ σου] (Sir 4.10)
 περιαιρέω (Ps 119[118].43);
 ῥύομαι (Ex 2.19; 5.23 [1x for 2x]; 6.6; 12.27; Josh 22.31; Jdg 8.34; 11.26; 2Sm
 12.7; 14.16; 19.10; 22.18, 49; 2Kg 18.32, 33 [2x]; Is 5.29; 36.14, 15 [1x for 2x], 18
 [2x], 19, 20 [2x]; 37.12; Ezk 3.19, 21; 13.21, 23; 14.18, 20; Mc 5.5; Ps 7.2; 18[17].1,
 18, 49; 22[21].21; 25[24].20; 34[33].5, 18, 20; 35[34].10; 39[38].9 [ABS²]; 40[39].14;
 50[49].22; 51[50].16; 54[53].9; 56[55].14; 59[58].3; 71[70].2, 11; 72[71].12; 79[78].9;
 82[81].4; 86[85].13; 91[90].13; 97[96].10; 106[105].43; 107[106].6; 109[108].21[22];
 119[118].170; 120[119].2; 142[141].7; 144[143].7; Pr 2.12; 10.2; 11.6; 12.6; 14.25;
 23.14; 24.11; Dn 8.4, 7; Ezr 8.31; Neh 9.28; Sir 40.24);
 σκιάζω (?2Sm 20.6; Jn 4.6);
 συνάγω (?Ezk 34.12 [A]);
 σώζω (2Kg 20.6; Is 19.20; 38.6; Jr 15.20; 39[46].17; 42[49].11; Ezk 14.16; Ps
 7.3; 22[21].9; 69[68].15; 70[69].2; 1Ch 11.14; 2Ch 32.11, 13, 14 [2x], 15 [2x]);
 ὑπολείπω (Ezk 14.20);
 Omitted: Pr 11.4; Sir 51.2.

Minor Greek Versions [MRN]:

A.1 It is noticeable that σώζω is a rare equivalent in the LXX for הִפֵּחַ hiph, ἐξαιρέω and ῥύομαι being preferred.

A.2 In what is traditionally designated as proto-Isaiah the LXX translates הִפֵּחַ hiph by the verb ῥύομαι and twice by σώζω, but in deutero- and trito-Isaiah the translation is always ἐξαιρέω (also at Is 31.5).

B.1 At Jr 21.12 הִפֵּחַ hiph seems to have been translated by two verbs in the phrase κατευθύνετε καὶ ἐξέλεσθε, although HR (750) only gives the equivalent as κατευθύνω, adding a question mark next to it. κατευθύνω is a frequent translation of the verb הִפֵּחַ hiph, and perhaps the text presents a doublet, with one verb translating הִפֵּחַ hiph and the other translating הִלִּיף.

B.2 Although HR (223) and Muraoka (*Index*:99) give the equivalent of הִפֵּחַ hiph at Ps 70(69).2 as βοήθεια, this seems to be the translation of the noun עֲזָרָה in the next phrase.

B.3 The translation καθαρίζω at Ps 39(38).9 in one manuscript tradition (S¹) seems to be an unlikely semantic equivalent, and it is marked as such by Muraoka

(*Index*:99). Likewise the translation συνάγω at Ezk 34.12 (A) is probably to be discounted as an equivalent. In both cases the translator has (over-)interpreted הַצִּיל hiph in the light of the context.

B.4 One may see the translation μακρὰν ποιέω at Pr 2.16 as a possible rendering of הַצִּיל hiph, if the sense of removing is conveyed by the Greek ‘to make distant’. Cook (1997:132) describes the Greek here as a drastic rewriting, suggesting that הַצִּיל does not have the nuance of ‘removing’ in its semantic field. He is misguided in this (see Exegesis A.2).

B.5 The apparent equivalent at Pr 19.19 of הַצִּיל hiph is the neologism λοιμέουμαι ‘to be pestilent’ (LSJ:1060; Lust, *Lexicon*:284). It seems probable that the translator read תִּלִּי for the MT תַּצִּיל (Lust, *Lexicon*:284; cf. Pr 19.25).

B.6 The translation σκιάζω at 2Sm 20.6 and Jn 4.6 implies that the translators read the verb הַצִּיל III ‘to overshadow’ (BDB:853) rather than הַצִּיל hiph, but הַצִּיל is a rare word and the meaning ‘to deliver’ makes sense in Jn 4.6. The idea of God’s shadow as a protective force became common in later Jewish exegesis (e.g. Mekhilta Beshallah I 173–174), but it may already be seen in the LXX (cf. Mark 9.7), and perhaps at Jn 4.6 where it is a צֶלַע ‘shadow’ that serves as protection (הַצִּיל hiph). For 2Sm 20.6 see Introduction, Text Doubtful B.1.

B.7 On the equivalents to הַצִּיל Hiph in Ben Sira see below under Vulgate, B.3.

b. Peshitta:

knš ? (Ezk 34.12);

hṯṯ (?2Sm 20.6);

[(*l*) *ms*’ *hyl*] (Sir 12.15);

nsb (Ho 2.11);

Aph *npq* (Ps 107.6);

Aph ‘*d*’ (Jdg 11.26; 1Sm 17.35; Am 3.12);

Aph ‘*l*’ (Pr 19.19);

‘*n*’ (Ps 31.3);

‘*nd*’ (Ps 119.43);

Pael *ps*’ (Gn 32.11; 37.21, 22; Ex 6.6; 12.27; 18.4, 8, 9, 10 [2x]; Nu 35.25; Dt 23.15; 25.11; Josh 2.13; 9.26; 22.31; 24.10; Jdg 6.9; 8.34; 9.17; 10.15; 18.28; 1Sm 4.8; 7.3, 14; 10.18; 12.10, 11, 21; 14.48; 17.37 [2x]; 30.8 [1x], 18 [1x], 22; 2Sm 12.7; 14.6, 16; 19.9; 22.1, 18, 49; 23.12; 2Kg 17.39; 18.29, 30 [2x], 32, 33 [1x], 34, 35 [2x]; 19.12; 20.6; Is 5.29; 19.20; 31.5; 36.14, 15 [2x], 18 [2x], 19, 20 [2x]; 37.12; 38.6; 42.22; 43.13; 44.17, 20; 47.14; 50.2; 57.13; Jr 1.8, 19; 15.20, 21; 20.13; 21.12; 22.3; 39.17; 42.11; Ezk 3.19, 21; 7.19; 13.21, 23; 14.16, 18, 20 [2x]; 33.9, 12; 34.10, 27; Ho 2.12; 5.14; Mc 5.5, 7; Zp 1.18; Zc 11.6; Ps 7.2, 3; 18.1, 18, 49; 22.21; 25.20; 33.19; 34.5, 18, 20; 35.10; 39.9; 40.14; 50.22; 51.16; 54.9; 56.14; 59.2, 3; 69.15; 70.2; 71.2, 11; 72.12; 79.9(?); 82.4(?); 86.13; 91.3; 97.10; 106.43; 109.2143.9;1; 119.170; 120.2; 142.7; 143.9; 144.11; Pr 2.16; 10.2; 11.4, 6; 12.6; 14.25; 23.14; 24.11; 1Ch 11.14; 2Ch 25.15 (+ *škḥ*); 32.11, 13, 14 [2x], 15 [2x, 1x + *škḥ*], 17 (+ *škḥ*) [2x]; Sir 8.16);

Ithrael *ps*’ (Pr 2.12);

plṯ (Dt 32.39; Ps 22.9);

prq (Ex 5.23; Ps 31.16; Jb 5.4, 19; Ezr 8.31; Ne 9.28; Sir 40.24; 51.2);

prš (Gn 31.9, 16);

qrb (1Ch 16.35);

Aph *rwḥ* (Jn 4.6);

[*rḥm*] (Sir 4.10);

Shafel *šwzb* (Sir 51.8); (passive) (Jb 10.7; Dn 8.4, 7);

šl' (Ps 144.7);
Large omission: 1Sm 26.24

A.1 The Peshitta renders נצל Hiph by *ps'* in the great majority of cases: only in Job (3x), Daniel (2x) and Ezra-Nehemiah (2x) is it not used at all.

A.2 The possibility that at 2Sm 20.6 *hṭṭ* 'to dig', presumably meaning 'to pluck out', is an appropriate translation of נצל Hiph is discussed at Introduction, Text Doubtful B.1. The meaning 'remove' is also recognised in Gn 31.9, 16 (*prš*, like TgO), Ho 2.11(*nsb*), Am 3.12 ('*d*'), Ps 107.6 (*npq*), and Ps 119.43 ('*nd*, with rearrangement of the syntax).

A.3 Sometimes the sense 'deliver' is modified for the sake of the context (Jn 4.6: Aph *rwh*; Ps 31.3: '*n*'; 1 Ch 16.35: Pael *qrb*). In Jb 10.7 and Dn 8.4, 7 a T-form of *šwzb* is used, apparently turning the expression into a passive formulation.

A.4 Occasionally in the Psalter a single occurrence of *ps'* stands for both נצל Hiph and another verb with a similar sense (Ps 71.2 and 82.4 with פלט; Ps 144.11 with פצה cf. the 'double-duty' use of *šl'* for the same pair in v. 7). This seems to be due to economy on the part of the translator rather than a different *Vorlage*. In Ps 79.9 the reformulation is more complex: for MT על והצילני וכפר על Pesh. has *hsny wpsny mn*. Presumably *ps'* as usual renders נצל Hiph, but *hws* as the equivalent to כפר is placed before it because this is thought to be the logical order.

B.1 As with the very similar rendering of the verse in TgProv (see below), Aph 'l' in Pr 19.19 probably means 'do wrong' and the second half of the verse is reformulated to match the first half.

B.2 The renderings in Sir 4.10 and 12.15 must be either free paraphrases or based on a different *Vorlage* from those which survive.

c. Targum:

TgO

Aph פרש (Gn 31.9, 16);
Shafel ש[י]ז[י]ב (Gn 32.12; 37.21, 22; Ex 2.19; 3.8; 5.23 [2x]; 6.6; 12.27; 18.4, 8, 9, 10 [2x]; Nu 35.25; Dt 23.15; 25.11; 32.39);

TgN

רוקן (Gn 31.9);
Aph נפק (Gn 31.16);
Shafel ש[י]ז[י]ב (Gn 32.12; 37.21, 22; Ex 2.19; 3.8; 6.6; 12.27; 18.4, 8, 9, 10 [2x]; Nu 35.25; Dt 23.15; 25.11; 32.39)
פרק (Ex 5.23 [2x])

TgPsJ

רוקן (Gn 31.9, 16);
Shafel ש[י]ז[י]ב (Gn 32.12; 37.21, 22; Ex 2.19; 3.8; 5.23 [2x]; 6.6; 12.27; 18.4, 8, 9, 10 [2x]; Nu 35.25; Dt 23.15; 25.11; 32.39);

TgF

רוקן (Gn 31.9, 16);
Shafel ש[י]ז[י]ב (Dt 32.39)

TgG

רוקן (Gn 31.9, 16 [MS E]);
Shafel ש[י]ז[י]ב (Gn 37.21 [MS D], 22 [MSS D,E]; Ex 5.23 [MS D: 2x]; 6.6 [MS D]; 12.27 [MSS AA,AAb]; Dt 32.39 [MS DD])

TgJ

Shafel ש[י]ז[י]ב (Josh 2.13; 9.26; 22.31; 24.10; Jdg 6.9; 8.34; 9.17; 10.15; 11.26; 18.28; 1Sm 4.8; 7.3, 14; 10.18; 12.10, 11, 21; 14.48; 17.35, 37 [2x]; 26.24; 30.8 [2x], 18 [2x], 22; 2Sm 12.7; 14.6, 16; 19.10; 22.1, 18, 49; 23.12; 2Kg 17.39; 18.29, 30 [2x], 32, 33 [2x], 34, 35 [2x]; 19.12; 20.6; Is 19.20; 31.5; 36.14, 15 [2x], 18 [2x], 19, 20 [2x]; 37.12; 38.6; 42.22; 43.13; 44.17, 20; 47.14; 50.2; Jr 1.8, 19; 15.20, 21; 20.13; 21.12; 22.3; 39.17; 42.11; Ezk 3.19, 21; 7.19; 13.21, 23; 14.16, 18, 20 [2x]; 33.9, 12; 34.10, 12, 27; Ho 2.12; 5.14; Am 3.12; Mc 5.5, 7; Zp 1.18; Zc 11.6);

Aph עוק (2Sm 20.6);

Aph נצל (Is 5.29; Ho 2.11);

Aph פרק (Is 57.13);

Aph גגן (Jn 4.6)

TgPs

Pa פצא (Ps 7.2, 3; 22.9, 21; 31.3, 16; 33.19; 34.5, 18, 20; 35.10; 39.9; 51.16; 54.9; 56.14; 59.2, 3; 69.15; 70.2; 71.2, 11; 72.12; 82.4; 86.13; 91.3; 97.10; 106.43; 107.6; 109.21; 119.170; 120.2; 142.7; 143.9);

Shafel ש[י]ז[י]ב (Ps 18.1, 18, 49; 25.20; 40.14; 50.22; 144.7, 11);

Aph פרק (Ps 79.9);

Aph סלק (Ps 119.43)

TgJob (11QTgJob only extant from ch. 17)

Pa פצא (Jb 5.4, 19; 10.7)

TgProv

Pa פצא (Pr 2.12, 16; 10.2; 11.6; 12.6; 14.25; 24.11);

Pa פלט (Pr 11.4; 23.14);

Aph עלי (Pr 19.19);

TgChr

Shafel ש[י]ז[י]ב (1Ch 11.14; 16.35; 2Ch 25.15; 32.11, 13, 14 [2x], 15 [2x], 17 [2x])

A.1 The standard Targumic renderings for Hiph נצל are ש[י]ז[י]ב (in the Pentateuch [all versions], the Prophets and Chr.) and Pa פצא (in Pss. Job and Prov.: cf. Pesh. in nearly all books).

A.2 Most of the exceptions are in places where Hiph נצל means not ‘rescue, save’ (sc. from some kind of trouble or evil) but ‘take away, remove’ (see Exegesis A.3). The Tgg (like the other Vss. here and elsewhere) identify the semantic variation by using different equivalents. Thus at Gen 31.9, 16 TgO has Aph פרש in the sense ‘separate’ (with the addition of מן, ‘some of’, in v. 9), while the other Tgg texts have רוקן, probably in the sense of ‘take away’ (cf. Ex 12.36) rather than ‘empty out’ (CAL), except for TgN in v. 16 (Aph נפק, ‘remove’, a more familiar word). Similarly TgJ has נצל Aph, probably in the sense ‘reclaim’, in Ho 2.11. Its curious rendering of 2Sm 20.6 (see below, A.3) may be based on assuming that Hiph נצל meant ‘remove’ there. The use of Aph סלק in Ps 119.43 is another example. On the other hand, TgJ does not depart

from its standard rendering in Jdg 11.26 and 1Sm 7.14; 30.8, 18, 22, as one might have expected.

A.3 The rendering of נצל Hiph by Aph עוק, ‘oppress’, in 2Sm 20.6 is at first sight perverse, but can be understood when it is observed that TgJ’s ‘and will oppress us’ corresponds to MT והציל עינוג. TgJ presumably took נצל Hiph in the sense ‘remove’ and saw ‘and will remove our eye(s)’ as a vivid idiom for ‘oppress’ (cf. Pesh. *wnhḥṯ ḡynyn*, ‘and gouge out our eyes’ [CAL]).

B.1 In Jn 4.6 the translator probably derived להציל from צלל, ‘overshadow’ (like LXX), but plausibly saw this as a metaphor for ‘protect’ (Aph גנן).

B.2 In Pr 19.19 תציל is rendered by מעלי, exactly as in Pesh (the two Vss often coincide in Pr, which points to some form of literary relationship between them: cf. Healey 1991:1-5, 7-10; also the fuller study of Diez Merino (1984). Toy (1899:376-77) concluded that the meaning in both Vss was ‘(he) sins’, presumably on the basis of the causative use of *ly* in Sy for ‘do wrong’ (CAL; cf. J. Payne Smith:413-14). On this view the second half of the verse closely parallels the sense of the first half. There is, it is true, no obvious explanation for such a different sense from any of the possible meanings of נצל Hiph. But a similar problem exists with LXX (q.v., B.5) and it has been suggested that its *Vorlage* may have been הליץ. Alternatively the translators may have been at a loss to understand v. 19b and concluded that a meaning like v. 19a was appropriate (parallelism: the change of person from 2nd to 3rd supports this view). Healey (:43), translates Tg here without reference to Pesh: ‘and the more he is relieved he increases his burden’, but he does not explain either the basis for ‘is relieved’ or how the translator(s) arrived at this meaning for תציל. One could of course see him/them as providing a paraphrase of MT with a change of subject to agree with v. 19a. But the first problem remains: *m’ly* in Sy as a passive part. Pael can mean ‘lofty, exalted, sublime’ (Payne Smith:413), but this is some distance from ‘is relieved’. Toy’s explanation is to be preferred.

d. Vulgate:

adiutorium (Sir 8.16[19]);

aufero (Ps 119[118].43);

defendo (1Ch 11.14);

effugio (2Sm 20.6);

eripio (Gn 37.22; Ps 107[106].6);

eruo (Gn 32.12[11]; Ex 6.6; 18.4, 9, 10b; Dt 23.15[14]; 25.11; 32.39; Josh 2.13; Jdg 8.34; 9.17; 1Sm 7.3; 10.18; 12.10, 11, 21; 14.48; 17.35, 37; 30.18 [2x], 22; 2Sm 12.7; 2Kg 17.39; 18.29, 30, 35 [2x]; Is 5.29; 36.14, 15, 20 [2x]; 37.12; 38.6; 42.22; 43.13; Jr 1.8; 15.20; 21.12; 42.11; Ezk 13.23; 34.27; Ho 2.12[10]; 5.14; Am 3.12; Mc 5.7[8]; Zc 11.6; Ps 7.3[2]; 22[21].21; 33[32].19; 35[34].10; 59[58].2; 69[68].15; 71[70].2, 11; 72[71].12; 97[96].10; 144[143].7, 11; Jb 5.4, 19; 10.7; Pr 2.12, 16; 24.11; 1Ch 16.35; 2Ch 32.14, 15, 17; Sir 51.8[11]);

excutio praedam (1Sm 30.8);

libero (Ex 2.19; 3.8; 5.23 [1x for 2x]; 12.27; 18.8, 10a; Nu 35.25; Josh 9.26; 22.31; 24.10; Jdg 6.9; 10.15; 1Sm 7.14; 17.37; 26.24; 2Sm 14.16; 19.10; 22.1, 18, 49; 2Kg 18.30, 32, 33 [1x for 2x], 34; 19.12; 20.6; Is 19.20; 31.5; 36.15, 18 [2x], 19; 44.17, 20; 47.14; 50.2; 57.13; Jr 1.19; 15.21; 20.13; 22.3; 39.17; Ezk 3.19, 21; 7.19; 13.21; 14.16, 18, 20 [2x]; 33.9, 12; 34.10, 12; Ho 2.11[9]; Mc 5.5[6]; Zp 1.18; Ps 7.2[1]; 18[17].1, 18, 49; 22[21].9; 25[24].20; 31[30].3, 16; 34[33].5, 18, 20; 39[38].9; 40[39].14; 50[49].22; 51[50].16; 54[53].9; 56[55].14; 59[58].3; 70[69].2; 79[78].9;

82[81].4; 86[85].13; 91[90].3; 106[105].43; 109[108].21; 119[118].170; 120[119].2; 142[141].7; 143[142].9; Pr 10.2; 11.4, 6; 12.6; 14.25; 23.14; Dn 8.4, 7; Ezr 8.31; Neh 9.28; 2Ch 25.15; 32.11, 13, 15, 17; Sir 40.24);

[*magis quam mater*] (Sir 4.10[11]);
nitor liberare (Gn 37.21);
prohibere posse (2Sm 14.6);
protego (Jn 4.6);
rapio (Pr 19.19);
servo (1Sm 4.8);
[*subporto*] (Sir 12.15);
tempto super repetitione (Jdg 11.26);
tollo (Gn 31.9, 16);
tueor (2Sm 23.12);
penitus fero praesidium (Jdg 18.28).

Text abbreviated and rewritten: Sir 51.2[3]

A.1 The regular equivalents are *eruo* and *libero*, which are both used across the full range of books. The greater frequency of *libero* is largely due to its prevalence in the Psalter. Several other verbs represent the same central meaning of the Hiphil.

A.2 The rarer meaning ‘remove, take away’ is represented by several verbs (*aufero*, *excutio (praedam)*, *tollo*), but in Ho 2.11 *libero* is used.

B.1 Several times verbs meaning ‘protect, defend’ are used for נצַל Hiph.: *defendo*, *fero praesidium*, *protego*, *tueor*, the first and last in parallel passages in 2Sm and 1Ch. This would seem to extend the meaning of נצַל Hiph. unjustifiably, although contextually the renderings are plausible. In Jn 4.6 the use of *protego* might also be based on deriving הַצִּיל from צַלַל.

B.2 The Vulgate’s tendency to paraphrase is probably responsible for the renderings *qui (eos) prohibere posset* and likewise the obscure *nihil super hac repetitione temptastis* in Jdg 11.26. In both cases a failure to recognise the rarer meaning(s) of נצַל Hiph. may have played a part. It is, however, just possible that in Jdg 11.26 *super hac repetitione* means (with rare uses of two Latin words) ‘beyond this reclamation’ (see Lewis and Short: 1568, 1804).

B.3 In Ben Sira the ‘Vulgate’ is in fact the Old Latin, which is a translation of a revised Greek text (Skehan and Di Lella: 56-57). In it there are, alongside some straightforward equivalents (in 40.24 and 51.8: cf. LXX, Pesh), others which are puzzling. In 4.10, 12.15 and 51.2 either a *Vorlage* different from the surviving Heb. mss or considerable freedom on the translator’s part seems to be involved (in 4.10 and 12.15 cf. LXX, Pesh; in 51.2 cf. LXX). Skehan and Di Lella appear to favour the first explanation for 4.10 (163-64) and the second for 12.15 and (more explicitly) for 51.2 (pp. 243, 245; 560, 562). In 8.16 it is likely that *adiutorium* is a free translation of מַצִּיל (which is evidently the text that Pesh knew), like βοήθεια in LXX, though there are no other examples of these words being used for נצַל Hiph.

5. Lexical/Semantic Field(s)

A.1 [See ישע]

A.2 The hiphil is in synonymous parallelism with both יָצָא hiphil ‘to bring out’ and גָּאָל ‘to redeem’ (Ex 6.6), מָלַט piel ‘to make safe’ (2Sm 19.10), חָשַׁךְ ‘to withhold’

(Sir 51.2) and גאל 'to redeem' (Sir 51.8). It is also in parallelism with חיה hif 'to spare' (Josh 2.13) and מלט hiph (Is 5.29).

B.1 [nil]

6. Exegesis

A.1 נצל hiphil appears to have a primary meaning of 'to snatch, remove' (cf. Root and Etymology) and from this derive such meanings as 'to rescue' (i.e. to remove from a dangerous situation). It may be divided, therefore, into three meanings (cf. BDB:664; HAL:677): 'to deliver', 'to take away' and 'to recover'. These three meanings may each be further categorized according to their connotations. The divisions in this entry and in BDB are concerned more with the direction of and nature of movement, rather than the apparent tone. 'To deliver' denotes movement towards someone/somewhere else, often with a theological connotation; 'to take away' denotes movement away from something/someone; and 'to recover' denotes movement towards the subject.

A.2 First, נצל hiph may mean 'to deliver' from the hands of an enemy (Gn 32.12; 37.21, 22) or from trouble, the largest number of examples devoted to the meaning in BDB and HAL ('herausreissen', 677). Although God is often the subject or implied subject of many instances of נצל hiph (e.g. Ex 3.8; see Syntagmatics A.1), this does not necessarily mean it has a particular nuance in most instances. In the theological setting of the Bible victory in battle is often attributed to God, whilst the verb does not appear to be used differently in battle contexts whether it has God as the subject or a human such as David and Saul. The sense of 'to deliver' by a human is, for example, indicated at Gn 37.21 where Reuben explains his action, נצל hiphil, by contrasting it with that of taking his own life (נכה נפש hiph). The literary context may be more determinative than the type of agent, such that there may be a difference between the historical writings and the Psalms or sapiential literature. In Sawyer's definition of נצל hiph he assigns 80% of its uses to religious contexts, and thereby glosses it as 'to deliver', but the description 'religious contexts' needs to be more precise, especially as every part of the Bible could be so called. He tentatively suggests that the other contexts may be forensic.

A.3 Second, נצל hiphil may denote 'to take away, snatch away' (BDB:664). It is used of God removing property (Gn 31.9, 16). In a physical sense it may be used of taking the prey from the mouth of animals (1Sm 17.35; Am 3.12; Ezk 34.10). In a metaphorical usage but with the same physical sense it is used of the snatching of words from the psalmist's mouth (Ps 119.43). It is often used of the stripping of spoils (e.g. Dt 32.39; Is 5.29; Ho 5.14; Am 3.12; Ps 7.3; 50.22; Dn 8.4, 7; cf. נצל piel, hitpael) and in this meaning is to be distinguished from many other lexemes in the semantic field. The fact that humans as well as God can be the subject also confirms this distinction (cf. Sawyer 1972:96–97). HAL:677 gives a specific meaning of 'entreissen' 'to snatch' to two instances (Jdg 11.26 and Am 3.12), which it distinguishes from the sense of 'entziehen, wegnehmen' 'to take away' found at Gn 31.9–10. The force of the action is, therefore, the main principle of division of meaning for HAL, and hence the third meaning below is not included, bring concerned as it is with the direction of movement.

A.4 A third meaning of 'to recover' in the sense of 'to take back' is apparent at Jdg 11.26. This is very close to both the second meaning of 'to take away, to snatch away' (and is listed under this by HAL:677) and the first of 'to rescue', but is distinct in its connotation of taking back what was previously held. At Jdg 11.26 Israel is

questioned for not taking back the cities that she once possessed. The other instances listed by BDB (664) in 1Sm 30 are more ambiguous and could also be classed under the first meaning. In the context prisoners and possessions are in the hands of the hostile Amalekites, so that their recovery could have been regarded as a ‘deliverance’. But in fact in none of the three occurrences of **נצל** hiph is **מן** used with reference to the Amalekites (in v. 22 it is partitive: Syntagmatics A.5), so the idea of getting the people and possessions *back* seems to be made more prominent than their being ‘set free’ from their captors (note also the use of **השיב** in v. 19) and the third meaning is more likely to be involved here. The Vg implies a specific meaning at 1Sm 30.8 with its translation *excutio praedam* ‘to shake out/remove violently the booty’. The LXX also at 1Sm 30.18a indicates that the verb there does not mean ‘to rescue’ by its translation ἀφαιρέω, which it only uses in four other cases for the translation of **נצל** hiph (Gn 31.9, 16; 1Sm 7.14; Ho 2.11).

A.5 A subdivision of the first meaning above, and not a fourth meaning as it is classified in BDB (665), is an ethical sense. In the Psalms **נצל** hiphil expresses deliverance from sin or guilt (Ps 39.9; 51.16; 79.9; 119.170).

B.1 R. Gradwohl appealed to the use of **נצל** hiphil in Gn 31.9, 16 to support his view that in Ex 3.22 and 12.36 **נצל** piel is used as a technical expression from the law concerning slaves, meaning ‘cause [object] to pay them the compensation owed to them for their labour’ (see **נצל** piel B.2). According to him in Gn 31 (where God is the subject) **נצל** hiphil means not ‘take away’ (e.g. NRSV) or ‘save’ (Buber-Rozenzweig), but ‘helped the oppressed servant Jacob get his legal rights’ (Gradwohl 1999:193-94), so ‘properly removed’ the flocks from Laban’s possession. There need be no doubt that for Jacob (who speaks in v. 9) and probably the narrator the attribution of Jacob’s acquisition of the best of the flocks to God’s action means that it is justified and ‘proper’: it is also in accordance with the agreement made between Jacob and Laban about Jacob’s wages in 30.31-34. Jacob’s wives, the daughters of Laban (who speak in 31.16), accept this view of the matter too. But this does not mean that the legality or propriety of the ‘removal’ is part of the meaning of **נצל** hiphil here. Furthermore, as the mention of ‘wages’ (**שְׂכָר**) in 30.32-33 shows, Jacob is not a slave but a hired labourer (**שָׂכִיר**), so any legal component in the meaning of **נצל** hiphil would have nothing to do with slave-law. As such it cannot provide any support for Gradwohl’s interpretation of the piel in Exodus.

7. Conclusion

A.1 **נצל** hiphil is primarily used of deliverance from danger, with God most often as the subject. A physical connotation to the verb is evident in another meaning ‘to take away, to snatch away’, which is close to the idea of deliverance. A third rarer use is that of ‘to recover’, which has the specific connotation of taking back what was previously held, and is therefore to be distinguished from the other two meanings in that it implies a return to the place of origin.

A.2 **מן** is a common syntagm of **נצל** hiph, but it is not clear that the syntagmatic relationship always denotes the same connotation. Its frequent use of the syntagm **מן** distinguishes it from the lexemes **עזר** and **ישע**, which rarely take this syntagm (Sawyer 1972:103–104). It also places it closer to such verbs as **מלט** piel, which is followed reasonably frequently by **מן**. With **נצל** hiph **מן** is used with both the first and second meanings distinguished under Exegesis, and could be seen as a semantic marker for these two meanings as opposed to the third, although even this is tentative given the

uncertainty over the interpretation of 1Sm 30 where we find cases both with and without the preposition.

A.3 In the LXX the translators tend to avoid using σῶζω for נִצַּל hiphil, which is evidence of a distinction in meaning from נִצַּל niph'al where σῶζω is the predominant translation. More research is needed into the Pesh and Tg, although they do seem to show a preference for *ps'* and ב[י]ז[י]ש respectively, the same lexemes chosen for rendering נִצַּל niph'al.

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