

Source Reference Sheet - Ancient Hebrew Concrete Thought Imagery

1. Primary Textual Sources

- **Masoretic Text (MT)** – The authoritative Hebrew text of the Tanakh. Basis for Torah, Prophets, Writings.
- **Textus Receptus (TR)** – Key manuscript tradition for the Apostolic Writings (New Testament). Used to maintain continuity with Hebrew thought against later critical abstractions.
- **Septuagint (LXX)** – Greek translation of Hebrew Scriptures; helpful for seeing how Jewish communities in the 2nd Temple period understood Hebrew idioms.
- **Dead Sea Scrolls** – Comparative readings that sometimes preserve more concrete expressions.

2. Lexicons & Word Studies

- **Jeff A. Benner, Ancient Hebrew Lexicon of the Bible** – Pictographic root meanings, concrete images behind Hebrew words.
- **Strong's Concordance** – Useful for cross-referencing Hebrew/Greek word numbers; definitions filtered for abstraction.
- **Brown–Driver–Briggs (BDB) Hebrew Lexicon** – Scholarly depth, though abstract at times. Adapted with a concrete thought lens.
- **Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon** – Early work, still valuable for root-based connections.

3. Cultural & Anthropological Background

- **Nomadic Shepherding & Tent Life Studies** – Daily rhythms (fire, water, flock, clan) that shaped imagery.
- **Ancient Near Eastern Context** – Household structures, covenant treaties, tribal alliances, harvest cycles.
- **Archaeology & Ethnography** – Village economics, threshing floors, boundary stones, wells, and watchtowers.
- **Thorleif Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek*** – Classic study showing Hebrew = concrete / Greek = abstract.

4. Rabbinic & Jewish Sources

- **Targums (Aramaic paraphrases)** – Preserve interpretive renderings close to the ground of Hebrew thought.
- **Mishnah & Midrash** – Rabbinic traditions that often highlight concrete word pictures and covenant patterns.

- **Jewish Liturgy & Blessings** – Passover, Sabbath, wedding blessings, and the Shema provide imagery preserved in worship life.

5. Imagery Studies & Thematic Research

- **Covenant Studies** – Suzerainty treaties, blood paths, adoption imagery.
- **Biblical Poetry Studies** – Parallelism as “painting with two strokes” rather than abstract logic.
- **Key Hebrew Terms** –
 - *Ruach* (wind/breath)
 - *Emunah* (firmness/steadiness)
 - *Ahavah* (covenant loyalty acts)
 - *Shalom* (wholeness, nothing broken)
 - *Chesed* (loyal-love in action)
 - *Torah* (instruction, path-boundary).

6. Hebraic-Christian Scholarship

- **Dwight Pryor, Brad Young, Lois Tverberg, Marvin Wilson** – Writers who draw readers back into Hebraic roots of the New Testament.
- **N.T. Wright (selective)** – Helpful when read through Hebraic lens, though sometimes abstract.
- **David Bivin, *Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus*** – Grounding Yeshua’s sayings in Hebrew idiom.

7. Method of Rendering

1. Begin with **Hebrew root meaning** (consonants and pictographic origins).
2. Ask: *What picture did this word carry in daily Hebrew life?*
 - (e.g., *emet* = firm stake in the ground → “truth as something firm you can lean on”).
3. Translate into **English imagery**, not abstract terms.
 - (e.g., “faithfulness” → “steadfastness on the covenant path”).
4. Cross-check with **cultural practices** (shepherding, harvest, tent, covenant meals).
5. Render into **flowing narrative or commentary** that feels earthy, grounded, lived.