

Willem A. VanGemeren, General Editor, *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan.

(*hāwā* II), hisht. only: worship, bow (down), make/do obeisance (H2556).

ANE Traditionally, the form הִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה was understood to be a hitp. form of שָׁחָה (and closely related to שָׁחָה and שָׁחָה). But now, upon the discovery of a root חוּי in Ugar. (with a form meaning “prostrate oneself”), it is agreed that a Heb. root חוּה once existed, of which only this form (the t-reflexive of the ancient causative shaphel) remains. An Arab. cognate meaning “curl up” also exists. The vb. appears at Qumran (1QpHab 12:13; 1QM 12:14; CD 11:24). The LXX almost always translates προσκυνεῖν (*TDOT* 3:249–50). Such gestures are known throughout the ANE (see O. Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World*, 308–11).

OT The hisht. form occurs 170x, 45x in the Pent. (23x, Gen), 55x in deuteronomistic hist. (48x, Sam-Kgs), 31x in six prophets (21x, Isa-Jer), 17x in Ps, 17x in Chron-Neh, and 5x in Ruth, Esth, Job.

1. The vb. always refers to an action/attitude directed toward a human or divine figure who is recognized (appropriately or inappropriately) as being in a position of honor or authority. Depending on the figure and the situation, it may be a gesture of greeting, respect, submission, or worship. The action may entail falling to one’s knees, in front of which one places the hands or between which one bows the face (nose, forehead) to the ground (or comparable gesture), as shown by the frequent reference to “the ground” (אֲרָץ) and “nose, face” (אַפַּיִם; see Gen 19:1; 1 Sam 25:23, 41; cf. 1 Kgs 18:42). The gesture is an external sign of the inner spirit (though hypocrisy is possible); the word can also simply express the inner attitude. The prayer posture (hands outstretched) normally does not entail prostration.

The vb. often is used in combination with other words, which help shape its meaning in a given context: סָגַד, קָרַד, כָּרַע, bend the knee, before God (or other gods) and kings (Ps 95:6; Esth 3:2, 5); נָשַׁק, kiss (Exod 18:7); נָפַל, fall down (2 Sam 1:2; 9:6, 8); פָּלַל, pray (Isa 44:17; 1 Sam 1:28). The vb. עָבַד, serve, often accompanies חָוָה, when used with Yahweh and with other gods (Deut 30:17; see list in *TDOT* 4:254), and brings worship and daily life into a single whole.

2. The vb. is used with respect to human interaction, but more often in connection with divine worship. As to human interaction, people bow before individuals for various reasons: to greet strangers respectfully (Gen 18:2), to acknowledge authority (Ruth 2:10), to give homage (1 Sam 28:14), even to express joy (Exod 18:7), and to beg (1 Sam 2:36). The gesture is used ironically in the development of familial relationships in Gen when, contrary to expectations, Jacob bows before Esau (Gen 33:3; cf. 27:29) and Joseph bows before Jacob (48:12, cf. 37:10) and finally refuses the obeisance of his brothers (50:18–20; cf. 42:6; 43:26).

In royal settings, subjects extend a submissive gesture to those of such status (2 Sam 14:4, 22; 15:5; 16:4; 2 Chron 24:17). That the act is not perfunctory may be illustrated by Haman's response to Mordecai's refusal to prostrate himself (Esth 3:2–6). Its use in royal psalms (72:11; cf. v. 9; 22:29) will in time draw the gesture into the sphere of messianic themes (cf. Rom 14:11; Phil 2:10). In addition, the divine messenger (Num 22:31; Josh 5:14; cf. Gen 19:1) and the prophet (2 Kgs 2:15; 4:37) can prompt submissive gestures.

3. The usage for divine worship is most common (approx. 110x, over half of which refer to other gods; in these contexts, RSV translates with worship (86x) or bow (down) (24x). This vb. is used for both individual and corporate acts, prompted by gratitude for what God has done (Gen 24:26, Abraham's servant; 1 Kgs 1:47, David) or upon reception of divine promises (Exod 4:31, Israel in Egypt) and other divine words (33:19, Israel; 34:8, Moses; Judg 7:15, Gideon). Such examples are not part of a worship service, but seem only to involve the offering of prayer. At times, this entails a visit to the sanctuary (1 Sam 1:19; 2 Sam 12:20).

In Chron-Neh especially this action joins other forms of cultic activity, such as sacrifices and various types of music (1 Chron 29:20; 2 Chron 7:3; 29:28–30; Neh 8:6; 9:3; cf. Deut 26:10); no doubt the word in itself, comparable to our "worship," denotes such a fuller setting in other texts as well (1 Sam 1:3; Ps 29:2; 95:6; 99:5, 9; 132:7; Jer 7:2; Ezek 46:9).

All peoples of the earth are called upon to worship the God of Israel (Ps 96:9), and the worship of Yahweh is envisaged as a future reality for Israel (Isa 27:13) in a new temple (Ezek 46:2–3) and for the nations (Ps 22:27–29 [28–30]; Isa 66:23; Zeph 2:11). At the same time, remarkably, the worship of gods on the part of non-Israelites is at times presented without judgment (2 Kgs 5:18; 19:37; cf. Ps 66:4, NRSV).

4. Various types of reference to the worship of other gods and their images are evident throughout the OT. The centrality of this issue for Israel is focused in the first [second] commandment (Exod 20:5; 34:14; Deut 5:9) and is reinforced by reminders (Ps 81:9 [10]), by reports and condemnations of idolatrous practices (1 Kgs 11:33; Jer 1:16), by royal reforms (2 Kgs 18:22), by ridicule (Isa 44:15–17), and by warnings that the worship of other gods puts Israel's future in peril (1 Kings 9:6, 9), as it had from their earliest days (Exod 32:8). In fact, it turns out to be the key factor in the fall of Israel (2 Kgs 17:16) and Judah (Jer 22:8–9).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

TDOT 4:248–56; *THAT* 1:530–33; *TWOT* 1:267–69; S. Kreuzer, "Zur Bedeutung und Etymologie von הַשְׁתַּחֲוּיָה / יִשְׁתַּחֲוּי," *VT* 35, 1985, 39–60.

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