

The Doctrine of Matstsâbâh, Mûtstsâb, Matstsêbâh, Matstsebeth, Mitstsâbâh, Matstsâb, N^etsîyb, and Nâtsab

Topics		
Nâtsab (נָצַב) [pronounced <i>naw-TSAH^BV</i>]	N ^e tsîyb (נִצְיָב) [pronounced <i>n^eTZEE^BV</i>]	Matstsâb (מַצָּב) [pronounced <i>matz-TZA^BV</i>]
Mûtstsâb (מֻצָּב) [pronounced <i>moots-TSAW^BV</i>]	Matstsâbâh (מַצָּבָה) [pronounced <i>matz-tzaw-VAH</i>]	Mitstsâbâh (מִצְצָבָה) [pronounced <i>mitz-tzaw-VAH</i>]
Matstsêbâh (מַצְבֵּה) [pronounced <i>mahtz-tzay^B-VAWH</i>]	Matstsebeth (alternate spelling of matstsêbâh)	Summary

Preface: Once and awhile, you come across several Hebrew words which are almost identical. What we have here are 7 spellings of 5 different Hebrew words which are all based upon the same root word, nâtsab.

1. The root verb for all of these words is nâtsab (נָצַב) [pronounced *naw-TSAH^BV*], which means *to station oneself, to take one's stand, to stand up, to set something upright, to erect*. This appears to be the root for a great many words, including those in our study. Strong's #5324 BDB #662.
2. Masculine noun: n^etsîyb (נִצְיָב) [pronounced *n^eTZEE^BV*]. Strong's #5333 BDB #662.
 - a. BDB definitions:
 - i. *Pillar, post*
 - ii. *Prefect, deputy*
 - iii. Also, apparently, *a garrison, a post*
 - b. Gesenius definitions:
 - i. *One set over, a prefect, a leader*
 - ii. *Something placed or set;*
 - (1) *hence, a statue, an idol*
 - (2) *A military station, a garrison*. This appears to be the most common use of n^etsîyb.
 - c. Occurrences in Scripture: Gen. 19:26 1Sam. 10:5 13:3, 4 2Sam. 8:6, 14 1Kings 4:19 1Chron. 11:16 18:13 2Chron. 8:10 17:2
 - i. When Lot's wife looked back toward Sodom and Gomorrah, she became a *pillar* or *statue* of salt. Gen. 19:26
 - ii. Samuel predicts what events will transpire in Saul's life, and one deals with Saul going back to his hometown (often mistranslated *hill of God*) and the particular place referenced is further identified in 1Sam. 10:5 as where the Philistine *garrison* is. It would be much more likely for this to be an outpost rather than a reference to an individual.
 - iii. In 1Sam. 13:3–4, Jonathan is said to have struck down the *garrison* of Philistines (because Jonathan is under the command of Saul, it is Saul who is said to have done this in v. 4). This would appear to be an outpost, a military station or a garrison. Some do interpret this as his having taken out a Philistine prefect or deputy; however, this would be in stark contrast to his great bravery exhibited in 1Sam. 14.
 - iv. David killed 22,000 Syrians and then set up *garrisons* in Syria, making them his servants who brought him tribute. He also established garrisons in Edom. 2Sam. 8:6, 14 1Chron. 18:13
 - v. 1Kings 4:19 is one of the very few places where n^etsîyb clearly refers to a *prefect* or *deputy*. There is a reference to Geber, who is called the only *prefect* in the land of Gilead.
 - vi. We find this in 1Chron. 11:16, which reads: **And David was then in the stronghold, while the garrison of the Philistines [was] then in Bethlehem**. This almost sounds like there was only was Philistine garrison at a time; however, that is by implication and not by a clear, direct statement. Furthermore,

it could be that there was only one garrison at that time, but that would not mean that in previous decades there were not several throughout central Israel.

- vii. 2Chron. 8:10 makes a reference to 250 men of Solomon who were the chiefs of *deputies* (or, *garrisons*).
 - viii. Jehoshaphat placed troops and *garrisons* throughout the land of Judah in order to strengthen his control over southern Israel. 2Chron. 17:2
3. Masculine noun: matstsâb (מַצֵּבָה) [pronounced *matz-TZA^BV*]. Strong's #4673 BDB #662.
- a. BDB definitions:
 - i. *Standing place*
 - ii. *Station, office*
 - iii. *Garrison, post, outpost*
 - b. Gesenius definitions:
 - i. *A place where anything stands*
 - ii. *A post or office assigned to anyone*
 - iii. *A military station, a garrison.*
 - c. Obviously, there does not appear to be a great deal of differentiation between these two words, which have the same root.
 - d. Scripture: Joshua 4:3, 9 1Sam. 13:23 14:1, 4, 6, 11, 15 2Sam. 23:14 Isa. 22:19
 - i. We find this word used to speak of the *place* where the priests feet are standing firm in Joshua 4:3, 9. Obviously, this word has nothing to do with a military station in this passage; however, it is where the priests had a sure *foothold*.
 - ii. In 1Sam. 13:23, the *garrison* of Philistines go out to the pass of Michmash. This would indicate that this word could be used of a moving force of men.
 - iii. This word is also used when the force was encamped at the pass of Michmash (1Sam. 14:1, 4, 6, 11, 15).
 - iv. From this group of Philistines, raiders were sent out on practice maneuvers to the north, east and west. These raiders are distinguished from the *garrison* of Philistines in 1Sam. 14:15.
 - v. This is a garrison of Philistines in Bethlehem during the time of David in 2Sam. 23:14. The implication in this passage is that, at least at that time, there was only one garrison of Philistines in Israel.
 - vi. An oracle of Isaiah tells Israel that God would pull them down from their *station* (as well as depose them from their office) in Isa. 22:19.
4. Masculine noun: mûtstsâb (מִצֵּבָה) [pronounced *moots-TSAW^BV*]. This is the same word as Strong's #4673 above, except with different vowel points. Strong's #4674 BDB #663.
- a. BDB definitions:
 - i. *Palisade, intrenchment*
 - b. Gesenius definitions:
 - i. *A garrison, a station (of soldiers)*
 - c. Scripture: In Isa. 29:3, God tells Jerusalem, "I will camp against you, encircling you; I will lay siege against you with a mound; I will raise up battle towers against you."
 - d. There is probably no reason to treat this word any differently than matstsâ^bv.
5. Feminine noun: matstsâbâh (מַצֵּבָהּ) [pronounced *matz-tzaw-VAH*], which means *guard, watch*. This is the feminine form of the Strong's #4673. In Zech. 9:8, this is spelled with an *mi-* rather than an *ma-*; mitstsâbâh (מִצֵּבָהּ) [pronounced *mitz-tzaw-VAH*]. Strong's #4675 BDB #663.
- a. BDB definitions:
 - i. *Guard, watch?*
 - b. Gesenius definitions:
 - i. *a garrison, a station (of soldiers)*. Gesenius sees these two forms as equivalent to the masculine noun mûtstsâb (Strong's #4674).
 - c. We do not have enough Scripture to differentiate between the masculine and feminine noun.
 - d. Scripture: In 1Sam. 14:12 Zech. 9:8:
 - i. In 1Sam. 14:12, the men of the *garrison* call out to Jonathan and his armor-bearer to draw them closer.

- ii. In Zech. 9:8, God tells Hadrach (which includes Damascus) that He would camp around His house like a *garrison* (or, *guard*).
6. Feminine noun: matstsêbâh (מַצֵּבָה) [pronounced *mahtz-tzay^b-VAWH*] and we find it when a pillar or monument is left to commemorate personal contact with God (Gen. 26:18, 22 35:14); or it can be a pillar commemorating a relationship with idols, which are Satan's demons, as in Ex. 23:24 Deut. 7:5 2Kings 3:2; these pillars can have specific shapes (usually when used of demon images as in Hos. 10:1 Micah 5:13) or not (Gen. 31:13, 45, 51–52). My impression here is that these are generally larger than the *sculpted images* and they are not always *sculpted*. Mostly found in the Torah, Kings and the prophets. The two Strong's numbers are slightly different spellings; however, they are both feminine and probably the exact same word. Strong's #4676 & #4678 BDB #663.
- a. BDB lists the two words as one. BDB definitions:
- Pillar, monument, personal memorial*
 - Stone* (set up and anointed as memorial of divine appearance), *stones* and *pillars* in connection with altars
 - Maşşêbâ, stump*
- b. Gesenius definitions:
- Statue, monument, pillar*
 - Trunk, stock of a tree*
- c. Scripture: Gen. 28:18, 22 31:13, 45, 51, 52 35:14, 20 Ex. 23:24 24:4 34:13 Lev. 26:1 Deut. 7:5 12:3 16:22 2Sam. 18:18 1Kings 14:23 2Kings 3:2 10:26–27 17:10 18:4 23:14 2Chron. 14:2 31:1 Isa. 6:13 19:19 Jer. 43:13 Ezek. 26:11 Hosea 3:4 10:1–2 Micah 5:13
- d. Because this definition is somewhat different than what we are examining, we will simply accept the meanings given by BDB and Gesenius and move on. However, you may want to note that this pair of words are spelled almost exactly as matstsâbâh (מַצֵּבָה) [pronounced *matz-tzaw-VAH*] (Strong's #4675 BDB #663) above. The only difference is one vowel point. This would suggest to me that these are actually the same words, with slightly different meanings.

7. Summary:¹

- a. The root verb for all of these words is nâtsab (נָצַב) [pronounced *naw-TSAH^BV*], which means *to station oneself, to take one's stand, to stand up, to set something upright, to erect*. This appears to be the root for a great many words, including those in our study. Strong's #5324 BDB #662.
- b. Masculine noun: n^etsîyb (נִצְיָב) [pronounced *n^eTZEE^BV*]. Strong's #5333 BDB #662.
- It means *pillar, post; prefect, deputy, someone [or something] placed over [someone/something else]; garrison, outpost, military base [station]; statue, idol*.
 - Occurrences in Scripture: Gen. 19:26 1Sam. 10:5 13:3, 4 2Sam. 8:6, 14 1Kings 4:19 1Chron. 11:16 18:13 2Chron. 8:10 17:2
 - When Lot's wife looked back toward Sodom and Gomorrah, she became a *pillar* or *statue* of salt. Gen. 19:26
 - N^etsîyb means *garrison* in 1Sam. 10:5 and in 1Sam. 13:3–4, where Jonathan is said to have struck down the *garrison* of Philistines.
 - David killed 22,000 Syrians and then set up *garrisons* in Syria, making them his servants who brought him tribute. He also established garrisons in Edom. 2Sam. 8:6, 14 1Chron. 18:13
 - 1Kings 4:19 is one of the very few places where n^etsîyb clearly refers to a *prefect* or *deputy*. There is a reference to Geber, who is called the only *prefect* in the land of Gilead. We have a similar use in 2Chron. 8:10, which makes a reference to 250 men of Solomon who were the chiefs of *deputies* (or, *garrisons*).
- c. Masculine noun: matstsâb (מַצֵּבָה) [pronounced *matz-TZA^BV*]. Strong's #4673 BDB #662.
- It means *Standing place; station, office; garrison, post, outpost*.
 - Obviously, there does not appear to be a great deal of differentiation between these two words, which have the same root.

¹ Realizing that some people may never check out the full doctrine, I have begun to abbreviate them and place them in with the exegesis.

- iii. Scripture: Joshua 4:3, 9 1Sam. 13:23 14:1, 4, 6, 11, 15 2Sam. 23:14 Isa. 22:19
 - (1) We find this word used to speak of the *place* where the priests feet are standing firm in Joshua 4:3, 9. Obviously, this word has nothing to do with a military station in this passage; however, it is where the priests had a sure *foothold*.
 - (2) In 1Sam. 13:23, the *garrison* of Philistines go out to the pass of Michmash. This would indicate that this word could be used of a moving force of men. See also 1Sam. 14:1, 4, 6, 11, 15 2Sam. 23:14.
 - (3) An oracle of Isaiah tells Israel that God would pull them down from their *station* (as well as depose them from their office) in Isa. 22:19.
- d. Masculine noun: mûtstsâb (מִצְבָּה) [pronounced *moots-TSAW^BV*]. This is the same word as Strong's #4673 above, except with different vowel points. Strong's #4674 BDB #663.
 - i. It means *garrison, a station* (of soldiers).
 - ii. Scripture: In Isa. 29:3, God tells Jerusalem, "I will camp against you, encircling you; I will lay siege against you with a *mound*; I will raise up battle towers against you."
 - iii. There is probably no reason to treat this word any differently than matstsâb.
- e. Feminine noun: matstsâbâh (מִצְבָּהּ) [pronounced *matz-tzaw-VAH*], which means *guard, watch*. This is the feminine form of the Strong's #4673. In Zech. 9:8, this is spelled with an *mi-* rather than an *ma-*; mitstsâbâh (מִצְבָּהּ) [pronounced *mitz-tzaw-VAH*]. Strong's #4675 BDB #663.
 - i. This word means *guard, watch; garrison, station [of soldiers]*. Gesenius sees these two forms as equivalent to the masculine noun mûtstsâb (Strong's #4674).
 - ii. We do not have enough Scripture to differentiate between the masculine and feminine noun.
 - iii. Scripture: In 1Sam. 14:12 Zech. 9:8:
 - (1) In 1Sam. 14:12, the men of the *garrison* call out to Jonathan and his armor-bearer to draw them closer.
 - (2) In Zech. 9:8, God tells Hadrach (which includes Damascus) that He would camp around His house like a *garrison* (or, *guard*).
- f. Feminine noun: matstsêbâh (מַצְבֵּה) [pronounced *mahtz-tzay^B-VAWH*] and we find it when a pillar or monument is left to commemorate personal contact with God (Gen. 26:18, 22 35:14); or it can be a pillar commemorating a relationship with idols, which are Satan's demons, as in Ex. 23:24 Deut. 7:5 2Kings 3:2; these pillars can have specific shapes (usually when used of demon images as in Hos. 10:1 Micah 5:13) or not (Gen. 31:13, 45, 51–52). My impression here is that these are generally larger than the *sculpted images* and they are not always *sculpted*. Mostly found in the Torah, Kings and the prophets. The two Strong's numbers are slightly different spellings; however, they are both feminine and probably the exact same word. Strong's #4676 & #4678 BDB #663.
 - i. Proper definitions: *statue, pillar, monument, personal memorial; stone* (set up and anointed as memorial of divine appearance), *stones* and *pillars* in connection with altars; *trunk, stock of a tree*
 - ii. Scripture: Gen. 28:18, 22 31:13, 45, 51, 52 35:14, 20 Ex. 23:24 24:4 34:13 Lev. 26:1 Deut. 7:5 12:3 16:22 2Sam. 18:18 1Kings 14:23 2Kings 3:2 10:26–27 17:10 18:4 23:14 2Chron. 14:2 31:1 Isa. 6:13 19:19 Jer. 43:13 Ezek. 26:11 Hosea 3:4 10:1–2 Micah 5:13
 - iii. Because this definition is somewhat different than what we are examining, we will simply accept the meanings given by BDB and Gesenius and move on. However, you may want to note that this pair of words are spelled almost exactly as matstsâbâh (מִצְבָּהּ) [pronounced *matz-tzaw-VAH*] (Strong's #4675 BDB #663) above. The only difference is one vowel point. This would suggest to me that these are actually the same words, with slightly different meanings.