

## Using Strong's .... but

A lot of people know about Strong's or more officially, the Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. This Concordance is based on the Authorized King James version from 1611 and was produced by some 100 scholars under the direction of James Strong. The first version was published in 1890.

The first paper versions consisted of:

- a concordance, an index of all English words in the KJV with the bible verses where they were found, a relevant part of that bible verse and a number for the corresponding Hebrew or Greek word.
- a comparative concordance with the differences between the KJV and newer revisions.
- a Hebrew dictionary, a list of all the Hebrew root words and the translations used in the KJV. Every word was given a number. The Strong's number ranging from 1 – 8674.
- a Greek dictionary, a list of all the Greek root words and the translations used in the KJV. Every word was given a number. These Strong's number ranging from 1 – 5624.

Usage:

- Look up a verse by any word of that verse and find its location in the Bible.
- Find verses that contain a specific English word.
- For a given English word, find one or more corresponding Hebrew (or Greek) words.
- Find the meaning of a Hebrew or Greek word. For each Hebrew or Greek word all the English words were listed that were chosen by the KJV translators.

Three problems:

- Strong's Concordance is based on an English Bible translation of 1611. Discoveries since then are not included.
- The dictionaries in Strong's do not give the semantic range of a given word but only those English words the KJV translators choose when they made their translation.
- Using the dictionary gives the suggestion that words, in and of themselves, have meaning. The truth is that words have a semantic range of meaning, but only the immediate context in which a word is found can give the necessary criteria to know which of the meanings within a word's semantic range is that which the author intends.

## Conclusion

The Strong's numbers themselves are a handy way to reference Bible words and verses. To bring forth the biblical author's intended meaning in a better way one could use the following methods:

- using a Hebrew English lexicon eg BDB (Brown-Driver-Briggs) or a Greek English lexicon like eg Thayer's,
- using an online lexicon with eg [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org),
- using a program like Accordance.

The contents of the above are based on an [article](#) of Tim Hegg from April 2016.

Semantic range: a word may have distinctive and different meanings that arise through usage over time and may have no relation to each other.

How to use BDB or Thayer's Lexicon with [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org)?

- a. search a word in a translation – toggle Strong's nr – click on 'Hxxxx' next to the word
  - b. search a verse eg 'Judges 5 10' - toggle Strong's nr – click on 'Hxxxx' next to the word
  - c. search direct strong's nr 'H3510' – etc
- For Greek use 'Gxxxx'.

In [this video](#) Mark Ward explains in a friendly and clear manner why not to use Strong's Dictionary and gives alternatives.