

Stuttgart Electronic Study Bible. Edited by C. Hardmeier and E. Talstra, together with A. Groves. Version 1.0. Using Version 2.1 of Libronix Digital Library System. Stuttgart and Haarlem: German Bible Society and Netherlands Bible Society, 2004. €240.00 / \$279.95. ISBN 3-438-01963-9.

The *Stuttgart Electronic Study Bible* (SESB), released in July 2004, allows the serious student of the Old and New Testament to do what other Bible software allows us to do, and much more. Like BibleWorks and Gramcord, the SESB provides the user with editions of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Old and New Testament, Hebrew and Greek dictionaries and numerous Bible translations in several languages: *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS, 5th corrected edition), *Novum Testamentum Graece* (Nestle-Aland, 27th Edition), Septuagint (A.Rahlfs), Vulgate (B. Fischer, R. Weber); four lexicons: *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon to the Old Testament* (H. J. Bosman, R. Oosting, F. Postma), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (J. Lust, E. Eynikel, K. Hauspie), and a concise Greek-English German dictionary (B. M. Newman); and two English (NRSV, NIV), five German, three French, three Dutch translations and one Danish translation. For the Septuagint, the CCAT/Gramcord database is included, for the Greek New Testament the Gramcord morphological database, allowing full linguistic analysis of each word in the LXX and the NT and search queries in the Greek OT/NT according to linguistic categories.

What is unique about SESB is 1. the fact that these texts are managed through the powerful Libronix Digital Library (LDL); 2. the inclusion of the (text-)critical apparatus for BHS and NA27; 3. the WIVU (Werkgroep Informatica of the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam) database for the Hebrew Bible, a linguistically analyzed Hebrew database which makes possible grammatical research of the Hebrew text, with new syntactic search options and additional morphological options; 4. the possibility to do a lemma search (so far only the German translations have been lemmatized), allowing the identification of clusters of terms belonging to a semantic domain (e.g., to find passages on “family relations,” the user can employ search terms like “father, mother, son, daughter, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, grandfather, grandmother”).

The interface of LDL makes the use of SESB easy to learn. In Basic Search, the user can search for a single word or for multiple words in the Biblical texts or in the Bible translations. In the Bible Search Results window the user can display the search results as a synoptical reference list. The search function for BHS allows the user to search for words, phrases or clauses and to specify morphological and syntactical criteria such as part of speech, person, gender, suffix, verb forms, stems, or function; if you click on “Show Preferred Bible”, a column on the right hand side of the screen provides the translation for the search results. Searches in the Greek New Testament, SESB use the morphological database of Gramcord.

The Topic Browser makes it possible to retrieve information in lexica and dictionaries, while the Reference Browser allows the user to find information on a particular Bible reference in all the library resources available through LDL. The KeyLink function links terms in the Hebrew OT, for example, with the Hebrew dictionary: when the cursor hovers over *bereshit*, the first word in Gen 1:1, a pop-up window displays and translates the lexemes “b” and “reshit”, and a click on the word opens the Hebrew-English dictionary providing further details. Another example: when the cursor hovers over *pisteuonti* in Rom 1:16, a pop-up window provides the lexical form *pisteuo*, at the bottom of the screen the information “verb, present, active, participle, masculine, singular dative” appears, and a click on the word opens the Greek-English dictionary providing further details. Or, KeyLink allows you to move from the term “salvation” in Rom 1:16

NRSV to the corresponding entry in a dictionary such as the *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, provided that it is available in LDL. The Parallel Resources button allows the user to access all resources that correspond to the current resource: if you work on Ps 23 or on Rom 8, the user is presented with a list of all available translations which, when opened, display Ps 23 or Rom 8. The Passage Guide allows the user to search any commentaries, Bible dictionaries, and other software bundles that can be added to LDL (such as the *The Essential IVP Reference Collection* or the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*) on a particular Bible passage. The Parallel Passages function displays e.g. the Greek text and/or translations of the Synoptic Gospels in parallel columns. The Parallel Bible Versions displays any number of biblical texts and translations in parallel columns. The Passage in All Versions function lets the user list versions of a particular passage from all available Bible editions in one window.

The critical apparatus which SESB provides for BHS and NA27 is easy to use. When the cursor is placed on a particular critical sign in the Hebrew or Greek text, a pop-up window displays the information of the critical apparatus that the print editions record concerning variant readings for the particular term or phrase, listing the variant readings and the manuscripts which support them. If one clicks on the critical signs, a new window opens displaying the annotation of the critical apparatus. The text and the critical apparatus can be synchronized in horizontal or vertical parallel windows. A unique feature is the possibility to search the critical apparatus; one can search for certain manuscripts or variants.

While the price of the software package is certainly justified, it may keep scholars and students who already own comparable Bible software such as Gramcord (\$235) or BibleWorks (\$299) from acquiring SESB. For German scholars who want to work in German only, there is no alternative to SESB. Multiple license agreements, attractive for Bible colleges, Seminaries and Divinity Schools, are available (e.g., three licenses for €600.00). The home page of SESB, part of the website of the German Bible Society (<http://www.dbg.de>), is available in German only.

For scholars, students and Bible translators who work with the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Bible and who use the critical editions of the Hebrew Bible and the Greek New Testament of Nestle-Aland, the *Stuttgart Electronic Study Bible* is an indispensable tool.

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