

# e-Sword Update & Serious Language Tools



**B**ack in the September 2006 issue, I reviewed the wonderful free Bible software program e-Sword ([www.e-sword.net](http://www.e-sword.net)), written and given to the church by Rick Meyers. I'd like to invest my space this month in updating you on this product, as well as informing you of several biblical language tools on other platforms for the serious student.

## e-Sword Update

The latest version of eS is 7.8.5. (BTW, the 6,000,000th download of eS occurred in July!). This version has a new "Gospel Harmony" feature ("Bible > Gospel Harmony"), which is actually a reproduction of A.T. Robertson's classic, *A Harmony of the Gospels*.

Also new in this latest version is the addition of several more Bible book abbreviations that the program recognizes, such as: Mt, Lk, Php, Jas, etc. There is also additional support for Japanese and Vietnamese modules.

The best news is that there are several new add-ons. Free stuff includes an update of Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the OT, the Hebrew New Testament (translated by Franz Delitzsch), the ESV translation, the Textus Receptus, Byzantine, and Westcott-Hort Greek New Testaments (all with Strong's

numbers), William R. Shepherd's Historical Atlas (graphics), the CIA World Factbook (graphics), and a few others.

Of special note, however, are the many low cost contemporary titles that are now available for eS. This is one big reason why eS is such a wonderful value. You pay nothing for the program and even the add-ons that do cost something are still inexpensive. New from AMG Publishers, for example, is *A Word for the Day: Key Words from the New Testament* ([www.e-sword.net/word4day.html](http://www.e-sword.net/word4day.html)),

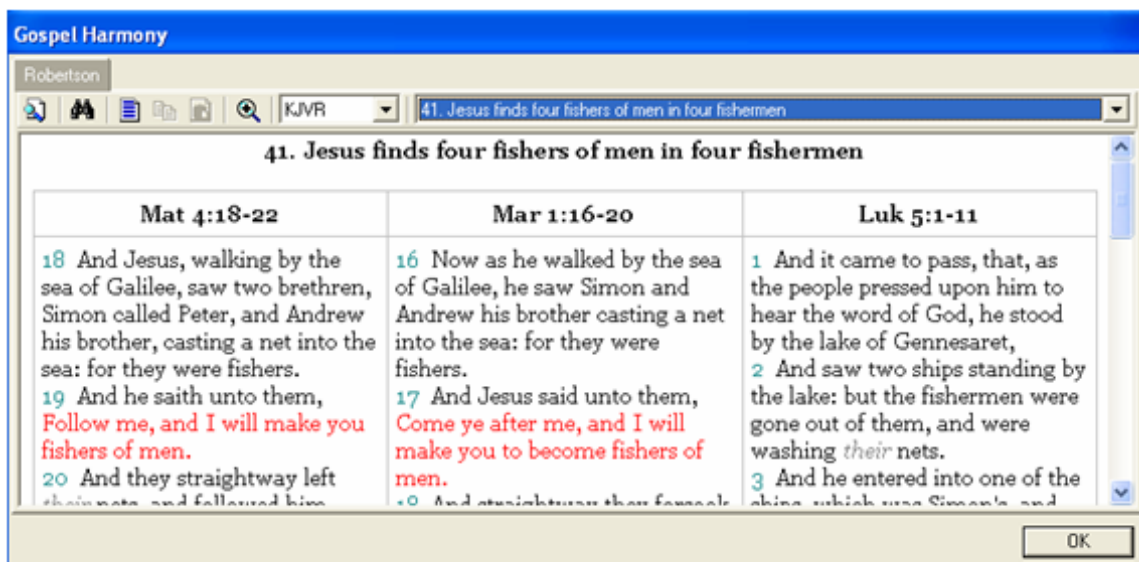


Fig. 1

a daily devotional based on Greek word studies made practical for Christian living (\$10.00).

And then there is eStudySource, who has jumped on the eS bandwagon with both feet! Check them out at [www.eStudySource.com](http://www.eStudySource.com). While they have been offering the NKJV, NLT, and the Complete Jewish Bible (\$14.99 each), as well as the Message and the HCSB (\$9.99 each) for a while, the BIG news (and you read it here first!) the NIV is coming very soon.

Also brand new at eStudySource is the very popular Life Application Study Bible Notes (\$14.99), which is nice because you don't have to buy another Bible. An absolutely must-have title (IMHO) is William MacDonald's Believer's Bible Commentary, the best one-volume commentary I have ever seen (and I've seen them all)—and at \$20.00, it's way cheaper than hardcopy. The Bible Knowledge Commentary OT and NT Set (the classics from the dudes at Dallas) is also a great value (\$34.99). And you just can't get the beloved J. Vernon McGee's five-volume Thru the Bible anywhere as cheap as here (\$39.99). The same is true of Lloyd J. Ogilvie's (ed.) massive The Preacher's Commentary, which at \$79.99 is cheaper than any other software platform (and in hardcopy, forget about it!). Other great values are Jon Courson's Application Commentary (NT; \$19.99), Larry Richard's The Bible Teacher's Commentary (\$19.99), the old standby Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (\$14.99), and Nelson's New Bible Manners & Customs (only \$9.99, although it does not contain all the illustrations of the print version).

I would dare humbly add a word or two about eS's documentation. As mentioned in my original review, while the On-line Help is rudimentary, there is 105-page tutorial manual (in .PDF), written by Barrie Gordon and Johan Struwig of South Africa. As a former documentation specialist, I am impressed with this manual. It's simply written, well organized, and very graphic. Its last update, however, was 6-27-03, so if these dear Christian brothers would have time, a revision is in order. It would also be nice if this manual were accessible from the eS "Help" menu, which could also serve as an alternative to more robust Online Help.

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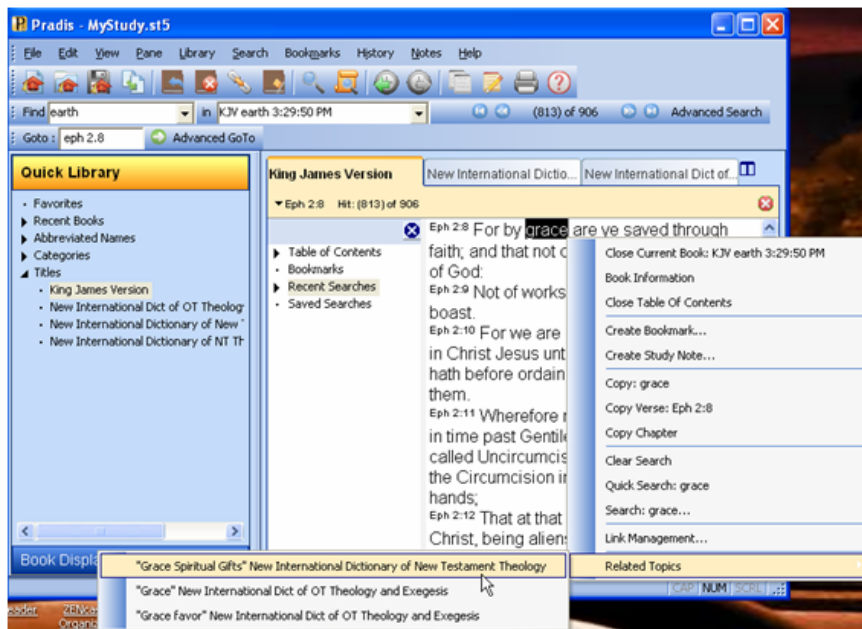
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**Fig. 2 – Zondervan’s premier platform, Pradis 6.0, with instant right-click lookup in biblical language powerhouses NIDNTT and NIDOTTE.**

Finally, if I may be so bold, I would again strongly urge you to support the eS project. As I originally mentioned, and it is still true, less than one percent of the people who download eS return to say thanks and contribute financially. That continues to burden me deeply. PLEASE go to the support page, <http://www.e-sword.net/support.html>, and encourage a selfless Christian brother. I said it once, and I say it again, e-Sword is what Bible software ought to be, so let us support this effort for God’s glory.

### Serious Language Tools

As a Bible expositor, which in-turn requires serious study of theology and the biblical languages, I have been using the four-volume New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (Colin Brown, ed.) for many years. While I also use Kittel’s 10-volume work, of course, I

have always liked Brown’s better. Well, thanks to Pradis 6.0 (Zondervan), I can now use the NIDNTT like never before.

But I’m getting ahead of myself. Pradis (Fig. 2) is Zondervan’s software platform, which is different from most other platforms but which I found easy to use. Its “tabbed” main window enables you to move from one resource to another quickly, and it has many features that today’s marketplace demands. Here is just a small handful that stand out to me: search the entire library by topic, verse, word, or phrase; view search results by topic, book-chapter-verse, in context, or in concordance view; link books to scroll simultaneously; copy and paste verses, words, or whole chapters into other documents; right-click on a word in the Bible text to perform such actions as search, create a bookmark or study note, copy, and, most important to me, select a “Related Topic.” (For more about Pradis’ features and add-ons, go directly to [www.zondervan.com/Cultures/en-US/Product/Software/Pradis.htm?QueryStringSite=Zondervan](http://www.zondervan.com/Cultures/en-US/Product/Software/Pradis.htm?QueryStringSite=Zondervan).)

It is that last feature that works so well for me. Having not only the NIDNTT but also the New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis, all I have to do (see Fig. 2) is right-click on a word, point at “Related Topics” and have instant access to other resources that deal with that word.

Now, because I am moderately geeky (about a 6—okay maybe 7, 8 tops—on a scale of 1-10), speed has always been an issue with me. Many programs in today’s bloat-ware are positively “snailish” (is that a word?). Not so here. I was pleasantly surprised at the virtually instantaneous lookup (entering Eph 2.8, for example, in the “Goto” box in the upper left corner). My benchmark, frankly, has for years been QuickVerse 4, Craig Rairdin’s hands-down fastest Bible program ever. But I have to admit; a verse lookup in Pradis is just as fast. I wouldn’t have believed it if I hadn’t seen it. And finding an entry in other resources is only a nanosecond slower (more or else).

While Zondervan has cornered the market (well, sort of) with these powerhouses, there are still many other titles out there for the serious student. To name only one publisher among others, for example, WORDSearch (<http://www.wordsearchbible.com>), one of my favorite platforms, has several classic essentials for language study: Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Trench’s Synonyms of the New Testament, and most notably, the abridged Kittel (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament). They also have one of my favorites, Spiros Zodhiates’ Complete Word Study Dictionary (OT & NT), as well as: Kenneth Wuest’s works; Barclay Newman’s A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament; Stephen Renn’s (ed.) Expository Dictionary of Bible Words; Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon; an analytical interlinear Greek NT; and, of course, Vine, Vincent, Robertson, Thayer, Louw & Nida, and Syntax of the Moods and Tenses. It also has a similar right-click lookup feature as Pradis. All that in one place!

So, serious students of God’s Word (which all we preachers must be) can truly rejoice that software makes a difficult task easier, that of obeying God’s mandate to dig deep into Scripture so we can adequately “feed the flock of God” (I Pet. 5:2; cf., Jn. 20:15-17; Acts 20:28; II Tim. 4:1-4). Words matter, so the words of God matter most.