

## **Accordance 11 and BibleWorks 10 – what makes them special?**

Accordance is a well-known Mac program, which now also runs on Windows. BibleWorks is a well-known Windows program, which now also runs on Mac. What are the particular strengths of each of these programs? And where are their limitations? This review sets the two programs side by side in a Windows 10 system in order to reveal their respective capabilities.

### **Accordance**

Accordance is currently offered for Mac OS, IOS and Windows. The current version number is 11. The versions for Mac and Windows are more or less identical in their respective capabilities. Some of the menu options are to be found in different places, but the scope of operation is basically the same. There are also versions of Accordance for iPad and iPhone. Due to the smaller screens and especially the touch-screen interface, the options there are slightly different.

Accordance is offered in six versions from the “Starter” version (US\$ 59.90) to the “Ultimate” version (US\$ 1,999). They differ only in the amount of resources they contain, not in the possibilities the program itself offers. The “Starter” version already contains a large selection of books, including seven English Bibles (e.g., ASV, ESV, KJV) and five from other languages (Portuguese Bible Almeida, German Elberfelder 1905, German Lutherbibel 1912, French Louis Segond and the Spanish Reina Valera from 1909 with Strong’s numbers), two commentaries (Matthew Henry condensed and IVP *New Bible commentary*), ESV-Crossrefs and Treasury of Scripture Knowledge, four Bible dictionaries (*Easton’s Bible dictionary*, Eerdmans Bible dictionary, *Bible names dictionary* and Webster’s dictionary) and many other useful books (including, e.g., *Nave’s topical Bible* as well as different works for identifying and comparing parallels in the Bible). There is even a version of the Greek New Testament with Strong’s numbers (Textus Receptus) included in the package, as well as a Greek dictionary organised by the Strong’s numbering system and the Mounce Greek dictionary. For the Old Testament, the Strong’s Hebrew dictionary and the Kohlenberg/Mounce Hebrew-Aramaic dictionary is included.

The “Bible Study Collection” (US\$ 199) offers a broad variety of English Bibles and commentaries as well as study tools. It includes the 49 volumes of the Tyndale commentary set and many other valuable books. The “Original Language Collection” (US\$ 299) is specially meant for students and teachers of the biblical languages Greek and Hebrew. It includes morphologically tagged texts of the Hebrew Bible, the Greek Septuagint and the Greek New Testament (based on Nestle-Aland 28). It also comes with the Brown-Driver-Briggs abridged Hebrew lexicon and the Louw & Nida Greek lexicon and many other books valuable for studying the Bible in its original languages. The “Essential Collection” (US\$ 499) basically combines the “Bible Study Collection” and the “Original Language Collection”. It adds an interactive atlas, a timeline and a Bible lands photo guide. The “Advanced Collection” (US\$ 999) adds a lot of further study and research material such as the Pillar New Testament commentary set, the John Phillips “Exploring” commentary set, the *BHS* Hebrew Bible and the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament 28 (both morphologically tagged and with apparatus). The “Ultimate Edition” (US\$ 1,999) builds upon the “Advanced Edition” by adding a large number of study tools and books designed for theological interaction with biblical texts. It includes many commentaries (e.g., the New International Greek testament commentary set, the New American commentary set and the Holman Old and New Testament commentary set), 29 English Bibles, the Greek-English lexicon on the New Testament (BDAG), the Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament (HALOT) and Jenni and Westermann’s theological lexicon of the Old Testament.

The main strength of Accordance is its speed and flexibility. The program starts with one workspace. A workspace is the biggest unit of the program. It contains at least one zone, which has at least one tab. Resources are displayed in a tab. A tab can contain parallel panes. Panes can show sources connected with each other, e.g., Bibles and commentaries. They scroll in sync with one another according to verse. Zones are independent, but can also be linked together, if desired. In this way it is possible to simultaneously open sources of a different kind, e.g., Bibles and commentaries in one zone and Bible maps in another zone. It is possible to open many different zones,

which all contain many different tabs and panes. Therefore it is feasible to do all the work in one workspace, but it is also possible to open different workspaces. This could be helpful if one works with more than one screen or wants to save a special workspace for further use. Any workspace can easily be saved and opened again at a later time. Favourite workspaces can be labelled as such for easy access in the future. The library is pre-organised into 23 categories, but it is also possible to create one's own folders and subfolders and sort the library to suit one's own preferences. An Infopane shows all installed resources with references to the text, giving quick access to these resources. It also shows other information related to the text, e.g., cross-references, related topics and parallel texts.

The main strength of Accordance is its search engine. Searches can be done in many different ways. The fastest search is with the quick entry box found in each tab. A more comfortable way to do searches is the "search" option in the menu, which offers more options to specify the search. It is even possible to search for topics. This search method automatically searches the resource in the leading pane of a selected tab but it can be redirected to search through any chosen resource in the library. Two kinds of searches are possible: word search and verse search. In both kinds the program offers suggestions for words, books or commands as soon as one starts typing. When using the "search" option one can see all the possible words, books or commands and scroll through them. There is also the possibility of course, to select a special term in a text and then use the right click to start a search (on the exact form, Lemma, root or special grammatical form). Using this tool with Hebrew texts (where words are often combined with an article, suffix or preposition) requires the correct part of the word to be selected before it can be searched.

There are two different modes for searching. The first is an exact search, which looks for all words in the exact way they are typed into the search field. This search can also be combined with multiple tags, which is especially useful for Hebrew and Greek tagged texts. In this way one can look for all kinds of grammatical or syntactical specialties. The second option is a flexible search, which also includes all kinds of variations of the search terms, e.g., plural forms, other tenses or even similar

phrases. This kind of search is very useful for the more typical use of Accordance. It applies mainly to Accordance texts.

A powerful way to do searches is the Construct searching capability. Especially when working with Greek and Hebrew texts, this gives a lot of help to construct complex searches.

Another special search option with Accordance is the overall search, which can be done in a separate Research tab or from the entry box in the Tool bar. This search can look through all installed resources or specified types of sources. What is astonishing is the speed of this complex search. Even with the Ultimate Edition and its vast number of resources, a search on two or three words at the same time takes only a few seconds. And even if it were to take a bit longer due to the complexity of the search, one can still go on working with Accordance while it searches.

A great many texts (biblical texts as well as other resources) are tagged. When the cursor hovers over a word that is tagged, an instant detail window automatically reveals that information (e.g., parsing information, definitions, grammatical or syntactical information, cross-references [full text] or footnotes). Alternatively, the tagged information can be opened in a separate window in complete form. A faster method is to triple click on a word, which opens a predefined source in a separate window. In this way one can, for example, define a special Hebrew lexicon for use with Hebrew texts. A triple click will then automatically open this lexicon with the highlighted word.

Besides the texts, there are also other resources within Accordance, which can assist the user in his or her biblical studies. One useful tool is the atlas, which can be customised completely according to the respective search. It can show sites, regions and routes. One can also create one's own map with sites, regions and routes. It even contains the possibility to view any topographical area in 3D. Besides this, Accordance includes a lot of pictures of Bible sites, biblical objects as well as Greek and Hebrew manuscripts.

Another useful tool is the timeline of biblical and world history. One can select conservative or critical dating schemes and it is also possible to add people and dates

to the timeline or edit the existing data.

To display research results, Accordance contains a number of different graphical analytical tools, showing for instance the distribution of hits in Bible texts or breaking down the results according to different tags.

The “Dynamic Interlinear” is not a standalone resource, but can be added to every tagged Bible. It can also be completely customized by adding or removing lines to be displayed. In this way one can show different translations of a given text or different textual sources (which can be used for the purpose of textual criticism). The “Compare Texts” button helps to show the same text in different translations or different textual sources. It automatically highlights differences between the parallel panes displayed.

The Ultimate Collection even contains a graphical syntax module, which graphically displays the syntax of the Hebrew Bible or the Greek New Testament. It also gives the possibility to search for syntactically compatible texts. This module can also be added to other collections as an add-on. Accordance also contains a diagramming tool which gives the user the possibility to display the sentence structure and syntax of biblical texts.

Daily reading, bookmarks, notes and the possibility to highlight texts are also integrated in Accordance. Bookmarks, notes and highlights can be synchronized via Dropbox to any other device running Accordance 11 (PC, Mac, iPhone or iPad). Notes can not only be added to biblical texts, but also to all other resources. In biblical texts they are connected to a particular Bible verse, whereas in other texts they are connected to single words. “User Modules” allow the inclusion of other Bible translations, commentaries, sermon notes and other sources into Accordance. These modules are then integrated into the library and can be fully searched like any other module. The “Parallel Module” allows for the search of parallels within the Bible. There are a lot of different categories offered by Accordance (e.g. Gospels, Synoptics, OT in the NT or Gospel harmony).

### **BibleWorks**

BibleWorks is offered for Windows and Mac. The current version is 10. Besides a

new appearance, version 10 offers improved Mac compatibility and functionality (although it runs on an emulator which means that it does not completely follow Mac user interface guidelines) as well as new search capabilities and exegetical resources.

BibleWorks comes as a complete packet with a number of resources which can be unlocked after a separate purchase. It is currently offered for US\$ 398, either as DVD or via download. There are numerous additional resources which can be separately ordered, e.g., the “Stuttgart Original Language Modules” including the Nestle Aland (NA) Greek New Testament 28 with apparatus and the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) and *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (BHQ) with apparatus as well as other sources for text critical research (US\$ 149 for either NT or OT, US\$ 199 for NT and OT). With version 10 it is also possible to include some of the WORD search modules into BibleWorks.

The main orientation of BibleWorks is on the biblical text itself. Therefore more than 50 original language texts and morphology bases, including a significant number of HD images of original Greek manuscripts, and the Hebrew codex Leningradensis are integrated into BibleWorks. Furthermore, it includes over 200 different editions of the Bible in many different languages (including many up to date versions), along with a number of lexical-grammatical references and other additional material. Altogether these valuable resources make for a rather impressive study tool. Everything in BibleWorks is centred on understanding and analysing the biblical text.

The availability of the Stuttgart Original Language Modules (SOLM) is one of the main additions of version 10. It must be bought separately, but is only available for version 10. The apparatus can be displayed in the Analysis window. The BibleWorks Manuscript Projects displays the similarities and differences in the different MSS texts.

Also new to BibleWorks 10 is the so-called “fuzzy search”. This only works with English texts. With the fuzzy search one can look up words like “love” and be given references to the different renditions of that word, e.g., “loves”, “beloved”, “loving” etc. There are two options to choose from, either the Link-based search or the Porter Stemming-based search. Also new is an E-Pub Reader, which is integrated into the

analysis window and a complete set of audio files for the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament as well as a few other new resources. Beyond that, the additional changes have to do with optics. The colour scheme can be fully customised. As previously mentioned, the main strength of BibleWorks is its concentration on working with the biblical text itself. This text can be shown in its original language and in a wide variety of translations. It can be analysed morphologically and syntactically, supplemented with timeline information or HD-pictures from Israel and additional notes.

There are also two commentaries on BibleWorks (Matthew Henry and NET Bible), but this is clearly not the main purpose for which BibleWorks was created.

The search capability of BibleWorks is exhaustive and very fast. A double-click on any word in any given Bible immediately shows all places where the same word (in its exact form) occurs. A right click gives the possibility to search according to different strategies (form, lemma or homonym). If a word is combined with an article, suffix or preposition (as is often the case in Hebrew texts), BibleWorks first asks which of the words the user wants to search.

Searches can also be started in the search window command line. Using the right click options, it is possible to insert morphological tags and other special search tags into the search. Besides the command line, more complex searches can be performed through the graphical search engine. The possibilities within this engine are numerous. If, for instance, one wants to find all the OT texts where a Hebrew word is translated by a certain Greek word in the LXX and at the same time a certain Latin word in the Vulgate, this can be arranged by the graphical search engine with only a few clicks. BibleWorks also contains numerous examples for searches with this search engine, which can be used and changed to adapt to one's own needs.

All search results are displayed in the Search window and can also be displayed graphically in different ways in the Stats tab of the Result window. The Result window offers twelve different tabs, so that searches can be saved while looking up a different text or doing a different search. It is also possible to start multiple instances of BibleWorks at the same time.

In all tagged texts, an analytical window pops up as soon as the cursor hovers over one of the words, showing all available grammatical and lexical information, cross references, notes, critical apparatus information, Greek/Hebrew form usage and so on. By right clicking, the possibility is given to look up the word in the lexicon browser of the user's choice or switch to one of the other resources with additional information. Two different analysis windows can be used to display the information needed or to write or show notes. BibleWorks also contains a basic editor, which enables the user to write notes directly within BibleWorks. The text can be saved as a RTF and then used in any word processor.

Different Bible versions can be linked together and displayed in parallel columns, vertical comparative lines or with their respective full context. Automatic highlighting shows differences in the text between Bible versions. Parallel-aligned Hebrew and Greek texts (Hebrew Old Testament and LXX) make it easy to find and search Hebrew and Greek equivalents. A Gospel synopsis tool displays the parallel gospel accounts. It is also possible to edit this synopsis.

A very user-friendly Diagramming Module contains the complete Greek New Testament sentence diagrams (Leedy's New Testament Greek sentence diagrams), but can also be used to construct one's own diagrams of any text. The Report Generator can be used to show and export all relevant information on a certain text (lexical information, morphological analysis, word frequency, etc). This information can be exported to a printable document.

The BibleWorks Vocabulary Flashcard Module is a very helpful tool for learning biblical Greek and Hebrew vocabulary. It also contains sound files for the correct pronunciation of the words.

Many online tutorial videos and a full electronic manual assist in making it a user-friendly tool, which can be of great help for the lay Bible reader as well as the experts in biblical studies.

### **Conclusion and comparison**

If the understanding and analysing of biblical texts, especially in their original

language, is what the user needs, BibleWorks is the most appropriate choice. The search capabilities are extremely fast and the graphical search engine offers extensive possibilities for every kind of search.

Working on and with the biblical text is what BibleWorks is made for. The limitations of this program include the lack of flexibility of the program itself (which can be modified only slightly in its structure) and its limited number of commentaries. The user also needs to be able to work in English since there are no other languages offered for the program itself.

Accordance is also a powerful program for working with biblical texts. It can be helpful for Bible readers on all levels: from the Christian who just wants to look up a certain text in the Old or New Testament, to the academic researcher working with Greek and Hebrew texts. The offered program bundles are a good starting point since they provide a good collection of resources for particular kinds of interests. But it is always possible to add further individual resources which can easily be purchased through the Accordance store on the internet.

When it comes to speed, Accordance is as fast as BibleWorks. What is especially impressive about Accordance is its flexibility. It can at times be a bit confusing since there are so many options to choose from but with a little experience, a user can customise his or her workspace to make it more comfortable to work with. The extent of resources for Accordance is only limited when it comes to Bible translations beyond English. The texts coming with Accordance are sometimes old translations (e.g., even with the Ultimate Edition, only the German versions Elberfelder 1905 and Luther 1912). Fortunately it is possible to buy further translations as add-ons. In this regard BibleWorks is much more up to date.

While BibleWorks itself is only in English, Accordance is offered in different languages (currently English, German, Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese). Not all of the menu options are translated completely. For example, English sentences can still be found in the menu options when using the German interface. However, since most of the resources are also in English, this is presumably not a major problem for most users. Accordance and BibleWorks are constantly revised and updated, so these things

will surely be sorted out in the future.

Overall, both programs are extremely helpful for working with biblical texts. They can be highly recommended for all levels of biblical research. If the user is interested mainly in the exegetical work, BibleWorks is number one. If the user also wants to have further study material and commentaries, Accordance is the best choice.

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