How Can Accordance be used in a Teaching Environment?

Respondent:

Roy B. Brown
OakTree Software, Inc. (www.AccordanceBible.com)
Booth 219 in the exhibit area

Introduction

The Accordance software is already well-known by Biblical scholars as the premier tool for research in original languages and other ancient resources used in Biblical studies. Even though Accordance is not usually thought of as a teaching tool, this presentation will demonstrate that Accordance equally excels when used for teaching in a learning environment, such as a classroom or other academic setting.

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There are at least three main ways that Accordance can be used most effectively in teaching:

1. Preparation — How can Accordance assist in preparation for teaching?

2. Presentation — How can Accordance make presentation of materials more effective in a classroom or other learning environment?

3. Participation — How can Accordance be used most effectively in interactions between students and teachers, especially in ways that cannot be anticipated?
Using Accordance in a learning environment also greatly depends upon the intended audience or level of the studies. For purposes of this presentation we will demonstrate how Accordance can be used in Biblical studies, both at a beginning undergraduate level and at an advanced graduate degree level.

For simplicity we will mainly use the same base text to demonstrate various aspects of teaching with Accordance. The text chosen for this presentation is Amos 1:1-2:6. Even though this will make the focus mainly on the Hebrew Bible, the same principles can be applied to Greek in the New Testament and even to other extra-biblical texts.

**Preparation**

Accordance can be used for teaching preparation in two primary ways:

1. To prepare handouts and other materials to distribute to students, and
2. To prepare presentations to be used during the actual teaching time.

**Handout Preparation**

When studying a passage from the Bible, Accordance makes it very easy to add as many parallel versions of the same text within the same window, limited mainly by the size of the monitor. In addition to parallel Bible texts, Accordance can also add parallel reference tools, such as notes, commentaries, or apparatus.

Having all of these texts in parallel not only provides an easy way to study different texts and resources together, but also provides a means to prepare a simple handout of any combination of parallel texts and other reference tools. A handout with any combination of parallel texts and other resources can all be printed directly from the same window to either paper or even to a PDF file.

For example, a handout with parallel texts could consist of two English translations with the Hebrew Bible for a beginning undergraduate class as shown below:
For an advanced graduate class, a handout could consist of the Hebrew Bible in parallel with the Septuagint, along with the apparatus of the Hebrew Bible and Septuagint:

Accordance also allows direct export of any of its resources to other software platforms such as a word processor or desktop publishing application. Accordance resources can be exported to other software by copy and paste, drag and drop, or saving as a file.

For example, a document can be prepared on a word processor that shows some of the text of the Amos passage along with a map and pictures of some of the sites mentioned in this passage. In addition to an English Bible, graphics from the Accordance PhotoGuide, the Accordance Bible Atlas, and archival pictures from the American Colony Archive are also used. Annotations can then be easily added to finish the handout, as in the sample shown below:
Presentation Preparation

Accordance can also be used to prepare presentations for classroom use. In a manner similar to preparing a printed handout, Accordance can export documents to presentation software such as Keynote or PowerPoint. Annotations and other resources can be integrated easily with the Accordance resources, as shown in the sample Keynote slide below:

What may not be so well-known is that Accordance itself can be used for presentations. Accordance has what is called a “Slide Show” mode to show material prepared in one or more workspaces in Accordance. The Accordance slide show mode allows showing the text and graphics of Accordance without even exporting from Accordance to other presentation software. The tabs within a workspace represent each “slide” of the presentation, while each workspace represents each group of “slides.”
For example, the workspace below shows a set of tabs with various texts and tools needed in a presentation for the text of Amos:

![Workspace Image]

The second workspace shows a map and other pictures related to the same text:

![Map Image]

**Presentation**

As described above, the Accordance resources can be used together with other presentation software, such as Keynote or PowerPoint. The focus here will be on how Accordance itself can be used as a presentation tool in a classroom environment.

**Basic Presentation**

For a beginning undergraduate class, the following series of slides will help to better understand the text of Amos. These slides were selected to show different aspects of a more popular study of Amos. The text with parallel translations along with a map of the area of Tekoa are already shown above.
In addition the following additional tabs will show other aspects of this passage:

**Scrollable parallel texts with commentary and notes** (to give better understanding of the meaning of the verses):

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**Introduction (1:1-2)**

Amos (1:1). Most Old Testament characters are introduced with their patronymic (“son of ...”) or at least qualified by a place name (“Micah of Moresheth,” Mic. 1:1). Amos is distinctive in having no further

Amos 1:1

1. **Amos 1:1** in Heb “The words of Amos.” Among the prophetic books this opening phrase finds a parallel only at Jer. 1:1. But is not that uncommon in other genres (note, e.g., Prov 30:1; 31:1; Ecc 4:1; Neh 1:1).

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**Popular dictionary article on “Tekoa” from Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia** (to describe the home town and background of Amos):

**TEKOÀ (TEKOAH).** KJV TEKOAH in 2 Samuel 14:2, 4, 9 and in RSV of 1 Maccabees 9:33; KJV THECOE, thî kồî, in 1 Maccabees 9:33.

1. **Tekoa, the wilderness.** Here is a rather wild, arid, and stony district, a dozen m. S of Jerusalem, deserted “save for donkeys and sure-footed men.” Its soil is a kind of chalk marl, the “frontier of tillable land.” Beyond is desert, the part toward the E characterized by Dr. George Adam Smith as “fifteen miles of chaos sinking to...the Dead Sea.”

There was scant cultivation in valley pockets where was preserved the once rich if sparse vegetable mold that overlay the hills of Judah, when anciently they afforded a forest. The region produced olives and a peculiar fruit called “sycomore

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**Pictures of sites from the Accordance PhotoGuide and the American Colony Archive, including Mount Carmel and Damascus:**

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Special Map with custom overlay (showing a spiral pattern that indicates how the message of Amos was first directed to the enemies of Israel, but concludes with a message for Israel itself):

Advanced Presentation
For an advanced graduate class, the focus would be more on a understanding of the original text of Amos. The following series of slides follow a similar pattern to the previous presentation, but at a more advanced level.

Parallel texts with other original texts:
Parallel texts with syntax structure (to help understand the structure of the original language):

Anchor Bible Dictionary article on “Tekoa” (to give a more detailed description of the home town and background of Amos):

Parallel theme of “three … even four” in the Context of Scripture from searching for Amos 1:3:
Parallels on judgment of the surrounding nations, as found in the *JBL* archive:

Parallel passages in the Hebrew Bible:

In addition to the above resource, the use of the Accordance inference engine (INFER command) can find allusions from Amos in other texts:

Allusions to Amos in other Hebrew Bible prophets:
Allusions to LXX Amos in Greek NT Acts:

Participation

Perhaps the most useful aspect of using Accordance in a teaching environment is as an interactive tool in ways that cannot be anticipated or prepared, to allow participation of both students and teachers interactively. In this situation the two most important requirements would be search speed and easy access to resources.

Starting with the text of Amos, several hypothetical examples will be used to illustrate the interaction of Accordance between the various resources. These examples will be shown in real time with no prepared presentation.

Basic Level Participation
For a beginning undergraduate class, the starting point will be the text of Amos that was shown above:
A student would now like to see the date of Amos based upon the reign of Uzziah the king. By selecting Uzziah, the Timeline can be opened to show the date and relationship of Uzziah with other kings and prophets in Judah:

In the Timeline someone notices that some years before Uzziah, there was a queen by the name of Athaliah, which is unusual for the time. So selecting Athaliah on the Timeline and opening the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* will give more background and explanation for her ascension to the throne.

**ATHALIAH** (PERSON) [Heb. אַתָּלְיָה (אַתָּלְיָה)]. Var. GOTHALIAH. In addition to the name of an infamous queen of Judah (see 3. below), “Athaliah” was also the name of 2 men listed in the Heb Bible. The meaning of the name Athaliah is controversial, since it cannot be traced to a Heb verb root. If derived from Akk, the meaning “Yahweh has manifested his glory” (IPN, 191) is conceivable. Assuming an Ar root, a meaning like “Yahweh is just” (Bauer 1930: 78) is possible. J. Gray (1 and 2 Kings [2nd ed.] CTI, 536) also supports an Ar derivation: “In view of the names ‘qal’ and ‘qalān’ from the Northern Hejaz, we suggest rather an Arabic derivation ‘qala’ (“to be abundant, bulky”), the name referring, perhaps, to a robust child.” Given the limits of our current knowledge, the problem cannot be solved. In any case, it is likely that this Heb name represents the oldest documented use of a female (see 3. below) having a name with the theophoric component “Yahweh.”

Someone then notices that in the Accordance edition of *Anchor* has the Hebrew word at the beginning of the article. So selecting this word and doing a search in the Hebrew Bible provides an original language search without typing the Hebrew word. An English translation can be added for those students that do not know Hebrew well.
Finally, going back to the original passage in Amos, we notice the expression “Carmel dries up” in verse 2. We could find the article on Carmel in the *Accordance PhotoGuide* to learn more about Mount Carmel today, as we have already seen above.

But the second part of the phrase “dries up” indicates that there was something unusual about the rainfall on Mount Carmel. So the students would like to learn more about the annual rainfall in Israel. Since we do not know where to find a map of the annual rainfall in Israel, we will open the Search All window and look for the word “rainfall.” To avoid too many false hits, we will limit the search to just the captions of Graphics tools available in Accordance.

After looking at a sample of the search results, we see that the best pictures are from the Carta *Sacred Bridge* historical geography and the Zondervan *ZIBBCOT* Commentary that shows rainfall in the area:

These pictures show that the land of Israel is on the border between desert conditions and abundant rainfall in the north, but within the land on the right, the rainfall in Israel is relatively high in the area of Mount Carmel. So connecting these maps with Amos 1:2 shows that the expression “Carmel dries up” is very unusual and is intimately connected to the message of Amos.
For an advanced graduate class, the starting point will again be the text of Amos, with parallel original language texts:

First of all, a student would like to see if there are any significant textual variants in this passage. So we will add the Qumran Biblical text in canonical order and the BHS textual apparatus as shown below.

Based upon the parallel Qumran text and the paucity of apparatus variants, it seems that this text is fairly well attested.

But another student notices the unusual Hebrew expression in Amos 1:3 translated as “threshing sledges of iron.” By selecting the first word, and hyperlinking to the HALOT Hebrew lexicon, we learn that this is some sort of a threshing sledge associated with “cut” or “incision,” as shown below:
Returning to the selection we can search for this word in the Hebrew Bible to see if it is used in other places. It is used four times in the Hebrew Bible, if searching by lemma, but here only the first reference is shown.

Instead of doing a lemma search, perhaps we can learn more about this word by doing a root search by using the right-click menu. There are now 35 words found with the same root, and the Accordance Analysis window gives a breakdown of the search results as shown below:

- Total number of verses = 34
- Number of different forms = 12:
  - gold = 6
  - moat = 1
  - threshing sledge = 4
  - maimed = 1
  - decision = 2
  - diligent = 5
  - Haruz = 1
  - cut = 1
  - sharp = 2
  - to decide, cut = 10
  - to act = 1
  - hip = 1

Here we see the general use of the root of the word in 12 different lemmas that all are associated with cutting or decisive action. This gives us a hint of a brutal conquest of Gilead by Damascus in Amos 1:3, as if they had threshed the entire land with destructive force.
Another student notices the pattern in most of the verses of this passage in the use of three followed by four. To see the general structure of this pattern in Amos, we can do a search of the word שלוש (three) just within Amos, and add the Syntax pane in parallel. And indeed as we would expect, not only do we see a repetition of the word several times, but also a very similar syntactical structure in each of these passages in this section of Amos.

[Image of Amos 1:3 and Amos 1:6]

“One More Thing”

To conclude this overview of how Accordance can be used to enhance the effectiveness of learning in a classroom environment, we would like to show a new capability in Accordance that will be useful for all levels of teaching that was just introduced in Accordance 9.5. We call this a “dynamic interlinear” feature. Many people are familiar with a traditional interlinear or even a reverse interlinear concept in which words in the original language follow an English translation, or English words follow the original language text.

The dynamic interlinear enhances teaching in a learning environment by providing a flexible way to compare the words of any text that has tagging on it, whether original language tagging or simple Strong’s number tagging. Two parallel panes will be used with an original language text and an English text with Strong’s numbers such as the NRSV with Strong’s numbers. Traditional interlinear viewing, whether reverse interlinear or traditional interlinear, would look something like the text below:

[Image of Amos 1:1 with keys and translation]
It is very easy to add much more information in parallel. For a beginning undergraduate class, it would be useful to look at the text with a translation comparison of several popular English translations:

For an advanced graduate class, it would be useful view the Greek text together with textual variants. Here is an interlinear display of the beginning of the book of Acts with several parallel New Testament codices in uncial font that show immediately any textual differences between major manuscripts:

**Conclusion**

This short presentation has given an idea of some of the different ways that Accordance can be effectively used in a classroom or in any other learning environment. What has been shown here is just a small sample of the different ways that Accordance can be used in teaching, and hopefully this will generate a desire to learn even more.