

קָרַב

hebrew

Meaning

- Midst
- Among
- Within
- Inwardly
- The centre, whether literal, figurative or adverbial

Masculine noun. Occurs over 250 times in the Old Testament.

From the root קרב, meaning “to come near, approach.” So קָרַב is a noun form built from the verb “to draw near.” While the verb קָרַב means “to approach” or “come near,” the noun קָרַב literally names that which is “in the middle” or “near inside.”

Examples and Theological and Poetic Significance

The word frequently bridges the physical and the spiritual, speaking about:

- God’s presence - “I the Lord your God am in the midst of the camp” in Deuteronomy 23:15 - God is not distant but immanently present with his people
- The inner person - The human heart is the inner arena where God's truth must dwell, frequently spoke about in these terms in the Psalms
- Moral contamination or holiness - when Israel sins, sin is said to be in their midst, suggesting that sin pollutes the entire community's inner life.

Thus, קָרַב serves as a key word for both geographical nearness (God among His people) and existential nearness (God within one’s heart).

Sense	Meaning	
Spatial / Physical	the inside, the middle, the interior of something	“is the Lord in our midst” — Exodus 17:7plugin-autotooltip_default plugin-autotooltip_bigExodus 17:7 וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם מַסָּה וּמִרִיבָה עַל רִיב בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל נִסְתָּם אֶת יְהוָה לֵאמֹר הֲיֵשׁ אֵין וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם מַסָּה וּמִרִיבָה עַל רִיב בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל נִסְתָּם אֶת יְהוָה לֵאמֹר הֲיֵשׁ אֵין ESV And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD by saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?” NIV And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the LORD saying, καὶ ἐπειρώμασεν...

Personal / Bodily	the inward parts, inner being	“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me” — Psalm 103:1plugin-autotooltip__default plugin-autotooltip_bigPsalm 103:1 Hebrew בָּרַכְתָּ יְהוָה וְכָל קִרְבִּי אֶת שְׁמִי קְדֹשׁוֹ ESV OF DAVID. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! NIV Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. NLT Let all that I am praise the LORD; with my whole heart, I will praise his holy name. τῷ εὐλόγει ἡ ψυχὴ μου τὸν κύριον καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐντόσ μου τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ ἁγίου αὐτοῦ...
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Common Grammatical Forms in the Old Testament

Form (Grammatical Description)	English Meaning	Hebrew Spelling
Absolute singular	the midst / inner part	קִרְבַּ
Construct singular	midst of / inner part of	קִרְבִּי
Absolute plural	inward parts	קִרְבִּים (rare poetic form)
Construct plural	of the inward parts	קִרְבֵּי
With 1st person singular suffix	my inward part / within me	קִרְבִּי
With 2nd person masculine singular suffix	within you	קִרְבְּךָ
With 2nd person feminine singular suffix	within you	קִרְבֶּךָ
With 3rd person masculine singular suffix	within him / in his midst	קִרְבּוֹ
With 3rd person feminine. sing. suffix	within her / in her midst	קִרְבָּהּ
With 1st person plural suffix	within us / in our midst	קִרְבָּנוּ
With 3rd person plural suffix	within them / in their midst	קִרְבָּם
Prefixed form with אֶ (“in”)	in the midst of	בְּקִרְבִּי — most common phrase
Prefixed form with מִן (“from”)	from the midst of	מִקִּרְבִּי

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