

# Laugh

## English - Laugh (Lawg)

= to express or manifest emotion, especially mirth or amusement, typically by expelling air from the lungs in short bursts to produce an inarticulate voiced noise, with the mouth open

## Hebrew - לַעֲגֹף - Lawag

= derision, scoffing, mocking, laugh in scorn

The modern English "f" sound in "gh" does not reflect the older "g" and "ch" sound, which are very close to the Hebrew "g."

Among the seven Hebrew terms for blasphemy (see below) and slander is this one, occurring eighteen times. Various subjects of this verb indicate its range of meaning.

The wicked mock the poor and thereby insult their divine Maker ([Prov 17:6](#)). Their wicked eyes mock their fathers ([Prov 30:17](#)). They delight in laughing at such servants of God as Job ([Job 21:3](#)), Jeremiah ([Jer 20:7](#)), Asaph ([Ps 80:6](#)), Nehemiah ([Neh 2:19](#)), the Jews ([Neh 3](#)), and Hezekiah's mailmen ([2 Chron 30:10](#)).

Men who mock God's servants and message will ultimately be mocked in turn: delivered into the captivity of people who speak with what seems to be a stammering or mocking tongue ([Isa 33:10](#)).

The source of this kind of judgment is God. The classic text is [Ps 2:4](#). The Lord will mock those rebels who say of God the Father and his Messiah, "Let us break off their bands and cast off their cords." God will laugh at the heathen; he will have all of them in derision ([Ps 59:8](#)). Likewise, Wisdom joins God in laughing at the calamities of the coarse and hardened fool; she mocks when their fear comes ([Prov 1:26](#)) just as "the virgin, the daughter of Zion" mocked the proud, boastful Sennacherib ([2 Kings 19:21](#); [Isa 37:22](#)), when God delivered her.

**Mocking, derision.** The Psalmist complains that God has made Israel a reproach, a scorn, and a derision to everyone around them ([Ps 44:13](#); see also [Ps 79:4](#)). The same is said of the two sisters Samaria and Jerusalem: "Thou shalt be laughed to scorn and had in derision" ([Ezek 23:32](#)). This derision which is directed at Jerusalem in particular will come from the nations that surround her ([Ezek 36:4](#)).

Compare "to speak against," "spy out," "slander" (going about as a busybody), "to murmur," to backbite," "defamation," "to laugh at," "deride," "to scoff at."

The phrase "the scorn of the nonchalant" ([Ps 123:4](#)) is not as "impossible" grammatically as Briggs thought it was; as Dahood has reminded us, it needs no emendation. The article is often present on the construct state in Phoenician and Hebrew construct chains. These mockers are either the heathen opposition or Israelite rogues whose air of independence makes them despicable to God and men.

The most controversial passage (at least in its application in the NT, [1 Cor 14:21](#)) is [Isa 28:11](#). God will speak to Israel with "stammering lips," i.e. in captivity the language of the foreign captors will appear to be unintelligible gibberish. Since Israel had regarded the prophetic word as so much nonsensical talk, God would pay them back in their own currency in Assyria. Such is the import of [Hos 7:16](#). In return for the "rage," i.e. the defiant speeches of Israel's princes who openly disavowed the Lord, God would let the same Egyptians to whom they appealed for help turn on them in derision. One turncoat deserved another!

Family/Language	Indo-European Reflex(es)	Gloss
<b>English</b>		
Old English:	hleahtor/hlehter	laughter, jubilation
	hliehhan/hilehhan	to laugh
Middle English:	laughen	to laugh
English:	laugh (lawg)	to show mirth/joy/scorn with chuckle/loud sound
	laughter	(sound of) laughing
<b>W-Germanic</b>		
Old High German:	hlahter	laughter
	lachēn	to laugh
German:	lachen	to laugh
Dutch:	lachen	to laugh
<b>N-Germanic</b>		
Old Norse:	hlæja	to laugh
Icelandic:	hlátr	laughter
<b>E-Germanic</b>		
Gothic	hlajhan	to laugh
Crimean Gothic:	lachen	to laugh