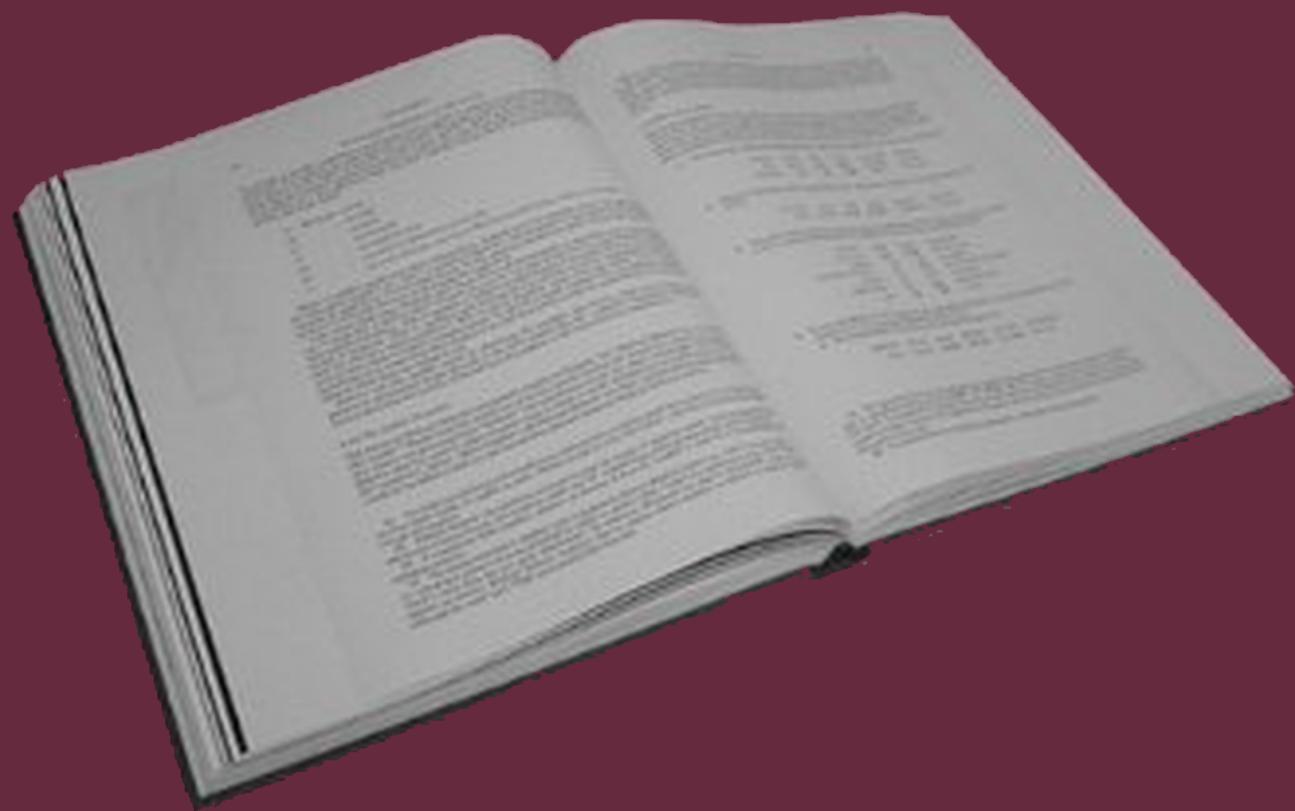


A New Grammar of
Biblical Hebrew



Frederic Clarke Putnam

A NEW GRAMMAR OF
BIBLICAL HEBREW



ALSO BY THE SAME AUTHOR

(with Ted A. Hildebrandt). *The Book of Proverbs: A Classified Bibliography*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010.

Proverbs. The Complete Biblical Library. Old Testament Study Bible. Springfield, MO: World Library Press, 1998.

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(with James C. Pakala). *Directory & Profile: Collection Evaluation & Development Section of the American Theological Library Association*. Collection Evaluation and Development Committee of the ATLA, 1986.

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BIBLICAL HEBREW

Frederic Clarke Putnam

ויהי נעם אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עִלֵּינוּ
וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָה עִלֵּינוּ
וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָהוּ:

*And may the favor of the Lord our God be upon us;
And the work of our hands establish for us;
And the work of our hands, establish it.*
Psalm 90.17



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To Emilie,
with thanks for unfailing
love & support

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LIST OF ENRICHMENT SECTIONS
(AT THE END OF EACH LESSON)

Section	Topic
1.4	Acrostic Poetry
2.8	Implicit/Assumed Information
3.8	The Divine Name
4.11	Hendiadys
5.10	Translation & the Exercises
6.11	Narrative Backbone (& Ancillary Information)
7.11	Directions
8.10	Verbal Euphony in Poetry
9.6	Semantic Clusters
10.8	The Perfect as Performative?
11.8	Reading a <i>Bulla</i>
12.6	Participles & Poetic Compression
13.8	Disjunctives in Poetry
14.8	Ruth 3.16
15.8	Genesis 13.2
16.7	Gerundive Infinitives Construct
17.7	Irrealis
18.8	<i>Nifal</i> vs. <i>Hitpael</i> ?
19.8	The Nature of D/ <i>Piel</i>
20.8	Modality
21.5	Nominal Formation
22.11	Vocabulary
23.5	Using the Lexicon
24.8	Narrative Aperture
25.10	Pre-reading Ruth 2.1-7
26.7	Participant Reference
27.7	Reading a Poem
28.8	Dating Haggai
29.6	The <i>Masora Marginalis</i> to Genesis 37.18-22
30.6	Pay Attention While Reading

PREFACE

The flood tide of introductory grammars of Biblical Hebrew since c. 1990 raises the question: “Why another?” This grammar exists, first, because I needed a grammar from which to teach that would reflect a discourse- and genre-based understanding of Biblical Hebrew¹. When the supplementary handouts overtook the regular textbook that I was using, I realized that it would be simpler just to fill in the gaps; this book is the result.

Secondly, students who pursued postgraduate studies encouraged me to persevere in seeking to have it published by reporting that they were better-prepared in Hebrew than their classmates (and even, in some cases, were as well-prepared as their professors). A number of people downloaded earlier permutations from my website (www.fredputnam.org) and reported using it to learn to read Hebrew. The learning and preparation of all of these students was, of course, their own responsibility; I am honoured to have had some part in it.

The positive response of others whom I respect, including linguists, translators, and professors of Hebrew, likewise encouraged me to bring it to fruition.

1. Unless otherwise qualified, the terms “Biblical Hebrew” and “Hebrew” refer interchangeably to the language of the biblical text (MT as represented by *BHS*); “Classical Hebrew” refers to both biblical and epigraphic materials.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am thankful for the suggestions and corrections of many students through the years, especially Linda Dietch (whom I also thank for her marvelous family story in footnote 39), Chris Drager, John Muhlfeld, Abigail Redman, and Robert Van Arsdale; for those offered by Rick Houseknecht of Biblical Seminary and Michael Hildebrand of Toccoa Falls College, both of whom have used this text to teach Biblical Hebrew; and for the extensive editorial help of Julie Devall and Jordan Siverd of Gregorian Publishing (although not even all of these together could catch all of my errors).

Most of all, I thank my wife and our daughters for their patience through the years with “Daddy’s writing”.

My goal in this, as in all things, is that people of the Book might grow in their ability to read it, and thus to delight in its beauty and truth. *S.D.G.*

Frederic Clarke Putnam
Hatfield, Pennsylvania
Epiphany MMX

ABBREVIATIONS

BIBLICAL BOOKS				GRAMMAR	
Canonically ²		Alphabetically		Verbal Stem	
Genesis	Gn	Am	Amos	D	<i>piel</i> (doubled stem)
Exodus	Ex	Dn	Daniel	Dp	<i>pual</i> (passive doubled stem)
Leviticus	Lv	Dt	Deuteronomy	Dt	<i>hitpael</i> (t-prefix doubled stem)
Numbers	Nu	Ec	Ecclesiastes	H	<i>hifil</i> (h-prefix stem)
Deuteronomy	Dt	Es	Esther	Hp	<i>hofal</i> (passive h-prefix stem)
Joshua	Js	Ex	Exodus	N	<i>nifal</i> (n-prefix stem)
Judges	Jg	Ezk	Ezekiel	Q	<i>qal</i> (“simple” stem)
1 Samuel	1 Sam	Ezr	Ezra	Qp	<i>qal passive</i> (passive of the “simple” stem)
2 Samuel	2 Sam	Gn	Genesis	Verbal Conjugation	
1 Kings	1 Kgs	Hb	Habakkuk	Coh	Cohortative
2 Kings	2 Kgs	Hg	Haggai	F	Imperfect (<i>yiqtol</i> , imperfective)
Isaiah	Is	Ho	Hosea	J	Jussive
Jeremiah	Jr	Is	Isaiah	NC	Infinitive Construct
Ezekiel	Ezk	Jb	Job	NA	Infinitive Absolute
Hosea	Ho	Jg	Judges	P	Perfect (<i>qatal</i> , perfective)
Joel	Jl	Jl	Joel	Pr	Preterite (<i>wayyiqtol</i> , imperfect with <i>waw</i> -consecutive/conversive)
Amos	Am	Jn	Jonah	Ptc	Participle
Obadiah	Ob	Jr	Jeremiah	V	Imperative
Jonah	Jn	Js	Joshua	Person, Gender, Number	
Micah	Mi	La	Lamentations	1	first person (“I, me, my”; “we, us, our”)
Nahum	Na	Lv	Leviticus	2	second person (“you”; “your”)
Habakkuk	Hb	Ma	Malachi	3	third person (“he, she, it, they”, “him, her”, &c.)
Zephaniah	Zp	Mi	Micah	f	feminine
Haggai	Hg	Na	Nahum	m	masculine
Zechariah	Zc	Ne	Nehemiah	p	plural
Malachi	Ma	Nu	Numbers	s	singular
Psalms	Ps	Ob	Obadiah		
Job	Jb	Pr	Proverbs		
Proverbs	Pr	Ps	Psalms		
Ruth	Ru	Ru	Ruth		
Song of Songs	SS	SS	Song of Songs		
Lamentations	La	Zc	Zechariah		
Ecclesiastes	Ec	Zp	Zephaniah		
Esther	Es	1 Chr	1 Chronicles		
Daniel	Dn	1 Sam	1 Samuel		
Ezra	Ezr	1 Kgs	1 Kings		
Nehemiah	Ne	2 Chr	2 Chronicles		
1 Chronicles	1 Chr	2 Sam	2 Samuel		
2 Chronicles	2 Chr	2 Kgs	2 Kings		

2. As the books are arranged in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*.

INTRODUCTION

This grammar of Biblical Hebrew, the language of the religious literature of ancient Israel, and the expressive medium of religious texts held dear by those of several of the world's major religions, seeks to inculcate in students the conviction that language makes sense, that the forms of Biblical Hebrew and their functions are not random, but rather motivated by the constraints of their linguistic medium, including both the genre within which they are used and the discourse structures of that genre.

Characteristics

1. *Frequency.* As much as possible, those aspects of the language which are most frequent, common, or “usual” are studied before the less common. The **verb** is presented beginning with the two conjugations (imperfect and preterite) whose parallel morphology (common subject affixes) accounts for more than forty percent of all verbal forms in Biblical Hebrew. **Vocabulary** is introduced in approximate order of frequency, allowing, of course, for the order of topics. The combined “supplementary” vocabulary lists (Appendix A) and those in the chapters introduce all words used fifty times or more in Biblical Hebrew (approximately 650 words in all). The verbal stems are the exception to this pattern of frequency; I find it more helpful pedagogically to link these by form and function rather than frequency. Furthermore, students find it helpful to interrupt the cascade of weak verbal roots with non-morphological topics in order to allow students time to assimilate the characteristics of each type of root.

There are a number of *statistics* scattered throughout the lessons, such as how often a particular conjugation, stem, or other form occurs. They are not intended to imply or establish a form's relative importance or significance; they are included because students frequently ask how often they can expect to see this or that phenomenon. Most are rounded off to the nearest whole number.

2. *Simplicity.* First-year students need to learn enough grammar and syntax to get them into the text. Beginning to understand a language comes from extensive interaction with the language *as it occurs*, not from memorizing paradigms and vocabulary, necessary as that is. This text presents basic grammar as quickly as has proven practical, with the goal that students begin reading the text fairly early in their first semester of study. Noun formation is described very simply, and primarily in terms of recognition. For example, the guttural verbal roots are presented in one brief lesson, rather than a half-dozen lengthy ones.

This is also the reason for offering explanations that are “pedagogical” rather than “technical” or “technically accurate” (e.g., footnotes 20, 34, 80). Most students tend to find technically precise explanations or definitions less than helpful; these explanations offer enough information for them to progress in their understanding without bogging them down in technical detail. The teacher or faculty member can always direct interested students to the appropriate discussions for further information.

3. *Continuity with previous language study.* Semiticists traditionally arrange verbal charts (paradigms) from the third to the first persons (3rd-2nd-1st [e.g., she/he-you-I]), and pronominal paradigms in the opposite order (1st-2nd-3rd). This is both contrary to the experience of students who have studied other languages in high school or college (where all paradigms are arranged 1st-2nd-3rd person), and confusing to beginning students (who need to remember that the order varies according to the type of paradigm). This text uses the order

1st-2nd-3rd for all paradigms. Students who pursue advanced studies in Hebrew or Semitics will need to orient themselves to the academic paradigms.

4. *A linguistic orientation.* Explanations in this grammar assume that language in general is an aspect of human behavior. Hebrew was a human language, a form of behavior that—like every other language—can be more or less (and more rather than less) understood by other human beings. This reflects the further conviction that languages—and the utterances in which they are incarnate—thus exist and function within larger societal patterns and systems; each part of any such system must, as much as possible, be understood in relation to the system of which it is a part, upon which it depends, and to which it contributes.

This text therefore aims at inculcating this understanding of language in general, and of Biblical Hebrew as an example of a particular stage of a specific language. Furthermore, since language is an aspect of *human* behavior, Biblical Hebrew is an example of the linguistic behavior of human beings—authors and speakers—in a particular time and place, and therefore must be read as an example of normal human communication, regardless of the speaker’s [author’s] understanding of his or her mission or purpose in writing, and equally, without regard for the reader’s view of the Bible as human or divine (or human and divine) in origin. Biblical Hebrew is not some extraordinary language, chosen for its ability to communicate at or beyond certain levels of human understanding. It was merely one aspect of an everyday human language, and should be read as such.

A specific application of this idea is that verbal conjugations are explained in terms of their function in biblical genres. The string of preterites (*wayyiqtol*, “waw-conversive/consecutive plus imperfect”) in a biblical story outlines the backbone of the narrative, or the narrative chain; it is a form with a discourse-level function that is related to the discourse-level functions of verbal conjugations, types of clause, etc.

At the same time, however, I have tried to avoid linguistic jargon and trivia, or at least to explain them when they are introduced. The term “function” tends to replace the word “meaning,” and verbal conjugations are explained in terms of their contextual function (rather than “defined” by a list of possible translation values). There is a glossary of terms in Appendix C.

5. *Exercises.* Most of the exercises are biblical texts taken from *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS). In order to allow teachers to assign texts that best suit the purposes and goals of their particular course and program, there are often more exercises than can be completed. [§5.10 explains the purpose and function of the exercises.]
6. *Appendices.* Appendices include supplementary vocabulary lists (above); an alphabetical list of proper nouns (persons and places) that occur fifty times or more in the Hebrew Bible; pronominal and verbal paradigms, including a table of some easily confused verbal forms; a glossary of morphosyntactic terms; and an annotated bibliography.
7. *Schedule & Workload.* This grammar was designed for two semesters (twenty-six weeks). The lessons assume that an average student who follows a normal schedule of eight to twelve hours of study per week in addition to time in class will achieve an average grade in the course.

The lessons introducing the “weak” verbal roots begin in Lesson 24. They are interspersed with lessons on reading biblical genres (25, 27) and the *Masora* (29), because students found it helpful to have “buffers”—time in which to absorb one set of forms before encountering the next.

Students and I have found it practical to work through Lessons 1-22 in one semester, meeting twice per week; in the second semester we alternate studying a lesson with working through an extended biblical text, for example, the story of Abraham (“Additional Resources Online”, below). This makes them encounter verbal forms and vocabulary in the text before meeting them “formally” in the grammar, which in turn lets them connect the more abstract presentation with a biblical passage. We also begin reading at sight from the biblical text about one-third of the way through the first semester, usually in an extra “reading session” of 30-45 minutes before or after the official class.

After completing this study, students should be able to develop their understanding of Hebrew grammar and syntax by reading the biblical text with the aid of standard reference works. By the end of their second semester/term of Hebrew, students should have read at

least ten chapters directly from the Hebrew Bible, in addition to many partial and whole verses in the exercises.

8. *References*. References to HBI are to the *Hebrew Bible Insert: A Student's Guide to the Syntax of Biblical Hebrew* (Putnam 1996), a booklet covering nominal, adjectival, pronominal, verbal, and clausal syntax, the “major” masoretic accents, and verbal paradigms.
9. *Additional Resources Online*. Reading notes on Abraham (Gn 12-25), Ruth (1-4), Jonah (1-4), and other materials may be downloaded without charge from www.fredputnam.org

Notes for Teachers

1. My courses entail many “discussions” or “conversations”—which appear *ad hoc* and *ad lib* to students, but are in fact carefully planned—that would make this work too long, tedious, and “chatty”. An example of this is the all-too-brief discussion of vocabulary (Lesson 2), which merely hints at a discussion of lexical and theoretical semantics and translation that resurfaces throughout their first year of study. In order to avoid this tediousness, and to protect other teachers from the need to disavow (at least some of) my idiosyncracies, I leave to you the task of filling in the gaps that are thereby necessarily created. In other words, because schools, teachers, and students are individual, what is effective in the context of a particular course, its teacher, and the curriculum of which they are part may not be in another, as all good teachers know.
2. Students and I have occasionally found it helpful to combine the lessons on resources (#23), reading (#25, 27), and the *masora* (#29) in order to fit a changed schedule.

Part I

INTRODUCTION & LESSONS 1-3 READING & PRONOUNCING HEBREW

This section introduces the writing system of Biblical Hebrew (alphabet, vowels), and how to pronounce words (accent, syllables). It also addresses the nature of vocabulary (gloss and meaning). By the end of these three chapters, you should be able to look at a Hebrew word, spell and pronounce it, analyze its parts (syllables, *dageš*, *šewa*), and recognize more than thirty of the most common words in Biblical Hebrew.

One of the biggest barriers to learning to read Hebrew is moving our eyes from right to left. Indo-European culture assumes a left-to-right orientation that affects our perception and experience of just about everything.

If you are asked to write a comic strip for Hebrew- or Arabic-speaking readers, be sure to put the punch line in the left-most (first, to us) panel!

In the USA, highway signs list the town to the left of the distance, again based on the assumption that people read left to right, and that “where” you are going is more important than “how far”—we don’t usually ask “What is forty-three miles from here?” but “How far is it to ...?”

This cultural pattern means that reading right-to-left is a major hurdle for most students—a hurdle that is not merely physical, but mental and emotional—because reading right-to-left *feels* wrong (especially for those who have learned reading techniques such as quickly returning the eyes to the beginning of the next line ... at the *left* margin).

When we add to this the non-alphabetic nature of the vowel symbols, and sounds that are not part of the vocal system of most English speakers, the task becomes daunting. The importance of the material in these opening chapters, and the value of pronouncing Hebrew aloud as much as possible, therefore, can hardly be overstated. Accordingly, you should read the examples in the chapters aloud, and read the exercises aloud, in order to attune both eye and ear to the patterns of Hebrew.

INTRODUCTION

These reformatted biblical quotations³ illustrate some of the similarities and differences between Hebrew and English, which you will notice as soon as you try to read them.

.dg m dg ry dn̄ lpp m b llš lpp ry o y o ou :a eeo y e :a eeo ou	.1
.sl̄n̄ knrd slmc ry vg llw n̄ dn̄ knrd O:a :i: :ea ou:i :i i a :i:	.2
.uoy ssruc tht h s̄n̄ dsruc dn̄ ouy sssl̄b tht h s̄n̄ dssl̄b e: a e i e: a e:e: a e i e:e:	.3
.lluf tn̄ s̄n̄ s ht ty s ht tn̄n̄ nur srvr ht ll̄n̄ : o iea e eae o:i :ei e a	.4
.rp ht srdsnc tht h s̄n̄ dssl̄b oo e :ei:o a:e i e:e:	.5
wo	
.tpw dn̄n̄ nd ts w nlbb f̄n̄ srvr ht b :e a a e oya o :ei e y	.6

Although they are certainly not written in Hebrew, these sentences exemplify some of the main *differences between Hebrew and English orthography* [writing].

1. Hebrew is read from right to left.
2. Hebrew vowels are written around (mainly below, but also above and beside) the consonants; they are mainly dots (called “points”) and dashes that are much smaller than the consonants.
3. Words cannot begin with a vowel—there must be a consonant, even if it is silent to our ears (e.g., the **נ̄** (*alef*) in these sentences).
4. Hebrew has a sign (.) that shows that there is no vowel between two consonants (e.g., the last vowel point in #4 and #6).

At the same time, however, there are significant *differences between this example and Biblical Hebrew* (apart from the obvious difference of using English [Latin] symbols):

1. The vowels are [much] smaller signs, not part of the Hebrew alphabet (i.e., they are not “letters”).
2. Biblical Hebrew has no capital letters.
3. Biblical Hebrew is punctuated by accent marks that correspond more or less indirectly to English [European] punctuation (see Lesson 25.3).

3. P.H. Mason & Hermann Hedwig Bernard, *Gently Flowing Waters: An easy, practical Hebrew grammar: with exercises for translation...arranged in a series of letters from a teacher of languages to an English duchess in two volumes: To which is attached Ma'eyney ha-Yeshū'ah: The fountains of salvation, being a translation, with notes critical and explanatory of Isaiah LIII. Also: Ha-Mafteah, key to the exercises*. Vol. 1, Letters I-XV (Cambridge: J. Hall & Son, 1853).

Lesson 1

THE HEBREW ALPHABET

The Hebrew alphabet has twenty-two letters, some of which have more than one form. Two letters distinguished only by the position of a dot (א, אֲ) were a single sign until the Masoretes added the points (lines in Ps 119.161-68, the “אֲ” section, begin with both).

Follow your teacher's example	Pronunciation	Transliteration ⁴	Final Form	Form	Name (accent is bolded)
	silent	'		א	<i>alef</i>
<i>boat</i>	b	b		ב	<i>bet</i>
<i>vent</i>	v	b/v		בּ	(“bait”)
<i>goat</i>	g	g g/g		ג גּ	<i>gimel</i>
<i>door</i>	d	d d/d		ד דּ	<i>dalet</i>
<i>hope</i>	h	h		ה	<i>he</i> (“hay”)
<i>vent</i>	v	v or w		ו	<i>vav / waw</i>
<i>zoo</i>	z	z		ז	<i>zayin</i>
<i>Hugh</i>	ch (loch)	h		ח	<i>het</i>
<i>title</i>	t	t		ט	<i>tet</i>
<i>yet</i>	y	j or y		י	<i>yod</i>
<i>keel</i>	k	k		כ	<i>kaf</i>
<i>hew</i>	ch (loch)	<u>k</u>	ך	כּ	
<i>liquid</i>	l	l		ל	<i>lamed</i>
<i>moon</i>	m	m	ם	מ	<i>mem</i>
<i>night</i>	n	n	ן	נ	<i>nun</i>
<i>sigh</i>	s	s		ס	<i>samek</i>
	silent	'		ע	<i>ayin</i>
<i>paper</i>	p	p		פ	<i>pe</i>
<i>ford</i>	f	p	ף	פּ	(“pay”)
<i>eats</i>	ts	s	ץ	צ	<i>sade</i>
<i>keel</i>	k	q		ק	<i>qof</i>
<i>r-right</i>	r (flapped)	r		ר	<i>reš</i> (“raysh”)
<i>sigh</i>	s	ś		שׁ	<i>sin</i> (“seen”)
<i>shall</i>	sh	š		שׂ	<i>šin</i> (“sheen”)
<i>tonight</i>	t	t ṭ		תּ ת	<i>tof</i>

4. Transliterating represents the sounds of one language with the letters of another. There is no universal transliteration scheme for Hebrew (see Jg 21.25). Once you can read and pronounce Hebrew, you should be able to “read” any transliteration scheme.

This “square script”—in contrast to the cursive found in manuscripts and the “archaic” forms used in inscriptions—was standardized after the invention of the printing press. Adapted from the Aramaic alphabet, this alphabet is found in published Hebrew Bibles and prayerbooks, as well as in academic books and journals. Most of these comments (below) on the shapes of the letters do not apply to extra-biblical inscriptions or original biblical manuscripts (no biblical author would easily recognize these letters!). These comments, some of which overlap, are intended as guidelines, not as rules for memorization.

1. Hebrew is written and read from *right to left*. Practice writing and reading the alphabet *in that order*.
2. There is only *one* alphabet; i.e., there are no “capital” or “small” letters.
3. Like some other Semitic scripts, this alphabet is “consonantal”—i.e., none of the letters of the alphabet directly represent vowels (cf. “a”, “e”, “i”, “o”, “u”), although a few consonants could be used to indicate the presence of long vowels.
4. The letters listed with and without a dot (ב/בּ, ג/גּ, ד/דּ, כ/כּ, פ/פּ, ת/תּ) are called the *b'gad-k'fat* letters (בגד כפת), a nonsense phrase made up of the letters themselves (the rabbis were fond of such mnemonic devices). At one time these letters had two pronunciations, distinguished by the presence or absence of the *dageš lene*, but only ב/בּ, כ/כּ, and פ/פּ are distinguished in modern Hebrew. When spelling a Hebrew word with English letters (transliterating), the letter without *dageš* is either underlined or followed by “h” to show that it is “soft” (e.g., “b/bh”, “k/kh”, “p/ph”).

This difference is sub-phonemic, i.e., it does not distinguish one word from another in Biblical Hebrew. In English, on the other hand, this same difference would be quite meaningful (phonemic): one’s response to “Come to su__er!” would probably be affected by whether the middle consonant was *f* or *p*!

5. Four letters are called “gutturals” (א, ה, ח, ע), so-called because they represent sounds made in the throat (Latin *guttur*).
6. Since some pairs of letters *sound alike*, you will need to learn to recognize Hebrew words by both sight and sound, and to distinguish them by sight.

א	ע	silent	
ס	ש	s	as in sigh
ח	כ	ך	ch or h as in loch, Bach or hew, Hugh
ב	ו	v	as in vent
פ	ק	k	as in keel
ט	ת	ת	t as in tough

7. Five letters have a special form used only at the end of a word. Four of these *final forms* have “descenders”; note their length relative to other letters.

Initial/Medial Form		Final Form	
כבר	כ	ך	אך
מלך	מ	ם	אדם
נביא	נ	ן	אבן
פלא	פ	ף	אלף
צדה	צ	ץ	ארץ

8. Some pairs of letters are *similar* in appearance:

To distinguish them, note the ...		
ד	ר	<i>tittle</i> —the small extension of the horizontal stroke—on <i>dalet</i> and <i>bet</i>
ב	כ	
ה	ח	left side—open or closed
ם	ס	lower corners—square or round
ט	נ	open at top or bottom
ג	נ	shape of bottom—“arched” or flat
ח	ת	shape of left leg—straight or bent; <i>tittle</i> on right side of <i>het</i>
ו	ז	shape of top
צ	ע	
ש	ש	dot on left or right; this is a later (medieval/Masoretic) distinction
ך	ן	<i>šewa</i> + <i>tittle</i> in final <i>kaf</i> (which also has a longer [wider] top stroke)

9. The Dead Sea (Qumran) Scrolls also reveal that Hebrew scribes often inscribed a line onto the parchment, and then suspended the text from the line (rather than resting the letters on the line, as in English). This is why so many letters have a horizontal stroke near the top of the letter, and why Hebrew tends to use descenders rather than ascenders.

Sixteen letters fit within a “square” and several of these are roughly square in appearance, i.e., roughly the same height and width. Listed alphabetically (from right to left), they are:

א ב ד ה ח ט כ מ ס ע פ צ ר ש ש ת

Three non-final forms (י, ל, ק) and the four final forms with descenders (#9, above) differ from the standard in *height*. The non-final forms are:

- *yod* is only half of the height and width of the other letters (its top is even with the others) ויהי
- *lamed* extends above the other letters⁵ לילה
- *qof* [and four final forms (#9, above)] extend below the others מקרא

Five letters are also narrower than the standard *width* (ג ז ו י ז). Each is roughly one-half as wide as the square. *Yod* (the “jot” of Mt 5.18), at roughly one-fourth of the square, is the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet.

10. The names of the letters are transliterated into English. Disyllabic names are accented on the first syllable (e.g., *a' lef*, *gi' mel*). [Transliteration is usually italicized.]

1.2 Concepts

acrostic	ascender	descender	medial form	tittle
alphabet	consonant	final form	square script	transliteration

5. In the Dead Sea (Qumran) Scrolls, the height of the ascender on the *lamed* is often greatly exaggerated, so that their location is obvious (also obvious at a glance is whether or not a photograph in a book or article is correctly oriented).

1.3 Exercises

1. Practice *reciting* the Hebrew alphabet, and *writing* it from right to left, with the final forms following their medial forms.
2. Esther 3.13 is one of twenty-six verses that contain every letter in the alphabet.⁶ Copy it in Hebrew; practice *spelling* the words by naming the Hebrew letters from right to left (words linked by a horizontal line, called *maqfef*, are considered separate words); and *find* all ten final forms. Which final form does not occur in this verse?

ונשלוח ספרים ביד הרצים אל-כל-מדינות המלך
להשמיד להרג ולאבל את-כל-היהודים מנער ועד-זקן טף ונשים ביום אחד
בשלושה עשר לחדש שנים-עשר הוא-חדש אדר ושללם לבוז:

3. Discuss the significance of Jesus' statement in Matthew 5.18.
4. This is an alphabetical list of most of the proper names that occur more than 175 times in Biblical Hebrew ("c", "d", "h" are titles and generic nouns). Write their *English form*, and practice spelling them aloud in Hebrew. Use the references—the first time that name occurs—to check your work.

Example:	גד	"gimel-dalet"	"Gad"	
Gn 25.26	יעקב	m.	Gn 17.5	אברהם a.
Gn 13.10	ירדן	n.	Ex 4.14	אהרן b.
Josh 10.1	ירושלם	o.	Gn 14.20	אל c.
Gn 32.28	ישראל	p.	Gn 1.1	אלהים d.
Gn 9.18	כנען	q.	Gn 41.52	אפרים e.
Gn 29.34	לוי	r.	Gn 10.10	בבל f.
Gn 19.37	מואב	s.	Gn 35.18	בנימן g.
Ex 2.10	משה	t.	Jg 2.13	בעל h.
Gn 10.14	פלשתי	u.	1 Sam 16.13	דוד i.
Gn 12.15	פרעה	v.	Gn 29.35	יהודה j.
Gn 36.37	שאוֹל	w.	Ex 14.13	יהושוע k.
2 Sam 5.14	שלמה	x.	Gn 30.24	יוסף l.

N.B.: When transliterated, some of these will not resemble their English counterparts, for one or more of these reasons. [This grammar uses the "received" transliteration.]

- a. The "J" that begins many names in English Bibles represents initial י; within names י often appears as "i" or merely indicates the presence of a vowel (see, e.g., exercises d, r, u [above]), but there are exceptions (below). This is because Latin used the letter "i" to transliterate י (as the corresponding Greek letter *iota* had been used centuries earlier in the Septuagint), and also because the letter "j" was not distinguished orthographically from "i" until the 17th century. The English Bible has inherited the transliteration of biblical names from these two sources. (In some ecclesiastical traditions, for example, "Jesu", representing an older "Iesu" is pronounced "Yesu" or "Yezu".)

6. The complete list: Ex 16:16; Dt 4:34; Js 23:13; 2 Kgs 4:39; 6:32; 7:8; Is 5:25; 66:17; Jr 22:3; 32:29; Ezk 17:9; 38:12; Ho 10:8; 13:2; Am 9:13; Zp 3:8; Zc 6:11; Ecc 4:8; Est 3:13; Ezr 7:28; Ne 3:7; 2 Chr 26:11; Dn 2:45; 3:22; 4:20; 7:19 (all Daniel references are in Aramaic). If, however, *sin* and *šin* are counted separately there are only fourteen vv. (Dt 4:34; 2 Kgs 7:8; Is 66:17; Jr 22:3; 32:29; Ezk 17:9; 38:12; Ho 10:8; 13:2; Zc 6:11; Est 3:13; Ecc 4:8; Ezr 7:28; 2 Chr 26:11). Two vv. include all five final forms (Ezk 38.12; Zp 3.8).

י > “j”			י > “i”		
יוֹסֵף	<i>jôsēf</i>	Joseph	יֵרֵמְיָהוּ	<i>yirm^eyāhû</i>	Jeremiah
יְהוּדָה	<i>y^ehūdā</i>	Judah	אֱלֹהִים	<i>*lōhîm</i>	Elohim
אֲחִיָּהוּ	<i>*hayyāhû</i>	Ahijah	הַלְלוּ-יָהּ	<i>hal^elû-yāh</i>	Halleluiah

- b. The gutturals (א, ה, ח, ע) are either ignored when names are transliterated (יחזקאל > Ezekiel) or represented by a second vowel (אֶהְרֹן > **Aaron**), reflecting the transliterations of the Septuagint and Vulgate.
- c. Two forms of *waw* represent long vowels (note the dots):

ו > “û”			ו > “ô”		
שְׂאוּל	<i>šā'ûl</i>	Saul	יוֹסֵף	<i>jôsēf</i>	Joseph

- d. The letter צ is often represented by “z” in traditional biblical transliteration, by either *ts* or *ş* in academic transliteration.

צ > “z”		
צִיּוֹן	<i>şiyyôn</i>	Zion
צִדְקִיָּהוּ	<i>şidqyhû</i>	Zedekiah
מֶלֶךְ-צִדְקָה	<i>malkî-şedeq</i>	Melchizedek

- e. The letter ש is often represented by “s” in traditional biblical transliteration, but by *ş* in academic transliteration.

ש > “s”		
שְׁלֹמֹה	<i>ş^elomo</i>	Solomon
יְרוּשָׁלַיִם	<i>jerûşālaim</i>	Jerusalem

1.4 Enrichment: Acrostic Poetry

No one knows why the biblical poets wrote acrostic [alphabetically organized] poems (the most famous is Ps 119); perhaps they were a type or style of poem, like sonnets in English. Other acrostics are, e.g., Lam 1-4 (each chapter), Pr 30.10-31, Ps 9-10 and Ps 37. Psalms 111 and 112 are also acrostics. After the opening “Halleluiah” (1a), each line (not each verse) begins with the next letter of the alphabet:

PSALM 112		PSALM 111	
הִלְלוּ יְהוָה	1a	הִלְלוּ יְהוָה	1a
אֲשֶׁר־אִישׁ יִרְא אֶת־יְהוָה	b	אֹרְחָה יְהוָה בְּכָל־לֵבָב	b
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו חָפֵץ מְאֹד:	c	בְּסֹדֵר יִשְׁרָיִם וְעֵדָה:	c
גִּבּוֹר בְּאָרֶץ יְהוָה זָרְעוּ	2a	גְּדִלִים מַעֲשֵׂי יְהוָה	2a
דּוֹר יִשְׁרָיִם יִבְרָךְ:	b	דְּרוֹשִׁים לְכָל־חַפְצֵיהֶם:	b
הוֹן וְעֶשֶׂר בְּבֵיתוֹ	3a	הוֹדוּ וְהִדְרֵר פִּעְלֹ	3a
וְצַדִּיקְתּוֹ עֲמֹדַת לְעַד:	b	וְצַדִּיקְתּוֹ עֲמֹדַת לְעַד:	b
זָרַח בַּחֲשֶׁךְ אֹר לְיֹשְׁרִים	4a	זָכַר עֲשֵׂה לְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו	4a
חֲנוּן וְרַחֲמוֹם וְצַדִּיק:	b	חֲנוּן וְרַחֲמוֹם יְהוָה:	b
טוֹב־אִישׁ חוֹנֵן וּמְלוּה	5a	טָרַף נֶתַן לִירְאָיו	5a
יְכַלְכֵּל דְּבָרָיו בְּמִשְׁפָּט:	b	יִזְכֹּר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ:	b
כִּי־לְעוֹלָם לֹא־יִמוּט	6a	כַּח מַעֲשָׂיו הַגִּיד לְעַמּוֹ	6a
לְזָכַר עוֹלָם יְהוָה צַדִּיק:	b	לַחַת לָהֶם נַחֲלַת גּוֹיִם:	b
מִשְׁמוּעָה רָעָה לֹא יִירָא	7a	מַעֲשֵׂי יָדָיו אֲמַת וּמִשְׁפָּט	7a
נִכּוֹן לְבוֹ בְּטַח בִּיהוָה:	b	נְאֻמִּים כָּל־פְּקוּדָיו:	b
סָמוּךְ לְבוֹ לֹא יִירָא	8a	סְמוּכִים לְעַד לְעוֹלָם	8a
עַד אֲשֶׁר־יִרְאָה בְּצָרָיו:	b	עֲשׂוּיִם בְּאֲמַת וַיִּשְׂר:	b
פָּזַר נֶתַן לְאֲבִיוֹנִים	9a	פְּדוֹת שִׁלַּח לְעַמּוֹ	9a
צַדִּיקְתּוֹ עֲמֹדַת לְעַד	b	צָוָה־לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ	b
קָרְנוֹ תְרוּם בְּכִבּוֹד:	c	קָדוֹשׁ וְנוֹרָא שְׁמוֹ:	c
רָשַׁע יִרְאָה וְכַעַס	10a	רְאִישִׁית חֲכָמָה יִרְאֵת יְהוָה	10a
שָׁנָיו יַחֲרֹק וְנִמַּס	b	שָׁכַל טוֹב לְכָל־עֲשִׂיהֶם	b
תְּאוֹת רָשָׁעִים תֵּאבֹד:	c	תְּהַלְתּוֹ עֲמֹדַת לְעַד:	c

- Lines in biblical poetry are conventionally referred to by verse number and a letter, so that, e.g., the three lines of v. 10 are referred to as Ps 111.10a, 10b, 10c.
 - Which line recurs three times in these two psalms with only the difference of one letter?
 - Which lines begin with letters distinguished by only the position of a dot?
- If you have a Hebrew Bible, look at Ps 119.161-168. These eight lines are grouped together under one letter, even though some begin with *sin* and some with *šin*. Which verses begin with which letter? [This incidentally demonstrates that these were originally one letter; the distinguishing dots were added by the Masoretes in the medieval period.]
- The “colon” at the end of each verse (which is actually two “diamonds”—look closely!) is called *sof pasuq*, which means “end of *pasuq*”; *pasuqim* (plural of *pasuq*) correspond to verses in English.

Lesson 2

THE VOWELS

Like English, Hebrew has a full range of vowel symbols. Unlike English, Hebrew vowels are not “letters” (i.e., they are not part of the alphabet) but are small signs placed under, between, or above consonants. The Masoretes—scribes who added the vowel markings—were unwilling to change the consonantal text, and so, apparently following the example of other Semitic languages, devised a system of “dots” and “dashes” to represent the various vowel sounds, which were added to the consonantal text. The vowel points were intended to eliminate ambiguity in pronunciation—all but three points represent only one sound each. [Contrast the variety of sounds represented by “ou” in English: *cough*, *though*, *rough*, *through*, *gouge*, etc.] The Masoretes used another set of signs (§2.2) to represent half-vowels (e.g., *beautiful*), whereas English uses the regular vowel signs (a, e, i, o, u) to represent both full- and half-vowel sounds.⁷

2.1 Full Vowels

The Full Vowels

Vowel Class	Name of Vowel	Vowel Point	וּ + Vowel Point	Transliteration & Pronunciation	Length: L(ong) or S(hort)	
A	<i>qameṣ</i>	ֿ	וֿ	mā	father	L
	<i>pataḥ</i>	ֿ	וֿ	ma	rot	S
E	<i>ṣere-yod</i>	ֿ	וֿי	mê	they	L
	<i>ṣere</i>	ֿ	וֿ	mē		
&	<i>segol</i>	ֿ	וֿ	me	bet	S
I	<i>ḥireq-yod</i>	ֿ	וֿי	mî	mean	L
	<i>ḥireq</i>	ֿ	וֿ	mī	mean	L or
				mi	bit	S
O	<i>ḥolem-waw</i>	ֿ	וֿו	mô		L
	<i>ḥolem</i>	ֿ	וֿ	mō	moan	
&	<i>qameṣ-ḥatuf</i>	ֿ	וֿ	mō		S
U	<i>šureq</i>	ֿ	וֿ	mû	moon	L
	<i>qibbuṣ</i>	ֿ	וֿ	mū	moon	L or
				mu	moot; book	S

7. Pronunciation of vowels, full and half, varies from one teacher to the next according to, for example, which variety of modern Hebrew one prefers. You will need to listen closely to your teacher’s example, which may not be quite the same as those listed here.

1. The vowel is read *after* the consonant that it is *under* (i.e., that it follows). In other words, the vowel is either below or to the left of its consonant (cf. the first column under “pronunciation”).
2. A vowel that includes a letter of the alphabet—called a “vowel letter”—(וּ, י, וּ, וּ) is always long.
3. Apart from the qualitative distinction between long and short *hireq* (/ee/ v. /i/), “length” refers primarily to duration (how long the sound of the vowel is maintained) rather than to vowel quality. For example, the difference between *šureq* and *qibbuš* is more like the difference between “boon” and “boot” than between “boon” and “bun” (English long and short /u/). Their tonal quality is the same, but their duration differs (in the English words this is due to the nature of the following consonants).
4. Although there are five “classes” of vowels (a, e, i, o, u), the “o/u”, and “i/e” vowels are so closely related that they often interchange, leaving three functional classes (a, i, u).
5. Some long vowels do not sound like their English counterparts, for example, “long e” sounds like English *a* as in “way”, so check the “pronunciation” column carefully. You must learn their Hebrew sounds and names.
6. *Qameš* and *qameš-hatuf* look alike. *Qameš-hatuf* is quite rare, and occurs only in unaccented, closed syllables (Lesson 3, below).
7. *Pataḥ-yod* and *qameš-yod* at the end of a word are both pronounced as the diphthong *ai*, as in *aisle*.
8. When ה, ו, and י follow a vowel, but are not themselves followed by another vowel, they are called “vowel letters” or *matres lectionis* (“mothers [i.e., helpers] of reading”). This practice started many centuries before the vowel points were used (c. below). When used as a vowel letter, the ה, ו, and י are considered vowels, not consonants (e.g., יוּ is referred to as a single unit of spelling: *šere-yod*).

	Vowel Letter or Consonant?	Explanation	Transliteration	Pronunciation
אישׁ	<i>yod</i> = vowel letter (mater)	<i>yod</i> is not followed by a vowel	ʾiš	<i>eesh</i>
אשה	<i>he</i> = vowel letter (mater)	<i>he</i> ends the word (is not followed by a vowel)	ʾiššā	<i>isha</i>
בַּיִת	<i>yod</i> = consonant	<i>yod</i> followed by a vowel	<i>bayit</i>	<i>bayit</i>
עַיִן	<i>yod</i> = consonant	<i>yod</i> is the first letter of the word (& followed by a vowel)	ʾayin	<i>ayin</i>
יוֹם	<i>waw</i> = vowel letter (mater)	<i>waw</i> is not followed by a vowel	<i>yôm</i>	<i>yôm</i>

- a. When they begin a word, or are followed by a vowel point, they are consonants (not *matres*).
- b. When they are written with the vowel letter (*mater*), they are called “full” (Hebrew *malē*, Latin *plene*, “full”).
- c. When *holem* lacks *waw*, and *šere* and long *hireq* lacks *yod*, they are called “defective” (Hebrew *ḥaser*, “lacking”).
- d. Forms with and without *matres* are pronounced alike. This discussion may sound excessively technical, but all of these terms are routinely used in commentaries and reference works dealing with the Hebrew text.
- e. Inscriptions show that *matres* were in use by the 10th century BCE, but they were not used consistently. When the Masoretes began to add the vowel points (c. CE 800), they incorporated the vowel letters that were already present in the text into their system, but did not add more vowel letters to the consonantal text, since that would have entailed changing the biblical text. Many words thus occur both with and without a vowel letter.

- f. This lack of standardization also explains why *hireq* and *qibbuṣ* have more than one value. If there was no vowel letter in the text, the Masoretes simply used the “defective” form of the vowel, which is why *hireq* and *qibbuṣ* can be either long or short.

2.2 Half-Vowels

Both Hebrew and English have half-vowels, e.g., “i” in “beautiful” and “a” in *sofa* (in regular conversation, not exaggeratedly, as “bee-yoo-**tee**-ful”). English orthography does not distinguish full and half vowels; the Masoretes distinguished them by using different signs.

The Half-Vowels						
Type	Name	Sign	Consonant + Sign		Length	Sound
<i>šewa</i>	<i>šewa</i>	·	וְ	m ^e		
a	<i>ḥatef-pataḥ</i>	ֿ·	וְֿ	h ^a	Half	<i>uh</i>
e	<i>ḥatef-segol</i>	ֿ·ֿ	וְֿֿ	h ^e		
o	<i>ḥatef-qames</i>	ֿ·ֿֿֿ	וְֿֿֿ	h ^o		

1. The *ḥatef*-vowels combine one of the full vowel signs with vocal *šewa* (וְ).
2. *Ḥatef*-vowels mainly occur after the gutturals (below) instead of vocal *šewa*. The *ḥatef*-vowels are most important when discussing guttural verbs (below).
3. The half-vowels all sound alike (“uh”, as in “Uh-huh”).
4. Vocal *šewa*, which is also a half-vowel, is the first vowel point in the Bible: בְּרֵאשִׁית, “in the beginning” (Gn 1.1). It is also the sound in the first syllable of its own name: *šh^eva*. It is thus the almost necessary sound between some combinations of consonants—a sound that is usually ignored in English orthography (cf. the slight separation between, e.g., the first two letters of “break” or “pray”).

2.3 A Brief History of Hebrew Orthography

Hebrew was first written with consonants and perhaps an occasional vowel letter. This meant that a cluster of consonants was potentially ambiguous. [These examples exaggerate the difficulties, since a word’s function is largely determined by the context.]

מֶלֶךְ^s *king, he reigned / was / became king, she reigned, they reigned, queen, one who rules [male or female], “her / his [act of] ruling, Be king!, or to be / come king*

As inscriptions show, by the 10th century BCE, *matres lectionis* were being used to indicate the presence of long vowels. This first took place at the end of words, and simplified reading by reducing a word’s potential function:

מֶלֶכוּ *his king, the one ruling him, they reigned, his [act of] ruling, or Reign! (masc. pl.)*
 מֶלֶכָּה *her king, queen, she reigned, her [act of] ruling, or Reign! (masc. sg.)*

Although many biblical books were written after the *matres lectionis* had begun to be used, spelling was never standardized, and so the *matres* were inserted haphazardly. In the 7th–9th centuries CE, the Masoretes began adding “points” to the consonantal text in order to preserve traditional

8. The archaic (“paleo-Hebrew”) alphabet did not use final forms; they were, however, in use by the time of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

pronunciation,⁹ but they did not attempt to standardize the use of *matres* before adding the vowel points, even though this meant inconsistencies in spelling (they considered the *matres* part of the “consonantal” text). The vowel points eliminated most of the ambiguity:

מִלְכָּה	≈ queen	מִלְכָּה	≈ Be king! (masc. sg.) or She reigned [was queen]
מִלְכָּה	≈ her king	מִלְכָּה	≈ she [the one] who reigns or the reigning one [female]

This overview helps explain the general scholarly freedom to suggest different pointings—repointing a word is not considered to be “changing the text”, since the vowel points were not original. It also explains why the same word can be spelled with and without a vowel letter, since the Masoretes were unwilling to add *matres* to the consonantal text.

Biblical texts may be “unpointed”, “consonantal” (both without vowel points), or “pointed” (often called “Masoretic”). Pointing is largely restricted to printed (typeset) Bibles and Hebrew prayer-books; Modern Hebrew is largely unpointed.

2.4 Regarding Vocabulary

The vocabulary lists include all the words that occur more than fifty times in the Hebrew Bible, except proper names of persons and places (which are listed in Appendix B). Words are introduced *very generally* in order of descending frequency, so that words that occur more frequently in the biblical text are learned first. A complete Hebrew–English glossary for this grammar appears in Appendix B. Learning vocabulary is a process of familiarization through repetition—some students learn best by repeatedly writing the list until the glosses are learned, others by reviewing them orally or by means of cards (Hebrew on one side, English on the other). It also helps to learn word by a biblical context in which it occurs.

Each list consists of Hebrew words alongside one or more suggested English *glosses* for that word. A gloss is merely a word used to translate a word—it is *not* a definition or meaning. The gloss(es) listed with each word are English words that frequently represent that Hebrew word in translations—they are *not* the word’s “basic” or “central” or “real” meaning. Words represent referential ranges, so that many glosses may be appropriate for a given word (although not every gloss will fit every context in which that word occurs).

In general, words have ranges of reference (also called their “semantic range”). The only apparent exceptions are highly technical terms, whether medical (*pneumococcy*s), mathematical (*cosine*), theological (*hypostatic union*), etc.¹⁰ The more limited a word’s area of reference, the more “technical” or specialized it is, and *the more its content is determined by what it refers to*. The less specific a term is—the broader its range of reference—the *more its content is determined by its context* (linguistic, cultural, etc.). “Dog”, for example, conveys less information than [is less specific than] “Labrador”, and so can fit a larger variety of contexts. The latter expression is limited to contexts that refer to a Labrador (again, unless it is being used metaphorically).

In addition to semantic range, words also have what might be called a “load”, as in the expression “a loaded word”. “Semantic load” refers to the combination of their denotation (“dictionary meaning”) and connotation (associated emotive function). In English, for example, “beefy”, “chunky”, “heavy”, “solid”, “big-boned”, and “fat” could all be used to refer to a person’s build, but many people would consider “solid” a compliment (or at least a polite euphemism) and “fat” a deliberate insult, even though “insulting” is not part of the dictionary’s definition. This point probably refers more to issues of translation than to the Hebrew lexicon, since we know the semantic load of words that we use in our own languages far more instinctively than we can know those in another language no longer spoken.

Furthermore, when comparing the vocabularies (lexicons) of different languages, the greater the extent to which words’ ranges overlap, the more they appear to “mean the same thing”. Since Biblical

9. There were several centers of scribal activity, where competing systems of pointing (and thus of pronunciations) developed; this one is called the “Tiberian”. Each group of Masoretes was therefore attempting to preserve the pronunciation that it had “received”. Nor did the Masoretes consider points to “add to” the biblical text, perhaps because the points do not affect its consonantal shape.

10. Many of these, however, can also be used metaphorically.

Hebrew is a textual language—i.e., there are no longer any native speakers of Biblical Hebrew—we are left to make educated guesses about the semantic range of some words, and the corresponding semantic range in English. These are “educated” guesses, however, based on its biblical use and the evidence from cognate Semitic languages, such as Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Aramaic, from its use in rabbinic (Mishnaic) Hebrew, and from medieval rabbinic commentators and grammarians.

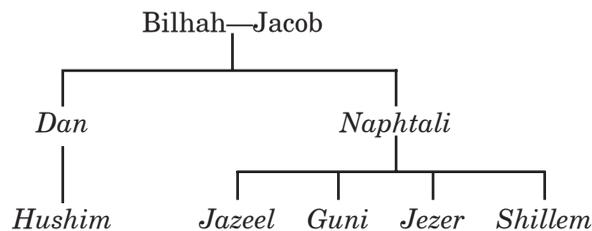
1. *Terms of relationship.* The following Hebrew terms are usually glossed by the first English term, although their range of application is often much broader, as the second gloss suggests:

אָב	<i>father, male ancestor</i>	אָהֶל	<i>tent, home</i>
אָח	<i>brother, male relative</i>	בֵּית	<i>house, household</i>
אָחֹת	<i>sister, female relative</i>	שֵׁבֶט	<i>tribe</i>
אָמ	<i>mother, ancestress</i>	מִשְׁפָּחָה	<i>clan, [extended] family</i>
בֵּן	<i>son, descendant; used to address a younger [unrelated] male (e.g., 1 Sam 3.16)</i>	בֶּן אָח	<i>son of a brother (nephew)</i>
בַּת	<i>daughter, female descendant; used to address a younger [unrelated] female (e.g., Ruth 2.8)</i>	בֶּן בֵּן	<i>son of a son (grandson)</i>

These are the usual glosses because these Hebrew and English words usually refer to the same aspect of reality. In each case, however, the Hebrew terms may also refer to relationships outside the nuclear family. Because parents and their children (the nuclear family) are the usual referents of the English terms, it is tempting to think of the first gloss listed for each term as its “real meaning” and the other gloss as an “extended” or “metaphorical” meaning, perhaps even concluding that every related male, for example, was considered a “brother”. We do not know whether or not this was how they thought about these words, since we cannot ask them, and they left no dictionaries. The brief genealogical table of Gn 46.8–27, which describes Jacob’s family at their journey to Egypt, illustrates this point. Note the use of the words “son” and “bore” in these verses:

²³ Now the *sons* of Dan were Hushim, ²⁴and the *sons* of Naphtali were Jazeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem. ²⁵These are the *sons* of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter; and she *bore* these to Jacob, all seven lives (Gn 46.23–25).

This diagram shows the generational spread described by “son” in these verses (those called “sons” are in *italics*):



Since Hushim, Jazeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem were Bilhah’s [and Jacob’s] grandsons, *not* her sons, the word בֵּן cannot have the same reference as “son” in everyday English. Furthermore, the verb glossed “bear/give birth to” (“and she *bore* these to Jacob”) cannot have the usual English function of “give birth”, but has an “extended” function that is revealed only by the context. Note that the same pattern describes the descendants of Jacob’s other three wives (Gn 46.8–27).

Since the range of reference of the usual English glosses is much more restricted than that of the Hebrew terms, the word “son” may be misleading if it suggests a closer genealogical or chronological relationship than the context allows. [On the other hand, English also uses some of these terms generically—“son” and “daughter” can refer to a younger unrelated male or female.]

The tiny lexical base (vocabulary) of Biblical Hebrew (c. 8400 words) means that we have only a very incomplete record of the Israelite lexicon, so that it is difficult to see how Abraham could have used the vocabulary of the OT to ask Sarah, “I’d prefer my steak less well done than last night, but the cakes could be a little softer than yesterday; maybe an oak fire would be better than sycamore. Oh, and could you also mend my favorite robe; that same seam is unraveling. Don’t forget to use the green thread—the blue showed up too much last time. And we need to remind the servant girls that they can only wash their hair every new moon due to the drought.” Of course he must have been able to say this (or something very much like it), but it is not entirely clear how he would have done so using the resources of Biblical Hebrew.

2. Many common glosses suggested by Hebrew-English reference tools may be traditional, but changes in either our understanding of Hebrew or English usage may mean that that gloss no longer functions accurately. It may even misrepresent the Hebrew. These glosses are sometimes included in the vocabulary lists with “trad.” (“traditionally”). For example:

	Traditional Gloss	Potential Gloss(es)	Discussion
לֵסְת	<i>lest</i>	<i>so that ... not</i>	<i>Lest</i> is a perfectly good, if uncommon, English word that indicates negative purpose.
כָּבַס	<i>full (wash by treading)</i>	<i>wash</i>	The archaic verb <i>to full</i> (from Latin, <i>via</i> Old French) means to “wash”, and is the origin of expression like “whiter than fuller’s cloth” (i.e., recently washed).
עַיִן	<i>eye, fountain</i>	<i>eye fount</i>	<i>Fountain</i> normally refers to a stream of water that is mechanically shot into the air or poured out, whereas עַיִן refers to a natural source of water (as opposed to a well or cistern).
סֵפֶר	<i>book</i>	<i>text scroll document record</i>	Codices (“proto-books”) were not in use until the third century CE, so that the rendering “book” for סֵפֶר is culturally misleading. We know that many Iron Age documents, apparently including even legal texts, were written on pieces of broken pottery (<i>shards</i> ; called <i>ostraca</i> when written on). [There is a specific term for <i>scroll</i> (מְגִלָּה; from the verb גָּלַל, <i>to roll</i>).]
יָלַד	<i>bear, give birth</i>	the same	This refers to both immediate birth and to physical <i>ancestry</i> , or “eventual” birth (cf. on Gn 36, above).
צְדָקָה	<i>righteousness</i>	<i>innocence rightness justness righteousness triumph</i>	Terms built on the root צִדִּיק are traditionally glossed with “righteous”, “righteousness”, etc., but in many places the thrust of the term is forensic <i>innocence</i> relative to a particular situation or accusation, not to an absolute or universal moral state. It is even possible that “innocence” is the primary reference and that the idea of “righteousness” is the global extension of particular innocence. Each passage needs to be studied in order to see which gloss is most appropriate, but not even careful study will guarantee certainty or consensus in every case.

3. It is often easier to explain what a word signifies than it is to give an appropriate gloss in another language, as the discussion of “give birth” shows. If you have studied another language, you may have thought, “There’s no way to say that in English”, which is, of course, not true. So far as is known, whatever one language can express others can express as well. The difference may be that what one language says in a single word, another can say only with a phrase, a sentence, or even a paragraph.

For example, Lot is called “[Abraham’s] brother’s son” and David referred to his nephews as “sons of [his sister] Zeruah”, which suggests that Biblical Hebrew lacked a simple lexeme that meant what English means by “nephew”. Both Biblical Hebrew and English can refer unambiguously to a sibling’s immediate offspring, but Biblical Hebrew lacks a single word

that has this function (much as modern English lacks a specific term for the parents of one's son- or daughter-in-law, although there are terms for this relationship in some languages).

This discussion suggests that the referents of words are not to be confused with the words that we use to express them. English “son” is usually the most contextually appropriate gloss for Hebrew בן, but this does *not* imply, and *must not* be misunderstood to imply, that בן somehow “literally” or “basically” or “fundamentally” *means* “son”, or even that it means “the same thing as is meant by the English noun ‘son’”, but rather that two language groups have chosen these particular words to refer [usually] to what turns out to be the same entity.

2.5 Concepts

full vowel function	lexeme lexicon	meaning <i>penult</i>	semantic range <i>šewa</i>
gloss	<i>malē' (plene)</i> spelling	range [of reference]	<i>ultima</i>
half (<i>hiatef</i>) vowel <i>hiaser</i> spelling	<i>matres lectionis</i> (sg., <i>mater</i>)	reference	vowel letter

2.6 Vocabulary

<i>hand (power, authority)</i>	יד .9	<i>father; male ancestor</i>	אב .1
		<i>fathers</i> ¹¹	אבות
<i>day; when (preceding the infinitive construct [§16.2])</i>	יום .10	<i>man (not Mankind/humanity), husband; each (as subject of a plural verb)</i>	איש .2
		<i>men, husbands</i>	אנשים
<i>priest</i>	כהן .11	<i>men of, husbands of</i>	אנשי
<i>all, whole; each, every</i> [NB: This is a noun, <i>not</i> an adjective; “all” is an adjective in English.]	כל .12	<i>god, God (used of Israel’s God and other gods)</i>	אל .3
		<i>gods, God (used of Israel’s God and other gods)</i>	אלהים
<i>heart (a person’s moral center; often used where English uses “mind”)</i>	לֵב .13	<i>woman, wife</i>	אשה
		<i>wife of</i>	אשת
<i>king; monarch</i>	מֶלֶךְ .14	<i>women, wives</i>	נשים .4
		<i>women / wives of</i>	נשי
<i>(f.) life, self; trad., soul</i>	נֶפֶשׁ .15	<i>(f.) land, country [of a geo-political region], earth (as in “heaven and earth”)</i>	אָרֶץ .5
<i>servant, slave; someone bound in some way to another person, for whom he or she works</i>	עֶבֶד .16	<i>house, home, household</i>	בַּיִת .6
		<i>houses, etc.</i>	בָּתִּים
<i>(f.) city</i>	עִיר .17	<i>son, male descendant (cf. בְּנֵי־מִינִין, Benjamin, “son of [my] right hand”)</i>	בֵּן .7
<i>cities</i>	עָרִים	<i>word, thing; event, affair, matter</i>	דָּבָר .8

- Most words in Biblical Hebrew are accented on the last syllable (עָרִים → *a · rim*), called the *ultima*.
- Some are accented on the next-to-last syllable (דָּבָר → *de · rek*), the *penult*.¹²

11. Some *plurals* with unexpected or unpredictable forms (e.g., אָבוֹת, *fathers*) are listed.

12. Di-syllabic (two-syllable) nouns with two *seghols* (דָּבָר, *sere-seghol* (סִפָּר, “document”), *seghol-patah* (זֶרַע, “seed”), two *patahs* (דַּעַת, “knowledge”) are called “segholates”, and are accented on the first syllable.

- The terms “ultima”, “penult”, and “antepenult” (the syllable before the penult) are commonly used in scholarly literature—including some commentaries—that discusses the spelling (pointing) or pronunciation of words; you need to know what they refer to.
- When the penult is accented, you will see a Masoretic accent over the consonant that begins that syllable, either *rebia'* (for full-width letters: e.g., יְרִירָה; note that it is larger than *holem*, and centered over the consonant), or *zaqef* (for narrow letters; e.g., נִפְשׁ). Words without these marks are usually accented on the ultima.

2.7 Exercises

- Learn the names and sounds of the full- and half-vowels. Practice writing them with different consonants.
- This list includes all but one of the proper names of people and places that occur between 174 and 77 times in Biblical Hebrew. *Pronounce* and *spell* each name aloud, and *write* them in their English forms, and *identify* each *waw* or *yod* as a consonant or vowel letter (and be able to explain your identification). Use the references (the name’s first canonical occurrence) to check your work. Unlike the [alphabetical] list in Lesson I, these are listed in descending order of frequency. For more practice with the alphabet, rearrange the list so that it is in alphabetical order (vowel letters count!).

Example:	יְבוּסִי	Jebusite	<i>yod, šewa, bet, šureq, samek, hireq-yod</i>
			1st <i>yod</i> = consonant (followed by vowel)
			<i>waw</i> = vowel letter (not preceded or followed by vowel)
			2nd <i>yod</i> = vowel letter (not followed by vowel)
Gn 17.19	יִצְחָק	.m	Gn 9.18 כְּנַעַן .a
1 Kgs 13.32	שִׁמְרוֹן	.n	Gn 10.22 אֲרָם .b
Nu 26.29	גִּלְעָד	.o	2 Sam 5.7 צִיּוֹן .c
2 Sam 3.3	אֲבִשְׁלֹום	.p	Gn 2.14 אֲשׁוּר .d
1 Kgs 11.26	יִרְבֵּעַם	.q	Gn 41.51 מְנַשֶּׁה .e
2 Kgs 24.11	נְבוּכַדְנֶאצַּר	.r	2 Kgs 23.31 יִרְמְיָה .f
Gn 29.32	רְאוּבֵן	.s	1 Sam 26.6 יוֹאָב .g
Gn 10.16	אֲמֹרִי	.t	Nu 34.20 שְׂמוּאֵל .h
2 Sam 8.16	יְהוֹשָׁפָט	.u	2 Kgs 16.20 חֲזַקְיָה .i
Gn 30.11	גָּד	.v	Jg 18.30 יְהוֹנָתָן .j
Gn 14.14	דָּן	.w	Gn 19.38 עֵמוֹן .k
Gn 13.18	חֶבְרוֹן	.x	Gn 25.30 אֲדוֹם .l

- Hatef*-vowels are usually transliterated in English Bibles as the corresponding full vowel (e.g., אֲדוֹם → “Edom”), but not in academic transliteration (e.g., [“dôm”]).
 - Šewa* usually appears in English names as *e*, although it can also be transliterated as *i*.
 - As with the first list of names (§1.3), the transliterated form may not resemble their form in English. This is because their form in English is based on their transliteration in Greek (in the Septuagint), Latin (in the Vulgate), or both.
- Transliterate the first four verses of 1 Chronicles into their English equivalents, and practice reading them aloud. You will need to know two more things: (1) the sign : (*sof pasuq*, “end of *pasuq*”) marks the end of the verse; and (2) the ׀ prefixed to the last word in this verse is a conjunction that can be glossed as “and”.

אָדָם שֶׁת אָנוֹשׁ:	1.1
קִינָן מִהֶלֶל אֵל יִרְדָּ:	1.2
חֲנוּךְ מִחוּשְׁלַח לְמֶדָּ:	1.3
נָח שֵׁם חָם וַיִּפֹּת:	1.4

Congratulations! You have now read four verses of the Bible in Hebrew! (Only 22,199 to go!)

2.8 Enrichment: Implicit / Assumed Information

Notice that the author of Chronicles does not tell us that these are personal names, how they are related (or even *that* they are related), and that he also expects his readers to know that the first nine words outline a single line of descent, but that v. 4 branches from a father to his three sons. In fact, to a reader who knows nothing of Genesis 5 and 6, these verses are gibberish. They demonstrate the principle of *assumed information*—information that a speaker or author does not mention, because he or she assumes that the readers or hearers already know it (both speaker and audience thus “share” the information). Assumed information typifies all communication, but is especially noticeable when the author lived (or lives) in another culture or time.

In much of Western culture, for example, if someone arrived at an early-afternoon meeting and said “Sorry I’m late—the service was slow”, most hearers would probably assume a scenario of lunch at a restaurant, including being seated, waiting to order, ordering, eating, paying, etc., none of which need be expressed, since we assume this as part of our own cultural setting. In the same way, the biblical authors never tell us why men tended to meet women at wells (e.g., Gn 24; Ex 2), but assume that their readers know that women drew and hauled water, and—in a culture without plumbing or public water—that an efficient way for a traveler to meet someone from the area was merely to wait at a well, since sooner or later someone would show up. In the same way, many middle- and upper-class North Americans would probably assume that a husband and wife of about the same age met in college, since, in fact, many do meet in college.

Reading 1 Chronicles 1.1–4 shows us that the “Chronicler” (as the author of Chronicles is often called) expected his readers to be familiar with the genealogies of Genesis. He did not expect his work to be read as an independent account of God’s dealings with Israel, but as a supplement or parallel to Genesis—Kings. This also explains that when he “ignored” the sins of David and Solomon, or the history of the Northern Kingdom—he was not trying to mislead his readers, but assuming that they knew the rest of the story.

Lesson 3

SYLLABLES

The final aspect of pronouncing Biblical Hebrew is to recognize combinations of consonants and vowels as syllables. This primarily entails distinguishing silent from vocal *šewa*, and *dageš lene* from *dageš forte*, which will enable you in turn to recognize a syllable as either open or closed. Although the ability to recognize syllables and identify their type will help you recognize some verbal forms, its main value is enabling you to pronounce Hebrew.

3.1 Šewa¹³

The sign for *šewa* (ְ) has at least two functions. It can represent a *half-vowel* (above) or mark the *absence* of a vowel. This section describes how to distinguish these functions.

- Vocal *šewa* (ְ) is a half-vowel (above), like the “i” in *beautiful*, or the “a” in *sofa*.
- Silent *šewa*. When two consonants occur with no vowel between them, the Masoretes inserted *šewa* as a “place-holder”. In English, consonants can be placed side by side, as in *placed*, but in Hebrew, every consonant—except the last letter of the word—must be followed by a vowel point. This *šewa* is also called *šewa quiescens*.

N.B.: The three *ḥatef*-vowels (ֿ / ֿ / ֿ) are always vocal.

There are **three basic rules** for distinguishing vocal and silent *šewa*.

- If the preceding vowel is short, the *šewa* is silent; if the preceding vowel is long, *šewa* is vocal; *qameṣ ḥataf* and *hireq* are ambiguous.

after a short vowel	יְמִלִּיכּוּ	<i>yamlîkû</i>
after a long vowel	יֵשְׁבוּ	<i>yēšēbû</i>

- Šewa* after (under) a letter written with *dageš* (“dot”) is always vocal; *šewa* before a letter with *dageš* is always silent.

after <i>dageš</i>	יִפְלוּ	<i>yipp̄lû</i>
before <i>dageš</i>	יִכְתֹּב	<i>yiktōb</i>

- When there are two *šewas* in a row, the first is always silent and the second always vocal (unless they are under the last two letters of a word, where they are both silent).

1st silent, 2nd vocal	יִשְׁמְרוּ	<i>yišm̄rû</i>
both silent (end of word)	וַיִּבְרָךְ	<i>wayyēbr̄k</i>

These three basic rules will allow you to distinguish most *šewas*; the following guidelines¹⁴ merely amplify them (despite all the rules, there are exceptions and ambiguities).¹⁵

- This discussion refers only to *šewa* itself; *ḥatef*-vowels are always pronounced.
- Most of these rules were developed by Rabbi Elias Levitas (d. 1549 CE).
- For more information, see Joüon & Muraoka (1991, §§50, 8, 10, 18, 19).

Šewa is vocal when it ...

a. follows the first letter in a word	בְּרֵאשִׁית	<i>b^erēšît</i>
b. follows another <i>šewa</i> (except at the end of the word)	יִשְׁמְרוּ	<i>yīšm^erû</i>
c. follows any consonant with <i>dageš</i> (cf. “j”)	יִכְפְּרוּ	<i>y^ekapp^erû</i>
d. follows the first of two identical consonants	רוֹמְמוֹ	<i>rôm^emû</i>
e. follows any syllable with a long vowel	יֵשְׁבוּ	<i>yēš^ebû</i>
f. precedes a <i>b^egad-k^efat</i> letter without <i>dageš</i> (a tendency, not a rule)	יֵשְׁבוּ	<i>yēš^ebû</i>

Šewa is silent when it ...

g. precedes another <i>šewa</i> (cf. “b”, “k”)	יִשְׁמְרוּ	<i>yīšm^erû</i>
h. follows a guttural consonant	יְהִיֶּה	<i>yihyē</i>
i. follows the last letter of a word (cf. “k”)	הָלַךְ	<i>hālak</i>
j. precedes <i>dageš</i> (cf. “c”)	יִכְתֹּב	<i>yiktōb</i>
k. follows <i>both</i> of the <i>last two</i> letters in a word (both <i>šewas</i> are silent, and the consonants are pronounced as a cluster; cf. “b”, “g”)	כְּתַבְתָּ וַיִּבֶךְ	<i>kātābt wāyyēbk</i>

Most of these “rules” merely invert another rule (cf., e.g., “b”, “g”, “k”), but allow you to examine a given *šewa* from more than one vantage point, as this table demonstrates:

בְּרֵאשִׁית	vocal	under first letter of word (a) [and thus does not follow a short vowel (#1)]; follows <i>dageš</i> (c)
יִשְׁמְרוּ	1st: silent 2nd: vocal	follows short vowel (#1); precedes another <i>šewa</i> (g) follows another <i>šewa</i> (b)
יִכְתֹּב	silent	follows short vowel (#1); precedes <i>dageš</i> (j)
רוֹמְמוֹ	vocal	between two identical consonants (d); follows long vowel (e)
יֵשְׁבוּ	vocal	follows long vowel (e); precedes <i>b^egad-k^efat</i> letter without a <i>dageš</i> (f)

3.2 *Dageš*

1. *Dageš lene*. When the Masoretes pointed the text, they distinguished the pronunciation of six letters (ב ג ד כ פ ת) as either “hard” or “soft”. Although we explain this as the difference between “b” (ב) and “v” (ב), or “p” (פ) and “f” (פ), it may have been more like the difference between, e.g., the “p” in “pit” and “tip” (hold your hand in front of your mouth). This is a difference in sound (p^h/p), but not in function (i.e., if you say “pit” with a big puff of air it still refers to a hole in the ground, a seed, etc.). The same is true of *dageš lene*—whether a consonant is hard or soft, the word is the same.
2. *Dageš forte*. Instead of writing a doubled letter twice (e.g., *supper*), Biblical Hebrew writes it once, with *dageš forte* (“strong *dageš*”) to show that it is doubled.¹⁶ A letter with *dageš forte* is therefore a doubled letter (although this rarely affects our pronunciation apart from the *b^egad-k^efat* letters).¹⁷ In transliteration, letters with *dageš forte* are written twice:

אִשָּׁה	<i>iššā</i>	“woman, wife”
יִפֹּל	<i>yippōl</i>	“he will fall” (“... falls”)
אִמִּי	<i>immî</i>	“my mother”

16. *Dageš forte* both doubles and “hardens” the *begeḏ-kefet* letters.
17. Five letters do not double: א, ה, ח, ע, ר.

- a. Like a doubled consonant in English, the first of the doubled consonants indicated by *dageš forte* closes one syllable and the second opens the next syllable:

supper	sup · per	(contrast “su · per”)
אִשָּׁה	’iš · šā	“woman, wife”
יִפֹּל	yip · pōl	“he will fall”

- b. Also like a doubled consonant in English (and unlike *dageš lene*), *dageš forte* affects the word’s function:¹⁸

supper	super
dinner	diner
גָּדֹלְתִי	<i>I am great</i>
גָּדַלְתִּי	<i>I made [someone or something] great</i>

- c. *Dageš* in a non-*b^egad-k^efat* letter can be only *forte*. In a *b^egad-k^efat* letter, however, *dageš* can be either *forte*, showing that the letter is doubled, or *dageš lene* (“weak dot”), which means that the letter is merely “hard” (but not doubled). [Since they cannot double, the gutturals and ׀ rarely occur with *dageš*.]

3. There are four basic rules for distinguishing *dageš forte*:

<i>Dageš</i> is always <i>forte</i> when it ...			
1. is in a non- <i>b^egad-k^efat</i> letter	הַצִּיִּם	ḥiṣ · šîm	arrows
2. follows a full vowel (long or short)	עַתָּה	’at · tā	now
<i>Dageš</i> is always <i>lene</i> when it ...			
3. follows <i>šewa</i>	מִשְׁתָּה	miš · te	feast
4. begins a word ¹⁹	דָּבָר	da · var	word, thing

N.B.: Identifying the type of *dageš* is challenging only when *dageš* occurs in a *b^egad-k^efat* letter. *Dageš* in a letter following *šewa* is always *lene* (the *šewa* is always silent); *dageš* after any full vowel is always *forte*. Neither *dageš* follows a *hatef*-vowel.

3.3 Identifying Syllable Boundaries

- Every syllable in Biblical Hebrew begins with a consonant, except the conjunction when it has the form - ׀ (below).
- Every syllable in Biblical Hebrew contains one—and only one—vowel, which may be either a full or a half vowel;²⁰ the number of vowels in a word determines the number of syllables.

מַיִם	ma · yim	water
בְּרִית	b^e · rîṭ	covenant, treaty, agreement
יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה	yiš · ta · ḥ ^a · ve	he bows down

18. The Hebrew examples are part of the verbal system (below).

19. There is one exception to this that we need not worry about.

20. Grammarians disagree on the nature of *šewa*. Some (e.g., Blau, Lambdin, Seow) agree with this statement. Others (e.g., Kelley, GKC [§26m]) explain the consonant with a half-vowel as the first part of the syllable of the following full vowel, since, in this theory, every syllable must have a full vowel. On the other hand, Joüon-Muraoka (§27c, da) finds a single *šewa* with three functions. No explanation yet accounts for every *šewa* (nor did the Masoretes explain their use of *šewa*).

3. There are two types of syllables in Biblical Hebrew. *Open* syllables consist of a consonant + vowel (CV); *closed* syllables consist of consonant + vowel + consonant (CVC).²¹ The nature of the syllable, and whether or not it is accented, then determine the length of its vowel.

When a syllable ends in ...	it is:	and its vowel is:
a vowel, vowel letter, א	open	long (rarely short)
a consonant (including ה)	closed	short (if the syllable is unaccented) <i>or</i> long (if the syllable is accented)

4. Therefore ...
- any consonant except א (and ה without *mappiq*) may close a syllable
 - in the middle of a word a consonant must be either doubled by a *dageš forte*, or followed by silent *šewa* in order to close a syllable
 - ה can close a syllable only when written with *mappiq* (ה-), which occurs only at the end of a word
5. As in English, a double letter (with *dageš forte*) closes one syllable and opens the next (above).

supper	sup · per				
אִשָּׁה	'iš · šā	woman, wife	בְּתִי	bit · tī	my daughter
יִפֹּל	yip · pōl	he will fall	יִפְלֵא	yip · pā · lē'	it is marvelous
כִּפֶּר	kip · pēr	he atoned	וַיֹּאמֶר	vay · yō' · mer	[and] he said

6. Some syllables seem to be both open and closed. A short vowel precedes *šewa* (like a closed syllable), but is followed by a *b^egad-k^efat* letter without *dageš lene* (as though the *šewa* were vocal). Some grammarians call this *šewa media* (i.e., “middle”), others say that this apparent anomaly reflects the history of the language, rather than a particular pronunciation. See footnote 15 (above). For example:

	Suggests <i>dageš forte</i> :	Suggests <i>dageš lene</i> :
מִלְכִי	<i>pataḥ</i> is short	} but כ lacks <i>dageš lene</i>
אֶתְכֶם	<i>segol</i> is short	

3.4 Furtive Pataḥ

When a word ends in a strong guttural (ה, ח, ע) that is *not* preceded by an *a*-class vowel (*pataḥ* or *qameṣ*), the Masoretes wrote *pataḥ* between the final vowel and the final guttural. This *pataḥ furtivum* (“furtive”) was written slightly to the right to show that it is pronounced after the non-*a*-vowel and before the guttural. [This is all much easier to illustrate than explain!] These words thus appear to have two consecutive vowels, but the furtive vowel was used only as a signal to listeners that the word ended in a guttural, not with the long vowel.

רוּחַ	rū ^a ḥ	wind, breath; spirit
רֵעַ	re ^a	friend, neighbour, companion

3.5 Concepts

<i>Adonai</i> (§3.8)	generic noun	long vowel	short vowel	vocal <i>šewa</i>
closed syllable	<i>dageš lene</i>	<i>mappiq</i>	silent <i>šewa</i>	YHWH (§3.8)
<i>dageš forte</i>	furtive <i>pataḥ</i>	open syllable	Tetragrammaton (§3.8)	

21. Each has various sub-types, which we leave to the reference grammars (see Bibliography).

3.6 Vocabulary

mountain; mountain range, hill country, high country (especially in contrast to valleys; cf. Jg 1.19)	הַר .26	humanity, humankind, man; Adam (cf. אִישׁ)	אָדָם .18
dwell, live, settle; sit; stay, remain	יָשַׁב .27	brother, male relative	אָח .19
eye; well, water-source (cf. <i>En-gedi</i> [עֵין־גִּדְי] “the well of the kid”)	עֵין .28	eat, devour, consume	אָכַל .20
face, presence (always plural)	פָּנִים .29	say, speak; think	אָמַר .21
stretch out, reach; let go, send [away]	שָׁלַח .30	daughter, female descendant (cf. <i>Bathsheba</i> [בֵּת־שֶׁבַע] “daughter of an oath”, or “seventh daughter”)	בַּת .22
name, fame, reputation	שֵׁם .31	daughters	בָּנוֹת
hear, listen (בְּקוֹל + שָׁמַע, hear the voice of ≈ obey)	שָׁמַע .32	people [group], nation, folk	גּוֹי .23
year (cf. ראש השנה, <i>Rosh hashanah</i> , “the head of the year” [New Year])	שָׁנָה .33	(f.) road, way, path, journey; custom	דֶּרֶךְ .24
		come, go, walk, travel; a general term for travel/motion	הֵלֵךְ .25

3.7 Exercises

1. Identify each *dageš* as either *forte* or *lene*, and each *šewa* as silent or vocal. Be prepared to explain how you determined your answer.

כָּבֵד .k	אֲנָשִׁים .a
כָּהֵן .l	אִשָּׁה .b
כָּלִי .m	בָּטָרָם .c
כָּפַר .n	בֵּית .d
מִזְבֵּחַ .o	בֵּן .e
מִלְחָמָה .p	דִּבֶּר .f
מִזְלָךְ .q	דִּבֵּר .g
מִשְׁפָּט .r	דָּם .h
נָאֵם .s	דֶּרֶךְ .i
עָלִיהֶם .t	וַיֵּאמֶר .j

2. Divide each word into syllables, and identify (the chart format is optional)
 - a. each **syllable** as open or closed
 - b. each **vowel** as long, short, or half
 - c. each **dageš** as *forte* or *lene*
 - d. each **šewa** as silent or vocal

Example:	יְכַפְּרוּ				תְּכַתְּבוּ		
Syllables	רו	פָּ	כַּפ	י	בו	תָּ	תְּכָ
Open/Closed	O	O	C	O	O	O	C
Vowel length	L	H	S	H	L	H	S
<i>Dagešōt</i>		<i>forte</i>				<i>lene</i>	<i>lene</i>
<i>Šewas</i>		vocal ²²	vocal			vocal	silent

22. *Dageš forte* technically represents two of the same letter, separated by [an invisible] silent *šewa*. This method of analyzing *dageš forte* is extremely artificial, and for pedagogical purposes only. The first of the doubled letter closes a syllable, and second opens the next syllable. Do not supply the “invisible” silent *šewa* that is “between” the doubled letters.

מִלְחָמָה	f.	בְּטָרֵם	a.
מִשְׁמֶרֶת	g.	הִבֵּר	b.
מִשְׁפָּט	h.	הִרְרָךְ	c.
נָאֵם	i.	כִּבְדֵּךְ	d.
הַשְּׁעִים	j.	לִילָה	e.

After you have done this, practice pronouncing these and the rest of your vocabulary.

3.8 Enrichment: The Divine Name

Most English Bibles distinguish “the LORD” (small capital letters) from “the Lord” (capitalized first letter). This distinguishes the personal *name* of God (“the LORD”) from the generic noun or *title* that means “lord” or “master”, referring to both humans (“my master”) and God (“the/my Lord”).

	Hebrew	Pronunciation	Interpretation
The Tetragrammaton (<i>tetra</i> “four” + <i>gramma</i> “letter”) is the personal name of God.	יהוה		
For unknown reasons (although we might speculate that it was in order to avoid breaking the commandment of Ex 20.7), the divine name (יהוה) was read as though it were pointed with the vowels of אֲדֹנָי.	יהוה + vowels of אֲדֹנָי	<i>Adonai</i> (usually)	“Lord”
This yielded a form (יְהוָה) that came to be misread as “Jehovah” (which is not a biblical word or name). [The initial <i>hatef-pataḥ</i> was written as <i>šewa</i> under the -י.]	יְהוָה		
Some read the form as שְׁמֵאֵל (i.e., “the Name” in Aramaic), although many read the Tetragrammaton as though it were הַשֵּׁם, “the Name” in Hebrew.	_____	<i>Adonai</i>	“the Lord” “my Lord” “my Master”
The original pronunciation of the divine name was thus lost.	יְהוָה		
Some clues to its pronunciation			
• In the Psalter, Exodus (twice) and Isaiah (three times), the first syllable of the divine name is used as a shortened form of the whole; הַיְיָ הַלֵּלְיָהּ (e.g., Ps 150.1, 6), which suggests the pronunciation of the first syllable.	יְהוָה	<i>Yah</i>	
• Greek texts occasionally transliterate [and abbreviate] the divine name as $\text{I}\alpha\omega$, which suggests a pronunciation like <i>Yahweh</i> (- ω - to approximate the sound of ו).	$\text{I}\alpha\omega$		
The orthography is thus often restored as (using Masoretic pointing).	יְהוָה or יְהוָה	<i>Yah · veh</i>	3 ms <i>hifil</i> imperfect of יהי: “he causes to become/happen”

Regardless of the exact history of its pronunciation (which is largely conjectural), the main point is that the Tetragrammaton, YHWH, is a *personal* or *proper name* (not a title), whereas אֲדֹנָי (Lord, Master) and אֱלֹהִים (God) are common nouns that were used as titles for the true God. When we realize that the term glossed as “the LORD” is a proper name we can better understand the constant reference to “the LORD your God” (which often seems tautologous—who else would be God?), which

would have reminded Israel that YHWH was the God to whom Israel owed covenantal fealty, not Molech, Dagon, Baal, or any other pagan deity (all of whom could be called אֱלֹהִים or אֱל, “God”, or אֱלֹהֵינוּ, “our God” by their worshippers).

יהוה אֱלֹהֶיךָ	<i>YHWH your God</i> (Dt 6.1)
יהוה הוא הָאֱלֹהִים	<i>YHWH is God</i> [i.e., not Baal] (1 Kgs 18.39); probably in the sense: <i>YHWH is the [true] God!</i>
וַיִּדְעֻם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה: וַיָּבֹא מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן אֶל־פַּרְעֹה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הָעִבְרִים	“... and that you may know that I am <i>YHWH</i> .” <i>So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him,</i> <i>“Thus says YHWH, the god of the Hebrews: ...”</i> (Ex 10.2b-3a). ²³
נָאִם יְהוָה לְאֲדֹנָי	<i>YHWH’s declaration to my master/lord: ...</i> (Ps 110.1)
כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָיךָ יְהוָה וְאֱלֹהֶיךָ	<i>Thus says your master, YHWH, even your god:</i> “... (Is 51.22)

1. When it immediately follows or precedes the term אֲדֹנָי (Lord, Master), יהוה is pointed with the vowels that correspond to אֱלֹהִים (יהוה אֲדֹנָי יהוה) so that it would be read as *Elohim* rather than *Adonai* (thus avoiding the reading *’Adonai ’Adonai*). This occurs about three hundred times in Biblical Hebrew.
2. Since the potential abuse of the name of God is a grave concern to many, some journals and books do not spell it out (e.g., as “Yahweh”), even when citing a biblical text in which it occurs (the journal or book might be thrown in the trash or otherwise treated callously, thus dishonoring “the Name”). Instead, they may follow the scribal practice of abbreviating it as “י”, or transliterate it without vowels (“Yhwh” or “YHWH”), or both.
3. Although the reasoning that led Israel to avoid or stop pronouncing the divine Name may have been (or at least sound) superstitious, its origin was positive—the desire to obey the commandment and avoid the curse. This was a “hedge” about the law: something that is never pronounced cannot be abused or misused. Some scholars suggest that the pronunciation of the Name was never known to any but the priests, and perhaps even passed from one high priest to the next, but there is no biblical evidence to support this theory.
4. The frequent use of these two terms to refer to the same God occasioned a great deal of discussion through the ages. Some rabbis suggested that יהוה refers to God in his covenantal, relational rôle, whereas אֱלֹהִים points to his godhood and power, and that the compound form יהוה אֱלֹהִים (one half of its occurrences are in Gn 2–3) deliberately identified the creator God of Genesis 1 (only אֱלֹהִים) as the covenantal and relational God (יהוה) of the rest of the book of Genesis.
5. These are not, of course, the only divine names or titles in Scripture, but they are by far the most common.

23. The point of Ex 10.2b-31 is that both Israelites and Egyptians [Pharaoh] will realize that the plagues that are afflicting Egypt are the work of the God of the Hebrews (i.e., YHWH), not of some other god (cf. Ex 20.2).

Part II

LESSONS 4–17

NOMINAL GRAMMAR VERBAL GRAMMAR (I)

This section introduces the forms of the noun and basic [strong] verb, and how they function in phrases, clauses, and sentences (morphosyntax), so that when you finish of these lessons, you should be able to read nominal phrases and verbal and non-verbal clauses.

You should be able to recognize and interpret the forms of the noun, adjective, pronouns (independent and suffixed), and basic verb, and in the exercises you will have read a number of clauses and phrases of Biblical Hebrew, so that the basic aspects of phrasal and clausal syntax should have become relatively familiar.

More specifically, you should be able to identify nouns as definite or indefinite; to identify which noun an adjective is modifying, whether or not that adjective is attributive, predicate (or substantive, if no noun is present); to recognize and identify construct chains as primarily subjective, objective, or adjectival; to identify (parse) verbal forms of the *qal* stem of the basic verb; and to identify the constituent elements of compound forms (e.g., a “word” made up of conjunction + preposition + article + noun).

Some of these concepts—e.g., nouns and verbs themselves, singular, plural, conjunctions, the imperative—will be familiar from English and other languages, even though their forms are quite different in Hebrew. Other aspects of these chapters—e.g., person, gender, number of verbal forms—will be familiar to students of languages which mark verbal forms to show agreement with their subjects. The construct—Hebrew’s way of showing the “of” relationship between substantives—will be largely unknown to most students, although its function is the same as “of” in English (along with some other common English syntagms).

These lessons also introduce the concept of “discourse”—that words function (have “meaning”) primarily in context, and that their context is not primarily the individual clause or sentence, but the entire story, sermon, poem, etc. in which they occur.²⁴ In fact, we will see that grammar (the combination of words and their forms to create meaningful texts) normally functions at the level of the paragraph (story, etc.) as well as within clauses and sentences.

Finally, because all languages are individual, some aspects of Hebrew, such as word order, as well as the non-semantic signals of clausal function (i.e., the distinction between conjunctive and disjunctive clauses, and the significance of that difference) will be entirely new ground for nearly all students.

The “enrichment” paragraphs in these lessons are extremely important, as they illustrate and apply the exegetical significance of the lessons. They are integral to the grammar, not merely “extras”.

24. The term “discourse” refers to the entire episode, whether that is a story (narrative), a set of instructions, a declaration about future events (prophecy), poem, conversation, &c. “Discourse” can also refer to the entire world within which the episode occurs or is described (the “universe of discourse”).

Lesson 4

THE NOUN

Many languages, like English, depend on endings, word order, or both to show a word's function in a sentence or clause, and to show the functional relationships between words. English adjectives, for example, usually come between the article and the noun that they modify (e.g., “the *red* book”, “a *wise old* prophet”). A word's function or role in English is normally indicated by its position in the sentence:

- a. The hungry man ate an apple.
- b. A hungry apple ate the man.

Since word order in English is usually subject-verb-object (SVO), these sentences differ in function, even though all six words are identical (counting “a/an” as two forms of one lexical item).

Another way to show both function and association is to put an ending on a word—called an *inflection*²⁵—different endings indicate the word's rôle in the sentence and the functional relationships between words in a clause. In the previous sentences, for example, we know that “hungry” describes “man” in a, but that it describes “apple” in b, since adjectives in English precede the word that they modify. Many languages, however, use fairly sophisticated inflectional systems to show agreement, or *concord* between words. Greek, Latin, and German, for example, use sets of endings called “cases” to indicate the rôle that different words play in the sentence (e.g., the nominative and accusative indicate the subject and object, respectively).

Endings may also indicate “gender” to show which words modify (or are modified by) other words. In French, for example, many adjectives add the letter “e” to the end of the lexical form when they modify feminine nouns. “Inflected” languages—in which endings show the function of and relationship between words (the case and gender + number, respectively)—often do not depend on word order to show syntax as heavily as does English. English, for example, uses gender only with third person pronouns (“his”, “she”, “its”), and only nouns are inflected for number (by the addition of the suffix “-s”), which means that word order is crucial to function in English (as the above sentence illustrates).

Although Hebrew nouns, adjectives, and verbs are inflected, sentences in Hebrew prose have a fairly restricted word order (although not nearly as rigid as word order in English). Inflection in Hebrew shows how words are related, but not syntactical function (as, e.g., subject or object). Nominal endings indicate *gender* (masculine, feminine) and *number* (singular, plural) in order to show *concord* between words, revealing which words “belong together”.

4.1 Gender

Every content word (noun, finite verb, pronoun, adjective, participle)²⁶ in Biblical Hebrew belongs to one of two classes, called “masculine” and “feminine”. Grammarians assign gender based on the gender of any verbs and adjectives that modify the word, and of pronouns that refer to it; i.e., feminine nouns are only modified by feminine adjectives and referred to by feminine pronouns,

25. To “inflect” is to “bend”, the term reflects the view that the endings are “bent” forms of the lexical, or “regular/straight” form.

26. A language's lexicon (the list of all the words in that language) can be crudely divided between *content words* (verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs) and *function words* (everything else).

and *vice versa* for masculine nouns. Pairs of words that refer to *animate* objects reflect so-called *natural gender*:

Masculine Nouns		Feminine Nouns	
<i>man, husband</i>	אִישׁ	אִשָּׁה	<i>woman, wife</i>
<i>bull, ox</i>	פָּר	פָּרָה	<i>cow</i>
<i>(male) lamb</i>	כֶּבֶס	כֶּבֶסָה	<i>ewe (female) lamb</i>
<i>king</i>	מֶלֶךְ	מַלְכָּה	<i>queen</i>
<i>son</i>	בֶּן	בַּת	<i>daughter</i>
<i>brother, [male] relative</i>	אָח	אָחוֹת	<i>sister, [female] relative</i>
<i>father, ancestor</i>	אָב	אִמָּה	<i>mother, ancestress</i>

Nouns that are feminine tend to end in either ה- or ת-. Masculine nouns can end in any letter of the alphabet, but tend *not* to end in ה- or ת-. Although endings are clues to a noun's gender, they are only secondary clues, since we can be confident of a noun's gender only if it occurs as the subject of a verb, if it is modified by an adjective, or if it is referred to by a pronoun. The gender of words that are never modified in these ways cannot be identified with certainty; their apparent gender is assigned based on their endings. Adjectives and participles, on the other hand, always have the ending that matches the gender [and number, below] of the word that they refer to or modify.

4.2 Number

Number is the other part of the concord system of Biblical Hebrew. In addition to suggesting gender, every noun's ending indicates whether the noun refers to one or more than one, and, together with its gender, shows which words modify it. Again, as with gender (above), the number of an adjective or participle is determined by the word that it modifies or refers to, so that the reader or hearer can track how words in the clause or phrase relate to each other.

4.3 The Forms of the Noun

	Singular		Plural	
Masculine	סוּס ²⁷	<i>horse or horse of</i>	סוּסִים	<i>horses</i>
			סוּסֵי	<i>horses of</i> ²⁸
Feminine	סוּסָה	<i>mare</i>		
	סוּסֹת	<i>mare of</i>	סוּסוֹת	<i>mares or mares of</i>
	מַלְכוּת	<i>kingdom or kingdom of</i>		

- Masculine singular nouns are considered *unmarked*—i.e., they normally have no special ending.
 - Feminine singular nouns are considered *marked*, since they usually end in either ה- , or ת-, although some are unmarked (e.g., עִיר, *city*; אֶרֶץ, *land*).
 - The construct singular ending (ת-) and the plural ending (וֹת-) *replace* the final ה-.
 - If the lexical form ends in ת-, the singular has only one form (e.g., מַלְכוּת); the plural ending (וֹת-) follows the ת-.
 - Masculine plural nouns usually end in either יִם - or יֵי -. These endings are added directly to the end of the singular form. The *only* function of the ending יֵי - is to signal that a noun is both *plural* and *construct* (the “of” function; see Lesson 9).
 - Feminine plural nouns usually end in וֹת- (occasionally in יִם - or יֵי -).
27. Although סוּסִים and סוּסָה are related, they are considered separate nouns.
28. Hebrew uses a form called the “construct” to indicate the “of” relationship (Lesson 9).

5. Although most nouns follow the paradigm above, the plural of some cannot be predicted from their singular. [“Irregular” plurals are listed with their singulars in the vocabulary lists.]

<i>father</i> (m.)	אָב	אָבוֹת	<i>fathers</i>
<i>man</i> (m.)	אִישׁ	אֲנָשִׁים	<i>men</i>
<i>woman</i> (f.)	אִשָּׁה	נָשִׁים	<i>women</i>
<i>house</i> (m.)	בַּיִת	בָּתִּים	<i>houses</i>
<i>daughter</i> (f.)	בַּת	בָּנוֹת	<i>daughters</i>
<i>city</i> (f.)	עִיר	עָרִים	<i>cities</i>

Endings therefore merely *suggest* a noun’s gender—they do not determine it. Nouns in the vocabulary lists that end in ה- or ת- are feminine, and other nouns are masculine, unless marked with “f.” or “m.”²⁹

masc. sg. noun with “fem.” plural	אָב	<i>father</i>	אָבוֹת	<i>fathers</i>
fem. sg. noun not in ה- or ת- with masc. plural	יָד	<i>hand</i>	יָדַיִם	<i>hands</i> [dual]
fem. sg. noun with “masc.” plural	אִשָּׁה	<i>woman</i>	נָשִׁים	<i>women</i>
fem. sg. noun not in ה- or ת- with fem. plural	אֶרֶץ	<i>land</i>	אֶרְצוֹת	<i>lands</i>

There are, however, tendencies in the gender of nouns. For example, parts of the body (e.g., יָד, *hand*; רֶגֶל, *foot/leg*; זְרוּעַ, *arm/shoulder*) are feminine (although שֵׁד, *breast* is masculine!). Tools or objects that people use (e.g., חֶרֶב, *sword*) also tend to be feminine.

4.4 Dual

Biblical Hebrew also uses a *dual* ending (ים־; accented on the penult) to refer to things that occur in pairs (e.g., parts of the body), or with units of measure to indicate two of that unit (e.g., “two hundred”, “two thousand”). It shows that such things were thought of primarily in pairs, even though they are usually glossed as simple plurals (“feet”, “wings”, not “two feet”, “two wings”).

Singular		Dual			
<i>ear</i>	אָזְן	אָזְנַיִם	<i>ears</i>	אָזְנַי	<i>ears of</i>
<i>hand</i>	יָד	יָדַיִם	<i>hands</i>	יָדַי	<i>hands of</i>
<i>nose</i>	אֶף	אֶפֶיִם	<i>nostrils</i>		
<i>foot</i>	רֶגֶל	רֶגְלַיִם	<i>feet</i>	רֶגְלַי	<i>feet of</i>
<i>palm</i>	כַּף	כַּפַּיִם	<i>palms</i>	כַּפַּי	<i>palms of</i>
<i>sandal</i>	נֶעַל	נֶעְלָיִם	<i>sandals</i>	נֶעְלָי	<i>sandals of</i>
<i>wing</i>	כַּנָּף	כַּנְפָּיִם	<i>wings</i>	כַּנְפָּי	<i>wings of</i>
<i>year</i>	שָׁנָה	שְׁנָיִם	<i>two years</i>		
<i>hundred</i>	מֵאָה	מֵאוֹתַיִם	<i>two hundred</i>		
<i>thousand</i>	אֶלֶף	אֶלְפָּיִם	<i>two thousand</i>		

A few other words have dual form, but lack any obviously dual quality or function:

יְרוּשָׁלַיִם	<i>Jerusalem</i>	מַיִם	<i>water</i>
מִצְרַיִם	<i>Egypt</i> ³⁰	שָׁמַיִם	<i>sky, heaven</i>

29. If a noun never occurs as the subject of a verb, and is never modified by an adjective or participle, lexicographers assign its gender based on its endings.

30. Egypt was divided into “Upper” and “Lower” Egypt, but this does not seem to be the reason for the form of its name.

4.5 Nominal Modification (I): The Article

To specify or *modify* something is to identify it more closely in order to narrow the field of possible referents. For instance, the main difference between “Please get a book” and “Please get the big tan book that is on the table” is that the second is more specific—the [a particular book, not just any book] big [not small or medium] tan [not red, yellow, blue, etc.] book that is on the table [not on the shelf, floor, etc.]. The adjectives “big” and “tan”, and the relative clause “that is on the the table” all modify the word “book”.

- (1) Please get a book.
- (2) ... *the* book
- (3) ... *my* book
- (4) ... *my tan* book
- (5) ... *my small tan* book
- (6) ... *my small tan* book *that is on the table*
- (7) ... *my small tan* book—*my copy of The Princess and Curdie—that is on the table*

Thus, to modify nouns and other substantives, English uses the definite article (2), possession (3; either pronominal [“my”, “her”] or nominal [“Susan’s”, “the prophet’s”]), adjectives (4–5), relative clauses (6), apposition (7), and other means. In this example the phrases grow increasingly specific, so that (7) virtually assures us of getting the right book.

Like many languages, English uses these means of modification in virtually any combination, e.g., “a book that is on the table” (relative clause), or “my copy of *The Princess and Curdie*” (possession and identification). The complexity or fulness of a description is determined by the redundancy factor of language. That is, speakers and authors tend to include as much information as necessary for effective communication.³¹ This is not an absolute value, and may apply more to casual conversation than to formal communication. On the other hand, authors who overestimate readers’ knowledge may write what they think is clear, but their readers may not understand (or may misinterpret) what they are trying to say.

Hebrew can also modify nouns by attaching, for example, the article, some prepositions, and possessive pronominal forms directly to the noun (rather like the -s plural in English).³² This first section describes the article, followed by a description of the most common conjunction.³³

4.5.1 The Article: Function

The article in Biblical Hebrew corresponds roughly to English “the”; Biblical Hebrew has no indefinite article.³⁴ Words with the article are *articular*; words lacking the article are *anarthrous*. Articular nouns are grammatically “definite” and anarthrous nouns are often “indefinite”, but Biblical Hebrew also has several other common ways to show a word’s definiteness or indefiniteness (e.g., the “construct”, below). Since English and Biblical Hebrew use their articles differently, articular words in the biblical text are not necessarily glossed using an English definite article.

31. The linguistic tendency toward efficiency explains why we rarely speak like sentence (7). If there were no other book nearby, we might say only, “Please get my [or even “the”] book”, since that would communicate enough information.

32. Biblical Hebrew also modifies nominal function by means of separate words, such as prepositions, adjectives, relative clauses, the construct chain (the “of” relationship), nominal apposition, and hendiadys.

33. A conjunction links lexemes, phrases, or clauses; it does not “modify” a noun. It is included here for pedagogic reasons.

34. The actual situation is slightly more complicated. Generic English nouns (e.g., “cow”, “house”, “son”—i.e., not proper names) must be modified by either an article (“the”, “a/an”) or a possessive (e.g., “her”, “our”, “their”); since they are not used “absolutely”, the sentence **Shepherd saw dog* is “ill-formed” (both nouns require an article). Biblical Hebrew, however, has no word(s) whose function is limited to that of “a/an”, although the word “one” (אֶחָד) occasionally fills that rôle.

That a word is indefinite does *not* mean that it is non-specific. For example, the phrase “a dog” in the sentence “She saw a dog” refers to a *specific* dog (the dog that she saw), even though the word “dog” is grammatically *indefinite*. Because Biblical Hebrew and English differ in their use of the article, words that are anarthrous in Hebrew often end up being definite in English. This is especially common in biblical poetry, where the article is relatively infrequent, but also occurs in prose.³⁵

4.5.2 The Article: Form

The article consists of a syllable prefixed to a word: • ה (he-pataḥ plus *dageš forte* in the first letter of the word; the size of the *dageš forte* is deliberately exaggerated). This combination of *pataḥ* + *dageš forte* is sometimes called the “pointing of the article” when it occurs at the beginning of a word. The article in Hebrew has only one form (i.e., it is not inflected for gender or number); apart from doubling the first consonant, it rarely affects the form of its word (#3, below).

1. This chart lists words with and without the article (the transliteration shows the doubling).³⁶

[a] king	<i>melek</i>	מֶלֶךְ	הַמֶּלֶךְ	<i>hammelek</i>	<i>the king</i>
years	<i>šānîm</i>	שָׁנִים	הַשָּׁנִים	<i>haššānîm</i>	<i>the years</i>
[a] name	<i>šēm</i>	שֵׁם	הַשֵּׁם	<i>haššēm</i>	<i>the name</i>

2. When a word begins with a *b^gad-k^fat* letter, *dageš lene* “becomes” the *dageš forte* of the article:

[a] house	<i>bayit</i>	בַּיִת	הַבַּיִת	<i>habbayit</i>	<i>the house</i>
words	<i>d^bārîm</i>	דְּבָרִים	הַדְּבָרִים	<i>hadd^bārîm</i>	<i>the words</i>

3. The article affects the form of a few words (in addition to doubling the first letter) in which a short vowel in the lexical form “lengthens” to *qameṣ* when the article is added:

<i>box (ark)</i>	אָרוֹן	הָאָרוֹן	<i>the box (ark)</i>
<i>land, earth</i>	אֶרֶץ	הָאֶרֶץ	<i>the land, earth</i>
<i>garden</i>	גֶּן	הַגֶּן	<i>the garden</i>
<i>mountain, hill country</i>	הַר	הַהָר	<i>the mountain, hill country</i>
<i>festival</i>	חַג	הַחַג	<i>the festival</i>
<i>people, nation</i>	עַם	הָעַם	<i>the people, nation</i>
<i>bull</i>	פָּר	הַפָּר	<i>the bull</i>

4. In two situations the first letter of the word does not double, so that the pointing of the article is *not* • ה (he-pataḥ followed by *dageš forte*):
 - a. Words that begin with *yod* or *mem* followed by vocal *šewa*.

<i>Judahites</i>	<i>y^hūdîm</i>	יְהוּדִים	הַיְהוּדִים	<i>hayhūdîm</i>	<i>the Judahites</i>
<i>kings</i>	<i>m^lākîm</i>	מְלָכִים	הַמְלָכִים	<i>ham^lākîm</i>	<i>the kings</i>

35. The opposite is also true. For example, the subject of Genesis 14.13a is an otherwise unknown fugitive, who is identified with the article: וַיָּבֹא הַפְּלִיט וַיִּגֹּד לְאַבְרָם *The fugitive* came and reported to Abram ... (Gn 14.13). To identify him in English, however, as “*the* fugitive” could mislead casual readers or hearers, who would conclude—based on their experience of English—that the article means that he was mentioned before this point in the story.

36. Transliterations are illustrative (pedagogical) rather than technically precise.

- b. Words that begin with a guttural (א ה ח ע) or *reš* (ר).³⁷

hill country	har	הַר	הָהָר	<i>hāhār</i>	the hill country
cities	‘ārîm	עָרִים	הָעָרִים	<i>he‘ārîm</i>	the cities

5. These are all of the possible forms [pointings] of the article:

• הַ before words beginning with all letters except א, ה, ח, ע, ר	הַבַּיִת	<i>the house</i>
	הַמֶּלֶךְ	<i>the king</i>
before ה, ח	הַחֶרֶב	<i>the sword</i>
הַ before -וֹ (sometimes) and -וֵי	הַמְּוֹדָעִים	<i>the spies</i>
	הַיְהוּדִים	<i>the Jews</i>
before -וֹ (vocal <i>šewa</i>)	הַנְּעָרִים	<i>the youths</i>
הַ before -א, -ר, and (usually) -ע	הָאִישׁ	<i>the man</i>
	הָעִיר	<i>the city</i>
	הָרֵאשׁ	<i>the head</i>
before -וֹ	הַחֲכָם	<i>the wise man</i>
הַ before unaccented -וֹ	הַהָרִים	<i>the mountains</i>
before unaccented -ע	הָעָרִים	<i>the cities</i>

N.B.: You do not need to memorize this list, or the table in #5; the main point is to recognize a word as *anarthrous* or *articular*.

4.6 The Conjunction *waw* (-וֹ)

Conjunctions are particles or function words that *join* words, phrases, or clauses (cf. “*juncture*”, “*junction*”). English has a multitude of conjunctions, many of which also specify the relationship between the clauses or phrases as contrast (“*but*”), alternatives (“*or*”), concession (“*although*”), etc. Hebrew has a number of conjunctions, but the most common by far is the letter ו, which is prefixed to the first word in the clause or phrase.

4.6.1 Function

The conjunction *waw* (also pronounced *vuv*) shows, for example, *that* clauses are related, but it does not imply anything about *how* they are related. The *function* of the *waw* depends entirely on the relationship between the two clauses which it joins. It therefore can represent the function of nearly any English conjunction, such as “*and*”, “*but*”, “*or*”, “*because*”, “*so that*”, “*although*”. None of these represent its “*real*” or “*literal*” function. On the other hand, these glosses are not equally permissible—or even possible—in a given context. *The first step* in interpreting any *waw* is to understand the content of the clauses that it joins so that we can determine their relationship.

1. Vocal *šewa* usually links the conjunction to its word; adding the *waw* to a word does not affect the word itself (apart from the usual loss of initial *dageš lene* due to the vocal *šewa* under the conjunction):

37. On gutturals see §22.1; their lack of doubling is their only characteristic that affects the article (for doubling, see §3.2b).

<i>a man</i>	אִישׁ	וְאִישׁ	<i>and a man</i>
<i>a day</i>	יוֹם	וְיוֹם	<i>but a day</i>
<i>a camel</i>	גַּמֶּל	וְגַמֶּל	<i>and a camel</i>

2. The vowel under the conjunction may be affected by the first letter of the word. When prefixed to a word beginning with a *bilabial* (“two lips”) consonant (ב נ מ), or to a word that has *šewa* as the first vowel, the conjunction becomes *šureq* (וֹ). This is the only time that a Hebrew syllable begins with a vowel.

<i>a house</i>	בַּיִת	וּבַיִת	<i>and a house</i>
<i>transgression</i>	פְּשָׁע	וּפְשָׁע	<i>or a transgression</i>
<i>a proverb</i>	מִזְשָׁל	וּמִזְשָׁל	<i>even a proverb</i>
<i>from the king</i>	מִהַמֶּלֶךְ	וּמִהַמֶּלֶךְ	<i>and from the king</i>
<i>their names</i>	שְׁמוֹתֵיהֶם	וּשְׁמוֹתֵיהֶם	<i>but their names</i>

4.6.2 Form

These are all of the possible forms (pointings) of the conjunction *waw*:

Conjunction	Prefixed to ...	Examples
-וּ	all words except the following	וְיִשְׂרָאֵל <i>and Israel</i>
	words beginning with <i>šewa</i>	וְנַעֲרוֹת <i>or maidens</i>
-וֹ	words beginning with ב נ מ	וּבִגְדָא <i>and a garment</i>
	words beginning with <i>hataf-pataḥ</i>	וּמַלְכָּה <i>or a queen</i>
	words beginning with <i>hataf-pataḥ</i>	וְחֵלֹם <i>but a dream</i>
-וֹ:	certain verbal forms	וַיִּכְתֹּב [and] he wrote
	יהוה	וַיהוה <i>and YHWH</i>
-וֹ	words beginning with <i>hiatef-segol</i>	וְאֵמֶת <i>and truth</i>
-וֹ	אֱלֹהִים	וְאֱלֹהִים <i>and God</i>
-וֹ	words beginning with ך	וַיהוּדָה <i>and Judah</i>
	words beginning with <i>hataf-qames</i>	וְעִנִּי <i>and affliction</i>
	words beginning with an accented syllable	וְאָרֶץ <i>and earth</i>
		וְלַיְלָה <i>and night</i>
	a verbal form (all 1cs preterites)	וְאָכַתְבִּי [and] I wrote

N.B.: You need not memorize this chart. The point is that any form beginning with a *waw* begins with the conjunction, *no matter how the waw is pointed*.³⁸

38. About ten nouns in Biblical Hebrew begin with *waw*; none occurs more than 9 times; most occur once. No lexical item begins with -וֹ.

4.7 Compound Forms (“Words”)

A single form (word) can thus be comprised of several elements, such as the conjunction, article, and noun (always in that order). The goal is to be able to identify the components of the compound form on the right:

noun	article + noun	conjunction + article + noun
בַּיִת <i>a house</i>	הַבַּיִת <i>the house</i>	וְהַבַּיִת <i>and the house</i>
מֶלֶךְ <i>a king</i>	הַמֶּלֶךְ <i>the king</i>	וְהַמֶּלֶךְ <i>or the king</i>
נָשִׁים <i>women</i>	הַנָּשִׁים <i>the women</i>	וְהַנָּשִׁים <i>or the women</i>

4.8 Concepts

affix	bilabial	form	modification/modify	preposition
anarthrous	conjunction	function	noun	<i>qal</i>
article	context	gender	number	separable
articular	dual	inseparable	plural	singular
aspect	feminine	masculine	[nominal] prefix	

4.9 Vocabulary

<i>altar; place of sacrifice</i>	מִזְבֵּחַ .43	<i>lord, master</i>	אֲדֹנָי	.34
		(<i>my</i>) [divine] <i>Lord, Master</i> (note the ending)	אֲדֹנָי	
<i>water; מַיִם waters of</i>	מַיִם .44	<i>tent; dwelling / home</i>	אֹהֶל	.35
<i>judgment, justice; justly; custom</i>	מִשְׁפָּט .45	<i>fire</i>	אֵשׁ	.36
<i>cross over, pass through / by; trespass</i>	עָבַר .46	<i>the</i> (for other forms, see §4.5.2(5))	הַ •	.37
<i>long / remote time</i> (i.e., time without visible or imaginable end); <i>age[s]</i> (trad. “forever”)	עוֹלָם .47	<i>and, but, or, even, ...</i>	וְ -	.38
		- וְ before words that begin with ב, מ, פ or have initial vocal <i>šewa</i>	וְ -	
<i>stand (stop; stay (in place))</i>	עָמַד .48	<i>sword, dagger, knife</i>	חֶרֶב	.39
<i>army, host; military duty; cf. the phrase צְבָאוֹת יְהוָה YHWH [of] hosts</i>	צָבָא .49	<i>YHWH</i> (proper name)	יְהוָה	.40
		<i>YH</i> (proper name; shortened form)	יְהַ יְהֵ	
<i>head, top, peak</i> (of mountain); <i>beginning</i> (cf. #16)	רֵאשִׁית .50	<i>sea; יַמִּים seas; הַיָּם the sea; west</i>	יָם	.41
		<i>take, get, acquire; buy; marry</i> (a wife)	לָקַח	.42

4.10 Exercises

Grammatical exercises are generally designed to help you to learn to see contextual examples of patterns so that you can begin to recognize them as they occur in the biblical text, not with the goal of assigning precise or exact functions to words, phrases, etc. The point of these particular exercises is that you learn to recognize some nominal affixes—the plural nominal endings, article,

and conjunction *waw*—and to identify the vocabulary form of nouns when combined with these affixes.

1. Provide a gloss for each noun, identify its gender and number, and write out its lexical [vocabulary list] form.

(2 Kgs 21.3)	מְזַבְּחוֹת .h	(Ex 34.7)	אָבוֹת .a
(1 Kgs 18.4) <i>prophet</i> נְבִיא	.i	(Nu 31.53)	אִישׁ .b
(Lv 27.2)	נְפֹשׁוֹת .j	(2 Sa 7.14)	אֲנָשִׁים .c
(1 Kgs 11.1)	נָשִׁים .k	(Ezk 14.16)	בָּנוֹת .d
(Ps 69.36)	עָרֵי .l	(Hos 11.10)	בָּנִים .e
(Ps 104.4)	רוּחוֹת .m	(Ex 1.21)	בָּתִּים .f
(Ps 148.4)	שָׁמַיִם .n	(2 Kgs 19.23)	הָרִים .g

2. Provide English glosses for these phrases. Be prepared to analyze and explain their elements (e.g., the spelling of the article or conjunction). If a word has more than one gloss translate it both ways (e.g., אִישׁ as both “husband” and “man”); Give the lexical form of words that do not have their lexical form. Note the hints on the left.

לַיְלָה <i>night</i>	יּוֹם וְלַיְלָה .i	אָדָם וְאֱלֹהִים .a
שֵׁר <i>noble</i>	הַמְּלָךְ וְהַשָּׂרִים .j	אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה .b
נְבִיא <i>prophet</i>	הַנְּבִיאִים וְהַמְּלָךְ .k	וּבַיִת .c
	עָרִים וְאַרְצוֹת .l	וְהַבָּיִת .d
	הָעָרִים וְהָהָרִים .m	בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת .e
	הָעָרִים וְהַבָּתִּים .n	הָהָר וְהָהָרִים .f
מִלְחָמָה <i>war</i>	שָׁלוֹם וּמִלְחָמָה .o	כְּהַנִּים וּמַלְכִים .g
שָׁמַיִם <i>heaven(s), sky</i>	הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ .p	כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב .h

4.11 Enrichment: Hendiadys

Hendiadys (Greek for “one through two”) is the name given to two words that can be linked to refer to a single entity. A common hendiadys, שָׁמַיִם וְאָרֶץ—*heaven and earth*, refers to the entire created order (perhaps what we call the “universe”), for which there is no specific lexeme in Biblical Hebrew.

Jonah used a unique hendiadys to tell the sailors that he feared [served] “Y^{HWH}, the god of heaven, who made *the sea and the dry land*” (אֶת־הַיָּבֵשָׁה וְאֶת־הַיָּם (Jon 1.9)). Since the sailors wanted to get *from* the sea *onto* dry land (1.13), Jonah’s way of identifying the creator was crafted to catch their attention! And it worked, as their response shows: a great fear (1.10), duplicated after they throw Jonah into the sea (1.16).

The satan [accuser] tells Y^{HWH} to afflict Job himself (rather than merely destroy his property and family), by saying “Only put forth your hand and strike *his bone and his flesh* [וְאֶל־בְּשָׂרוֹ וְאֶל־עַצְמוֹ] ...” (Jb 2.5), not a reference to internal and external physical affliction, but to Job’s entire body.

Hendiadys is also a *verbal* function, when two verbs describing the same event or when one verb modifies the following verb. In 1 Kgs 17.20, the two verbs (... וַיִּקְרָא ... וַיֹּאמֶר) must refer to the same event since calling and speaking are not discrete acts (i.e., to call is to speak).

וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהֵיהוּהָ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי And he called to Y^{HWH}, and said “Y^{HWH} my God, ...”
(1 Kgs 17.20)

Occasionally as many as three verbs describe one event; the combination in Jg 9.7 suggests that Jotham was probably shouting so that the rulers of Shechem could hear him from atop Mount Gerizim:

וַיִּשָּׂא קוֹלוֹ וַיִּקְרָא וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם שְׁמְעוּ אֵלַי And he lifted his voice and called and said to them
“Listen to me, ...” (Jg 9.7)

Lesson 5

THE HEBREW VERB³⁹

The verb may be thought of as the “motor” of the sentence: it makes the sentence “run” or “go”. It does this by identifying what the subject of the sentence did, or by describing the subject itself.⁴⁰

- a. Moses wrote Psalm 90.
- b. Moses was humble.

Sentence (a) tells us what Moses did (it identifies a deed that he performed), but does not describe him; sentence (b) describes Moses himself, without telling us anything about what he has done. Both functions can be combined in a single sentence, which can be either *compound* (c) (i.e., two or more *parallel* clauses) or *complex* (d) (i.e., at least one clause is *subordinate* to another):

- c. Moses was a humble man, and he wrote Psalm 90.
- d. Moses, who was a humble man, wrote Psalm 90.

Since English is a “slot” language in which a word’s function is determined by its position, we normally recognize the verb in an English clause or sentence by its *position*—the verb is the word following the subject (which is the first word or group of words in the sentence).

- e. The *bears* killed forty-two men.
- f. The Levite *bears* the ark.

In (e) the word “bears” is the subject (since it begins the sentence and is preceded by the article “the”), and “killed” is the verb. In (f), however, “bears” is a verb, identifying or naming what the Levites (the subject) did to the ark. In either case, we know that “killed” and “bears” are the predicates of their respective sentences because they follow their subjects.⁴¹

In (a) through (f), as in languages in general, the verbs define or describe the subject or its action(s). Verbs are therefore part of the *comment* of their clause.

A clause consists of a *topic* (or “subject”) and a *comment* (or “predicate”). In sentence (a), “God” is the topic and “created heaven and earth” is the comment (it describes an action of the subject). A sentence always consists of at least one clause, although a clause may not be a complete sentence. All three of the following sentences represent “complete” thoughts, but the thought represented by (h) is “more complete” than that in (g), and (i) is the most complete of the three. Only (g) consists of a single clause.

39. Much of the rest of this book addresses the functions and forms of the verb in Biblical Hebrew, not because verbs are somehow more fundamental or basic or “important” than nouns, but because the verbal system is the most complex aspect of Hebrew grammar.

40. This distinction between action and state is discussed further below (§15.1).

41. We sometimes recognize that a word is the verb because of its context, not because of its form or syntax:

- a. “Bank!” the flight instructor screamed.
- b. “Bank” was his laconic reply to “Where are you going?”
- c. “Bank ahead” called the lookout on the riverboat.

Linda Dietch, a former student, told me that this example reminded her “... of my dad’s answer when I asked why he wasn’t around when my mom went into labor with my older brother: ‘I fell at the bank.’ He fractured a vertebrae in his back and so he and my mom were hospitalized at the same time. My sympathy turned to irritation when I learned that he had fallen out of a tree stand at a river bank. He went on a hunting trip, leaving my mom alone when she was 8.5 months pregnant with their first child!”

- g. Job was patient.
- h. Job was patient, even when he was tested.
- i. Job was patient, even when his flocks and herds were stolen, his servants and children killed, and he himself afflicted with boils.

Like nouns, verbs in Biblical Hebrew are inflected for several reasons: (1) to indicate that the form is a verb; and (2) to show the person, gender, and number (§5.1.3) of the noun(s) that it modifies (its “subject”). Their inflection also indicates (3) the general function or nature of the clause (especially in narrative); and (4) the general time frame of the event or state that they describe. Verbal affixes (the “bits and pieces” that inflect the form) can be prefixed or suffixed to the verbal root (§5.1.1).

Verbal inflection is therefore part of the concord system (§4.1–2), since its affixes indicate its subject (the word that it modifies or comments on), and the relationship between the event or state that it describes and those described by verbs in other clauses. English has lost most of its inflectional system; only third person singular forms are inflected by adding “s” (“I/you/we/they sing” *vs.* “he/she sings”).

5.1 Form

In discussing the verbal conjugations (Lessons 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13), “stems” (Lessons 18–21), and weak verbal roots (Lessons 24, 27, 28, 30, 31) the term “diagnostic” refers to those few vowel points (including *dageš*) that enable us to distinguish one form from another, or to determine the stem and root of a particular form. This is one aspect of a verb’s *morphology*, or “shape”, which is created by its subject affixes (§5.1.1) and by the vowel points that the Masoretes added to the consonantal text to tell readers how to read a particular form. We have already looked at the basic morphology of the noun (e.g., endings for gender and number); now we turn to the morphology of the verb in Biblical Hebrew.

5.1.1 Subject (PGN) Affixes

Verbs modify their subjects by identifying what the subject is or does. In English the verb follows the subject (word order again), but Hebrew verbs have affixes (prefixes and suffixes) that agree with the person, number, and gender of the subject.

1. The *person* [P] of the verb (first, second, third) shows the relationship of the speaker or narrator to the action or state described by the verb:

Person	The speaker/narrator ...		
1st	... describes himself as doing the action, or as existing in the state described by the verb	“I know” “I thought”	“We see” “We went”
2nd	... directly <i>addresses</i> (speaks to) the subject of the verb	“You know” “You thought”	“You see” “You went”
3rd	... talks or writes <i>about</i> the subject of the verb	“He knows” “They thought”	“She sees” “He went”

2. The verb’s *gender* [G] (masculine, feminine) and *number* [N] (singular, plural) agree with the number and gender of its subject, so that the form of the Hebrew verb is sufficient to identify its subject (unlike the verb in English, which requires an explicit subject).

The three features of person-gender-number [PGN] are indicated by the form of the verb itself, whereas the subject of an English sentence is always a separate word, either a noun (“Moses”, “a servant”) or pronoun (“he”, “they”). The subject in Hebrew *may* be expressed by a noun or pronoun, but the narrator’s decision to identify the subject by using a separate word (whether it is a proper name or a common noun), phrase, or clause is one of the ways that he shapes the story.

Furthermore, although “he went” in English describes the action of one male (“he”), the form of the English verb (“went”) tells us nothing about its subject. The verb in Hebrew, however, identifies its subject as singular or plural, masculine or feminine, and first, second, or third person. Although “you” is completely ambiguous in English (singular? plural? male? female?), there is a specific

Hebrew verbal form for each 2nd person number-gender combination (2ms, 2fs, 2mp, 2fp), all of which are represented by “you” in contemporary English.

The range of subjects to which a given verbal form may refer is thus modified by verbal suffixes and prefixes—affixes attached to the end and beginning of the verbal root (below)—so that the verb agrees with the person, gender, and number [PGN] of its subject. There are two main sets of verbal PGN affixes, one for each of the two main sets of conjugations.

5.1.2 Verbal Root

Every verbal form consists of a set of consonants called the “verbal root”. The root usually has three, but sometimes two (rarely four) of these consonants, which we will call “radicals”.⁴² Verbal roots have been abstracted by grammarians from the forms of the verb.⁴³

מִשַׁלְתִּי	<i>I ruled/reigned</i>	מִשַׁל	<i>Rule! (masc. sg.)</i>
יִמְשַׁל	<i>He shall rule/reign</i>	הַמְשַׁלִּים	<i>Those (masc. pl.) who rule ...</i>
מִשַׁל	<i>He ruled/etc.</i>	הַמְשִׁילֹהוּ	<i>They caused him to rule</i>

When early grammarians recognized that these and other forms share the consonants ל-ש-ל, and that they all refer in some way to “rule”, “govern[ment]”, “dominion”, etc., they concluded that these three consonants—in this order—were the “root” of a verb מִשַׁל, “rule/govern”, as well as the root (or source) of nouns referring to rule or government. Since many roots in the Semitic languages—including Biblical Hebrew—have three radicals, the Semitic languages are said to be “triradical”.

Many lexical tools (lexicons, theological wordbooks and dictionaries, concordances, etc.) list both verbal forms and nouns under the verbal root that they are either “derived from” or “related to” (e.g., these nouns that contain מִשַׁל and refer to governance are listed after the verbal root מִשַׁל).

מִמְשָׁלָה	<i>rule, dominion, realm, kingdom</i>
מִשָּׁל	<i>rule, dominion; authority (2x)</i>
מִשְׁלָה	<i>rule, dominion; ruler</i>

In order to use any of these tools you must know whether it lists words alphabetically or by root, and be able to identify the putative “roots” of nouns, since the nouns will be listed under [after] the verbal forms.

5.1.3 Conjugation

Hebrew verbs have two main sets of forms—the *perfect* (which has a more or less unique set of PGN affixes) and the *imperfect* (which “shares” PGN affixes and other characteristics with other conjugations). The main difference between these two main sets of conjugations⁴⁴ is that the perfect uses PGN *endings* to agree with the subject, whereas the imperfect uses PGN *prefixes and endings* to agree with the subject. The perfect is thus also called the “suffix conjugation” and the imperfect is called the “prefix conjugation”. Their functions also differ (below). Although it is tempting to describe or think of these as tenses, they are not as fundamentally time-oriented as Indo-European tenses; any connotation of “tense” in Biblical Hebrew depends more heavily on the surrounding context and syntax than in, for example, English.

Some conjugations in Biblical Hebrew, such as the preterite and imperative, have a single or primary function—to narrate a series of past events and to give commands, respectively. The perfect and imperfect, on the other hand, have various functions, depending on, for example, whether or not they have a prefixed conjunction (וּ). And some—more specifically, the imperfect—also has other functions that are discerned largely from their context, such as when the imperfect functions as a third-person “imperative”, as in “He should/ must/ought to ...”

42. The term “radical” refers to the consonants of the verbal root (Latin radix, “root”).

43. Some grammars and most lexicons use the “root” sign (ר) when they discuss verbal roots.

44. The term “conjugation” is more neutral than either “tense” or “aspect”, both of which are potentially misleading with regard to Biblical Hebrew.

Finally, the descriptions of the functions of the various conjugations in this book refer primarily to their function in biblical *narrative* or *instructional* discourse.⁴⁵

5.1.4 Stem (*binyan*)

There are eight main ways of constructing verbal forms in Biblical Hebrew in order to show the type of action being described by the verb. The medieval grammarians referred to these combinations of vowels and affixes as *binyanîm* (“buildings”), since they were “built” on or from the root; today called “stems”. [see §18.1]⁴⁶

In *form*, some stems have a doubled middle radical (*piel*, *pual*), some have stem prefixes (*hifil*, *hofal*, *nifal*), one has both (*hitpael*), and one has neither (*qal*). Note that all of these names, except for “qal” have the letters “p” or “f” and “l”. This is because the early rabbinic grammarians used the verbal root פֿעַל *pʿl* (“do, make”) as their paradigm verb, following the example of the Arabic gramarians.

Where English uses pronouns, helping verbs, and prepositions to show the type of action described by a verb (“David *hid* the sword”, “David *hid* [*himself*]”, “David *was hidden*”, “The sword *was hidden by David*”), Hebrew shows the *function* of the verbal form by, e.g., doubling the middle letter of the verbal root, and varying the forms and vowels of the prefixes.

Doubled II-radical		Prefix		Both	Neither
<i>Piel</i>	משל	<i>Hifil</i>	המשיל		
<i>Pual</i>	משל	<i>Hofal</i>	המשל	<i>Hitpael</i>	<i>Qal</i>
		<i>Nifal</i>	נמשל		

We begin with the *qal* (Q)⁴⁷ stem, since more than two-thirds of all verbal forms in the Bible are in the *qal*. The word “qal” means “light”; *qal* is the only stem that has no stem prefix (its only prefix is the subject [PGN] prefix in imperfect and preterite), and no doubled letters (in the strong verb).⁴⁸

5.2 The Imperfect

The prefix conjugation—the “imperfect”—primarily describes events or states that are either present or future to the time of the speaker. It therefore tends to be more frequent in direct quotations and poetry than in narrative. (Biblical Hebrew rarely anticipates events, whereas anticipation is not infrequent in English, as in “He would soon discover ...”) It is therefore unlike the English imperfect (or the French *imparfait*), which refers to a continuous action in the past (e.g., “He was walking”)—the Hebrew imperfect does not refer to the past.⁴⁹

5.2.1 Form

The imperfect⁵⁰ uses *prefixes* and some *suffixes* to show the person, gender, and number of its subject. Every form of every imperfect has a PGN prefix; half of the forms also have endings. The affixes of the imperfect are:

45. In biblical poetry, conjugations seem to be used more for poetic reasons than for any temporal reference.

46. They can also be called “constructions” or “patterns”. In some languages the term “stem” refers to the “unchangeable” part of a verbal or nominal form. In Semitic studies the three radicals are called the “root”; the verbal stems (combinations of vowels, prefixes, and doubling) are built “on” or “from” those roots.

47. The name of the stem sounds like “Cal” (a nickname for “Calvin”), not *kwal* (unlike English “q”, Hebrew ק does not require a following “u”).

48. This means that doubling is not a sign of the *qal*, as it is of some other stems (below).

49. This statement refers primarily to biblical narrative, not to poetry.

50. The imperfect is also called “*yiqtol*” (the 3ms form of the *qal* imperfect of the verb קטל *qtl*, “kill”), or the “prefix conjugation” (since every form has a prefix). The name “imperfect” reflects the view that it describes action that was yet-to-be-complete.

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
1st	Common	- א I	- נ We
	Masc.	- ת You	ו - ת You
2nd	Fem.	י - ת	נה - ת
	Masc.	- י He/It	ו - י
3rd	Fem.	- ת She/It	נה - ת
			They

- Two sets of forms (2ms/3fs, 2fp/3fp) are identical, and can be distinguished only by context.
- The dash (-) represents the consonants of the verbal root, which either follows, or is “surrounded by” the PGN affix.
- A form with a *yod* prefix is always *masculine*.
- The six forms with a - ת prefix all require endings, context, or both to distinguish their PGN.
- These affixes *must be memorized*, since they are used in the imperfect and preterite⁵¹ of all verbs, and the second-person endings are used in the imperative of all verbs.
- Although the subject prefix is always followed by a vowel, none is listed here because the prefix vowel varies from stem to stem.

5.2.2 Qal Imperfect

The term *qal* (related to the verb קלל *qll*, “be light, slight, trifling”) means “light”, and was used because the *qal* lacks the doubling and prefixes (or both) that occur in the other stems (Lessons 18–21). The term “*qal*⁵² imperfect” refers to a particular combination of three elements: the radicals of the verbal root, the PGN affixes of the imperfect, and the vowels that characterize the *qal* imperfect, a combination that yields the following paradigm:

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
1st	Common	אָמַשַׁל <i>I rule</i>	נְמַשְׁלוּ <i>We rule</i>
	Masc.	תְּמַשַׁל <i>You rule</i>	תְּמַשְׁלוּ <i>You rule</i>
2nd	Fem.	תְּמַשְׁלִי	תְּמַשְׁלֶנָּה
	Masc.	יְמַשַׁל <i>He rules</i>	יְמַשְׁלוּ
3rd	Fem.	תְּמַשַׁל <i>She rules</i>	תְּמַשְׁלֶנָּה <i>They rule</i>

- The vowel for the *qal* PGN prefixes is *hireq* (except 1cs—remember the close relationship between the *i/e* vowels). Two other stems also have *hireq* as their prefix vowel (*nifal*, *hitpael*,⁵³ Lessons 18, 19).
- The first radical (*not* the PGN prefix) is followed by silent *šewa*.
- The vowel after the second radical in the *qal* imperfect is often *holem* (all forms except those with a vocalic ending). Because this vowel helps distinguish one stem from another, it is often called the “stem” or “theme” vowel.
- Verbs that have a guttural (ה, ח, ע) as their second or third radical (e.g., שָׁמַע, שָׁלַח) usually have *pataḥ* as their theme vowel. This *pataḥ* is the only difference between these verbs and מִשַׁל.

51. The *preterite* is the conjugation that identifies the “main storyline” of biblical narratives (Lesson 6).

52. It is also called “G” for *Grundstamm* (German: “basic stem”).

53. The names of the stems reflect the verbal root פָּעַל (“do, make”), which was used as the paradigm verb by the early Jewish grammarians. The names (which are the 3ms perfect of פָּעַל for each stem) are often written with a sign for ‘*ayin*: *nifal*, *hitpa’el* to show the presence of the middle radical. This is left out for the sake of simplicity.

Person	Gender	Singular		Plural	
1st	Common	אֶשְׁמַע	<i>I hear</i>	נִשְׁמָע	<i>We hear</i>
2nd	Masc.	תִּשְׁמַע	<i>You hear</i>	תִּשְׁמְעוּ	<i>You hear</i>
	Fem.	תִּשְׁמְעִי		תִּשְׁמַעְנָה	
3rd	Masc.	יִשְׁמַע	<i>He hears</i>	יִשְׁמְעוּ	<i>They hear</i>
	Fem.	תִּשְׁמַע	<i>She hears</i>	תִּשְׁמַעְנָה	

5. Verbs with **ס** as their third radical (III-**ס** verbs) have *qames* where שׁוֹמַע has *patah*, because the **ס** cannot close the syllable (e.g., מוֹצֵא: אֶמְצֵא, תִּמְצֵא, etc.). Since the **ס** is silent, it is not followed by silent *šewa*, the second syllable is open, and the vowel is long.

Person	Gender	Singular		Plural	
1st	Common	אֶמְצֵא	<i>I find</i>	נִמְצְאוּ	<i>We find</i>
2nd	Masc.	תִּמְצֵא	<i>You find</i>	תִּמְצְאוּ	<i>You find</i>
	Fem.	תִּמְצְאִי		תִּמְצַאְנָה	
3rd ^g	Masc.	יִמְצֵא	<i>He finds</i>	יִמְצְאוּ	<i>They find</i>
	Fem.	תִּמְצֵא	<i>She finds</i>	תִּמְצַאְנָה	

5.2.3 Function (HBI §2.2.2)

The function of the imperfect depends on its context, especially on the genre (literary type) of material, and sometimes on whether or not the conjunction (ו-) is prefixed to the form. In the lengthy narratives of Genesis, for example, the imperfect is relatively infrequent, whereas it is by far the most frequent verb form in Leviticus (most of which is instruction, commandment, and prohibition, with little narration).

1. The imperfect usually occurs in direct or indirect quotations,⁵⁴ and generally refers to *future* or *present* events.⁵⁵

כָּל־הַשְּׁמַע יִצְחַק־לִי:	Everyone who hears <i>will laugh</i> for me (Gn 21.6).
וְרֵב יַעֲבֹד צָעִיר:	“... and the older <i>shall serve</i> the younger” (Gn 25.23).
וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנֹכִי אֲנָאֵל:	He said, “ <i>I will redeem</i> ” (Ru 4.4).
זֹאת בְּרִיתִי אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמְרוּ	This is my covenant which <i>you shall keep</i> (Gn 17.10).

It occurs in both main and secondary clauses, as in Gn 17.10. “This is my covenant” is the *main* clause—it is the primary part of the sentence—and the relative clause (introduced by the relative אֲשֶׁר) is *secondary* or supplemental to it.

2. The following list of functions of the imperfect is not meant to intimidate beginning students, but rather to arm you against simply equating the imperfect with the [English] future by demonstrating some of the variety of expression possible within a single conjugation. When beginning your study of Hebrew, assume that an imperfect verb refers to the present or future, unless a modifying particle occurs, or there is enough context to show that it has

54. An indirect quotation reports what someone said, thought, or felt, and is usually introduced by “that”: “He said *that* she had finished”. A direct quotation would be: “He said, ‘She finished.’” Indirect quotations also occur with verbs of perception (e.g., “see”, “hear”), and emotion (e.g., “fear”, “rejoice”).

55. Since those have not yet occurred, they may be called *irrealis* (“not real”). This does not mean that the events will not happen, merely that they had not happened as of the time of the quotation.

some other use (or your teacher directs you otherwise). You will find this list more helpful when you begin reading the biblical text.

- a. The imperfect occurs in conditional sentences, generally preceded by **אם** (*if*) or **אם לא** (*if not*; also with **אולי**, *perhaps*):

אם־יגְאֹלֶךָ טוֹב יִגְאֹל	“If he will redeem you—good, let him redeem.
וְאִם־לֹא יִחְפֹּץ לְגַאֲלֶךָ	But if he is not pleased [willing] to redeem you ...” (Ru 3.13).
אם־תִּגְאֹל גְּאֹל וְאִם־לֹא יִגְאֹל	“If you will redeem, redeem! But if he will not redeem” (Ru 4.4)

- b. The imperfect can be negated by **לֹא** or **אַל** (both ≈ *not*). Depending on the context, a negated second person imperfect may express a *prohibition*:⁵⁶

לֹא נִרְדּוּ כִּי־הָאִישׁ אָמַר אֵלֵינוּ	“... we will not go down, for the man said to us,
לֹא־תִרְאוּ פָנַי	“You shall not see my face ...” (Gn 43.5).
וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא תִשְׁלַחוּ:	He said, “Do not send” (2 Kgs 2.16).
לֹא תִרְצַח	“You shall not murder” (Ex 20.13).
לֹא תִגְנוֹב	“You shall not steal” (Ex 20.15).

- c. When it is not first in its clause, the imperfect may be modified by a particle:

וְכָל־עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה טָרָם יִצְמַח	and every wild herb had not yet sprouted, ... (Gn 2.5; טָרָם ≈ <i>not yet</i>); = “no herb had yet sprouted”
עַד אֲשֶׁר־תָּשׁוּב חֲמַת אָחִיךָ:	“... until your brother’s anger turns away” (Gn 27.44; עַד אֲשֶׁר ≈ <i>until</i>)
אוּלַי יִישַׁר בְּעֵינֵי הָאֱלֹהִים	“Perhaps it will be good in God’s eyes ...” (Nu 23.27; אוּלַי ≈ <i>perhaps</i>)

- d. When the imperfect occurs with the conjunction (**וְ**) it *always begins* its clause, is usually followed by its subject, and generally refers to the future. It seems to imply that the imperfect is closely linked to the preceding verb (which is often an imperative or another imperfect). Many times the verb merely describes the next in a logical or chronological sequence of events, but, depending on the *context* and on the *relationship* between the function (“meaning”) of the verbal roots, this syntagm may also imply purpose or result.

נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם ... וַיִּרְדּוּ בְרִדַּת הַיָּם	“Let us make mankind ... so that they may rule ...” (Gn 1.26).
אוּלַי יִתְעַשֵּׂת הָאֱלֹהִים לָנוּ וְלֹא נֵאבֵד:	“Perhaps God will save us, so that we do not perish” (Jon 1.6).
וְנָחִיָּה וְלֹא נָמוּת	“... that we may live and not die” (Gn 43.8).

3. Hebrew lacks forms that correspond to what are called “helping”, “auxiliary”, or “modal” verbs (e.g., “may, might, will/would, shall/should, ought”).⁵⁷ Imperfect forms can apparently serve any of these functions, but the nuance of any given imperfect form is open to debate (see the examples above). This is especially clear in biblical poetry, where a single form might be rendered as either “*May* YHWH bless you” (precative—a prayer), “YHWH *blesses* [is blessing] you” (present indicative), or “YHWH *will/shall*⁵⁸ bless you” (future). Even published translations differ, and their renderings tend merely to follow tradition. For now, unless the context demands a modal interpretation, we will use the simple present or future to represent the imperfect (unless the context, especially a particle, indicates that the verb is functioning modally, as in Gn 17.18).

56. The imperative (Lesson 8) in Biblical Hebrew is used only for positive commands, not for prohibitions.

57. The verbal root **יָכַל**, glossed as “[be] able”, “can”, or “could”, is introduced with the infinitives (below).

58. The distinction between “will” and “shall” is complex, but this grammar uses “will” in the first person for simple futurity, and “shall” for intent, determination, or choice. In the second and third persons, “shall” is much stronger than “will” (e.g., “You shall not steal”). In American English, at least, this distinction is largely lost. “Shall” is viewed as more “correct” or “formal”; emphasis tends to be by means of vocal stress (“You *will* not get any dessert!”).

... ותאמר האשה	The woman said ...
מפרי עץ-הגן נאכל:	“From the fruit of the trees of the garden we <i>may eat</i> ” (Gn 3.2)
את-שני בני תמית	“My two sons <i>you may put to death</i> ...” (Gn 42.37)
לו ישמעאל יחיה לפניך:	“If only Ishmael <i>might live</i> before you!” (Gn 17.18; לו, <i>if only</i>)

4. This brief discussion of conjugational function shows that, as in vocabulary (Lesson 2), so in grammar, there is no direct or one-to-one correspondence between Biblical Hebrew and English (i.e., they are non-isomorphic). The function of a given form depends on a complex interplay of its lexical function, the genre in which it occurs, and the content of its immediate and larger contexts (perhaps especially, its relationship to the preceding clause). The verbal conjugation therefore has no “basic”, “fundamental”, or “central” function *in the other language*. This in turn implies that no word or form has a “literal” function in another language (again, especially when the languages are as varied in form and function as Biblical Hebrew and English).

5.3 The “Sign of the Object”

Hebrew uses a particle to point out the *definite direct object* of the verb. The particle אֵת (or אֶת) occurs only before definite direct objects (in Ex 34.13, the object precedes the verb).

אֲשַׁלַּח אֶת-עַבְדֵי אֵלֶיךָ I will send <i>my servants</i> to you ... (1 Kgs 20.6)
וְאֶת-אַשְׁרָחֵי תְּכַרְתוּן, and <i>their Asherahs</i> you shall cut down (Ex 34.13)

5.4 Maqqef

A horizontal line (¯), written evenly with the top horizontal stroke of, e.g., ך (־ך) can link two or more words into a single accentual unit, so that they are pronounced as though they were one form (although they are still separate “words”). This is especially common when the first consists of a single syllable, such as the sign of the object (Ex 34.13, above).

כָּל-אֵלֶּה	<i>all these</i>
בֶּן-אַחִינֹעַם	<i>son of Ahinoam</i>
עַל-הָעִיר	<i>against the city</i>

5.5 Parsing Verbs

To parse is to identify the “parts” (Latin: *pars*) of a thing. Parsing verbal forms allows us to check our understanding of a form, since our ability to understand it depends on identifying or recognizing it accurately. Parsing a Hebrew verb entails identifying the following elements or “parts” (some do not yet apply):

Lexical form	The radicals of the verbal root
Gloss(es)	One or more of the glosses linked to its <i>lexical form</i>
PGN	The person, gender, and number of the subject form (e.g., 3fp)
Stem	For now, we are studying the <i>qal</i>
Conjugation	E.g., imperfect, preterite, imperative, perfect
Prefixes	There are only four possibilities for this column: the conjunction <i>waw</i> , the interrogative –ךָ (§18.1.2), inseparable prepositions (Lesson 7), the article (only on participles [Lesson 12])
Suffixes	This refers <i>only</i> to the PGN of pronominal suffixes (Lesson 14; <i>not</i> the PGN of the subject)

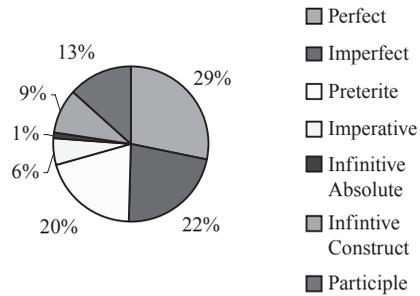
The “parsing form” at the end of this lesson may be reproduced and used throughout your studies.

5.6 Frequency

The occurrence and distribution of the conjugations vary widely, the perfect and infinitive absolute being the most (29%) and least frequent (less than 1%), respectively. The conjugations are not distributed evenly through the Bible; e.g., imperatives (positive commands) are more frequent in the poetic books (Pss) than in, for example, the specifically “covenantal” books (Ex, Lv, Dt).

More than one-fifth (22%) of all verbs in Biblical Hebrew are imperfect. Together with the preterite (Lesson 6), *two-fifths of all verbal forms* (42%) use the same set of subject [PGN] affixes.

Conjugation	Occurrences	% of Total
Perfect	21032	28.4%
Imperfect	16110	21.8%
Preterite	14977	20.3%
Imperative	4270	5.8%
Infinitive Absolute	796	1.1%
Infinitive Construct	6985	9.4%
Participle	9787	13.2%
Total	73957	



5.7 Concepts

affix	dynamic equivalence	interlinear	parse	radical
aspect	function	<i>maqfef</i>	person	root
comment	functional equivalence	modification	PGN	stem
conjugation	gender	morphology	predicate	subject
context	imperfect	number	prefix	topic
diagnostic			<i>qal</i>	translate/translation

5.8 Vocabulary

<i>rule, reign</i>	משל	.59	<i>no, not</i>	אֵל	.51
<i>tree</i> (sg. & coll.), <i>wood</i>	עֵץ	.60	One form with two functions: the preposition <i>with</i> ; direct object marker (not translated)	אֵת אֶת-	.52
<i>voice, sound</i>	קוֹל	.61	<i>go down, descend</i>	יָרַד	.53
(f.) <i>breath, wind, spirit</i>	רוּחַ	.62	<i>utensil, tool,⁵⁹ container, pot</i>	כֵּלִי	.54
<i>cultivated ground</i> (trad. “field”); contrast מִדְּבָר	שָׂדֶה	.63	<i>no, not</i>	לֹא	.55
<i>official; leader, ruler</i>	שָׂר	.64	<i>war, battle</i>	מִלְחָמָה	.56
<i>heaven(s), sky</i>	שָׁמַיִם	.65	<i>be[come] king; reign, rule</i> (as monarch, king)	מָלַךְ	.57
<i>watch, guard, keep, protect</i>	שָׁמַר	.66	<i>place</i>	מָקוֹם	.58

59. The function of the “utensil” or “tool” may be specified: מִלְחָמָה כֵּלִי *utensils of war* ≈ weapons.

5.9 Exercises

1. After learning the PGN affixes of the imperfect and the 3ms *qal* imperfect of מִשַׁל, gloss these clauses in English, using the simple future, and parse the verbs.

a. יִמְשְׁלוּ הַכְּהֹנִים .c. תִּשְׁמַעְנָה הַבָּנוֹת .e. יִמְלֹךְ הַיּוֹד
 b. תִּשְׁמְעֵי .d. תִּשְׁלְחוּ .f. יִמְשַׁל שְׁלוֹמָה

2. After reading the “enrichment” section (below), prepare an interlinear version of these clauses and sentences, and be ready to discuss the task of representing one language by another.

2 Sam 14.16	a. יִשְׁמַע הַמֶּלֶךְ
Ps 121.7; אֲ- your (m.s.)	b. יִשְׁמַר אֶת-נַפְשְׁךָ
עַל upon, over	c. תִּמְשְׁלֵי עַל-הָעִיר
עַל upon, over	d. יִמְשְׁלוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים עַל-הָאָרֶץ
David; עַל over, upon (prep.); כָּל all of	e. יִמְלֹךְ הַיּוֹד עַל-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ
בְּרִית, covenant; אִתְּכֶם with you (m. pl.)	f. אֶכְרַת בְּרִית אִתְּכֶם
Ex 20.13; רָצַח murder	g. לֹא תִרְצַח
Ex 20.15; גָּנַב steal	h. לֹא תִגְנֹב
קוֹל [the] voice of	i. יִשְׁמְעוּ הַבָּנִים וְהַבַּת אֶת-קוֹל-הָאֱלֹהִים
בְּרִית (see “f”, above)	j. תִּזְכְּרֵי אֶת-הַבְּרִית
Is 30.21; וְאֶזְנוֹיְךָ and your ears; מֵאַחֲרֶיךָ from behind you	k. וְאֶזְנוֹיְךָ תִשְׁמַעְנָה דְבַר מֵאַחֲרֶיךָ
אֵל approach, come near [be] near; קָרַב to (prep.)	l. יִקְרְבוּ אֶל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ
כָּתַב write; כָּל all of; אֶל to, unto (prep.)	m. תִּכְתֹּב אֶת-כָּל-הַדְּבָרִים אֶל-הָעֶבֶד

5.10 Enrichment: Translation & the Exercises

Translation from one language [and therefore one culture] into another raises a host of questions which we will not attempt to answer. One of the foremost questions is whether the translator is primarily responsible to the original text or to the audience for which the translation is intended. Does the translation primarily face the original or the reader(s)? The answer to this question determines many of the differences between the so-called “dynamic” or “functional equivalence” versions and the more-or-less “literal” versions.

The exercises in an introductory grammar afford us an opportunity to practice recognizing grammatical forms and their function, and to check our identification and understanding by representing them in English. In other words, the goal is *not* “translation” as we often think of it—rendering or representing a passage written in one language (in this case, Biblical Hebrew) by means of a fluid passage in another language (e.g., English). Especially in later lessons, where the exercises consist of biblical passages, such “fluent” translations often merely show that we are familiar with one of the standard English versions (or that we checked our work against theirs!). In fact, without first-hand speakers to interview, no one knows Biblical Hebrew well enough to produce a “polished” or “smooth” translation without a great deal of guesswork, much of which merely reflects the “received” or traditional translation or interpretation.

Furthermore, the goal of exercises should reflect our overall reasons for studying Biblical Hebrew—that we learn to read the biblical text as carefully as possible, that we be able to understand and evaluate translational choices made by the various versions in English (and, possibly, other languages), and that we be able to evaluate the comments in published tools (commentaries, lexical aids, etc.). We are not trying to see “more deeply” into the text, but to make sure that we are actually reading the text, rather than skimming across its surface, basing our “understanding” on what it says (and does not say), rather than on what we have heard said about it.⁶⁰

Therefore, your primary goal in rendering the clauses, phrases, sentences, and verses into English should be to represent what is in the Hebrew text—to prepare an “interlinear”—that will provide a basis for studying the Hebrew text and looking at other versions. Your “translation” of the exercises should, therefore, be fairly “literal”, even “wooden”—it is actually a *gloss*, not a translation—rather than free and impressionistic (see the discussion of “gloss” in terms of vocabulary in Lesson 2). This does not mean that it should be unintelligible (e.g., following Hebrew word order rather than English); your work should be well-formed English. Free and impressionistic versions are the appropriate fruit of much study and interpretation, *not* for this point in your Hebrew career.

This list of “rules” for glossing Biblical Hebrew into English are merely suggestions—feel free to use or modify them in ways that are most fruitful for the specific goals of your own studies.

1. Every element is verbally represented in English; every English element represents an element in the Hebrew text.
2. Words in English that correspond to elements of compound forms in Hebrew are linked by dashes (e.g., וַיֹּאמֶר, *and-he-says*).
3. Each Hebrew lexeme is rendered by the same English lexeme (e.g., אֶרֶץ is rendered by *land*; אֲשֶׁר by *who/that*, הִנֵּה by *behold*, and וְ by *and*).⁶¹
4. Synonyms are distinguished (e.g., לְ *to*, לַ *unto*).
5. The object marker אֶת is indicated by “[o]” or the like.
6. Linking words that are necessary for sensible English (e.g., relative pronoun, article, copula) are added in brackets [*is*], *italics*, or underlined.
7. Only proper names (persons, places) are capitalized.
8. Only two punctuation marks are used:
 - a. “!” indicates that the verb that it follows is an imperative (#16b).
 - b. “?” indicates the presence of the interrogative prefix (-הַ).
9. In longer passages, verse numbers are minimized (verse divisions and numbers were not original).
10. Rules for the construct (Lesson 9):
 - a. Words in construct are indicated by “-of” as the last element in their English word-group.
 - b. All elements of a construct are visually linked by en-dashes (i.e., *the-house-of-the-king*).
 - c. Words that are construct to a definite form are represented with the definite article “the”.
11. Verbs are rendered as “he” and “she” for 3ms and 3fs, respectively, regardless of the “gender” of their subject in English, e.g., *and-[o] the-city she-was-captured*.
12. The translation of *hifil* verb forms (Lesson 20) includes the word “cause” if the form is causative.
13. Verbal forms are rendered as consistently as possible:
 - a. imperfects as future: *I-will-[future]*
 - b. preterites as past: *and-she-[past]*;
 - c. imperatives are immediately followed by an exclamation point (e.g., *Go! to the land ...*).

60. This is not meant to denigrate the use of commentaries and other exegetical tools, but merely to suggest that if our primary obligation is to the text, we ought to be sure that our primary interaction is *with the text*.

61. The latter is not “who” or “that”, but the combined form “who/that”.

These rules probably sound great—after all, don’t we want to get as “close” to the original as possible? Here’s the result for Jonah 1.1–3:

- וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־יוֹנָה בֶן־אֲמִטַּי לֵאמֹר: 1
- And-he-was the-word-of YHWH unto Jonah the-son-of Amittai to-say
- קוּם לֵךְ אֶל־נִינְוֵה הָעִיר הַגְּדוֹלָה וּקְרָא עָלֶיהָ כִּי־עָלְתָה רָעָתָם לִפְנָי: 2
- Rise! Go! unto Nineveh the-city the-great and-call against-her for she-has-gone-up their-evil before-me
- וַיִּקָּם יוֹנָה לְבָרֶחַת תַּשְׁיֶשֶׁה מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּרֵד יָפוֹ וַיִּמְצָא אֲנִיָּה בָאָה תַרְשִׁישׁ 3
- And-he-rose Jonah to-flee Tarshish-ward from-before YHWH and-he-went-down Joppa and-he-found ship going Tarshish
- וַיִּתֵּן שְׂכָרָהּ וַיֵּרֵד בָּהּ לְבוֹא עִמָּהֶם תַרְשִׁישָׁה מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה:
- And-he-gave her-fare and-he-went-down in-her to-go with-them Tarshish-ward from-before YHWH

Carefully following the rules yields a text that is neither Hebrew nor English (“Heblish”?); if it communicates meaning to anyone, he or she will *already know Hebrew* and so can reconstruct the Hebrew text behind our “translation”.

Although we might think that such a version demonstrates our knowledge of Hebrew and our faithfulness to the Hebrew text, it actually shows that we don’t understand how language works. The first priority of any attempt to communicate is *to communicate*, and this rendering of Jonah communicates little. Since most users of this grammar know the story of Jonah, as well as English, we can figure out what is going on in the “Heblish Version”, even though it is not normal English. In order to test our understanding of Hebrew, therefore, we need to render the Hebrew text into “good”—or at least “normal”—English (since it was written, as far as we know, in “good” [“normal”] Hebrew). For example:

YHWH’s word came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying, “Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh, and call out against her that⁶² their wickedness has come up into my presence.”

But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish away from YHWH’s presence. He went down to Joppa, found a ship going to Tarshish, paid its fare, and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish away from YHWH’s presence. (Jonah 1.1–4)

Whether or not this is the best possible translation of these verses into English is beside the point at the moment. It certainly *communicates* more to the reader than the “inter-linear” version, and so—from that point alone—is more “successful”.

62. Ambiguities are one of the delights of translation. In this case, the word כִּי can introduce either the reason for Jonah’s mission (“since”, “because”, “for”), or the content of his message (“that”).

Lesson 6

THE PRETERITE

Languages tend to use one particular verbal conjugation for the “main sequence” of events in a story (“narrative”). In Biblical Hebrew that form is the *preterite* (which means “past”), the conjugation that identifies the main sequence of events in a biblical narrative.⁶³ In telling a story, English uses the simple past for the sequence of events, as in this example (the preterites are in *italics*).

George *walked* toward the cliff, wondering what had happened to his friends. Standing on the edge, he *gazed* down its face, looking for some sign of them, but no one was there. He *sighed*, *put* his hands to his mouth, and *shouted* yet again. There was still no answer, but then something far below him *moved* on the face of the cliff.

The main storyline consists of five events: George walked, gazed, sighed, put, and shouted, and something moved. The other verbal forms (“wondering”, “had happened”, “standing”, “looking”, and “was”), also identify events (or non-events), but do not describe the *next event* on the storyline. Both “wondering” and “standing” tell us that George was doing two things at the same time (wondering as he walked; standing as he gazed). “Looking for” modifies “gazed”, narrowing its focus (no pun intended) to tell us that George was not merely admiring the scenery. The three verbs “sighed”, “put”, and “shouted” identify a sequence of actions (and perhaps, by their close proximity, suggest that they were executed rapidly and without interruption). The form “had happened”—an example of the English “past perfect”—refers to something that occurred before George walked toward the cliff.⁶⁴ Both occurrences of “was” are negated (“no one”, “no answer”)—they are examples of *irrealis*, giving the reader information about something that did not occur.

It may be helpful to think of a story as made up of a number of *threads*,⁶⁵ each of which keeps track of a certain type of information. The thread provided by pronouns is obvious in the sentences above: “his”, “he”, and “him” enable the narrator to refer to George without repeating his name (just as “them” refers back to “his friends”).⁶⁶ Another thread is the simple past tense that outlines the story (George walked, gazed, sighed, put, and shouted, and [then] something moved).

... וַיֵּרֶץ הָעֶבֶד	And the servant <i>ran</i> ... (Gn 24.17a)
... וַיֹּאמֶר הַגַּמְיָאִינִי	And <i>he</i> said, “Let me swallow ...” (Gn 24.17b)
... וַתֹּאמֶר שְׂתֵה	And <i>she</i> said, “Drink ...” (Gn 24.18a)

63. Although the existence of a preterite “conjugation” in Biblical Hebrew is debated, this grammar uses the term to refer to the past narrative *function* of these verbs, rather than to their form, since this form and function are so closely related in Biblical Hebrew (avoiding the debate about the existence of the preterite as a morphological class).

64. Of course, the narrator decides how to express this simultaneous action. How would the story change if it read “Walking toward the cliff, George wondered ...” In this case, “wondered” is the main narrative verb (preterite), modified by “walking”. The biblical narrators made the same choices, as we shall see.

65. This is not the same as the literary term “narrative thread”, which refers to a story’s basic plot.

66. Pronouns have a similar function in Biblical Hebrew (see §13.1.2).

The preterite (= “past”) in Biblical Hebrew (also called “*wayyiqtol*”⁶⁷) is also a thread—a cohesive device that links an event to the preceding event. The preterite in Biblical Hebrew thus has the same function as the italicized verbs in the “story” (above)—it tells the reader that the event that it describes was the next event in the story (see §6.10).

Verbal PGN is a cohesive device in Biblical Hebrew that enables us to track verbal subjects. In Gn 24.17, for example, the second verb וַיֹּאמֶר, *and he said*, is 3ms. Since it has no expressed subject, and has the same PGN as the preceding verb, they have the same subject, but וַתֹּאמֶר, *and she said*, is 3fs, which tells us that Rebecca (already introduced in the story) answered the servant’s request. Furthermore, since they are described by three consecutive preterites, readers will assume that these events are consecutive and consequentially related.⁶⁸

6.1 Form

The PGN affixes of the preterite are the same as those of the imperfect. The only difference between their forms is that the preterite is always preceded by *waw* followed by *pataḥ* with a *dages forte* in the PGN prefix (this is sometimes called the “pointing of the article” (· ך), since it has the same vowel and doubling), so that the PGN prefix is doubled by the *dages forte* (except the guttural -א [1cs: “I”]). The result of this combination of the conjunction, pointing, and prefix is the following set of subject affixes, which is unique to the preterite (cf. the PGN prefixes of the imperfect, §5.2.1).

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
1st	Common	- אָךְ I ...	- וְנָּ We ...
	Masc.	- תָּךְ You ...	וְתָּ - ךְּ You ...
2nd	Fem.	יְ - תָּךְ You ...	וְתָּ - נָּךְ You ...
	Masc.	- יָּ He/It ...	וְיָּ - ךְּ They ...
3rd	Fem.	- תָּ She/It ...	וְתָּ - נָּ They ...

1. Apart from the prefixed *waw* and *dages forte* the forms of the preterite are identical to those of the imperfect.
2. Every form that begins with *waw* followed by a letter with *dages* (or *waw* + *qamesi* followed by *alef*) is preterite.

6.1.1 The *qal* preterite of מָשַׁל

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
1st	Common	וָאֶמְשַׁל I ruled/reigned	וְנִמְשַׁלְנוּ We ruled/reigned
2nd	Masc.	וְתִמְשַׁלְךָ You ruled/etc.	וְתִמְשַׁלְכֶם You ruled/etc.
	Fem.	וְתִמְשַׁלְיְךָ You ruled/etc.	וְתִמְשַׁלְנָה You ruled/etc.
3rd	Masc.	וַיִּמְשַׁל He ruled	וַיִּמְשַׁלוּ They ruled
	Fem.	וַתִּמְשַׁל She ruled	וַתִּמְשַׁלְנָה They ruled

67. The term “*wayyiqtol*” transliterates the 3ms form of the *qal* preterite of the verb קָטַל (וַיִּקְטֹל). This conjugation is also called “imperfect plus *waw*-consecutive” and “imperfect plus *waw*-conversive”, which reflect views that the *waw* either “converted” the function of the imperfect from present-future to narrative, or showed that its event was “consecutive to” or “consequent upon” the preceding event. All of these terms are used by various authors and resources.

68. Other cohesive devices are temporal and locative expressions (e.g., אָז, “then”, הַיּוֹם, “today”; שָׁם, “there, in that place”).

- Note the difference in form (the vowel under the conjunction) and function between the imperfect (Dt 10.2) and preterite (Jr 32.10) of the same verb:

וְאָכַתְבַּת עַל־הַלְחָת אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים and *I will write* on the tablets the words
 (Dt 10.2); 1cs Q F +w
 וְאָכַתְבַּת בַּסֵּפֶר and *I wrote* in the document (Jr 32.10); 1cs Q Pr

- When the verbal PGN is 1cs (“I”), with the guttural prefix א, the waw is followed by *qames*, and there is no *dages forte* in the א, since it is a guttural, and so does not double (cf. Jr 32.10, above):

וְאֶשְׁלַח אֶת־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶת־אַהֲרֹן and *I sent* Moses and Aaron ... (Jos 24.5); 1cs Q Pr

- As with the imperfect, preterites of II- and III-guttural and III-א verbal roots⁶⁹ have an *a*-vowel after the second radical instead of *holem*.

וְאָקְרָא לְךָ בְּשִׁמְךָ and *I called* you by your name (Is 44.4). 1cs Q Pr
 וַיִּשְׁמַע דָּוִד וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־יוֹאָב And David *heard* and *sent* Joab (2 Sam 10.7) 3ms Q Pr (both)

- Because only four consonants function as prefixes in the preterite, all preterites begin in one of six ways—there are no exceptions—regardless of the vowel following the prefix.

- אַ	1cs preterite: <i>I</i>	- וַ	1cp preterite: <i>we</i>
- אֵ	2ms/2fs/3fs preterite: <i>you, she</i>	- הֵ	3ms/p preterite: <i>he, they</i>
- וְ	2/3fp preterite: <i>they</i>	- הֵ	

N.B.: In parsing the preterite, there is no need to specify the conjunction in the “prefix” column, since the term “preterite” assumes the prefixed *waw*.⁷⁰ Your teacher may want you to spell this out.

Lemma	Lexical Form	Gloss	P/G/N	Stem	Conjugation	Prefix
וַיִּמְשַׁל	מִשַּׁל	<i>rule, reign</i>	3ms	Q	Pr	

6.2 I-א Verbal Roots

The *qal* preterite (and imperfect) of most strong verbs looks like מִשַּׁל (above), but five verbs look quite different. These five verbs begin with the letter א (they are therefore called I-א⁷¹ or “initial א” verbal roots). Because א is silent when followed by silent *šewa*, the prefix vowel of the *qal* imperfect and preterite is *holem*, not *hireq*, and there is no *šewa* under the א (i.e., the *šewa* was left out and the א functions as a “place marker”, a little like “silent *e*” in English). The five I-א verbs⁷² are:

69. On this terminology, see §6.2 (below).

70. There are a few examples of preterites without prefixed *waw*.

71. The Roman numeral “I” refers to the position of the *’alef* as the *first* radical of the verbal root. The same pattern can also refer to the second (II) and third (III) letters in the verbal root. These terms (I-, II-, III-) will be used without further comment.

72. Other verbal roots begin with א, but their forms follow the pattern of the “guttural” verbal roots (Lesson 22).

Verbal Root	Gloss	Occurrences
אמר	say, speak	5000+
אכל	eat, consume, devour	827x
אבד	perish; stray	191x
אפה	bake, cook	54x
אבה	desire, be willing, agree	25x

1. Their prefix vowel in Q F and Pr is *holem*; there is no *šewa* under the א, which is silent.

נאכל	We [shall] eat	1cp Q F
ותאמר	You/She said	2ms/3fs Q Pr
ויאמרו	They said	3mp Q Pr
נאבד	We [shall] perish	1cp Q F

2. In 1cs *qal* imperfect and preterite the 1cs prefix (א) assimilates with the first radical, so that only one א is written:

אמר	I shall say	1cs Q F
ואכל	I ate	1cs Q Pr

3. The main reason for introducing this set of verbal roots at this point is so that we can use אמר in the exercises. Here is its paradigm for the *qal* preterite:⁷³

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
1	Common	ואמר I said	ונאמר We said
2	Masc.	ותאמר You said	ותאמרו You said
	Fem.	ותאמרה	ותאמרנה
3	Masc.	ויאמר He said	ויאמרו They said
	Fem.	ותאמרה She said	ותאמרנה

N.B.: אמר is so frequent that the clause יהוה ואמר YHWH said represents one-half of one percent of all the words in Biblical Hebrew (ויאמר alone occurs nearly 2000 times).

6.3 Functions (HBI §2.2.3)

The introduction to this chapter said that the preterite identifies the main storyline of the narrative; this is its main function, but it also has other—much less frequent—functions.

6.3.1 Narrative “backbone”

The preterite describes a series of events in the main flow of a narrative (also called the “main sequence” or “backbone” of the narrative). Preterites are usually translated with the simple past. Each preterite always begins its clause, so that the string of preterites describes the string of past events (see also the examples above) [all of the verbs in these examples are Q Pr]:

73. The paradigm for the *qal* imperfect of אמר is nearly identical to this paradigm of its preterite.

וַיִּקְרְאוּ-צוּם וַיִּלְבְּשׁוּ שָׂקִים	and they proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth (Jonah 3.5)
וַיִּשָּׁבַע הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר	and the king swore [an oath] and said ... (1 Kg 1.29)
וַאֲכַתְּבָה בְּסֵפֶר וַאֲחַתְּמָהּ ...	and I wrote in the document, and I sealed [it], ... and I
וַאֲשַׁקֵּל הַכֶּסֶף בְּמֵאזְנִים:	weighed the silver with scales (Jr 32.10).

Tracing the string of preterites in Gn 1 reveals the prominence of divine speech in creation (these are only the last few verses of the creation story):

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים ...	and God said ... (Gn 1.26)
וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֲתֵּי-הָאָדָם ...	and God created human beings, ... (Gn 1.27)
וַיְבָרֵךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים	and God blessed them
וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים ...	and God said to them (Gn 1.28b)
וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים ...	and God said ... (Gn 1.29)
וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-כָּל-...	and God saw everything ... (Gn 1.30)

Calling the “preterite chain” the narrative “backbone” does not mean that events described by preterites are the only events—or even “essential” or most important events—of the story.⁷⁴ It *does* mean that in the narrator’s mind, the events described by these verbs comprise the main sequence, or flow, of the narrative. As you might expect from its function, the preterite is far more common in books that are largely narrative (e.g., Gn, 1–2 Sam, Est) than in books that are mainly covenantal (e.g., Lv, Dt) or poetic (e.g., Jb, Pss, Pr, SS). In 1 Sam 3.4–5, the string of preterites outlines a series of events (the speeches introduced by “[and] he said” are brief).⁷⁵

וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֶל-שְׁמוּאֵל	YHWH called Samuel
וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִי:	and he said, “Here I am!” (1 Sam 3.4)
וַיָּרֶץ אֶל-עֵלִי	He ran to Eli
וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִי כִּי ...	and he said, “Here I am, because ...”
וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא-קָרָאתִי ...	But he said, “I did not call ...”
וַיֵּלֶךְ	So he went
וַיִּשְׁכַּב:	and he lay down (1 Sam 3.5).

This string of preterites extends (with interruptions, see §6.6, §6.10) through the rest of the chapter (and the rest of Samuel⁷⁶). When first reading a biblical narrative, a helpful first step is to identify the preterites, since they normally yield the [bare] outline of the story (see Lesson 25).

6.3.2 *Narrative Summary*

Although each preterite in a string usually describes the next event in a series, a preterite may also summarize an entire sequence of events, usually at the end of a larger discourse. This function can be recognized by *content* of the preterite clauses, and the relationship between the events that they describe. “God humbled” (Jg 4.23) summarizes the events of Jg 4.13–22, whereas the next preterite (4.24) describes a further event that had begun on the same day.

74. For example, in any story, *what* is said is as important as *that* something was said (e.g., the content of the initial divine speech (Gn 1.26) is crucial, although its content is not “on” the storyline).

75. Note the context-dependent renderings (or non-rendering) of the initial *waw*.

76. The books of 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, and Ezra-Nehemiah each form a single book in the Hebrew Bible.

וַיִּכְנַע אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת יָבִין מֶלֶךְ-כְּנָעַן לְפָנָיו בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: וַתִּחַלֵּף יַד בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל הַלּוֹךְ וְקָשָׁה עַל יָבִין מֶלֶךְ-כְּנָעַן עַד אֲשֶׁר הִכְרִיתוּ אֶת יָבִין מֶלֶךְ-כְּנָעַן:	So on that day, God <i>humbled</i> Jabin king of Canaan before the sons of Israel (Jg 4.23), and the hand of the sons of Israel <i>grew</i> continually harsher against Jabin king of Canaan until they [had] destroyed Jabin king of Canaan (Jg 4.24).
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6.3.3 Past Perfect

A preterite can apparently refer to an event that took place before the previous event. This function is discernable only from context. Although YHWH might be repeating himself, in the context, Ex 4.19 seems to refer back to 4.11–12; it seems unlikely that Laban interrupted Jacob and Leah’s wedding night (Gn 29.24).

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה	Now YHWH <i>had said</i> to Moses ... (Ex 4.19)
וַיִּתֵּן לָבָן לָהּ אֶת-זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחָתוֹ לְלֵאָה בַתּוֹ שִׁפְחָה	Now Laban <i>had given</i> her Zilpah his maid— [to be] his daughter Leah’s maid (Gn 29.24)

6.3.4 Compound Reference

Consecutive preterites can describe a single event. In Ru 1.9 and 14, the three women wept aloud (“lifted their voices and wept”), which we might call “compound” or “multiple” reference:

וַתִּשְׂאָנָה קוֹלָן וַתִּבְכְּיָנָה	And they <i>lifted</i> their voices and <i>wept</i> (Ru 1.9)
וַיִּקְרָאוּ אֶל-לוֹט וַיֹּאמְרוּ	And they <i>called</i> to Lot and <i>said</i> ... (Gn 19.5)

6.4 Word Order

Although there is some variety in the order of elements in preterite clauses, *every preterite begins a new clause* (as the above examples illustrate), which can be called a “preterite clause”. *Nothing*—adverb, subject, object, negative, prepositional phrase—precedes the preterite. After the preterite the order is generally **subject—object(s)** (direct or indirect); **adverbial** expressions are usually clause- or sentence-final. This structure of main narrative clauses is the main reason that Hebrew is often referred to as a **V-S-O** (verb-subject-object) language.

6.5 The Imperfect & Preterite

The imperfect and preterite together “cover” all of the verbal “tenses” and many of the verbal “moods” used in English:

Imperfect (contextual)	Present Future Modal (<i>may/might, should, ought, etc.</i>)
Preterite	Past Narrative (the main line of events)

1. They do not directly correspond to what we think of as “tenses”, “moods”, or “aspects”, since their function depends on the type of material—the *genre*—within which they occur, so that this chart applies primarily to their function in *narrative*, not to their use in poetry, legal or instructional materials, or other genres.
2. The imperfect can also be preceded by the conjunction *waw*, which means that you will need to distinguish these forms from the preterite; the clue is the pointing under the *waw*:

וַיִּמְשֹׁל	conjunction + 3ms Q imperfect (present/future)	<i>and he shall rule</i>
וַיִּמְשַׁל	conjunction + 3ms Q preterite (narrative past)	<i>and he ruled</i>
וַאֲמַשֹּׁל	conjunction + 1cs Q imperfect (present/future)	<i>and I shall rule</i>
וַאֲמַשִּׁל	conjunction + 1ms Q preterite (narrative past)	<i>and I ruled</i>

6.6 *Disjunctive Clauses (HBI §3.2.2)*

Since the preterite names consecutive narrative events, other information (e.g., flashbacks, contemporaneous action) is contained in clauses that begin with *waw* followed by “something-other-than-a-verb”. This information is often *parenthetical*, adding information to the narrative about a character or circumstance that the reader needs to understand the story. It may also *contrast* two characters or their circumstances, or *introduce* a new character to the story, or describe something that did not happen (a negative clause).

Disjunctive clauses in narrative may be non-verbal, have a perfect or a participle as predicate, or an imperfect with a modifying adverb. Genesis 12.6b, for example, heightens God’s promise in the next clause (12.7) by telling the reader that the promised land was not uninhabited:

וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי אֲזַ בְּאֶרֶץ:	(now the Canaanites were then in the land) (Gn 12.6b)
לְזֶרְעֲךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת־הָאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת	“... to your seed I shall give this land.” (Gn 12.7)

The syntax of the disjunctive clause (*w* + subject [“the Canaanites”]) means that this is not the next event in the story (the Canaanites were [already] in the land), but it contains information crucial to the story.

Furthermore, the disjunctive syntax of this clause derives from—and is determined by—its function in the story; the word order is not merely another way of saying “the same thing”. In other words, a disjunctive clause is a signal that its contents do *not* describe the next event in the story (whether it is a positive or negative statement). Furthermore their syntax does not *of itself* indicate the function of a disjunctive clause; it merely indicates its non-sequentiality. [See §6.11.]

6.7 *Frequency*

About one-fifth (20%) of all verbal forms in the Bible are preterites, but this frequency is much higher in narrative than in poetry. In Genesis (for example) more than two-fifths of all verbs are preterite, but in the Song of Songs less than one percent are preterite.

6.8 *Concepts*

clause	disjunctive [clause]	narrative	perfect	VSO
<i>waw</i> -consecutive	flashback	narrative backbone	pluperfect	<i>wayyiqtol</i>
<i>waw</i> -conversive	genre	parenthetical information	preterite	word order
diagnostic(s)				

6.9 Vocabulary

<i>bread, food</i>	לֶחֶם .75	<i>enemy</i>	אֹיֵב .67
<i>wilderness</i> (uncultivated or “unclaimed” land)	מִדְבָּר .76	(I) <i>also, even, all the more</i> (cj.) (II) <i>nose, nostril; anger</i> (n.)	אָף .68
<i>clan, extended family</i> (smaller than a tribe)	מִשְׁפָּחָה .77	<i>covenant, treaty, agreement</i>	בְּרִית .69
<i>serve</i> (cf. עָבַד)	עָבַד .78	<i>flesh, meat; humanity</i> (as “flesh”)	בָּשָׂר .70
<i>time</i> (i.e., a particular moment)	עֵת .79	<i>month, new moon</i>	חֹדֶשׁ .71
<i>do something</i> [good or bad] for/to [someone] (trad. “visit”)	פָּקַד .80	<i>be[come] strong; seize, grasp, hold onto</i>	חָזַק .72
<i>flock</i> (sheep, goats)	צֹאן .81	<i>evening</i>	עָרֵב .73
<i>approach, come / draw near</i>	קָרַב .82	<i>cut [off]; with בְּרִית as object, make a treaty</i>	כָּרַת .74

6.10 Exercises

1. After studying the PGN affixes of the preterite and the 3ms *qal* preterite of מוּשַׁל, represent these clauses in English using the simple past (“He said”) for the preterite and simple future (“He will say”) for the imperfect. Parse the verbs.

.g וַיִּמְלֹךְ שְׂאוּל	.d וַתִּכְרַתִּי	.a וַתִּמְשֹׁלוּ
.h וַיִּמְלֹכוּ	.e וַתִּכְרַתִּי	.b וַאֲשַׁמַּע
.i וַתִּקְרַבִּי	.f וַתִּשְׁמְרֵנָה	.c וַיִּשְׁלַחוּ

2. Gloss these clauses and sentences in English, parsing the verbal forms. Remember that the purpose of the exercises is primarily to understand why the text means what it does.

2 Kgs 20.8; אֵל to; Hezekiah; Isaiah	.a וַיֹּאמֶר חֲזַקְיָהוּ אֶל-יְשַׁעְיָהוּ ...
Gn 21.27; שְׁנֵיהֶם <i>they both</i> [<i>the two of them</i>]	.b וַיִּכְרַתוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם בְּרִית:
Jg 12.7; שֵׁשׁ <i>six</i> ; Jephthah; Israel	.c וַיִּשְׁפֹּט יַפְתָּח אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים
2 Sam 20.22; רֹאשׁ <i>head of</i> ; בֵּן <i>son of</i> ; Sheba, Bichri	.d וַיִּכְרַתוּ אֶת-רֹאשׁ שִׁבְעֵ בֶן-בְּכָרִי
Ex 6.5; זָכַר <i>remember</i> ; בְּרִיתִי <i>my</i> [final ' -] <i>covenant</i>	.e וַאֲזָכֹר אֶת-בְּרִיתִי: ⁷⁷
2 Sam 11.3; לְ- <i>for the</i> ; דָּרַשׁ <i>seek</i> ; David	.f וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד וַיְדַרְשׁ לְאִשָּׁה וַיֹּאמֶר ...
Jg 2.5; שָׁם <i>there, in that place</i>	.g וַיִּזְבַּחוּ-שָׁם לַיהוָה:
Jg 2.2; אַתָּם <i>you</i> (mp); יוֹשֵׁב <i>inhabitant</i> (ms Q Ptc); הַזֶּאת <i>this</i> (modifies אֶרֶץ)	.h וְאַתֶּם לֹא-תִכְרַתוּ בְרִית לְיוֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת
2 Kgs 24.6; שָׁכַב <i>lie down, sleep</i> ; עִם <i>with</i> ; אֲבֹתָיו <i>his fathers</i> ; בְּנוֹ <i>his son</i> ; Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin	.i וַיִּשְׁכַּב יְהוֹיָקִים עִם-אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּמְלֹךְ יְהוֹיָכִין בְּנוֹ

77. The two “diamonds” mark the end of a biblical verse (*sof pasuq*, “end of *pasuq*”).

- Ps 59.1; לְהַמִּיתוֹ, *to kill him (put him to death)* j וַיִּשְׁמְרוּ אֶת־הַבַּיִת לְהַמִּיתוֹ
- Jg 20.27; שָׁאַל *ask*; -בִּי often introduces the object of שָׁאַל; בְּנֵי בִיהוּהָ k וַיִּשְׁאַלוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּיהוּהָ
- Jg 9.18; הָרַג *kill* (Q Pr; the guttural (ה) affects the prefix syllable); בְּנָיו *his sons* l. וַתַּהַרְגוּ אֶת־בְּנָיו

6.11 Enrichment: Narrative Backbone (& Ancillary Information)

Tracing preterite and disjunctive clauses in a narrative reveals its skeleton (the preterites) and information that the author considered “ancillary” to the storyline (disjunctive clauses). In 1 Samuel 3, for example (next page), the first three verses contain seven disjunctive clauses and two secondary (parallel) clauses, which together set the stage (or background) for the rest of the story (disjunctive clauses are in *italics*):

- Now the young man Samuel was serving YHWH in Eli’s presence,*
but YHWH’s word was rare in those days—
no vision was breaking through. [parallel clause]
Then one day
when Eli was sleeping in his place
(now his eyes had begun to be dim—
he could not see), [parallel clause]
and the lamp of God had not yet gone out,
and Samuel was sleeping in YHWH’s temple, where
the ark of God was,
- 1a וְהַנֶּעַר שְׂמוּאֵל מְשַׁרְתַּת אֶת־יְהוָה לִפְנֵי עֲלִי
 b וּדְבַר־יְהוָה הָיָה יָקָר בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם
 c אֵין חֲזוֹן נִפְרָץ:
 2a וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַהוּא
 b וְעַלִּי שָׁכַב בַּמְּקוֹמוֹ
 c וְעֵינָיו הִחְלוּ כְהוֹת
 d לֹא יוּכַל לִרְאוֹת:
 3a וְנֵר אֱלֹהִים טָרָם יִכָּבֵה
 b וּשְׂמוּאֵל שָׁכַב בְּהִיכַל יְהוָה
 אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם אָרוֹן אֱלֹהִים:

Following these introductory—scene-setting—disjunctive clauses, the *events* of the specific story begin with the preterites in verse 4 (preterites are in **bold**):

- YHWH **summoned** Samuel
and he said, “Here I am”.
And he ran to Eli
and he said, “Here I am, for you called me.”
But he said, “I did not call. Go back to sleep.”
So he went and **he lay down**.
And YHWH called Samuel again,
And [so] Samuel got up,
[and he] went to Eli,
and he said, “Here I am, for you called me.”
But he said, “I didn’t call, my son. Go back to sleep.”
- 4a וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֶל־שְׂמוּאֵל
 b וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִנִּי:
 5a וַיָּרֶץ אֶל־עֲלִי
 b וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִנִּי כִּי־קָרָאתָ לִּי
 c וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא־קָרָאתִי שׁוּב שָׁכַב
 d וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּשְׁכַּב:
 6a וַיִּסָּף יְהוָה קְרָא עוֹד שְׂמוּאֵל
 b וַיִּקָּם שְׂמוּאֵל
 c וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־עֲלִי
 d וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִנִּי כִּי־קָרָאתָ לִּי
 e וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא־קָרָאתִי בְנִי שׁוּב שָׁכַב

Calling the information in verses 1–3 “background” does not mean that this is unimportant or non-essential to the story. It does mean, on the other hand, that these clauses “set the stage” for the sequential events, which begin in verse 4.

After Samuel goes twice to Eli the author finally explains why Samuel did not recognize YHWH’s voice, setting off his explanation syntactically in a disjunctive clause (*waw* + noun):

- (Now Samuel did not yet know YHWH,
 nor had YHWH’s word yet been revealed to him)
- 7a וּשְׂמוּאֵל טָרָם יָדַע אֶת־יְהוָה
 7b וְטָרָם יִגְלֶה אֵלָיו דְּבַר־יְהוָה:

The author used disjunctive clauses (*w* + a noun [“Samuel”] (7a) and *w* + adverb [“not yet”] (7b)), to tell readers that these clauses will describe events or situations that do **not** follow **sequentially** the events just described (see §6.6 (above)). Furthermore, because these statements are negative, they “describe” *non-events* (*irrealis*), or things that did not happen and which therefore are not (and cannot be) part of the storyline (since they hadn’t yet occurred), but their information is crucial to the reader’s understanding of the sequence of events in the story. They answer a question that would probably occur to most readers, namely, how Samuel could be serving YHWH (3.1) and not recognize his voice. Having given the reader this needed information, the preterite chain then resumes the narration of the sequence of events:

And YHWH again called Samuel a third time	וַיִּסַּף יְהוָה קְרֹא־שְׂמוּאֵל בְּשִׁלְשִׁית 8a
and he got up and he went to Eli	וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-עֲלִי 8b
and he said , “Here I am, because you called me”	וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי כִי קָרָאתָ לִי 8c
and Eli discerned that YHWH was calling the young man.	וַיִּבֶן עֲלֵי כִי יְהוָה קָרָא לְנָעַר: 8d
And Eli said to Samuel ...	וַיֹּאמֶר עֲלֵי לְשְׂמוּאֵל 9a

Lesson 7

NOMINAL MODIFICATION (II): PREPOSITIONS

Prepositions precede (are *pre-positioned* to) other words in order to show their *function* or *rôle* in the clause or phrase. In English, for example, the difference in function between “George went *to* the store” and “George went *from* the store” is determined by the prepositions “to” and “from”, which indicate which way George went relative to the store. Prepositions thus modify a noun’s *syntagmatic function*, rather than its reference (which is modified by the article (§4.3), construct (Lesson 8), adjectives and the relative particle (Lesson 11). Prepositions in Biblical Hebrew do not affect the form of the word that they modify (remember, there are no “case endings” in Hebrew). There are three types of prepositions in Biblical Hebrew:

1. *inseparable*—the prepositions **ב**, **כ**, and **ל** are always prefixed to the word that they modify (like the conjunction **ו**)
2. *separable*—the preposition **מן** may be either separate from or prefixed to the word that it modifies
3. *separate*—most prepositions in Biblical Hebrew are separate words (as are prepositions in English)

7.1 The Inseparable Prepositions

The prepositions **ב** (*in, with, against*), **כ** (*like, as, according to, about [approximately]*), and **ל** (*to, for, at, belonging to*), are always prefixed to the word that they govern, becoming the first syllable in the word (cf. the conjunction **ו**).

1. If the word is anarthrous, the preposition is prefixed using vocal *šewa* (but if the first vowel in the word is *šewa*, they use *hireq*).

<i>a house</i>	בֵּית	בְּבַיִת	<i>in a house</i>
<i>a king</i>	מֶלֶךְ	כְּמֶלֶךְ	<i>like a king</i>
<i>a woman</i>	אִשָּׁה	לְאִשָּׁה	<i>to/for a woman</i>
<i>garments</i>	בְּגָדִים	בְּבְגָדִים	<i>in /with garments</i>
<i>young men</i>	נְעָרִים	כְּנְעָרִים	<i>like young men</i>

2. The first letter of a word that begins with a *b^egad-k^efat* letter loses *dageš lene*, since the preposition is followed by a [half-] vowel:

<i>a house</i>	בֵּית	לְבַיִת	<i>to a house</i>
<i>a son</i>	בֶּן	כְּבֶן	<i>like a son</i>
<i>tool</i>	כְּלִי	בְּכְלִי	<i>with a tool</i>

3. If the first letter of the word has a *ḥatef*-vowel, the preposition uses the full vowel that matches the half-vowel:

<i>an ark / box</i>	אָרוֹן	בְּאָרוֹן	<i>in a box</i> (“in the box” = בְּאָרוֹן)
<i>a fool</i>	אִיִּל	לְאִיִּל	<i>to a fool</i>

4. When they are added to an *articulated* word, these three prepositions *replace* the -ה of the article, but *not* its pointing (hence the importance of being able to recognize the article's pointing). These three are the *only* prefixes that replace the -ה of the article:

Articular			Anarthrous	
<i>the house</i>	הַבַּיִת	בְּבַיִת	<i>in the house</i>	בְּבַיִת <i>in a house</i>
<i>the son</i>	הַבֵּן	כְּבֵן	<i>like the son</i>	כְּבֵן <i>like a son</i>
<i>the woman</i>	הָאִשָּׁה	לְאִשָּׁה	<i>to/for the woman</i>	לְאִשָּׁה <i>to/for a woman</i>

5. When they are added to the name and titles of God (below), their vowel is *sere* (with אֱלֹהִים) or *pataḥ* (with יהוה and אֲדֹנָי):

<i>God</i>	אֱלֹהִים	לְאֱלֹהִים	<i>for God</i>
YHWH	יְהוָה	בְּיְהוָה	<i>in YHWH</i>
<i>the Lord</i>	אֲדֹנָי	לְאֲדֹנָי	<i>for/to the Lord</i>

6. When the *conjunction* is prefixed to a word with an inseparable preposition (-ל , -כ , -ב), it is simply added in front of the preposition (-ב and -כ will lack *dageš lene*):

<i>like the house</i>	כְּבַיִת	וְכַבַּיִת	<i>and like the house</i>
<i>for the king</i>	לְמֶלֶךְ	וְלְמֶלֶךְ	<i>even for the king</i>

7. The prepositions -ל (c. 20,000x) and -ב (c. 15,700x) account for well more than half of all prepositions in Biblical Hebrew. There are several reasons for their frequency:

- a. -ל often indicates an [*indirect*] *object*, much like English “to” or “for”:

וַיִּזְבְּחוּ־שָׁם לַיהוָה:	They sacrificed there <i>to</i> YHWH (Jg 2.5)
לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה לְבְנִי	“Do not take a wife <i>for</i> my son ...” (Gn 24.6)
וְלֹא דָרַשׁ לְבַעֲלִים:	And he did not seek [<i>for</i>] the Baals (2 Chr 17.3)

- b. The preposition -ל is also one of several ways in which Biblical Hebrew indicates *possession*; the -ל is prefixed to the “owner”. The context determines whether the syntagm corresponds to a phrase “an X of Y” (“Y’s X”) or clause (“Y has/had an X”). This is how Hebrew shows that the owner is a particular person, and implies that he or she has more than one:

נְבִיא לַיהוָה	a prophet <i>of</i> YHWH (1 Kgs 18.22); (implication: YHWH has more than one prophet)
מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	a psalm <i>of</i> David (Ps 3.1); (implication: David wrote more than one psalm)
וְלִרְבֵּקָה אָח	Now Rebekkah <i>had</i> a brother (Gn 24.29); (implication: Rebekkah had more than one brother)

- c. The preposition -ל frequently shows purpose or result, much like English “to”, in the sense of “in order to” or “so that” (Lesson 16).
- d. The preposition -ב has a wide range of functions, as its glosses suggest (e.g., *in*, *with*, *by*, *on*, *against*), and is also used to form temporal clauses (as is the preposition -כ ; Lesson 16).

7.2 The Separable Preposition (מִן)

1. The preposition מִן, “from”, can be prefixed to its noun, or written as a separate word. When separate, it is usually linked to the word that it governs with *maqef*:

<i>a house</i>	בֵּית	מִן־בֵּית	<i>from a house</i>
<i>the son</i>	הַבֵּן	מִן־הַבֵּן	<i>from the son</i>
<i>the woman</i>	הָאִשָּׁה	מִן־הָאִשָּׁה	<i>from the woman</i>

2. Like the inseparable prepositions (-ב-, -כ-, -ל), מִן is often joined to the word that it governs, becoming its first syllable. When this happens, the *nun* of מִן assimilates⁷⁸ completely to the first letter, which therefore doubles, so that the *nun* shows up only as a *dageš forte* in the first letter. This assimilation is called *nunnation*. In the first example, **minbáyit* > *mibbáyit* (* means that the form is hypothetical; > means “developed into”).

<i>a house</i>	בֵּית	מִבֵּית	<i>from a house</i>
<i>a son</i>	בֵּן	מִבֵּן	<i>from a son</i>
<i>a king</i>	מֶלֶךְ	מִמֶּלֶךְ	<i>from a king</i>

3. This means that we now know three causes of doubled letters:

The word’s spelling:	אִשָּׁה	<i>a woman / wife</i>
The article:	הַבֵּן	<i>the son</i>
Nunnation:	מִמֶּלֶךְ	<i>from a king</i>

N.B.: You should **always ask why a letter is doubled**, since this often helps identify the word’s lexical form, or distinguish the elements of a “compound word” (below).

4. Since *reš* and the gutturals (א, ה, ח, ע) do not double, מִן appears as -מִ (remember that the *i/e* vowels are closely related) when it is joined to a word beginning with one of these letters:

<i>a woman</i>	אִשָּׁה	מִאִשָּׁה	<i>from a woman</i>
<i>a city</i>	עִיר	מִעִיר	<i>from a city</i>
<i>a land</i>	אֶרֶץ	מִאֶרֶץ	<i>from a land</i>

5. Since מִן does not replace the ה- of the article, but is prefixed to it, *siere* also joins מִן to articular words:

<i>the house</i>	הַבַּיִת	מִהַבַּיִת	<i>from the house</i>
<i>the woman</i>	הָאִשָּׁה	מִהָאִשָּׁה	<i>from the woman</i>
<i>the king</i>	הַמֶּלֶךְ	מִהַמֶּלֶךְ	<i>from the king</i>

7.3 Summary: Compound Forms

A substantival form (one “word”) can thus consist of as many as four elements: a noun plus up to three prefixes (conjunction, preposition, article [and always in that order]).⁷⁹ This chart shows how

78. In *assimilation* one consonant becomes exactly like another—usually the one after it. In English the prefix *in-* (“not”) assimilates to the first letter of words beginning with *m*, *r*, *l* (e.g., *immobile*, *irreplaceable*, *illegal*), but not to the first letter of every word (cf., e.g., *inviolate*). Note that assimilation produces a doubled letter in English as well as in Biblical Hebrew.

they are combined; you should learn to “take apart” the forms listed on the right by identifying their elements:

Noun	+	Article	+	Preposition	+	Conjunction
בֵּית		הַבַּיִת		לְבַיִת		וְלַבַּיִת
<i>a house</i>		<i>the house</i>		<i>to the house</i>		<i>and to the house</i>
מֶלֶךְ		הַמֶּלֶךְ		מִהַמֶּלֶךְ		וְמִהַמֶּלֶךְ
<i>a king</i>		<i>the king</i>		<i>from the king</i>		<i>even from the king</i>
אִישׁ		הָאִישׁ		כְּאִישׁ		וְכְאִישׁ
<i>a man</i>		<i>the man</i>		<i>like the man</i>		<i>or like the man</i>

7.4 Independent (“Separate”) Prepositions

All other Hebrew prepositions are separate words, although they are often connected to their noun by *maqfef*. Those that end in a long vowel (e.g., לְפָנַי) often cause an initial *b^ogad-k^ofat* letter in the following word to lose *dageš lene*.

<i>a house</i>	בֵּית	תַּחַת־הַבַּיִת	<i>under the house</i>
<i>his father</i>	אָבִיו	תַּחַת־אָבִיו	<i>in his father’s place</i>
<i>a house</i>	בֵּית	לְפָנֵי־בַיִת	<i>before / in front of a house</i>
<i>the king</i>	הַמֶּלֶךְ	לְפָנֵי־הַמֶּלֶךְ	<i>before / in the presence of the king</i>
<i>Dan</i>	דָּן	עַד־דָּן	<i>as far as Dan</i>
<i>the Jordan</i>	הַיַּרְדֵּן	עֲבַר־הַיַּרְדֵּן	<i>beyond the Jordan</i>
<i>Moses</i>	מֹשֶׁה	אֶל־מֹשֶׁה	<i>to[ward] Moses</i>

7.5 Syntax

Hebrew prose often repeats the preposition before each element of a multiple object, and uses the conjunction between prepositional phrases. Since this repetition is normal, it is most likely non-emphatic.

בֵּין בֵּית־אֵל וּבֵין הָעַי	<i>between Bethel and Ai (Gn 13.3); not “[right smack dab] between both Bethel and Ai”</i>
מִדָּן וְעַד־בְּעֵר שְׁבַע	<i>from Dan to [as far as] Beersheba (1 Sam 3.20)</i>

7.6 Direction / Goal

Hebrew indicates that an action or event is directed to or toward a person, thing, or location in three different ways: (1) lexically, by prefixing a *preposition* (e.g., אֶל) to the object (§7.4); (2) morphologically, by suffixing the letter ה- to the object (§7.6.1); and (3) contextually (§7.6.2).

7.6.1 The Accusative / Directional Ending (ה, -)

A suffixed ה, - on some words indicates the direction or goal of verbs of motion—where the subject of the verb is going:

וַיָּקָם וַיָּבֹא הַבַּיְתָה	and he got up and went <i>to the house</i> (2 Kg 9.6)
וַיָּשָׁב יוֹסֵף מִצְרָיִמָה	and Joseph returned <i>to Egypt</i> (Gn 50.14)
וַיִּפְרֹשׂ כַּפָּיו הַשָּׁמַיְמָה	and he spread his hands <i>toward the sky</i> (2 Ch 6.13)
וַיִּסּוּרוּ שָׁמָּה	and they turned aside <i>to that place</i> (Jg 18.15)

79. We will see another combination—but still a maximum of four elements—when we discuss pronominal suffixes.

Since Ugaritic⁸⁰ suggests that this is a remnant of an accusative case ending,⁸¹ it has come to be called “accusative ה-”. Unlike prepositions, the accusative ה- occurs on only a few words, the most frequent of which are listed here.⁸²

1. *Nouns* (common and proper)

Lexical Form	With Accusative/Directional ה-		Frequency ⁸³	
			Locative	Total (c.)
אֶרֶץ	אֶרְצָה	to[ward] the ground	87x	2500x
מִצְרַיִם	מִצְרַיִמָה	to[ward] Egypt	29x	680x
בַּיִת	הַבַּיְתָה	to[ward] the house	20x	2000x
הַמִּדְבָּר	הַמִּדְבָּרָה	to[ward] the wilderness	18x	270x
הַהָר	הַהָרָה	to[ward] the mountain / hill country	14x	550x
שָׁמַיִם	הַשָּׁמַיִמָה	to[ward] heaven/the sky	12x	420x
שְׂאוֹל	שְׂאוֹלָה	to Sheol	10x	65x
עִיר	הָעִירָה	to[ward] the city	9x	1090x
בַּיִת	בַּיְתָהּ	to[ward] the house, inward	8x	2040x
יְרוּשָׁלַיִם	יְרוּשָׁלַיִמָה	to[ward] Jerusalem	5x	640x
שַׁעַר	שַׁעַרָה	to[ward] the gate	4x	360x

2. *Locatives*

Lexical Form	With Accusative/Directional ה-		Frequency		
			Locative	Total	
there	שָׁם	שָׁמָּה	to[ward] there/that place	142x	831x
where?	אֵן	אֵנָּה	to where?	39x	42x

3. *Direction* (see §7.11)

Lexical Form	With Accusative/Directional ה-		Frequency		
			Locative	Total	
sea; west	יָם	יָמָּה	to[ward] the west (sea); westward	64x	392x
north	צָפוֹן	צָפוֹנָה	to[ward] the north; northward	53x	153x
east	קֶדֶם	קֶדְמָה	to[ward] the east; eastward	26x	86x
south; Negev	נֶגֶב	נֶגְבָה	to[ward] the south (Negev); southward	29x	110x
south	תֵּימָן	תֵּימָנָה	southward	13x	24x

7.6.2 *Directional Objects*

In addition to prepositions and the directional ה-, the place toward which someone is moving may simply be named, and the “movement to[ward]” understood from the combination of a verb

80. The “Semitic” languages are spoken by the people groups traditionally identified with the “sons of Shem” listed in Gn 10. They are commonly divided between Eastern (Akkadian, which includes the dialects of Assyria and Babylonia) and Western (Ugaritic; Aramaic, Canaanite [of which Hebrew, Moabite, Edomite, &c. are dialects]; Arabic, and Ge’ez [Ethiopic]). Comparative linguistics is the study of the links between related languages, and uses one language to explain features of another.

81. Like the rest of the Semitic family, Hebrew certainly had case endings early in its history.

82. Although the statistics show that the directional ה- is relatively infrequent (e.g., “to[ward] the house” is expressed some 130 times with the preposition -אל, but only twenty-eight times with the directional ה-), there are many forms with directional ה- in Biblical Hebrew, which means that you will need to recognize them.

83. Occurrences of the directional form and total occurrences of the word are listed on the right.

of motion and the name of the place. Objects may also indicate a location rather than a direction (2 Sam 11.9).

... וַיִּקְרָא לְרַחֵל וּלְלֵאָה הַשָּׂדֶה אֶל-צֹאנוֹ:	... and he summoned Rachel and Leah <i>to the field</i> , to his flock (Gn 31.4)
מִן-הָאָרֶץ הַהוּא יָצָא אֲשׁוּר	From that land he went out <i>to Ashur</i> (Gn 10.11)
וַיִּשְׁכַּב אֲוִרְיָה פֶתַח בַּיִת הַמֶּלֶךְ	Uriah slept <i>at the door</i> of the king's house (2 Sam 11.9)
וַיֵּרְדוּ הַגֵּרָן	... and go down <i>to the threshing floor</i> (Ru 3.2)

N.B.: These are *not* three different functions, merely different ways of realizing the same function.

7.7 Prepositional Clauses

Hebrew rarely uses the verb “to be” for clauses that describe the location of a person or thing. Instead, Biblical Hebrew simply juxtaposes the noun and prepositional phrase, leaving the time frame (“tense”) to be inferred from the context:

וְדָוִד בְּמִדְבַר-זִיף	David [<i>was</i>] <i>in</i> the wilderness of Ziph (1 Sa 23.15)
וַיֹּתֵם בֶּן-הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל-הַבַּיִת	and Jotham, the king's son, [<i>was</i>] <i>over</i> the palace (2 Kg 15.5)
וַיִּכְבוֹד-יְהוָה עַל-הַבַּיִת	and YHWH's glory [<i>was</i>] <i>over</i> the temple (2 Ch 7.3)
וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי אָז בְּאֶרֶץ	now the Canaanites [<i>were</i>] then <i>in</i> the land (Gn 12.6)

7.8 Concepts

accusative	directional	preposition
assimilation	inseparable preposition	prepositional phrase
comparative linguistics	locative	Semitic
compound form(s)	nunnation	separable preposition

7.9 Vocabulary

<i>gift, offering, tribute</i>	מִנְחָה .92	<i>behind, after</i> (locative & temporal)	אַחַר .83 אַחֲרַי
<i>to, as far as; until, while</i>	עַד .93	<i>to, toward</i>	אֶל- .84 אֵל
<i>leave, forsake, abandon</i>	עָזַב .94	<i>cubit; forearm</i>	אַמּוּה .85
<i>on, upon, over; against; concerning</i>	עַל .95	<i>in, with, by, on, against, ...; when, while</i> (with inf. const.)	בְּ- .86
<i>with</i>	עִם .96	<i>between</i>	בֵּין .87
<i>innocent, just; righteous</i> (adj.)	צַדִּיק .97	<i>on behalf of, about; away from; behind</i>	בְּעַד .88
<i>innocence; righteousness</i> (n.)	צִדְקָה .97	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i> (with numbers); <i>when, while</i> (with inf. const.)	כְּ- .89
<i>lie down, sleep; have sexual relations with</i>	שָׁכַב .98	<i>to, for</i> (indicates indirect object); <i>have</i> (showing possession)	לְ- .90
<i>under, beneath; instead of, in place of</i> ⁸⁴	תַּחַת .99	<i>from, out of; some of; than</i> (in comparisons)	מִן .91

84. For example, Josh 6.20 says that Jericho's wall fell down תַּחֲתֶיהָ, “under itself” (“in its own place”), straight down on its foundation.

7.10 Exercises

1. When you have studied the inseparable prepositions and *מן*, and can recognize the presence of the article, identify the elements of these forms and provide English glosses for them.

a.	וּלְבָן	c.	וְעַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ	e.	וּמִהַבַּיִת
b.	וּמִהֶרֶם	d.	מִכְּהֵן	f.	וּלְאֲנָשִׁים

2. Represent these *phrases* and *clauses* in English, parsing the verbal forms.

1 Sam 3.15; בֶּקֶר <i>morning</i> ; Samuel	a.	וַיִּשְׁכַּב שְׁמוּאֵל עַד־הַבֶּקֶר
Dt 7.2; לָהֶם <i>for/with them</i>	b.	לֹא־תִכְרַת לָהֶם בְּרִית
Gn 13.4; קרא <i>call</i> ; שֵׁם <i>the name of</i> ; שָׁם <i>there</i> ; Abram	c.	וַיִּקְרָא שָׁם אֲבְרָם בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה:
Dt 10.2; כתב <i>write</i> ; לוח <i>tablet</i>	d.	וַאֲכַתֵּב עַל־הַלֹּחַת אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים
Josh 8.5; אֲנִי <i>I</i> ; עַם <i>nation, people</i> ; אֲשֶׁר <i>who</i> (relative particle); אִתִּי <i>with me</i>	e.	וְאֲנִי וְכָל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר אִתִּי נִקְרַב אֶל־הָעִיר
Lv 9.8; שחט <i>slaughter</i> ; עֵגֶל <i>calf of</i> ; חַטָּאת <i>sin-offering</i> ; Aaron	f.	וַיִּקְרַב אֶהֱרֹן אֶל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיִּשְׁחַט אֶת־עֵגֶל הַחַטָּאת
Jg 20.27; שאל <i>ask</i> (middle-guttural verbs have a <i>hiatef</i> -vowel rather than <i>šewa</i> ; an initial <i>b^gad-k^ffat</i> letter following a word ending in ו-, י-, or יִ- often lacks <i>dages lene</i>)	g.	וַיִּשְׁאַלוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּיהוָה
2 Chr 2.16; ספר <i>count</i> ; Solomon	h.	וַיִּסְפֹּר שְׁלֹמֹה כָּל־הָאֲנָשִׁים
Gn 1.5; קרא <i>call, name</i> ; אור <i>light</i>	i.	וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לְאוֹר יוֹם
Ex 18.24; קול <i>voice of</i> ; חתנו <i>his father-in-law</i> ; Moses	j.	וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה לְקוֹל חֹתְנוֹ
Josh 24.25; עַם <i>nation, people</i> ; הָהוּא <i>that</i> ; Joshua	k.	וַיִּכְרַת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּרִית לָעָם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא
1 Kgs 2.10; יוֹ - <i>his</i> (the י- shows that the noun is plural); David	l.	וַיִּשְׁכַּב דָּוִד עִם־אֲבֹתָיו
Ex 2.24; נִאֲקָתָם <i>their</i> [ם, ך - 3 mp] <i>groaning, complaint, lament</i> ; בְּרִיתוֹ <i>his covenant</i> ; זָכַר <i>remember</i> ; אֵת has both functions in this verse	m.	וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נִאֲקָתָם וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּרִיתוֹ אֶת־אֲבֹרָתָם אֶת־יִצְחָק וְאֶת־יַעֲקֹב:

7.11 Enrichment: Directions

As the Abram/Abraham stories progress, the divine promises become increasingly specific. YHWH first promised to *show* Abram a “land” (Gn 12.1), then that he would *give* “this land” to his descendants (Gn 12.7). In Gn 13.14–15, he tells Abram that what he can see “from the place where [he was] standing”, using the cardinal directions with the accusative ה- to identify the general extent of the now-promised land, which he declares that he will give to *both* Abram and his descendants.

צָפְנָה וְנִגְבָּה וְקִדְמָה וְיָמָּה: ... to the north, and to the Negev [south], and to the east, and to the sea [west] (Gn 13.14–15)

What we cannot tell from the story is the extent of the land that Abram could see, since we do not know (1) where he was standing; or (2) the precise topography of his day.

In the ancient Near East [ANE], orientation was toward the east (cf. Lat. *orient*); *yāmīn* could mean either “right side”, “right hand”, or “south”. In the northern hemisphere today we “orient” ourselves and our maps to the north, which reflects magnetic means of direction-finding (e.g., lodestones, compass). Without such tools, sunrise functioned as the primary directional indicator.

South	North	West	East	
יָמִין	שְׂמֹאל	אַחֲרַי	קֶדֶם	Jb 23.8–9
			עַל-פְּנֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם מִקֶּדֶם	Zc 14.4
		וַיָּבֹה	מִזְרָחָהּ	
נֶגְבָה	צְפוֹנָה			

Job says that God and his work cannot be found in any direction (Jb 23.8–9), but whether he refers to the cardinal directions (east, west, north, south) or his own point of view (“in front”, “behind”, “on [my] left”, “on [my] right”) is unclear, since all four words can have both frames of reference.

In Zc 14.4, the Mount of Olives is said to be “facing” Jerusalem “on the east”; when it splits “from sunrise [east] to the sea [west]”, its two halves will move “northward” and “toward the Negev [south]” (all four forms have “directional” ה-).

Lesson 8

COMMANDS & PROHIBITIONS

The imperfect conjugation can function modally with the sense of “should” or “must” (Lesson 5); the *imperative* conjugation is used for positive commands.⁸⁵ Like the imperative in English, which has only an implicit subject (“Go to bed!”), commands in Biblical Hebrew rarely name the subject. Like the imperfect and preterite, however, the imperative in Biblical Hebrew identifies the gender and number of its subject, using the PGN *endings* (only) of the second person imperfect.

8.1 Form

The imperative occurs only in the second person, and uses the subject [PGN] endings of the imperfect *without* the subject prefixes.

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
2nd	Masc.	no ending or הַ -	וּ -
	Fem.	יְ -	וֹנֵה -

8.2 The Qal Imperative

When the affixes of the imperative and the vowels of the *qal* imperative are added to the verbal root, the paradigm of the *qal* imperative is:

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
2nd	Masc.	מִשְׁלֵךְ מִשְׁלָה	מִשְׁלֵחוֹ מִשְׁלֵחוֹת
	Fem.	מִשְׁלֵיךְ	מִשְׁלֵיחֵהָ

1. The *hireq* under the first radical with vocalic endings avoids consecutive vocal *šewas* (when the prefix is removed from the imperfect, the *šewa* under the first radical becomes vocal).⁸⁶
2. It is not uncommon for the 2ms imperative to have the ending הַ -, which, in the *qal*, yields a form that looks just like 3fs *qal* perfect (מִשְׁלָה), and can be distinguished from it only by the context.
3. As in the imperfect and preterite, II- and III-guttural verbal roots form their imperative with *pataḥ* rather than *holem*; III-**ס** roots have *gameš*.

85. Imperatives are relatively infrequent, accounting for only about one in twenty of all verbs in Biblical Hebrew. Although we might expect to see them in the covenantal “legal” books, they are proportionately most frequent in Psalms (12% of all verbs), Song (11%), Jeremiah (7%), and Isaiah (7%); cf. Leviticus (2%) and Deuteronomy (4%).

86. This explanation is pedagogical, not technical.

Person	Gender	Singular		Plural	
2nd	Masc.	שָׁמַע	מִצָּא	שָׁמְעוּ	מִצְאֵוּ
		שָׁמְעָה	מִצְאָה		
	Fem.	שָׁמְעִי	מִצְאִי	שָׁמְעֶנָּה	מִצְאֵנָּה

8.3 Function (HBI §2.2.4c)

1. Positive *commands* use the imperative.

קָרָא נָא גַם לְחוּשֵׁי הָאָרְכִי	Summon Hushai the Archite ... (2 Sa 17.5).
אָרֶץ אָרֶץ אָרֶץ שָׁמְעִי דְבַר־יְהוָה:	Land, land, land, <i>hear</i> YHWH's word (Jr 22.29).
בֶּן־אָדָם עֲמֹד עַל־רַגְלֶיךָ	Son of man, <i>stand</i> on your feet! (Ezk 2.1)
שָׁמְעוּ אֶת־הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה	Hear this word! (Am 3.1)

2. *Prohibitions* (negative commands) are formed with the *imperfect* (*not* imperative) negated by לֹא or אַל. There may be a slight tendency for prohibitions with לֹא to be more universal or permanent than those with אַל (which would then refer to an immediate or specific situation), but this must be determined for each case; it is not a general rule.

לֹא תִגְנוֹב:	Do not steal (Ex 20.15).
לֹא תַעֲבֹר בִּי	Do not cross over against me (Nu 20.18).
לֹא־תִקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָהּ שָׂרַי	Do not call her name Sarai (Gn 17.15).
אַל־נָא תִקְבְּרֵנִי בְּמִצְרַיִם	Do not bury me in Egypt (Gn 47.29).
רַק אֶת־בְּנֵי לֹא תִשָּׁב שָׁמָּה:	But my son do not take back there (Gn 24.9).

8.4 Other Volitional Verbs

The term “volitional” refers to speech in which the speaker asserts his or her will (volition) toward another person. The imperative (above) is the most obvious form of volitional speech, but not all declarations of a speaker’s will are directed to the hearer. Some may indirectly command another person (“He should ...”, “Rebecca ought to ...”, “Let Ezra do it” [*not* in the sense of “allow” or “permit”]), or summon a group (of which the speaker is part) to do something (“Let’s ...”, “We should ...”).

8.4.1 Cohortative (HBI §2.2.4a)

The first person forms of the imperfect can show *volition*—the subject’s determination to do something. This is technically another modal use of the prefix conjugation, although this form can occur with an added הָ -. It is parsed in the conjugation column as “c” (for “cohortative”).

נִכְרְתָה בְּרִית אֲנִי וְאַתָּה	You and I <i>will make</i> a covenant (Gn 31.44) or “We—you and I—will make a covenant”
וְאֶשְׁלַח סֵפֶר	I <i>will send</i> a letter ... (2 Kgs 5.5)
נִשְׁלַח אַנְשִׁים לְפָנֵינוּ	We <i>will send</i> men before us ... (Dt 1.22)
נִזְבַּחָה לַיהוָה:	We <i>will sacrifice</i> to YHWH (Ex 5.17)

When it occurs with the conjunction after another cohortative, imperfect, or imperative, the cohortative may be *telic*, showing purpose or result; this is determined by the context and the relationship between the functions of the two verbs:

תְּהִי אֱלֹהִים ... וְנִכְרַתָּה בְרִית עִמָּךְ:	Let there be an oath ... that we <i>may make</i> a covenant with you (Gn 26.28)
קָרָא נָא גַם לְחוּשַׁי ... וְנִשְׁמָעָה מִה־בְּפוּי	Call Hushai ..., <i>that we may hear</i> (2 Sam 17.5)
... וְנִפְּלָה גּוֹרְלוֹת וְנִדְעָה we'll cast lots <i>so that we may know</i> ... (Jn 1.7)

8.4.2 Jussive (HBI §2.2.4b)

In the third person the prefix conjugation can also have volitional force, which is called *jussive* (Latin *jussus*, a command). This functions rather like a third person imperative, that is, “Let him ...” in the sense of “He should/must/ought ...”,⁸⁷ but probably *not* with the sense “Allow him to ...”. Because there is no special form⁸⁸ for this function, grammarians differ on which verbs are jussive and which are not, especially in biblical poetry; in Gn 41.35, for example, Joseph is offering Pharaoh advice, so the verbs are probably jussive:

וַיִּקְבְּצוּ אֶת-כָּל-אֹכֶל ... וַיִּצְבְּרוּ-בָר	“Let them gather all the food ... and let them store grain ...” (Gn 41.35); i.e., “They should ...”
יִשְׁמְעוּ הָעִבְרִים:	“Let the Hebrew hear!” (1 Sam 13.3); i.e., not permission, but exhortation.
יִשְׁמַר אֶת-נַפְשׁוֹ:	May he guard your life or He shall guard your life (Ps 121.7)

8.5 The Volitional Particle (נָא)

The imperative, cohortative, and jussive may be followed by the particle נָא (with or without *maqfef*). Although נָא is often translated “please”, or “I pray” (in the archaic sense of “ask”), its function seems to be inconsistent, which means that its function is not clear. A verb followed by נָא, however, is *always* volitional. When a volitional verb is negated, it may be preceded by אַל-נָא or לֹא-נָא:

שְׁמַע־נָא הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חָלַמְתִּי:	“Hear this dream which I dreamed (Gn 37.6).
וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ אֲמַר-נָא שְׁבִלֹת	They said to him, “Say ‘Shibboleth’” (Jg 12.6).
וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-נָא תַעֲזֹב אֶתְנוּ	He said, “Do not abandon us, ⁸⁹ ...” (Nu 10.31).

8.6 The Volitional Summary Particle (וְעַתָּה) (HBI §3.3.8)

The particle וְעַתָּה (וְ + עַתָּה); traditionally, “And now”) usually introduces an imperative, cohortative, or jussive, which directs the hearer to pursue a course of action based on the preceding discourse. Volitional forms occur frequently without וְעַתָּה, but you should expect to find a volitional verb (negative or positive) after וְעַתָּה whenever you come across it. When it occurs without a volitional form, it functions as a temporal particle, “now”. Note that the volitional form is often *not* the following word; additional information or reasons can precede the command or declaration of intent.

וְעַתָּה בְּנִי שְׁמַע בְּקוֹלִי	Now therefore, my son, listen to my voice (Gn 27.8)
וְעַתָּה יִגְדֹל-נָא כֹחַ אֲדֹנָי	Now therefore, let the power of my Lord be great (Nu 14.17)
וְעַתָּה כָּתְבוּ לָכֶם אֶת-הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת	Now therefore, write this song (Dt 31.19)
וְעַתָּה יִשְׁמַע־נָא אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ	Now therefore, let my lord the king hear (1 Sam 26.19)

87. Since Biblical Hebrew does not use helping verbs to show what is called “mood”, the choice of which helping verb to use in English reflects the translator’s interpretation.

88. The imperfect and jussive can be distinguished in a few types of verbal roots because their vowels differ (below).

89. Pronominal objects are always attached to either the verb itself or, as here, the direct object marker itself (אתנו > את+נו).

Dt 9.7; שכח <i>forget</i>	זכר אל-תשכח .k
Josh 9.6; לָנוּ <i>for [with] us</i>	ועתה פרתוֹלָנוּ בְּרִית: .l
2 Kgs 4.36; קרא אל <i>call to, summon</i> ; Gehazi, Shunamite	ויקרא אל־גיחזי ויאמר קרא אל־השנמית .m
Hg 2.11; שאל <i>ask</i>	שאל־נא את־הכֹּהֲנִים .n
Gn 27.43; י - <i>my (1cs)</i>	ועתה בני שִׁמֶע בְּקִלִּי .o
Dt 6.4; אלהינו <i>our [נו- 1cp] god</i> ; אחד <i>one</i>	שִׁמֶע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד: .p

8.10 Enrichment: Verbal Euphony in Poetry

The first eight lines of Psalm 100 contain seven commands: “Shout ...! Serve ...! Enter ...! Know ...! Enter ...! Thank ...! Bless ...!” Even though Hebrew poetry does not use rhyme, the repeated PGN affix *ב*- on the string of 2mp imperatives links this series of commands by both form and sound (imperatives are *italicized*). Nearly every line in the psalm (after the title [1a]) begins with a word ending in *-u*, and several (2a-b, 4a-b) end with a word that begins with the preposition *ב*- (*with*). Read these lines aloud until you can begin to hear their repeated sounds.

<i>Shout</i> to YHWH, all the earth;	הֲרִיעוּ לַיהוָה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ: 1b
<i>Serve</i> YHWH with joy;	עֲבְדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה בְּשִׂמְחָה 2a
<i>Come</i> before him with a glad shout;	בָּאוּ לִפְנֵי בְּרִנָּה: 2b
<i>Know</i> that YHWH is God.	דָּעוּ כִּי־יְהוָה הוּא אֱלֹהִים ... 3a
<i>Enter</i> his gates with thanks,	בָּאוּ שְׁעָרָיו בְּתוֹדָה 4a
His courts with praise,	חֲצֹרֹתָיו בְּתִהְלָה 4b
<i>Thank</i> him,	הוֹדוּ־לוֹ 4c
<i>Bless</i> his name;	בְּרַכּוּ שְׁמוֹ: 4d

Reading the Hebrew text reveals effects such as this aural repetition (which is invisible in English), so that we can enjoy both *what* they said and *how* they said it.

Lesson 9

NOMINAL MODIFICATION (III): THE CONSTRUCT

The English word “of” signals many relationships, including possession (“the sword of Goliath”), relationship (“son of David”), and modification (“an altar of gold”). These can also be signalled by the “possessive ‘s” (“God’s kingdom”, “the scribe’s son”) or an adjective (“a golden altar”), or even by juxtaposing two nouns (“a stone wall”).

Hebrew expresses these relationships with the construct chain, in which each word is “linked to” the following word. Words are said to be in either the “construct” or “absolute” state. Nouns thus have one of two states:⁹⁰ they are either “absolute” (from Latin, meaning “unconnected” or “independent”) or “construct”. About **one-third** of all nouns in Biblical Hebrew occur in the construct state.

9.1 The construct Chain

To modify (in language) is to restrict. A major way to modify a word’s referent in English and Hebrew is by means of the “of” relationship. Consider, for example, “the girl’s book”, “the author’s book”, and “his book”. In each case the words before “book” restrict what “book” can refer to. In order to show this relationship, Biblical Hebrew places two or more substantives side-by-side in a sequence of words called a *construct chain*, in which each word is linked to the following word by the “of” relationship:

1.	אָבִי מֶלֶךְ	<i>a father of a king or a king’s father</i>
2.	אָבִי הַמֶּלֶךְ	<i>the father of the king or the king’s father</i>
3.	בַּת הַמֶּלֶךְ	<i>the daughter of the king or the king’s daughter</i>
4.	סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה	<i>the document of the teaching/law</i>
5.	בֵּית מֶלֶךְ הָאָרֶץ	<i>the house of the king of the land</i>
6.	בֵּית מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל	<i>the house of the king of Israel</i>

1. Each noun is *in construct* to the *following* word.
2. The order is not arbitrary, and may not be changed (e.g., #1 cannot mean “a father’s king”).
3. The last word in a construct chain is in the absolute state.⁹¹ The vocabulary form of a noun is also its form in the *absolute*.
4. A construct chain therefore consists of a series of words, each of which (except the last) is modified by the rest of the series.

9.1.1 Forms

1. Masculine singular and feminine plural nouns have the same endings in both states. Feminine singular and masculine plural nouns, however, have separate endings for absolute and construct. The ך- of the fem. construct singular and the ך- of the plural replaces the ה- of the singular; if the absolute ends in ך-, the absolute and construct singular endings are the

90. Unfortunately, the words “construct” and “absolute” can refer to a word’s *function* (i.e., “linked” or “independent”) or its *form* (since the construct spelling of many words differs slightly from their absolute [lexical] form). You will need to note which sense applies.

91. We shall note the single exception to this when we discuss pronominal suffixes (Lesson 14, below).

same. The ם- of the masculine plural absolute drops off, and the form has *šere* instead of *hireq*, as in the following table.⁹²

Singular				Plural				
	Absolute		Construct		Absolute		Construct	
Masc.	סוּס	<i>horse</i>	סוּס	<i>horse of</i>	סוּסִים	<i>horses</i>	סוּסֵי	<i>horses of</i>
Fem.	סוּסָה	<i>mare</i>	סוּסַת	<i>mare of</i>	סוּסוֹת	<i>mares</i>	סוּסוֹת	<i>mares of</i>

2. Even if the ending is the same (as in ms and fp), the vowels of words in construct often differ from their lexical form, since the accent changes [lessens] slightly when a word is in construct.

Singular				Plural				
	Absolute		Construct		Absolute		Construct	
Masc.	בַּיִת	<i>house</i>	בֵּית	<i>house of</i>	בָּתִּים	<i>houses</i>	בֵּתֵי	<i>houses of</i>
	בֵּן	<i>son</i>	בֶּן	<i>son of</i>	בָּנִים	<i>sons</i>	בְּנֵי	<i>sons of</i>
Fem.	אִשָּׁה	<i>wife</i>	אִשָּׁת	<i>wife of</i>	נָשִׁים	<i>wives</i>	נָשֵׁי	<i>wives of</i>
	בַּת	<i>daughter</i>	בֵּת	<i>daughter of</i>	בָּנוֹת	<i>daughters</i>	בְּנוֹת	<i>daughters of</i>

3. This does not apply to long internal vowels (cf. סוּס, above), i.e., those written with a *mater* (which are thus called “unchangeably long”):

Singular				Plural				
	Absolute		Construct		Absolute		Construct	
Masc.	אִישׁ	<i>man</i>	אִישׁ	<i>man of</i>	אֲנָשִׁים	<i>men</i>	אֲנָשֵׁי	<i>men of</i>
Fem.	עִיר	<i>city</i>	עִיר	<i>city of</i>	עָרִים	<i>cities</i>	עָרֵי	<i>cities of</i>

4. Three fairly common nouns form their construct singular by adding ךְּ - (פְּרִי has the same form in both states):

Singular				Plural				
	Absolute		Construct		Absolute		Construct	
	אָב	<i>father</i>	אָבִי	<i>father of</i>	אָבוֹת	<i>fathers</i>	אָבוֹת	<i>fathers of</i>
	אָח	<i>brother</i>	אָחִי	<i>brother of</i>	אָחִים	<i>brothers</i>	אָחֵי	<i>brothers of</i>
	פֶּה	<i>mouth</i>	פִּי	<i>mouth of</i>				
	פְּרִי	<i>fruit</i>	פְּרִי	<i>fruit of</i>				

5. The construct singular of nouns with two vowels with either *waw* or *yod* between them “collapses” or “simplifies” into a single long vowel (-*awe*- > -*ô*-; and -*ayi*- > -*ê*-):

Singular				Plural				
	Absolute		Construct		Absolute		Construct	
	מָוֶת	<i>death</i>	מוֹת	<i>death of</i>				
	בַּיִת	<i>house</i>	בֵּית	<i>house of</i>	בָּתִּים	<i>houses</i>	בֵּתֵי	<i>houses of</i>
	עַיִן	<i>eye; spring</i>	עַיִן	<i>eye / spring of</i> ⁹³	עַיִנִּים	<i>eyes</i>	עַיִנֵּי	<i>eyes of</i>

92. The following paradigms list the singular and plural forms for each word—regardless of the point being illustrated—as they occur in Biblical Hebrew. If a form is not listed, it does not occur.

93. עַיִן is the first part of the names of many water sources, e.g., עַיִן־גֵּדִי (*En-gedi*) “Well of [the] Kid”.

9.1.2 Syntax

1. Although the form of a word often signals that it is in the construct, the primary signal of a construct chain is an *uninterrupted series of two or more substantives*, the last of which is often definite, being either an articular noun or proper name.⁹⁴

כּוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם	<i>the stars of the sky</i>
בֶּן דָּוִד	<i>the son of David, David's son</i>
עָרֵי יְהוּדָה	<i>the cities of Judah, Judah's cities</i>
בָּנוֹת זֶלְפָחָד	<i>the daughters of Zelophehad, Zelophehad's daughters</i>
מִזְבֵּחַ הַזָּהָב	<i>the altar of gold, the golden altar</i>

2. The definiteness of the *last* element in a construct chain determines the definiteness or indefiniteness of *every* element in that chain. If the last element is definite, the entire chain is definite; if it is indefinite, then the entire chain is indefinite. A substantive can be definite because it is articular, or because it is a proper name, or because it is construct to another word that is definite.

<i>a man's son</i>	בֶּן אִישׁ	בֶּן הָאִישׁ	<i>the son of the man, the man's son</i>
<i>houses of a city</i>	בְּתֵי עִיר	בְּתֵי הָעִיר	<i>the houses of the city, the city's houses</i>
<i>a king's song</i>	שִׁיר מֶלֶךְ	שִׁיר דָּוִד	<i>the song of David, David's song</i>

3. On the other hand, some words in construct with a definite noun may be definite, but are not exclusive. The phrase *תּוֹעֵבַת יְהוָה*, *an abomination of YHWH*, for example, describes many things in Scripture, none of which is “*the* [implicitly: only] abomination of YHWH”.
4. Nothing can come between words in a construct chain except the locative ה- without breaking the chain. This includes prepositions and the conjunction ׀, which can only be prefixed to the first word in the chain.
5. Articular words, proper names (and substantives with a pronominal suffix, below) cannot occur within a chain. When they occur, the construct chain ends. Since they are all definite, they make the entire chain definite. This means that the first noun in a construct chain cannot have the article or be a proper name.⁹⁵
6. Each word in a construct “belongs to” the next word. This is never reversed. כּוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם (the first example above) cannot mean “the sky of the stars”.
7. Most construct chains have either two or three parts (as above), but construct chains can [rarely] have as many as six elements (six-element chains are extremely rare⁹⁶). In these examples, English words linked by dashes represent a single Hebrew form:

לְפָנַי כָּל-קְהַל עֵדַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	in-the-presence-of all-[of] the-assembly-of the-congregation-of the-sons-of Israel (Nu 14.5)	[six elements]
וְאֶל-כָּל-מִשְׁפַּחַת בֵּית-אָבִי אִמּוֹ	and-to all-[of] the-clan-of the-household-of the-father-of his-mother (Jg 9.1)	[six elements]
לְכָל-עֲבוֹדַת מִשְׁכַּן בֵּית אֱלֹהִים	for-all-[of] the-labour-of the-tabernacle-of the-house-of God (1 Ch 6.33; cf. 1 Ch 28.13, 20)	[five elements]
מִסְפַּר יְמֵי-חַיֵּי הַבָּלוּ	the-number-of the-days-of the-life-of his-vanity [his vain life] (Qo 6.12)	[five elements]

94. Or a noun with a pronominal suffix (Lesson 14).

95. The apparent exception to this, the phrase *יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת* (traditionally rendered “LORD of hosts” but now “Sovereign LORD” [NIV] or the like), may be probably more apparent than real. It occurs fifteen times in the form *יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת* (e.g., 2 Sam 5.10; 1 Kgs 19.10, 14; Ps 89.9), which may suggest that *יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת* is a shortened form of the same phrase. It also occurs six times as *יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵים צְבָאוֹת* (Ps 59.6; 80.5, 20; 84.9; *יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵים צְבָאוֹת* occurs twice [Ps 80.8, 15]). *יְהוָה* may not, therefore, be in construct to *צְבָאוֹת*, but rather in apposition to an implicit [culturally understood] *יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת*. On the other hand, however, *יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת* may be a true exception.

96. In Nu 14.5, the form *לְפָנַי* is a compound preposition the second element of which is *פָּנִים*, *face, presence*; in Jg 9.1, the last form is compounded from *אִם*, *mother*, and *ו-*, *his*.

9.1.3 *Function*

Construct chains are functionally *attributive*—they modify a word by limiting its range to the “of” term. “Brother”, for example, could refer to many males; “brother of *David*” limits the potential referents to seven. This modification often shows possession, but it can also carry any of several nuances, such as those identified for “of” in English, or the genitive in Greek or German.

Construct chains have three primary functions: objective, subjective, or adjectival. For example, “the love of God” can refer to one’s love *for God* (“God” is the object of the love) or God’s love *for someone/thing* (“God is the subject of the love); “the word of YHWH”, on the other hand, refers consistently to a message from YHWH (Yhwh is the source of the message).

Possession—a common function of the construct—is an example of the subjective function, so that “Goliath’s sword” refers to “the sword that Goliath has (had/owns/uses/etc.)”. The following list of functions of the construct is not meant to suggest that the biblical authors chose to use a particular “type” of construct (any more than we think about “which” function of “of” we are using). It merely illustrates the types of relationships that the construct can indicate.

Since the entire chain cumulatively modifies the first word, *only the first word* in a construct chain can be the subject, object, or indirect object of a clause, or the object of a preposition. This will become increasingly clear as you read more Hebrew.

1. *Possession*. The item named by the first word belongs to the second.

חַרְבַּת גִּלְיָת *Goliath’s sword or the sword of Goliath* (1 Sa 21.10)
כִּסֵּא שְׁלֹמֹה *Solomon’s throne or the throne of Solomon*

2. *Attribution*. The second word modifies the first, and is often glossed like an adjective. This type of construct chain often has a pronominal suffix (Lesson 14) on the final word (the ׁ- in Ps 2.6).

מִזְבֵּחַ הַזָּהָב *the gold altar or the altar of gold* (Nu 4.11)
הַר קִדְשִׁי *my holy mountain or the mountain of my holiness* (Ps 2.6)

3. *Relationship*. The construct chain describes people who are related to one another.

בַּת־מֶלֶךְ *a king’s daughter; a daughter of a king* (2 Kg 9.34)
אָבִי כְּנַעַן *Canaan’s father; the father of Canaan* (Gn 9.18)

4. *Definition*. Generic terms are often defined more closely by a proper name:

נְהַר־פְּרַת *the river Euphrates* (Gn 15.18)
אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן *the land of Canaan* (Gn 17.8)

5. The noun כָּל—“all, every, each” is in construct to the noun that it modifies. Its construct form is כָּל (with or without *maqgef*):

כָּל־עַם הָאָרֶץ *all the people of the land* (2 Kgs 11.20)
לְכָל־בְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְלִשְׂרֵי הַצָּבָא *to all the king’s sons and to the leaders of the army* (1 Kg 1.25)

9.2 *The “Possessive” lamed*

A construct chain is either entirely definite (“*the servant of the king*”, “*the city of David*”) or entirely indefinite (“*a servant of a king*”). To show possession when the owner is specific but the thing possessed is not (“*a servant of the king*”, “*a prophet of YHWH*”), Hebrew prefixes the preposition ל (cf. §7.1) to the “owner”. The context determines whether the construction is a phrase “a X of Y” (“Y’s X”) or clause (“Y has/had an X”). This often implies that a person had more than one prophet, psalm, &c.

נְבִיא לַיהוָה	<i>a prophet of YHWH</i> (1 Kgs 18.22)
מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	<i>a psalm of David</i> (e.g., Ps 3.1)
וּלְרֵבֶכָה אָח	<i>Now Rebecca had a brother</i> (Gn 24.29)
וּלְנַעֲמִי מִיַּדַּע לְאִשְׁתָּהּ	<i>Now Naomi had a relative by [or of] her husband</i> (Ru 2.1)

9.3 Concepts

absolute	attributive; attribution	modification; to modify	possessive	state
adjectival	construct (chain)	objective	relationship	subjective

9.4 Vocabulary

<i>prophet</i>	נְבִיא	.125	<i>love, like; desire</i> (cf. Amnon, 2 Sam 13)	אָהַב	.116
<i>inheritance, property</i>	נַחֲלָה	.126	(f.) <i>mother; ancestress</i>	אָם	.117
<i>young man</i> ⁹⁷	נֶעֶר	.127	<i>gather, take in</i>	אָסַף	.118
<i>guilt, trespass, sin</i>	עוֹן ⁹⁸	.128	<i>chest, box; ark</i> (of the covenant)	אָרוֹן	.119
<i>inward part</i>	קָרֵב	.129	<i>garment, clothing</i>	בְּגָד	.120
<i>inside, within</i>	בְּקִרְבֵּי		<i>morning</i>	בֹּקֵר	.121
<i>foot, leg</i>	רֵגֶל	.130	<i>glory, honor, wealth</i>	כְּבוֹד	.122
<i>peace, health, welfare</i>	שָׁלוֹם	.131	<i>camp, army</i>	מַחֲנֵה	.123
<i>teaching, instruction</i> (trad., “law”)	תּוֹרָה	.132	<i>messenger</i> (מַלְאָכִי, Malachi, “my messenger”); <i>angel</i>	מַלְאָךְ	.124

9.5 Exercises

Gloss these phrases and clauses, parsing the verbal forms, and identifying any construct chains. Use the “rules” for glossing the construct (Lesson 5):

1. Words in construct are indicated by ‘-of’ as the last element in their English word-group.
2. All elements of a construct are visually linked by em-dashes (i.e., *the-house-of-the-king*).
3. Words that are construct to a definite form are represented with the definite article “the”.

97. This word can focus on *age* (“youth”, “young man”), especially when opposed to “elder” or “aged” (e.g., Ex 10.9; Dt 28.50; Josh 6.21; 1 Sam 17.33,42; 2 Kgs 4.29 ... 35; Is 3.5; Est 3.13), but can also reflect social standing; for example, it identifies an especially trusted or personal *servant*, such as one who accompanies his master on an errand or journey (e.g., Gn 22.3,5,12,19; Ex 33.11; Jg 7.10; 9.54; 19.3,9 ..., 19 [N.B.: distinguished from other (previously unmentioned) servants!]; 1 Sam 14.1,6; 16.18; 20.21,35 ...; 25.5,8 ...; 2 Kgs 4.19,22,24,25; 5.20; 6.15,17; Ru 2.5,6; Est 2.2; 6.3,5), to an *heir* (e.g., Gn 25.27; 34.19; 37.2; 41.12; 2 Sam 18.5,12 ...), or a young man who is in some way “special” (e.g., Jg 13.5,7,8 ...; 17.7,11 ...; 1 Sam 1.22,24 ...; 2.11,13 ...; 3.1,8; 4.21; 9.3,5 ...; 16.11; 1 Kgs 11.28; 1 Chr 12.28). Some occurrences, by modifying it with “small” or “little” seem to encompass *both* (e.g., Jg 8.20; 1 Sam 20.35; 1 Kgs 3.7 (cf. 1 Ch 22.5; 29.1); 2 Kgs 5.14). The narrative sometimes includes the age of the נֶעֶר (e.g., Gn 37.2 (17 years); 2 Chr 34.3 (16 years; cf. 34.1)). Calling someone a נֶעֶר thus often implies that he is a person of *rank* or *relative importance*.

98. The Masoretes pointed this word with what looks like two consecutive vowels. It is pronounced, however, as though a *waw* preceded the *holem*: `a · *wôn* (i.e., according to its theoretical spelling: עֹוֹן).

i. לְכָל־אֲנֹשֵׁי־יְהוּדָה	e. בֵּית בְּנֵי אִשְׁתְּ הַכֹּהֵן	a. בַּת מֶלֶךְ
j. בֶּן לְדָוִד	f. רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים	b. בֵּית בֶּן הַמֶּלֶךְ
k. עָרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	g. שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי־הַדָּוָד	c. נְבִיאֵי יְהוָה
l. בְּן־אִשָּׁה מִן־בָּנוֹת הָרָן	h. מִבְּנוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ	d. מַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
Josh 10.6; Gibeon, Joshua	וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ אֲנָשִׁי גִבְעוֹן אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־הַמַּחֲנֶה	a.
Ex 10.7; אֵלָיו <i>to him</i>	וַיֹּאמְרוּ עַבְדֵי פַרְעֹה אֵלָיו ...	b.
Gn 46.19; Rachel, Jacob, Joseph, Benjamin	בְּנֵי רָחֵל אִשְׁתְּ יַעֲקֹב יוֹסֵף וּבְנֵימָן:	c.
Ex 24.8; הִנֵּה <i>here is</i> ; Moses	וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה הִנֵּה דַם־הַבְּרִית	d.
1 Kgs 14.19; יָתֵר <i>rest of</i> ; כְּתוּבִים <i>are written</i> ; note the possessive ל near the end; Jeroboam, Israel	וַיִּתֵּר דְּבָרֵי יִרְבְּעָם כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:	e.
Ex 6.25; אֵלֶּה <i>these [are]</i> ; ל <i>according to</i> ; (name); ׀ - <i>their</i> (3 mp); Levites	אֵלֶּה רֵאשֵׁי אֲבוֹת הַלְוִיִּם לְמִשְׁפַּחָתָם:	f.
2 Kgs 14.16; אֲבֹתָיו <i>his fathers</i> ; וַיִּקְבֹּר <i>and he was buried</i> ; בְּנוֹ <i>his son</i> ; תַּחְתָּיו <i>in his place</i> ; Jehoash, Samaria, Jeroboam	וַיִּשְׁכַּב יְהוֹאָשׁ עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּקְבֹּר בְּשֹׁמְרוֹן עִם מַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּמְלֹךְ יִרְבְּעָם בְּנוֹ תַּחְתָּיו:	g.
Josh 13:23; וַיְהִי <i>and it was</i> (3 ms Q Pr , <i>היה</i>); Reuben, Jordan	וַיְהִי גְבוּל בְּנֵי רְאוּבֵן הַיַּרְדֵּן	h.
Gn 16.7; מָצָא <i>find</i> ; Hagar	וַיִּמְצָא מֶלֶךְ וַיְהִי אֶת־הָרָר	i.
1 Sam 4.4; עָם <i>people</i> ; שִׁלֹה <i>to Shiloh</i> ;	וַיִּשְׁלַח הָעָם שִׁלָּה	j.
וַיִּשְׂאוּ <i>and they took</i> ; שָׁם <i>there</i> (+ בֵּין)	וַיִּשְׂאוּ מִשָּׁם אֶת אֲרוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת	
Nu 3.21; אֵלֶּה <i>these [are]</i> ; Gershonites	אֵלֶּה הֵם מִשְׁפַּחַת הַגֵּרְשׁוֹנִי:	k.

9.6 Enrichment: Semantic Clusters

You now have a large enough Hebrew vocabulary that you will begin to find it helpful to group and learn words by their *semantic domain*—their shared “area of reference”. Here are few examples, taken from the vocabulary in Lessons 2–9 (numbers are the number of the lesson):

Human relationships (family)			Human relationships/rôles (society)		
<i>father; male ancestor</i>	אב	2	<i>lord, master</i>	אָדוֹן	4
<i>brother, male relative</i>	אָח	3	<i>humanity, humankind, man; Adam</i>	אָדָם	3
<i>man, husband; each</i>	אִישׁ	2	<i>enemy</i>	אֹיֵב	6
<i>(f.) mother; ancestress</i>	אִם	9	<i>people [group], nation, folk</i>	גּוֹי	3
<i>woman, wife</i>	אִשָּׁה	2	<i>priest</i>	כֹּהֵן	2
<i>women, wives</i>	נָשִׁים		<i>king, monarch</i>	מֶלֶךְ	2
<i>son, male descendant</i>	בֵּן	2	<i>messenger; angel</i>	מַלְאָךְ	9
<i>daughter, female descendant</i>	בַּת	6	<i>rule, reign</i>	מָשַׁל	5
<i>daughters</i>	בָּנוֹת		<i>servant, slave</i>	עֶבֶד	2
<i>clan, extended family</i>	מִשְׁפָּחָה	3	<i>official, leader, ruler</i>	שָׂר	5
Parts/Aspects of the Body/Person			Terms that Refer to Deity		
<i>heart</i>	לֵב	2	<i>(my) [divine] Lord, Master</i>	אֲדוֹנָי	4
<i>(f.) life, self</i>	נֶפֶשׁ	2	<i>god, God</i>	אֵל	2
<i>eye [water-source, well]</i>	עֵין	3	<i>gods, God</i>	אֱלֹהִים	
<i>face, presence</i>	פָּנִים	3	<i>YHWH (proper name)</i>	יְהוָה	4
<i>head, top, peak</i>	רֹאשׁ	4	<i>Yah (proper name)</i>	יְהִי	
<i>voice, sound</i>	קוֹל	5			
<i>(f.) breath, wind, spirit</i>	רוּחַ	5			
<i>(II) nose, nostril; anger (n.)</i>	אָף	6			
<i>foot, leg</i>	רֵגֶל	9			

Seeing how terms are related to each other will help you remember their gloss(es), since you will learn them according to their semantic function, rather than merely in isolation. As you learn more words, a semantic “map”—cross-referenced lists or diagrams that link words by function or reference—will also help you realize the [sometimes slight] differences between apparent synonyms, although this often comes only by studying the occurrences of a pair (or set) of closely related words to see how each one is used.

Lesson 10

THE PERFECT (QATAL, SUFFIX CONJUGATION)

The imperfect primarily refers to the present or future, and the preterite explicitly narrates series of events. Both are “prefix” conjugations. The other main verbal paradigm of Biblical Hebrew, the “perfect”, has an extremely broad set of functions that are both *temporal*—ranging from pluperfect (in, e.g., narrative flashbacks) to simple past, present, and even future—and *volitional* (especially as imperative). The main distinction in form between the imperfect and preterite, on the one hand, and the perfect, on the other, is that the perfect uses a unique set of PGN affixes—all of which are suffixes (hence “suffix conjugation”)—to refer to the person, gender, and number of its subject. Its other name, *qatal*, reflects the 3ms *qal* perfect of לָּקַח, “kill”, a common paradigm verb.

The perfect is the most frequent conjugation in Biblical Hebrew. More than one-quarter (28%) of all biblical verbs are perfects.

10.1 Form

The perfect⁹⁹ uses *suffixes* to agree with the person, gender, and number [PGN] of its subject.

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
1st	Common	אָנִי - <i>I</i>	אֲנִי - <i>we</i>
2nd	Masc.	אַתָּה - <i>you</i>	אַתֶּם - <i>you</i>
	Fem.	אַתְּ - <i>you</i>	אַתְּן - <i>you</i>
3rd	Masc.	--- <i>he/it</i>	הֵם - <i>they</i>
	Fem.	הִיא - <i>she/it</i>	הֵן - <i>they</i>

1. The 3ms perfect has no ending; it is the lexical (or “vocabulary”) form of the verb.
2. Second person endings all consist of אָ + vowel point, as does 1cs.
3. The *šewa* of the 2fs perfect ending is silent; this is the only time that a Hebrew word ends with two consonants (see “*Dageš, šewa, & Syllables*”, Lesson 3): מָשַׁלְתְּ ≈ *mašalt*.
4. The 3fs (הִיא -) and 3cp (הֵם -) endings consist of a vowel.
5. The 2mp (אַתֶּם -) and 2fp (אַתְּן -) endings consist of a closed syllable.
6. The third person plural (“they”) is called “common” (as are both first person forms) because the same suffix (הֵם -) is used for subjects of either gender.
7. These endings are used throughout the perfect of all verbs (the only difference is the loss of *dageš lene* in the אָ- endings of some forms of the verb), and so *must be memorized*.

99. The perfect is also called “*qatal*” (= 3ms *qal* perfect of the traditional paradigm verb) or “suffix conjugation”.

10.2 The Qal Perfect

Person	Gender	Singular		Plural	
1st	Common	מִשַׁלְתִּי	<i>I ruled</i>	מִשַׁלְנוּ	<i>We ruled</i>
2nd	Masc.	מִשַׁלְתָּ	<i>You ruled</i>	מִשַׁלְתֶּם	<i>You ruled</i>
	Fem.	מִשַׁלְתְּ		מִשַׁלְתֶּן	
3rd	Masc.	מִשַׁל	<i>He ruled</i>	מִשַׁלוּ	<i>They ruled</i>
	Fem.	מִשַׁלָּה	<i>She ruled</i>		

The slight vocalic differences under the *radicals* of the verbal root reflect the nature of the ending (whether an open or closed syllable or a vowel) and are fairly consistent throughout the entire verbal system, not just the *qal* perfect. You do not need to memorize these guidelines, but they may help you find your way around the verbal paradigms.

1. If the PGN ending *begins with a consonant* (all except the third person forms), there is silent *šewa* after the third radical (i.e., before the ending), and the second radical's vowel is *pataḥ* (-ַ-).
2. If the ending is a *closed syllable* (2mp, 2fp), the second radical has *pataḥ*, and the vowel after the first radical is a half-vowel (*šewa* [-י-]).
3. If the ending is a *vowel* (3fs, 3cp), the second radical has vocal *šewa* (-ֻ-).
4. If the ending is a closed syllable (2mp, 2fp) or vowel (3fs, 3cp), it is accented; otherwise, the accent falls on the antepenultimate [next-to-last] syllable. This is part of the reason for the variations in the vowels within the verbal root.
5. The perfect may describe a simple past event (“I ruled”), ingression (“He began/came to rule”), or ongoing action (“She was ruling”).

מִשַׁלְתִּי	<i>mā · šal · tî</i>	מִשַׁלְנוּ	<i>mā · šal · nû</i>
מִשַׁלְתָּ	<i>mā · šal · tā</i>	מִשַׁלְתֶּם	<i>m^e · šal · tem</i>
מִשַׁלְתְּ	<i>mā · šalt</i>	מִשַׁלְתֶּן	<i>m^e · šal · ten</i>
מִשַׁל	<i>mā · šal</i>	מִשַׁלוּ	<i>mā · š^e · lû</i>
מִשַׁלָּה	<i>mā · š^e · lā</i>		

10.2.1 Stative Verbs

Some verbs have either *šere* or *holem* after the second radical in the 3ms *qal* perfect (the lexical form). The rest of their forms are like מִשַׁל. These verbs describe a state or condition, and are called “stative” verbs (Lesson 15). The most common stative verbs in Biblical Hebrew are:

גָּדַל	<i>be[come] large, great</i>	מָלֵא	<i>be[come] full</i>
זָקֵן	<i>be[come] old</i>	קָדַשׁ	<i>be[come] holy, set apart, reserved</i>
טָהַר	<i>be[come] ceremonially clean, pure, acceptable</i>	קָרַב	<i>be[come] near, close</i>
טָמֵא	<i>be[come] ceremonially unclean, impure</i>	רָחַק	<i>be[come] distant, far</i>
כָּבֵד	<i>be[come] heavy, important; wealthy</i>	שָׁלַם	<i>be[come] whole, complete, healthy, at peace</i>

10.2.2 III-נ Verbs

Verbs that end in נ (III-נ verbs) look slightly different because “syllable-final” נ becomes silent and cannot close the syllable (§6.2). Their forms differ from those of מִשַׁל (above) and other strong verbs in three ways.

1. They lack silent *šewa* after the **א**, which functions as a reminder of historical spelling (cf. the now-silent *e* in English, which was pronounced in Chaucer’s day).
2. Since the second syllable is thus open, they have *qameṣ* after the second radical rather than *pataḥ* (§22).
3. Since the *qameṣ* after the second radical therefore precedes the ending, the **ת** of the second person endings lacks *dageš lene* (and 2fs lacks the final silent *šewa*).

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
1st	Common	מָצָאתִי <i>I found</i>	מָצָאנוּ <i>We found</i>
2nd	Masc.	מָצָאתָ <i>You found</i>	מָצָאתֶם <i>You found</i>
	Fem.	מָצָאתְּ <i>You found</i>	מָצָאתֶן <i>You found</i>
3rd	Masc.	מָצָא <i>He/It found</i>	מָצְאוּ <i>They found</i>
	Fem.	מָצְאָה <i>She/It found</i>	

4. In most other III-guttural verbal roots, 2fs *qal* perfect has two *pataḥs* (note the accent).

שָׁלַחְתְּ *šā · la · ḥat* you sent שָׁמַעְתְּ *šā · ma · ‘at* you heard

10.3 Function (HBI §2.2.1)

The function of the perfect is heavily contextual. It depends primarily on the *genre* or literary type of the discourse within which it occurs. Its function also reflects the content of its clause and its relationship to the surrounding context, as well as the action or state described by the verbal root itself. A primary factor in its temporal and modal function is syntactical—whether or not it occurs with the prefixed *waw* (וּ-).¹⁰⁰

1. *Without the conjunction*, the perfect nearly always refers to the *past* in narrative—either the simple past (“he saw”), continual past (“he was seeing”), perfect (“he has seen”) or pluperfect (“he had seen”). The function is controlled by the context. In narrative, the perfect tends to be preceded by another word, either a subordinating conjunction such as **כִּי**, the relative (**אֲשֶׁר**), or, in a disjunctive clause (§6.6, and below), by its subject, object (Gn 42.4), prepositional phrase (2 Sam 5.5), or a negative (**לֹא**).

בְּחֶבְרוֹן מָלַךְ עַל־יְהוּדָה ... וּבִירוּשָׁלַם מָלַךְ ... עַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהוּדָה:	In Hebron <i>he</i> reigned over Judah ..., and in Jerusalem <i>he</i> reigned over all Israel and Judah (2 Sam 5.5).
וְאֶת־בְּנֵימִין אָחִי יוֹסֵף לֹא־שָׁלַח יַעֲקֹב	(Joseph’s brothers went down [preterite] ...), but Benjamin, Joseph’s brother, Jacob <i>did not send</i> ... (Gn 42.4)
וְהָדָד שָׁמַע בְּמִצְרַיִם כִּי־שָׁכַב דָּוִד עִם־אֲבֹתָיו	Now Hadad <i>heard</i> in Egypt that David <i>slept</i> with his fathers ... (1 Kgs 11.21)

This function of the perfect is especially common in *disjunctive clauses* (§6.6, §6.10), which describe events that happened alongside or before the preceding preterite (a flashback), contrast or compare two events (Gn 1.5), or inject a non-event (i.e., with a negative) into a string of preterites (Jg 11.17).

וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לְאוֹר יוֹם וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לַיְלָה	God called [preterite] the light “Day”, and the darkness <i>he</i> called [perfect] “Night” (Gn 1.5).
וְלֹא זָכְרוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־יְהוָה	but the sons of Israel <i>did not remember</i> YHWH ... (Jg 8.34)
וַיִּשְׁלַח יִשְׂרָאֵל מַלְאָכִים אֶל־מֶלֶךְ אֲדוֹם ... וְלֹא שָׁמַע מֶלֶךְ אֲדוֹם וְגַם אֶל־מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב שָׁלַח וְלֹא אָבָה	Israel sent [preterite] messengers to the king of Edom, ... but the king of Edom <i>did not listen</i> , and also to the king of Moab [they] <i>sent</i> , but he <i>did not agree</i> (Jg 11.17).

100. This discussion refers primarily to narrative and instructional biblical prose.

The disjunctive clause shows that the event that it describes is *not necessarily* the next event in the story. Its relationship to the storyline (simultaneous, overlapping, antecedent [flashback], proleptic, etc.) must be determined by the relationship of its *content* to its *cotext*.¹⁰¹ This is an especially common function of the perfect in biblical narrative.

This does *not* mean that events described in disjunctive clauses are insignificant or less important, but rather that they stand outside the main sequence (often like a “by the way” comment in English), telling the reader something that he or she either will need to know in order to fully understand something that is going to be described in the narrative.

From another perspective, non-events (*irrealis*) are often just as important as events, so that we should always ask why the narrator is telling us that this or that *didn't* happen.

2. *Stative* verbs (§15.1) may describe either a *past* or *present* state, condition, or situation in the perfect, including verbs that describe an emotion, thought, perception, or condition. Their function is determined by the syntax and context; 2 Sam 7.22 is a direct quotation; Dt 34.9 is a disjunctive clause.

גְּדַלְתָּ אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה You are great, Lord YHWH (2 Sam 7.22)
וַיְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־נֹון מְלֵא רוּחַ חָכְמָה Now Joshua ben Nun was full of a spirit of wisdom (Dt 34.9)

3. Any *perfect with a prefixed* -ו begins a clause, and is often followed by its subject or object. This tends to occur in direct quotations (within either narrative or prophecy), where the perfect tends to refer to the present or future, and may function as a series of instructions (Lv 3.8), predictions, or commands (Ru 3.2). Again, the nuance depends heavily upon the literary genre and immediate context.

וְסָמַךְ אֶת־יָדוֹ עַל־רֹאשׁ ... He shall lean his hand on [its] head, ...
וְשָחַט אֹתוֹ ... and slaughter it ..., and the sons of Aaron
וְזָרְקוּ בְנֵי אֹהֶלן אֶת־דָּמֹו shall sprinkle its blood (Lv 3.8).
וְרָחַצְתָּ וְסָכַתָּ וְשָׁמַתָּ שְׂמֹלֶתְךָ עָלֶיךָ Wash, perfume yourself, put on your robe,
וַיִּרְדָּתָּ הַגֶּרֶן and go down to the threshing floor (Ru 3.2)
כִּי יִמְלְאוּ יָמֶיךָ וְשָׁכַבְתָּ אֶת־אֲבוֹתֶיךָ When your days are full [complete], and you
lie down with your fathers, ... (2 Sam 7.12).

The predicate of a disjunctive clause that interrupts a sequence of *waw* + perfect clauses may be *imperfect* or *imperative*. This often happens within a series of instructional or imperatival *w* + perfects, and reflects the non-instructional line of the disjunctive clause.

וְקָרְבוֹ וּכְרָעָיו יִרְחַץ בַּמַּיִם And its inner part and legs he shall [must] wash with water (Lv 1.9)
וְאֵשׁ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ תֹּקֵד בּוֹ And the fire of the altar shall [must] be kept burning on it (Lv 6.2
[ET 6.9]¹⁰²)

10.4 The Imperfect, Preterite, & Perfect

As this chart suggests, a verb's conjugation in Biblical Hebrew narrative is primarily related to the function of its clause within a particular genre, and the relationship of the contents of the clause to the main line of that genre. These are not absolute rules: for example, an imperfect may begin a prophetic discourse, as may a participle (not listed), a perfect may introduce a series of preterites, &c. Within direct quotations, any verbal conjugation may be used.

101. The terms “context” and “cotext” are often distinguished. “Cotext” refers to the surrounding *words*, and “context” to the entire sociological and conceptual “world” within which the discourse occurs (“context” in this sense can also be called the “universe of discourse”).

102. This nomenclature is the normal way of indicating different verse numberings between the Hebrew and English text (ET); it means that Leviticus 6.2 in the Hebrew text is 6.9 in the English Bible (Leviticus 6.1 in Hebrew is 6.8 in the English text).

Conjugational Functions	Primary Temporal Reference	Primary Function		Subject person gender number
		Main “storyline”	“Added” information (disjunctive clauses)	
preterite	past	narrative		any
waw + perfect	present-future-modal	instruction prophecy		
perfect	past	narrative		
imperfect	present-future-modal	instruction prophecy		1st only 2nd only 3rd only
cohortative imperative jussive	future	commands (used in direct quotations)		

10.5 Concepts

antecedent	cotext	genre	perfect	<i>qatal</i>
content	disjunctive clause	instructional material	performative	stative verb
context	flashback	narrative	proleptic	suffix conjugation

10.6 Vocabulary

<i>tribe; rod, staff</i> (m.) ¹⁰³	מִטָּה	.141	<i>perish</i>	אָבַר	.133
<i>people</i> [group], <i>nation</i>	עַם	.142	<i>ear</i>	אָזֶן	.134
<i>text, document</i> , ¹⁰⁴ <i>writing(s)</i>	סֵפֶר	.143	<i>cattle; animals</i>	בְּהֵמָה	.135
<i>friend, companion</i>	רֵעַ	.144	<i>master, owner, husband, Baal</i>	בַּעַל	.136
<i>lip, language; edge, shore</i>	שִׁפָּה	.145	<i>herd</i> (large cattle, such as donkeys, camels, cows, horses)	בָּקָר	.137
<i>tribe; rod, staff</i>	שִׁבְט	.146	<i>be, become</i> (often ל introduces the result), <i>happen, occur</i>	הָיָה	.138
<i>swear</i> [an oath] (N only)	שָׁבַע	.147	<i>palm of hand, sole of foot</i>	כַּף	.139
<i>judge</i> (vb.)	שָׁפַט	.148	<i>command[ment], order</i>	מִצְוָה	.140

103. The noun מִטָּה refers to a tribe slightly more frequently (196/248 = 79%) than שִׁבְט (143/193 = 74%). מִטָּה is more common in Ex & Nu, whereas שִׁבְט is distributed more widely and evenly, as this table shows (statistics are for these books, not total occurrences):

	מִטָּה			שִׁבְט		
	<i>staff</i>	<i>tribe</i>	other	<i>staff</i>	<i>tribe</i>	
Ex	20	6	26	4	1	3
Nu	5	103	108	8	1	7
Dt				19		19
Jg				16	1	15
Sam	2		2	18	3	15
Kgs		2	2	13		13
Pss	1		1	2	11	9
Pr				8	8	

104. “Book”—the traditional gloss for סֵפֶר—is misleading; codices, the forerunners of bound volumes—“books” as we think of them—were not used until the second century CE. A סֵפֶר could be written on nearly any material (e.g., a broken piece (sherd) of pottery (writing makes it an *ostrakon*), a piece of papyrus or parchment, a clay tablet). The noun מְגִלָּה (related to the verb גָּלַל, “to roll”) refers explicitly to a “scroll”, although it is relatively infrequent in Biblical Hebrew (21x) compared to סֵפֶר (185x).

10.7 Exercises

After learning the PGN subject endings of the perfect, parse and gloss (using the simple past) these forms.

	.i	וּנְקַרְב	.e	מִצָּאת	.a	אָבְדָתִי
	.j	קָרְבָנוּ	.f	יִשְׁפָטוּ	.b	וְתִמְצָא
	.k	וּשְׁמֹרְתָן	.g	קָרְבָנוּ	.c	קָרָאתָ
	.l	שָׁפְטוּ	.h	וַיִּזְכַּר	.d	וְתִקְרָא
1 Kgs 2.12; כִּסֵּא <i>seat, throne</i> ; אָבִיו <i>his father</i> ; Solomon, David					.a	וּשְׁלֹמֹה יָשָׁב עַל-כִּסֵּא דָוִד אָבִיו
Dt 28.47; הָ- <i>your</i> (2 ms); שְׂמֵחָה <i>joy, rejoicing, happiness</i>					.b	לֹא-עֲבַדְתָּ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּשִׂמְחָה
2 Sam 19.12; David, Zadok, Abiathar					.c	וְהַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד שָׁלַח אֶל-צְדוֹק וְאֶל-אֲבִיָּתָר
Jg 6.10; י - <i>my</i> (1cs); בְּקוֹל שְׁמֵעַ <i>listen to the voice of (obey) ...</i>					.d	וְלֹא שָׁמַעְתֶּם בְּקוֹלִי:
Ps 47.9 (each line is a clause); קָדְשׁוֹ <i>his</i> [ו- 3ms] <i>holiness</i>					.e	מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהִים עַל-גּוֹיִם אֱלֹהִים יָשָׁב עַל-כִּסֵּא קָדְשׁוֹ:
2 Chr 21.12; הָ- <i>your</i> (2ms); Jehoshaphat; Asa					.f	לֹא-הִלַּכְתָּ בְּדַרְכֵי יְהוֹשָׁפָט אָבִיךָ וּבְדַרְכֵי אֲסָא מֶלֶךְ-יְהוּדָה:
2 Sam 22.22; כִּי <i>for, that, because</i> ; רָשָׁע <i>be wicked</i> ; <i>act wickedly</i> ; here בָּן <i>against</i> ; י - <i>my</i>					.g	כִּי שְׁמַרְתִּי בְּרַכִּי יְהוָה וְלֹא רָשַׁעְתִּי מֵאֱלֹהֵי:
Ne 1.7; חֹק <i>statute, rule, regulation</i>					.h	וְלֹא-שָׁמְרָנוּ אֶת־הַמִּצְוֹת וְאֶת־הַחֻקִּים
Ex 2.20; בְּנֹתָיו <i>his</i> [ו- 3ms] <i>daughters</i> ; זֶה לְמָה <i>Why?</i>					.i	וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-בְּנֹתָיו לְמָה זֶה עֲזַבְתֶּן אֶת־הָאִישׁ
Ps 119.55; הָ- <i>your</i> (2ms); יְהוָה (vocative); ignore the final הָ - on וַאֲשַׁמְרָה					.j	זְכַרְתִּי בְּלִילָה שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה וַאֲשַׁמְרָה תּוֹרָתְךָ:
Dt 6.5; הָ- <i>your</i> (2ms); כֹּחַ <i>strength, might, power</i>					.k	וְאִהְבַתְּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־מְאֹדְךָ:
Dt 31.12; לְמַעַן <i>so that, in order that</i> ; לָמַד <i>learn</i> ; יִרָא <i>fear</i> ; כֶּם- <i>your</i> (2mp); שִׁמְרוּ <i>here be careful</i> ; לַעֲשׂוֹת <i>to do; by doing</i>					.l	לְמַעַן יִשְׁמְעוּ וּלְמַעַן יִלְמְדוּ וַיִּרְאוּ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְשָׁמְרוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כָּל־דְּבַרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת:

10.8 Enrichment: The Perfect as Performative?

A possible function of the perfect not mentioned in the lesson, is the perfect as *performative*. A performative is a verb that accomplishes or realizes the act that it describes, so that to say, e.g., “I promise that ...” is to make the promise—no further action is required (cf., e.g., “I declare ...”, “I announce ...”, “I claim ...”). A crude test of a performative is whether or not the word “hereby” can be inserted into the statement, as well as such functional tests as whether or not the speaker has the authority to accomplish the act that he or she is naming.

A common example of a performative in the prophetic literature is the formula “Thus says YHWH” (כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה), so that although אָמַר is 3ms *qal* perfect, it refers to the following quotation, rather than to a past speech.

The performative function may also explain statements with a perfect as predicate, especially divine pronouncements, such as the promise of the land to Abram [sic]:

לְזַרְעֶךָ נָתַתִּי אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת To your seed I [hereby] *give* this land (Gn 15.18)

Why does this statement use the perfect, since the former promises (Gn 12.7; 13.15, 17), use the imperfect to refer to a clearly future event (Abram does not yet have any heirs to whom the land might be given)? One explanation is that the performative function is better suited to the divine self-malediction in the covenantal ratification ceremony (Gn 15.17).

In Gn 17.5, two verbal clauses—with an imperfect (יִקְרָא) and *waw* + perfect (וְהָיָה)—referring to the future, precede a perfect (נִתְתִּיךָ). The content and context of the divine promise suggest that this is a performative, especially since Abram [now Abraham] was not yet a “multitude of nations”, and would not even be a father for some time (the verse is divided into clauses).

וְלֹא־יִקְרָא עוֹד אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ אַבְרָם	“And your name shall no longer be called ‘Abram’,
וְהָיָה שְׁמֶךָ אַבְרָהָם	but your name shall be ‘Abraham’,
כִּי אֲבִי־הַמּוֹן גּוֹיִם נִתְתִּיךָ:	because I [hereby] <i>make</i> you a father of a multitude of nations” (Gn 17.5).

The possibility of performative functions here and in other places again cautions us against assuming a simple relationship or equation between verbal conjugations—or verbal function—in Biblical Hebrew and other languages.

Lesson 11

NOMINAL MODIFICATION (IV)

Biblical Hebrew uses prepositions to show a noun's syntagmatic function (Lesson 7). It limits or modifies the range of a noun's reference by means of the article (§4.3), construct chain (Lesson 9), relative particle אֲשֶׁר (§11.2), or adjectives (cf. the examples in §4.3).

11.1 Adjectives

11.1.1 Form

Adjectives in Hebrew use the same endings as the noun. The lexical form of the adjective is masculine singular. The endings are added to the lexical form, unless it ends in הַ, in which case the gender-number endings replace הַ (e.g., יָפֵה). Endings often affect the word's vocalization.

Gender	Singular	Plural	
Masc.	טוֹב	טוֹבִים	<i>good</i>
Fem.	טוֹבָה	טוֹבוֹת	
Masc.	גָּדוֹל	גָּדוֹלִים	<i>large, great</i>
Fem.	גָּדוֹלָה	גָּדוֹלוֹת	
Masc.	יָפֵה	יָפִים	<i>handsome, attractive; beautiful</i>
Fem.	יָפָה	יָפוֹת	

Adjectives use the endings that agree with the *grammatical gender* of the word that they modify, so that their endings do *not* always match the ending of the noun that they modify. This is especially true for feminine nouns that do not end in הַ-, תַּ-, or וֹת- (plural). When an adjective modifies a collective noun (e.g., צֵאן), it may agree with its grammatical number (and be singular), or with the noun's collective sense (and be plural).

אִשָּׁה יָפָה	<i>a beautiful woman</i>	Both nouns have the form (ending) associated with their genders, so the adjectives and nouns have the same endings.
סוּסִים טוֹבִים	<i>good horses</i>	
עָרִים גָּדוֹלוֹת	<i>great cities</i>	All three nouns are feminine (despite their form); so the adjectives have the feminine ending.
יָד חֲזָקָה	<i>a strong hand</i>	
נָשִׁים יָפוֹת	<i>beautiful women</i>	
עַם גָּדוֹל	<i>a great people [nation]</i>	Both adjectives agree with the noun, one with its grammatical number, the second with its collective sense.
הָעָם הַהֹלְכִים	<i>the people who walk</i> (Is 9.1)	

11.1.2 Function

Adjectives in Biblical Hebrew have three functions, which are indicated by 1) whether or not the adjective and its substantive agree in *definiteness*; 2) the *word order* of the adjective and

substantive; and 3) the immediate *syntax*. The three functions may be called *attributive*, *predicate*, and *substantive*.

1. An *attributive* adjective and its noun agree in definiteness—both are either definite or indefinite—and form a noun phrase, like an adjective in English:

הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגָּדֹל the *great* king
בְּחֵיל כָּבֵד מְאֹד ... with a very *heavy* [i.e., lavish] retinue (1 Kg 10.2)

2. A *predicate* (or “verbal”) adjective and its noun form a non-verbal clause, glossed using a form of “to be”.¹⁰⁵ The adjective is usually indefinite, the noun definite, but both may be indefinite, especially in poetry. The adjective, which *predicates* something about the noun, may precede or follow it.

הַמֶּלֶךְ גָּדֹל The king *is* [was] *great*.
גָּדֹל הַמֶּלֶךְ
טוֹב הַדְּבָר The word *is* *good* (1 Kgs 2.38).
כִּי כָבֵד הָרָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ
כָּל-הַרְכִּי-אִישׁ זָךְ בְּעֵינָיו for the famine *was* *heavy* [i.e., harsh, severe] in the land (Gn 12.10).
All a man’s ways *are* *clean* in his eyes (Pr 16.2).

3. When there is an adjective but no noun, the adjective “becomes” a noun—it is *substantive* (or “nominal”), and may function as a noun or as a relative clause. Indefinite substantive adjectives occur much more frequently in poetry than prose. Some adjectives occur so frequently as substantives that they can be considered nouns (e.g., more than 90% of the occurrences of זָקֵן, “old”, are substantive, hence the gloss “elder”). An adjective in a construct chain is always substantive (Pr 15.28; Ex 12.21).

הַגָּדֹל the *great one/man*; he [one] *who is* *great*
לֵב צְדִיק יַהֲנֶה לְעֲנוּת The heart of *the righteous* ponders in order to answer (Pr 15.28);
this could also be attributive: “A righteous heart ...”
וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה לְכָל-זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל Moses summoned all of *the elders* of Israel ... (Ex 12.21)

4. When both noun and adjective are indefinite (as is fairly common in poetry), the adjective’s function must be determined from its context. For example, when the modified noun is the subject or object of a clause or sentence (“*The great king* went to war”), or object of a preposition (“for *the great king*”), then the adjective is *attributive*. When the noun and adjective form their own clause (“*The king is great*”), the adjective is *predicate*.

Adjective with Noun		
	Indefinite Noun	Definite Noun
Predicate	טוֹב מֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ טוֹב <i>A king is good.</i> ¹⁰⁶	טוֹב הַמֶּלֶךְ <i>The king is good.</i>
Attributive	מֶלֶכָּה טוֹבָה <i>a good queen</i> ¹⁰⁷	הַמֶּלֶכָּה הַטוֹבָה <i>the good queen</i>

105. It may seem that we are *adding* “is”, “was”, &c. to the text. Not so. The predicate translation renders the Hebrew text according to the requirements of English syntax and grammar. Some translations (e.g., KJV, NKJV, NAS) italicize words to show that there is no form in the Hebrew text that directly corresponds to that English term. It is unfortunate that this practice gives the appearance of “adding to” to the text.

106. When an anarthrous adjective follows an indefinite noun, the context—the clausal syntax—determines whether the adjective is predicate or attributive. Hence טוֹב מֶלֶךְ could be either *a good king* or *a king is good*.

107. See the preceding note.

Adjective without Noun	
Indefinite Noun	Definite Noun
טוב <i>a good one/person/man</i> <i>he who is good / whoever is good</i>	הטוב <i>the good one/person/man</i> <i>[the/any] one who is good</i>
טובה <i>a good woman</i> <i>she who is good</i>	הטובות <i>the good women</i> <i>the women who are good</i>

5. English adds “-er” to an adjective to show comparison (“taller”, “holier”) or uses the adverb “more” (“more wise”, “more sure”). There is *no comparative* form in Biblical Hebrew, which compares two things by using the preposition מִן to introduce the thing *to which* something is being compared (the word introduced by “than” in English comparison). Comparative adjectives are always predicate.

וְכַעַס אֹיִל כָּבֵד מִשְׁנֵיהֶם	... but a fool’s wrath <i>is heavier than</i> both (Pr 27.3)
וְטוֹב־רֶשׁ מֵאִישׁ כֹּזֵב:	... and a poor [man] <i>is better than</i> a man of a lie [liar] (Pr 19.22)
גָּדוֹל יְהוָה מִכָּל־הָאֱלֹהִים	YHWH <i>is greater than</i> all gods. (Ex 18.11)
כִּי חֲזָק הוּא מִמֶּנּוּ	... for [they—i.e., the people] <i>are stronger than</i> we (Nu 13.31)

6. The “comparative *min*” also occurs with stative verbs, where the subject of the verb is compared to someone/thing else (1 Kgs 10.23).

וַיִּגְדַּל הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה מִכָּל מְלָכֵי הָאָרֶץ	And King Solomon <i>became greater than</i> all the kings of the land ... (1 Kgs 10.23)
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7. The word כָּל, *all*, is a *noun* in Hebrew; it therefore does *not* agree with the noun that it modifies, but usually occurs in construct with it as כָּל, *all of, each of, every* ... (more than 4000x). With pronominal suffixes (Lesson 14) it is written כָּל־ (c. 200x).¹⁰⁸ When it [occasionally] occurs with the article, it refers to “everything” (i.e., “the whole [thing]”; 2 Sa 19.31; cf. Lv 1.9, 13; more than one-quarter of the occurrences of הַכָּל are in Ec).

כָּל־הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת	according to <i>all [of]</i> this teaching/instruction (Dt 4.8)
וַיִּתֵּר כָּל־דְּבָרֵי אֲסָא	Now the rest of <i>all [of]</i> the words of Asa (1 Kgs 15.23)
מִנֶּרֶת זָהָב כְּלָה	a lampstand <i>entirely</i> [all of it] of gold (Zc 4.2)
וַיֹּאמֶר מִפִּיבֹשֶׁת אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ	And Mephiboshet said to the king,
גַּם אֶת־הַכָּל יִקַּח	“Let him just take <i>everything</i> ...” (2 Sa 19.31).

8. The word מְאֹד, *very, much*, can strengthen adjectives and verbs, and so is often called an “adverb”. מְאֹד is not inflected for gender or number. It comes at the end of the phrase or clause, following the word that it modifies. [N.B.: מְאֹד is strengthened by repetition (Nu 14.7).]

קָרוֹב אֵלַיךָ הַדְּבָר מְאֹד	... the word is <i>very near</i> to you (Dt 30.14)
טוֹבָה הָאָרֶץ מְאֹד מְאֹד:	The land is <i>very, very good</i> (Nu 14.7)
יָפָה הִיא מְאֹד	... she was <i>very beautiful</i> (Gn 12.14).
אִישׁ בְּרִיא מְאֹד	... a <i>very fat man</i> (Jg 3.17).

9. Adjectives follow construct chains; they do not interrupt them.

כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂה יְהוָה הַגָּדֹל	all of the <i>great</i> work of YHWH (Dt 11.7 Jg 2.7)
וְאֵלֶּה דְּבָרֵי הַיּוֹד הָאֲחֵרִים	These are the <i>last</i> words of David (2 Sam 23.1)

108. The “x” is shorthand for “times” or “occurrences” [in Biblical Hebrew]. This means “two hundred times”.

11.1.3 The Most Common Adjectives

This lists by frequency all adjectives used 50 times or more in Biblical Hebrew (* indicates those which occur often or primarily as substantives).

רָע	<i>bad, evil, disastrous</i> (661x);	רָחוֹק	<i>far, distant</i> (85x)
רָעָה	fem. as subst.: <i>disaster, tragedy, evil, wickedness</i>	קָרוֹב	<i>near</i> (78x)
טוֹב	<i>good, pleasant; happy</i> [of the heart] (612x)	עָנִי	* <i>afflicted, distressed, poor</i> (76x)
רַב	<i>much, many</i> (475x)	מֵת	<i>dead</i> (72x)
צַדִּיק	<i>just, innocent, righteous</i> (206x)	זָר	<i>strange, different, illicit</i> (71x)
זָקֵן	* <i>old</i> (187x); <i>elder</i>	כָּסִיל	* <i>stupid, dull, insolent</i> (70x); <i>fool</i>
אַחֵר	<i>another, other</i> (166x)	מָלֵא	<i>full</i> (67x)
חָכֵם	<i>wise, skilled</i> (138x)	אֲבִיוֹן	* <i>poor</i> (61x)
קָדוֹשׁ	<i>holy, set apart</i> (115x)	חָזָק	<i>hard, strong</i> (56x)
מְעַט	<i>few</i> ; subst.: <i>a little</i> (96x)	קָטוֹן	<i>small, little, insignificant</i> (54x)
חָלַל	<i>dead, killed</i> (94x); subst.: <i>the dead</i>	חֲדָשׁ	<i>new</i> (53x)
טָהוֹר	<i>clean, pure</i> (94x)	שָׁוְא	<i>worthless</i> (52x); <i>in vain</i> (adverb); subst.: <i>worthlessness</i>
תָּמִים	<i>whole, complete, entire, blameless</i> (91x)	אַחֲרֹן	<i>behind, last</i> (50x)
טָמֵא	[ceremonially] <i>unclean, impure</i> (88x)		

11.2 The Relative Particle

A relative clause modifies a noun or substantive by *relating* something about it. English relative clauses are introduced by a relative pronoun (“who”, “which”) and follow the word that they modify—“the prophet *who said*”. Hebrew relative clauses are introduced by the relative אֲשֶׁר (more than 5500 times in Biblical Hebrew).

1. Like the relative pronoun in English, אֲשֶׁר normally follows the word that it modifies:

עֲנִי עַמִּי אֲשֶׁר בְּמִצְרַיִם	... the affliction of my people <i>who are in Egypt</i> (Ex 3.7)
הַמְּלָכִים אֲשֶׁר מִצְפּוֹן בְּהָר	... the kings <i>who were on the north in the hill country</i> (Jos 11.2)
בֶּעֶז אֲשֶׁר מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת אֶלְיִמֶלֶךְ:	... Boaz, <i>who was from Elimelek's clan</i> (Ru 2.3)
עִם-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר עִם-שָׂאוּל וְיֹנָתָן:	... with [the] Israel[ites] <i>who were with Saul and Jonathan</i> (1 Sam 14.21)

N.B.: English allows “implicit” relative clauses—i.e., those that do not begin with a relative pronoun, such as “the kings from the north” instead of “the kings *who were* from the north”. In biblical narrative, however, relative clauses are nearly always explicit (written with אֲשֶׁר).

2. When a relative clause modifying a “locative noun” ends with שָׁם, “there”, the combination שָׁם ... אֲשֶׁר often functions as a relative locative adverb (שָׁם ... אֲשֶׁר, “where”):

בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן אֲשֶׁר-שָׁם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	... in the land of Goshen, <i>where the sons of Israel</i> [were], ... (Ex 9.26)
מִן-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-אַתָּה שָׁם	“... from the place <i>where</i> you are ...” (Gn 13.14)
בְּהֵיכַל יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר שָׁם אֲרוֹן	... in YHWH's temple, <i>where</i> the ark ... was (1 Sa 3.3)

3. When this type of relative clause describes a person, group, or thing, it is usually predicate (“who/which was/were/is/etc. there”):

אֶת-הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר-שָׁם: ... the Amorites *who were there* (Nu 21.32)

4. The compound form **כְּאֲשֶׁר** (**אֲשֶׁר** + **כִּי**) is a comparative particle, “as, just as,” that often precedes a verb (especially verbs of command, instruction, etc.); following the introductory particle **וַיְהִי** it is often temporal in the sense of “when”:

וַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה לָהֶם כְּאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה	YHWH shall do to them <i>just as</i> he did ... (Dt 31.4)
כְּאֲשֶׁר יֹאמֵר מִשַּׁל הַקְּדָמוֹנִי	As the proverb of the ancients says, (1 Sam 24.14)
וַיְהִי כְּאֲשֶׁר זָקֵן שְׁמוּאֵל	Now <i>when</i> Samuel was old, ... (1 Sam 8.1)

N.B.: Biblical Hebrew has three syntagms that correspond roughly to the relative clause in English: (1) clauses introduced by the particle **אֲשֶׁר**; (2) clauses formed by a substantive adjective (§11.1.2); and (3) clauses formed by a substantive participle (§12.2). Although these sound the same when rendered into English, the **אֲשֶׁר** clause modifies a noun; the substantival adjective and participle have no noun to modify.

11.3 Non-verbal Clauses

A clause is a group of words that makes a *comment* (the predicate) about a *topic* (the subject). Although the word “predicate” is often used casually to refer to verbs, a predicate can be nearly any part of speech or connected group of words (syntagm). A clause can be a sentence, or merely part of a sentence (e.g., relative clauses, above). In these two examples, David is the subject; the rest of the clause tells us something about David:

- | | |
|--|---|
| a. David <i>wrote many songs</i> . | ascribes an action to David (something that he did) |
| b. David <i>was a mighty warrior</i> . | explains who/what David was (what kind of warrior he was) |

Hebrew clauses that sound like (a) are *verbal* clauses (a verb is the main part of the predicate), but clauses like (b) tend to be *non-verbal*, with either a predicate adjective (Ex 9.27), noun, prepositional phrase, or adverb as the predicate. We will consider a clause non-verbal when it lacks an imperfect, preterite, perfect, imperative, predicate participle (Lesson 12), or infinitive (Lesson 16). We will also consider the more specific word in a non-verbal clause to be the subject, with (1) proper names and definite nouns more specific than generic nouns; (2) personal pronouns more specific than proper names and definite nouns; and (3) demonstratives more definite than personal pronouns.

יְהוָה הַצְּדִיק	YHWH is the righteous one (Ex 9.27)
אֲנִי יְהוָה	I am YHWH (Ex 6.2); pronoun as subject
אָחִי הוּא	he is my brother (Gn 20.5); pronoun as subject
וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם אֵלִישָׁע	Elisha said to them, “ <i>This</i> is not the way,
וְלֹא זֶה הַדֶּרֶךְ וְלֹא זֶה הָעִיר	nor [וְלֹא] <i>and not</i>] is <i>this</i> the city. ...” (2 Kgs 6.19)

A clause is either *syndetic* (linked to its preceding context by a conjunction) or *asyndetic* (lacking a conjunction; these are relatively infrequent in biblical narrative). Disjunctive and preterite clauses are by definition syndetic, as is any other clause beginning with *waw*. Other types of clauses are also syndetic, such as those that begin with subordinating particles, such as **כִּי**, **אֲשֶׁר**, **לְמַעַן**, etc. It is not the first word or form that determines that a concatenation of words is a clause, however, but the presence of a topic and a comment.

11.4 Nominal Apposition

Nouns can also be modified by other nouns. In *apposition* one noun follows another, but they do not form a construct chain (since the first noun is usually definite, it cannot be in construct). If the first noun is a generic term (e.g., “the king”), the apposed noun is usually a personal name. If the first noun is a personal name, the second usually identifies him or her by office, position, or relationship (i.e., the aspect of that person that is contextually appropriate). A major clue to the presence of apposition is that proper names and definite nouns do not occur in construct:

(a)	הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד	King David (2 Sa 3.31; Samuel-Kings uses this syntagm)
(b)	דָּוִד הַמֶּלֶךְ	King David (1 Ch 26.26; Chronicles uses this syntagm)
(c)	יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן-נּוּן	Joshua son of Nun (Ex 33.11)
(d)	שָׂרַי אִשְׁתְּ אַבְרָהָם	Sarai, Abram's wife (Gn 16.1)
(e)	דָּוִד עֶבֶד יְהוָה	David, the servant of YHWH (Ps 36.1)
(g)	רוּת הַמּוֹאֲבִיָּה אִשְׁתְּ מַחְלוֹן	Ruth, the Moabitess, Mahlon's wife (Ru 4.10)
(f)	בָּרוּךְ בֶּן נְרִיָּהוּ הַסֹּפֵר	Baruch, son of Neriah, the scribe (Jr 36.32)

In (c) – (e), a construct chain is apposed to the proper name; in (f), a second apposition (“the scribe”) further describes Baruch; in (g), a second apposition, which is also a construct chain describes Ruth as “Mahlon’s wife”. Understanding this requires reading the string of words to see how they are related to each other, as well as general knowledge of biblical context. These examples also illustrate the frequent interdependence of construct chains and apposition.

11.5 Concepts

adjective apposition/apposed	attributive clause	comment predicate	relative subject	substantive topic
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11.6 Vocabulary

<i>copper, bronze</i>	נְחֹשֶׁת	.158	<i>other, another</i> (adj.)	אַחֵר	.149
<i>service, servitude, labour, work</i>	עֲבוּדָה	.159	<i>who, which, what, that; when</i>	אֲשֶׁר	.150
<i>mouth</i>	פֶּה		[just] like, as; when	כְּאֲשֶׁר	
<i>mouth of</i> (construct)	פִּי	.160	<i>large, big, great</i> (adj.); <i>be / become large, great</i> (st. vb.)	גָּדוֹל	.151
<i>holiness, “apartness”</i>	קָדְשׁ		<i>old; elder</i> (adj.); <i>be / become old</i> (st. vb.)	זָקֵן	.152
<i>holy, sacred</i> (adj.) ¹⁰⁹	קָדוֹשׁ	.161	<i>good</i> (adj.); <i>be / become good</i> (st. vb.)	טוֹב	.153
<i>much, many</i> (adj.)	רַב	.162	<i>honest, upright, right</i> (adj.); <i>thus, so</i> (adv.)	כֵּן	.154
<i>bad, disastrous; evil, wicked</i> (adj.)	רַע	.163	<i>before</i> (temporal & locative), <i>in the presence of, in front of</i>	לְפָנַי	.155
<i>bad, disastrous, evil, wicked</i> (adj.)	רָשָׁע	.164	<i>wadi</i> (temporary stream or its valley; rarely perennial stream, e.g., Jabbok)	נַחַל	.156
<i>gate</i> (of a city)	שַׁעַר	.165	<i>horse, stallion</i> (m.)	סוֹס	
			<i>mare</i>	סוֹסָה	.157

11.7 Exercises

- After studying the forms of טוב, גדול, יפה (§11.1.1), gloss these phrases and clauses, parsing any verbal forms. Be prepared to explain their structure and the function of the adjectives.

a. האיש הטוב	d. גדול האלהים	g. האיש הגדול אשר בשדה
b. האשה יפה מאד	e. הערים על-ההרים	h. העיר במדבר קטנה
c. האיש אשר בבית	f. הבקר אשר על-ההרים	i. זקן אבי הפהן

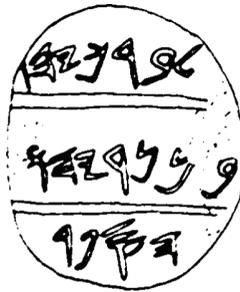
109. “Holy” and “sacred” are synonyms with different histories: “holy” comes from Old English *hālig*, “sacred” from Latin *sacrare*.

2. Gloss these phrases and clauses, parsing the verbs and identifying the function of any adjectives.

- a. טוב יהוה לכל
Ps 145.9; remember that כל is a noun
- b. וייראו האנשים יראת גדלה
Jon 1.10; ירא fear, be afraid; יראת fear (noun); an object from the same root as its verb is called a “cognate accusative”, which is a common syntagm in Biblical Hebrew
- c. וקרא זה אלזה ואמר
קדוש קדוש יהוה צבאות
מלא כל-הארץ כבודו:
Is 6.3; זה this [one]; צבא host, army; מלא fulness, that which fills (n.m.); כבוד+ו; glory+his [Your gloss should differ from most English versions.]
- d. ויאמר האיש הזקן שלום
Jg 19.20; the last word is a quotation
- e. ויאמר שמעו דבר-המלך הגדול מלך אשור
2 Kg 18.28; Assyria
- f. אנשים רשעים הרגו את-איש-צדיק בביתו
על-משכבו
2 Sam 4.11; הרג kill; צדיק innocent; בית+ו house+his; משכבו+ו bed+his
- g. ויבאו כל זקני ישראל
וישאו הפתנים את-הארון:
1 Kgs 8.3; ויבאו they [m.p.] went; וישאו they carried
- h. שחו רעים לפני טובים
ורשעים על-שערי צדיק:
Pr 14.19; שחו they bow (down); לפני in the presence of; רשע / רע bad, evil, wicked; the verb is elided from the second line
- i. והייתם קדשים פי קדוש אני:
Lv 11.45; והייתם and you [m.p.] shall be; אני I; כי because, for (that)
- j. והלכתם אחרי אלהים אחרים
אשר לא-ידעתם:
Jr 7.9; אחרי after
- k. והבית אשר-אני בונה גדול
כי-גדול אלהינו מכל-האלהים:
2 Chr 2.4; אני I; בונה building (a participle functioning as a predicate adjective); נני our
- l. ומלך ארם צוה את-שרי הרכב לאמר
לא תלחמו את-הקטן את-הגדול
פי אם-את-מלך ישראל לבדו:
2 Chr 18.30; ארם [he] commanded; לא Do not fight; תלחמו saying; לאמר chariot; רכב fight; אם but; כי only (him alone)
- m. עיר גדולה גבעון פאחת ערי הממלכה
והיא גדולה מן-העי
וכל-אנשיה גברים:
Josh 10.2; אחת one of; ממלכה kingdom; היא she, it; ה- her, its; גבור warrior; Gibeon, Ai

11.8 Enrichment: Reading a Bulla

This is a greatly enlarged drawing of a *bulla*, the clay impression of a seal; the original is thumbnail-sized.



לברכיהו

בן נריהו

הספר

of Berechyahu

ben Neryahu

the scribe

or (using more familiar forms of the names):

Belonging to Baruch

son of Neriah

the scribe

(cf. Jr 36.32)

This is a greatly enlarged copy of a typical *bulla*, with an inscription consisting of the owner's name (with *lamed* of possession), followed by "son of", his father's name, and his occupation. The appositions between "Baruch" and "son of Neraiah" on the one hand and "the scribe" on the other, identify both men by their fathers' names and their occupation or position in society. The *bulla* is thus the owner's "signature".

1. Both names end in *-yahu*, a variant of *-yah* that occurs in Biblical Hebrew. [Jeremiah's name occurs with both endings: יְרֵמְיָהּ (8x; only in Jr 27.1–29.1) and יְרֵמְיָהוּ (>110x; in the rest of the book; never in 27.1–29.1).]
2. Since the names of the father and son, as well as the occupation, match the biblical references, this particular bulla most probably records the personal seal of the scribe named Baruch ben Neraiah who worked for Jeremiah, and would have been affixed to documents (long since deteriorated) that he wrote, transcribed, or witnessed.
3. The same form of personal identification was in use long before the Israelite monarchy and the period of the canonical prophets. In Josh 1.1, Joshua is identified as יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן-נוּן מִשְׁרַת מֹשֶׁה, *Joshua son of Nun, servant of Moses*; Joshua—not his father—was Moses' assistant; Baruch was a scribe, according to the information on this bulla.
4. This bulla appeared on the antiquities market without any reference to its provenance. This means that its interpretation lacks the controls that its discovery *in situ* (in place) would have provided, such as depth, occupational or destruction layer, etc.
5. You can find more information on the paleo- or archaic Hebrew (Canaanite) alphabet at many sites on-line.

Lesson 12

THE PARTICIPLE

The verbal system of Biblical Hebrew includes forms that are called both “participles” and “verbal adjectives”, since they are based on verbal roots and are functionally adjectives. Unlike English participles (forms that end in “-ing”), Hebrew participles can be identified by their vowels, a prefixed **וְ** (in most verbal stems),¹¹⁰ and syntax. More than one-tenth (about 13%) of all verbal forms in Biblical Hebrew are participles. They are especially common in biblical poetry.

12.1 Form

All participles are inflected for gender and number in order to agree with the word that they modify. They use the same endings as adjectives and nouns. Like adjectives, participles agree with the *grammatical* gender of the word that they modify. The *qal* has two participles—active and passive.

		Qal Active Participle		Qal Passive Participle	
		Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Masc.	abs.	מוֹשֵׁל	מוֹשְׁלִים	מוֹשׁוּל	מוֹשׁוּלִים
	const.		מוֹשְׁלֵי	מוֹשׁוּל	מוֹשׁוּלֵי
Fem.	abs.	מוֹשֶׁלֶת מוֹשְׁלָה	מוֹשְׁלוֹת	מוֹשׁוּלָה	מוֹשׁוּלוֹת
	const. ¹¹¹			מוֹשׁוּלָת	

1. The *qal active* participle always has an *o*-vowel (*holem* or *holem-waw*) after the *first* radical.
2. The *qal passive* participle always has a *u*-vowel (*šureq*, rarely *qibbuš*) after the *second* radical.
3. Unlike the other verbal conjugations, participles can be articular. Like the infinitive construct, they can occur with prepositions and pronominal suffixes (Lesson 14).

12.2 Function (HBI ¶2.2.5)

The participle in Biblical Hebrew is an adjective, with the same functions as the adjective—attributive, predicate, and substantive. The rules for identifying participial function are the same as for the adjective (§11.1.2).

1. *Attributive*, or *adjectival* participles usually follow, and agree in definiteness with the word that they modify. Although they are attributive, their verbal nature means that they can be glossed in several ways, often as relative clauses (cf. Pr 8.34; Dt 1.38); for example, Is

110. The term “stems” refers to various patterns of vowels and prefixes used to modify the function of the verbal root (Lesson 18).

111. There are about thirty-five feminine construct *qal* participles in Biblical Hebrew; few of these are strong verbal roots. The most frequent occurs in the phrase וְזָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבַשׁ, “flowing with milk and honey” (20x; always fsc Q Ptc from the root זָבַח, “flow”).

40.3 could also be rendered “a voice which was calling, ...” Their temporal reference (past, present, future) is entirely contextual:

אֲשֶׁרִי אָדָם שָׁמַע לִי	How happy is the man <i>who listens</i> to me, ... (Pr 8.34)
קוֹל קוֹרָא בַּמִּדְבָּר	A voice <i>calling</i> , “In the wilderness ...” (Is 40.3)
יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן-נֹון הֶעֱמִיד לְפָנָיךְ	Joshua son of Nun, <i>who stands</i> before you (Dt 1.38)
מִשְׁפָּט כְּתוּב	judgment <i>that is written</i> (Ps 149.9)
שָׁלֹם ... שֹׁמֵר הַבְּגָדִים	Shallum ..., <i>the keeper of [who keeps or the one who keeps]</i> the garments (2 Kgs 22.14)
וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־הָעָם נֹשְׂאֵי הַמִּנְחָה:	He sent away the people <i>who had carried</i> the tribute (Jg 3.18)

2. *Predicate*, or *verbal* participles may precede or follow the word that they modify; the words *disagree* in definiteness. In narrative, predicate participles tend to occur in disjunctive clauses, where they function much like finite verbs. A predicate participle is technically “tenseless”—its temporal reference depends on the context, as does its nature as simple or continuous action. Note that the last five examples in this list occur in disjunctive clauses (§6.6):

אֱלֹהִים מֹשֵׁל בְּיַעֲקֹב	God <i>rules</i> in Jacob (Ps 59.14)
צְדִקְתּוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לְעַד	His righteousness <i>stands</i> for ever (Ps 112.9)
וְהֵם לֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי שָׁמַע יוֹסֵף	But they did not know that Joseph <i>was listening</i> (Gn 42.23)
וַעֲתָלְיָה מַלְכַת עַל־הָאָרֶץ:	Now Athaliah <i>was ruling</i> over the land (2 Kg 11.3)
וּפְלִשְׁתִּים עֹמְדִים אֶל־הָהָר מִזֶּה	Now the Philistines <i>were standing</i> on the hill on this side (1 Sam 17.3)
וּמַלְכַת־שֶׁבָא שָׁמְעַת אֶת־שִׁמְעֵן שְׁלֹמֹה	Now the queen of Sheba <i>heard</i> the report of Solomon ... (1 Kgs 10.1)
וְהִיא יֹשֶׁבֶת בִּירוּשָׁלַם	Now she <i>lived</i> in Jerusalem (2 Kgs 22.14)

Depending on the context, and the semantic *load* of the verbal root, a predicate participle following הִנֵּה or וְהִנֵּה *may* suggest the speaker’s sense of immediacy:

כִּי־הִנְנִי בּוֹרֵא שָׁמַיִם חֲדָשִׁים וְאָרֶץ חֲדָשָׁה	For I am <i>about to create</i> [<i>creating</i>] a new heaven and a new earth (Is 65.17)
הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי עֹשֶׂה דָבָר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל	I am <i>doing</i> [<i>about to do</i>] a thing in Israel (1 Sa 3.11)
וְהִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי יֹרֵד אֵלֶיךָ	I am <i>going to come down</i> [<i>coming</i>] to you (1 Sa 10.8)

3. When there is no substantive for the participle to modify, it is “its own noun”, and thus *substantival* (nominal), glossed by a pronominal relative clause (“he who ...”, “the one who ...”, “whoever ...”, etc.). As Jos 2.24 suggests, all participles in construct chains are substantive.

הוֹלֵךְ בְּיִשְׁרוֹ יִרָא יְהוָה	<i>Whoever walks</i> in his honesty fears YHWH (Pr 14.2)
יְהוָה שׁוֹמֵרְךָ	YHWH is <i>the one who watches</i> you [= “your watcher”] (Ps 121.5)
כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ	All the <i>inhabitants</i> of the land (Jos 2.24)

4. Some verbs occur primarily as substantive participles (e.g., the verbal root אִיב occurs 281 times; all but two are substantive participles). Words listed as nouns that have the vowel pattern *o-e* (i.e., *holem* - *šere*) are *qal* participles that were used primarily as substantives (e.g., שֹׁפֵט, *judge*; סֹפֵר, *scribe*).

הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי נֹתֵן אֶת־אֵיבֶךָ בְּיָדֶךָ	I am about to give [predicate ptc.] <i>your enemy</i> into your hand (1 Sam 24.4)
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5. Since they are *verbal* adjectives, participles can govern direct and indirect objects. They also occur with pronominal suffixes (Lesson 14); the suffix may indicate pronominal possession or it may identify the [pronominal] direct object of the action described by the participle:

שְׂמֹרֵךְ: ... שׂוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל: *He who watches you ... he who watches Israel* (Ps 121.3b, 4b)
 אֲנִי יְהוָה רֹפֵאֲךָ *I am YHWH, [he] who heals you* (Ex 15.26); or *your healer*

12.3 Concepts

active	nominal	participle	predicate	verbal
adjectival	attributive	passive	substantive	

12.4 Vocabulary

<i>there is/are</i> (opposite of אֵין/אִין)	יֵשׁ .175	<i>ram</i>	אֵיל .166
<i>death; מוֹת, death of</i>	מָוֹת .176	<i>choose</i> (the preposition בְּ- often introduces its object)	בָּחַר .167
<i>in front of, before, opposite</i>	נֶגֶד .177	<i>mighty man, warrior</i>	גִּבּוֹר .168
<i>work, occupation</i>	מְלָאכָה .178	<i>generation, life-span</i>	דּוֹר .169
<i>count; write, record</i>	סָפַר .179	<i>seek, inquire</i> (cf. מְדַרְשׁ)	הִרְשָׁה .170
<i>scribe, secretary, recorder</i> (ms Q Ptc)	סֹפֵר	<i>kill</i>	הִרְגַּה .171
<i>opening, entrance</i>	פֶּתַח .180	<i>sacrifice</i> (n.)	זָבַח .172
<i>ask [for], request</i>	שָׂאל .181	<i>outside</i> (noun and prep.); <i>street</i>	חוּץ .173
<i>oil</i> (usually olive oil)	שֶׁמֶן .182	<i>wisdom, skill</i>	חֵכְמָה .174

12.5 Exercises

After learning the forms of the *qal* participle, *gloss* these phrases and clauses, *parsing* the verbs, and *identifying* each participle's function as either attributive, predicate, or substantive (adjectival, verbal, nominal).

- 2 Chr 22.12; Athaliah וַעֲתִלְיָה מַלְכֵת עַל-הָאָרֶץ: .1
- Is 9.1; רָאוּ *they saw* (3cp Q P); צִלְמֹת; *death-shadow; נָנְה it shined;* *עַל + הֵם- (their / them) < עֲלֵיהֶם* הָעַם הַהֲלֹכִים בְּחֹשֶׁךְ רָאוּ אֹר גָּדוֹל
יִשְׁבִי בְּאָרֶץ צִלְמוֹת אֹר נָנְה עֲלֵיהֶם: .2
- Ps 59.14b; וַיֵּדְעוּ *and they will know* (3 mp QF); אָפַס; *end; Jacob* וַיֵּדְעוּ כִּי-אֱלֹהִים מוֹשֵׁל בְּיַעֲקֹב לְאַפְסֵי הָאָרֶץ .3
- 1 Sam 3.3; הַיְכָל *temple; שָׁן* *there, in that place; Samuel* וּשְׁמוּאֵל שָׁכַב בְּהֵיכַל יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר-שָׁן אֲרוֹן אֱלֹהִים: .4
- Ps 147.3; שָׁבַר *break; רָפָא* *heal* הִרְפָּא לְשִׁבוּרֵי לֵב .5
- Ec 7.15; וְצִדִּיק אֲבָר בְּצִדְקוֹ *in + righteousness + his* וְיֵשׁ צִדִּיק אֲבָר בְּצִדְקוֹ .6
- Ps 58.12 וְיֵשׁ-אֱלֹהִים שֹׁפְטִים בְּאָרֶץ: .7

- Gn 25.28; four names! .8 וַיֵּאָהֵב יִצְחָק אֶת־עֵשָׂו ... וּרְבֵקָה אֶהְבֶּת אֶת־יַעֲקֹב:
- Ps 75.8 .9 כִּי־אֱלֹהִים שִׁפְט
- Ps 106.3; עֲשֵׂה *happy* (trad., *blessed*); אֲשֶׁר־י שִׁמְרֵי מִשְׁפָּט .10
do; צְדָקָה *righteousness, innocence*; עֵת *time* עֲשֵׂה צְדָקָה בְּכָל־עֵת:
- 1 Sam 18.16; הוּא *he*; יֵצֵא *ms Q Ptc < go* .11 וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיהוּדָה אָהֵב אֶת־דָּוִד
out, leave; בֹּא *ms Q Ptc < come/go in*; הֵם + כָּא *ms Q Ptc < come/go in*; הֵם + לִפְנֵי *before + them*; David כִּי־הוּא יוֹצֵא וְבָא לִפְנֵיהֶם:
- Jg 4.4; הִיא *she*; הִיא *that*; עֵת .12 וּדְבוּרָה אָשָׁה נְבִיאָה אֲשֶׁת לְפִידוֹת
time; Deborah, Lapidot הִיא שִׁפְטָה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֵת הַהִיא:
- Jr 22.11; אָבִי + וְ .13 כֹּה אָמַר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי שָׁלוֹם בְּנֵי־אֲשִׁיָּהוּ מִלֶּךְ יְהוּדָה
Shallum; Josiah; Judah הַמֶּלֶךְ תַּחַת יֵאֲשִׁיָּהוּ אָבִיו
- Lv 14.47; יִכְבֹּס *he will wash*; יוֹ + בְּגָד .14 וְהִשְׁכַּב בְּבֵית יִכְבֹּס אֶת־בְּגָדָיו
garments + his (suffixed to a plural noun; cf. #6) וְהֵאכֵל בְּבֵית יִכְבֹּס אֶת־בְּגָדָיו:
- 1 Sam 17.3; מִזֶּה *on one [this] side* (זֶה + מִן) .15 וּפְלִשְׁתִּים עֹמְדִים אֶל־הָהָר מִזֶּה
Philistines וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל עֹמְדִים אֶל־הָהָר מִזֶּה
- Jr 23.2; לָכֵן *therefore* (כֵּן + לָ); עַל *concerning*; .16 לָכֵן כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
both participles are from the root רעה *shepherd, tend* (the mp ending “replaces” the final ה- of the root) עַל־הָרְעִים הָרְעִים אֶת־עַמִּי
- Ps 107.2a; גָּאֵל *redeem* .17 יֵאָמְרוּ גְאוּלֵי יְהוָה

12.6 Enrichment: Participles & Poetic Compression

Participles are especially common in the book of Proverbs, probably because they allow highly compressed syntax, perhaps also to impart a “timeless” and “universal” air to the sayings. In Pr 17.9, for example, the use of four participles allows the proverb to be compressed into only eight words:

מִכְסֵה־פֶשַׁע מְבַקֵּשׁ אֲהָבָה *Whoever conceals a transgression seeks love*;
וְשֹׁנֵה בְדָבָר מַפְרִיד אֱלוֹפִי: *And whoever repeats a matter separates a friend [friends] (Pr 17.9)*

At times, however, compression can be confusing. How should we read these lines? Which is primary—seeking or concealing, repeating or separating? Since our experience suggests that talking about offenses can destroy relationships, but that this is not the only reason for relationships to fail, we would probably read Pr 17.9b as suggested above (rather than “Whoever separates friends repeats a matter”).

In 17.9a, however, either participle could be read as the subject, so that an alternative interpretation (and translation) would be “Whoever seeks love conceals a transgression”. This line may even be deliberately ambiguous, written in order to allow or even encourage both understandings. The decision to *gloss* it in one way or the other, however, is essentially arbitrary, since either participle can be predicate or substantive.

Word order is not always a reliable guide to syntax or function, especially in biblical poetry, so that we must reflect on the content of the proverb in order to translate it appropriately.

In Pr 12.1a, however, the parallelism helps us determine that the first participle is the subject (substantive) and the second the predicate, since the predicate is elided from the second line, and since “loves discipline” parallels “hates correction”, we follow the first reading:

אֲהָב מוֹסֵר אֶהָב דַּעַת *Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge;*
 וְשֵׂנְא תוֹכַחַת בְּעַר: *And whoever hates correction [loves] stupidity (Pr 12.1)*

It may seem that we have merely read the Hebrew as though it followed English word-order, but our interpretation (and therefore translation) is actually based on the parallels between the two lines. The general principle here is the frequent omission [elision] of the predicate from the second of two parallel lines of biblical poetry.

Two passive participles (Lesson 19) allow even greater compression in Pr 27.5—only five words:

טוֹבָה תּוֹכַחַת מְגֻלָּה מֵאַהֲבָה מְסֻתֶּרֶת: *A revealed rebuke is better than concealed love (Pr 27.5)*

This could also be rendered so that the English syntax corresponds to the Hebrew:

Better a rebuke revealed than love concealed.

Nothing is gained beyond (perhaps) a certain “poetic” feel due to the rhyme of “revealed” and “concealed”; both renderings are as compressed as English allows. Or, if we wanted to add a poetic structure that is not present in the Hebrew sentence, we could invert the order of the last two words so that we read **noun** – *adjective* ... *adjective* – **noun**, creating a grammatical chiasm, but this may be overly clever.

Better a **rebuke** revealed than concealed **love**.

Lesson 13

PRONOMINALS (I)

One challenge in writing or speaking is keeping track of who is acting or speaking, and whether or not this is a new person or someone already mentioned in the discourse. Another challenge is to write so that the result “holds together”, or is “cohesive”. Pronouns are a *cohesive* device (§6), a linguistic “glue” that binds together a discourse. English tracks clausal subjects pronominally (e.g., “Then *he* went ...” or “After *she* had taken ...”), rather than by repeating the subject’s name. Pronouns are thus called “anaphoric” (Greek *ana*, “above”), since they usually refer *back* to someone or something previously mentioned (traditionally called the “antecedent”).¹¹²

Biblical Hebrew has two sets of pronouns—individual words, called “independent pronouns”, and suffixes, called “pronominal suffixes” (Lesson 14). Both sets are inflected for person, gender, and number to link them to their “antecedent”.

Independent personal pronouns identify the subject of the clause; these “subject” pronouns, however, are not merely cohesive—they also function on the level of discourse, a “higher-level” function that explains why Biblical Hebrew has independent subject pronouns alongside the PGN of the finite verb.¹¹³ (§13.1.2). The third person independent pronouns (along with a few other forms) also function as *demonstrative adjectives* (“this”, “these”, “that”, “those”).

Pronominal suffixes show pronominal possession (“my”, “her”, “their”), indicate the pronominal objects of verbs and prepositions, and the pronominal subjects of the infinitive construct (§16.1.1).

13.1 Independent Pronouns

Pronominal forms in Biblical Hebrew have person, gender, and number. Independent pronouns usually identify the subject of their clause; about 20% of all independent personal pronouns occur with the conjunction *waw* as part of the first form in disjunctive clauses (*w* + pronoun).

13.1.1 Form

Person	Gender	Singular		Plural	
1st	common	אֲנִי	אֲנִי	אֲנִי	אֲנִי
	masc.		אַתָּה		אַתֶּם
2nd	fem.		אַתְּ		אַתֶּן
	masc.		הוּא	הֵם	הֵמָּה
3rd	fem.	הִיא	הִיא		הֵנָּה

112. Pronouns can be *cataphoric*, referring to something that follows (“Although *he* awoke early, John ...”); this function is rare in Biblical Hebrew.

113. Apart from commands, English sentences have explicit subjects, either nominal or pronominal (English also uses a “dummy” subject, as in “*It’s* raining” and “*There’s* one in here”). Independent subject pronouns in Biblical Hebrew often “sound” redundant (or “emphatic”) to English readers when they occur alongside a verbal form that indicates the PGN of its subject. They are not actually redundant, because: (1) all communication is as efficient as possible (superfluity is only apparent, never real); and (2) their function is related to the larger context in which they occur, including the genre and the relationship of their clause to the preceding clause. This will become more clear as you begin to read the biblical text.

- The basic form is distinct for each person; gender and number is distinguished by the end of the form:

Person	Form	
1st	- אָנִי	<i>I, we</i>
2nd	- אַתָּה	<i>you</i>
3rd	- הֵם	<i>he, she, it, they</i>

- The “double forms” differ primarily in frequency and distribution:
 - אָנִי (1cs) is more than twice as frequent (803x) as אַתָּה (c. 350x), but in some biblical books one form dominates, for example

	אָנִי	אַתָּה
Dt	55x	6x
Ezk	1x	155x

- The longer 1cp form (אֲנִי־וְהוּא, “we”) occurs about 115 times in Biblical Hebrew, the shorter form (וְהוּא) only six times.
- The longer 3mp form (הֵמָּה, “they”) is slightly more frequent (c. 55%) than הֵם; as with 1cs (אָנִי/אֲנִי־וְהוּא), they are not distributed evenly:¹¹⁴

	הֵמָּה	הֵם
Gn	4x	17x
Ex	5x	17x
Lv	1x	18x
Ps	25x	3x
Ezk	57x	8x ¹¹⁵

- “She/It”—הִיא (3fs written with *-w-*)—is “normal” in the Torah, but is written הִיא in the rest of the Bible.¹¹⁶

13.1.2 Function (HBI §1.5.1)

- An independent pronoun *always* means that you are looking at a *clause*, whether or not the pronoun comes first in the clause.
- Independent personal pronouns usually identify the *subject* of a verbal or non-verbal clause (“I”, “she”, “we”). They do *not* show pronominal possession (e.g., “my”, “your”) or the pronominal objects of verbs or prepositions (e.g., “him”, “for them”). The examples illustrate its use with various types of predicates—a noun (Gn 3.19; Ex 6.2), adjective (Ezk 42.14), finite verb (Gn 41.15), and participle (Nu 33.51):

כִּי־עָפָר אַתָּה	For <i>you</i> are <i>dust</i> , ... (Gn 3.19)
אֲנִי יְהוָה	<i>I</i> am YHWH (Ex 6.2).
כִּי־קָדַשׁ הֵמָּה	For <i>they</i> [fp] are <i>holy</i> (Ezk 42.14).
וְאֲנִי שָׁמַעְתִּי עֲלֶיךָ	And <i>I</i> heard about <i>you</i> ... (Gn 41.15)
כִּי אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן	When <i>you</i> cross the Jordan ... (Nu 33.51)

114. When two 3mp pronouns occur in the same v., both forms may be used (7x), although both are repeated in some vv. (הֵמָּה (17x) or הֵם (7x)).

115. In Ezekiel, the clause הֵמָּה הֵמָּה/הֵם הֵמָּה, *for they are a rebellious household*, occurs seven times, six times with הֵמָּה as the subject, once with הֵם.

116. The 3fs form הִיא—with *yod*—occurs ten times in the Torah out of more than 150 occurrences in those books.

3. Independent pronouns also occur in non-verbal clauses, apparently signaling the non-verbal predication:

יהוה הוא האלהים YHWH [*—he*] is [the] God! (1 Kg 18.39).
 כִּי־טוֹב כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְכֶם הוּא׃ For the goodness of all of the land of Egypt [*it*] is yours (Gn 45.20).

4. Independent pronouns often occur with the conjunction *-וְ*, creating a disjunctive clause (§6.6). After a conversation between Joseph and his brothers, the narrator finally explains why Joseph’s brothers thought that they were secure in talking in front of him (Gn 42.23). The added information of Jg 11.39 makes the virginity of Jephthah’s daughter explicit.

וְהֵם לֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי שָׁמַע יוֹסֵף
 כִּי הַמְלִיץ בֵּינֵהֶם׃ Now they did not know that Joseph could understand [participle] them, because the interpreter was between them (Gn 42.23).
 וְהִיא לֹא־יָדְעָה אִישׁ ... (now she had not known a man) ... (Jg 11.39)

The change of subject that is often signalled by an independent pronoun may also imply a contrast between the events or actions described by two clauses, especially when a disjunctive clause begins with *w* + pronoun (cf. 2 Chr 13.11 (Exercise #16)). The contrast is thus appropriately signalled in English by rendering the conjunction as, for example, “but”, “now”, “but as for her”.

Although the contrasting clause—“every great matter they shall bring to you”—is left out of Exercise #6 (Ex 18.22), the disjunctive clause that ends the sentence again signals a contrast, here by beginning the clause with the object (*waw* + non-verb) rather than the subject.

5. The only affix that can be attached to the independent personal pronouns is the conjunction *-וְ*.

13.2 Demonstratives

Demonstratives *point out* or *point to* a person or object (“this”, “that”, “these”, “those”), and can be thought of as making an articular word even more definite or specific (contrast “this scroll” with “the scroll”).

13.2.1 Form

	Gender	Singular	Plural
“Near”	masc.	זֶה	אֵלֶּה
	fem.	זֹאת	אֵלֶּה
“Far”	masc.	הוּא	הֵמָּה
	fem.	הִיא	הֵנָּה

The paradigm of the demonstratives overlaps the paradigm of the personal pronouns (above). The “far” demonstratives are the same as the third person personal pronouns. They are demonstrative primarily when they are attributive (§13.2.2(5), below).¹¹⁷

13.2.2 Function (HBI §1.5.2)

1. Since demonstratives are essentially adjectives, they can be either predicate or attributive. Unlike adjectives, they are not substantive.
2. Like adjectives, demonstratives agree with the grammatical gender and number of the word that they modify.

117. Their discourse functions may differ, but there is little functional difference between “That is the king” and “He is the king”.

3. When they are *predicate*, (1) demonstratives are *anarthrous*; (2) they tend to *precede* the word that they modify; and (3) they are usually the *subject* of the clause (זה, the second demonstrative in 2 Kgs 6.19, occurs eleven times in Biblical Hebrew):

זאת הארץ	This is the land (Nu 34.2)
היא העיר הגדלה	That [it] is the great city (Gn 10.12)
אלה שמות	These are the names (Ex 1.1)
ויאמר אלישע לא זה הדרך ולא זה העיר	Elisha said to them, “This is not the way, nor is this the city. ...” (2 Kgs 6.19)

4. *Attributive* demonstratives *follow* the word that they modify, and are *articulate*:

המקום הזה	this place (Gn 28.17)
בעיר ההיא	in that city (Js 20.6)
כל-היום ההוא	all that day (Nu 11.32)

5. An articulate “third person pronoun” is therefore actually an attributive demonstrative:

בימים ההמה	in those days (Jr 3.16) ¹¹⁸
בעת ההוא	at that time (Nu 22.4)
העיר הזאת	this city (Gn 19.20)

6. Usually the demonstrative immediately follows the noun that it modifies. If the noun is modified by an adjective (or is in construct), the attributive demonstrative follows the entire phrase, after any adjectives, or after the final word of the construct chain, or both. In Gn 2.12, the adjective after the attributive demonstrative is predicate:

הדבר הגדול הזה	this great thing (1 Sa 12.16)
הרעה הגדלה הזאת	this great evil (Gn 39.9)
כאשר הבאתי אל-העם הזה	Just as I brought upon this people
את כל-הרעה הגדלה הזאת	all this great disaster (Jr 32.42)
וזהב הארץ ההוא טוב	and the gold of that land is good (Gn 2.12)

13.3 Interrogative Pronouns

Biblical Hebrew uses two *uninflected* interrogative pronouns to ask questions about persons (“who?”, “whom?”) and things (“what?” “how?”). Both are normally “fronted”—they begin their clause.

13.3.1 The Interrogative מי

The uninflected interrogative מי, “who”, is always *definite*, and always asks about a *person*.

1. If there is no verb, מי is usually the subject of a non-verbal clause (but cf. Ru 2.5, #3, below):

ויאמר פרעה מי יהוה	Pharaoh said, “Who is YHWH, ...?” (Ex 5.2)
מי אתם	“Who are you (m.p.)?” (Jos 9.8)
מי האנשים האלה	Who are these men ...? (Nu 22.9)
בתמי את	“Whose daughter are you?” (Gn 24.23)
מי עשה הדבר הזה	“Who did this thing?” (Jg 6.29; cf. Jg 15.6)
מי-שמע כזאת	Who has heard [such a thing] as this?
מי ראה כאלה	Who has seen [such things] as these? (Is 66.8)

118. The phrase “[in] those days” accounts for nearly three-quarters of all occurrences of the 3mp demonstrative.

2. When **מי** is the object of the verb, it has the sign of the object, but still begins the question (and is rendered “whom”):

אֶת־מִי תַעֲבֹדוּן “Whom will you serve?” (Jos 24.15)
 אֶת־מִי אֲשַׁלַּח וּמִי יֵלֶךְ־לָנוּ “Whom shall I send, and who shall go for us?” (Is 6.8)

3. **מי** also functions as the object of prepositions (in Ru 2.5, the **ל** shows possession):

אַחֲרַי מִי יֵצֵא מִלֶּךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל After *whom* has the king of Israel gone out? (1 Sam 24.15)
 לְמִי הַנְּעֻרָה הַזֹּאת: To *whom* does this young woman *belong*? (Ru 2.5)

13.3.2 The Interrogative **מה**

The uninflected interrogative **מה**, “what”, is always *indefinite*, and does *not* refer to persons. If there is no verb, **מה** is the subject of a non-verbal clause.

וְאָמְרוּ־לִי מַה־שְּׁמוֹ “... and they say to me, ‘What is his name?’
 מַה אֶמַּר אֲלֵהֶם What shall I say to them?” (Ex 3.13)
 מַה־עָשָׂה לָךְ הָעָם הַזֶּה “What did this people do to you?” (Ex 32.21)
 וּמִי־יֹאמַר־אֵלָיו מַה־תַּעֲשֶׂה: And who says to him, ‘What are you doing?’” (Qo 8.4)
 מַה הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חֲלַמְתָּ “What is this dream which you dreamed?” (Gn 37.10)

1. **מה** also occurs in indirect questions:

לֹא יָדְעוּ מַה־הוּא They did not know *what* it [was] (Ex 16.15)

2. **מה** may also ask “why”, often in combination with **ל** (**לְמַה** or **לָמָּה**, “for what?”):

מַה אֲנַחְנוּ יֹשְׁבִים פֹּה “Why are we sitting here ...?” (2 Kgs 17.3)
 לְמַה לֹא־הֵלַכְתָּ אֵלָי “Why didn’t you come to me?” (Nu 22.37)
 וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד לְשָׂאוּל And David said to Saul,
 לְמַה תִּשְׁמַע אֶת־דְּבַרֵי אָדָם “Why do you listen to men’s words, ...?” (1 Sam 24.10)

3. **מה** is spelled with three different vowels, depending on the first letter of the following word; there is no difference in function:

מָה What?
 מַה־ What?
 מֶה What?

13.4 Frequency

There are 8,629 independent pronominal forms in Biblical Hebrew:

Personal (subject)	5,001	
Demonstratives	2,651	
Interrogative	977	(מָה (554x), מִי (423x))

13.5 Concepts

antecedent	demonstrative	interrogative	pronoun
cohesion	independent pronoun	pronominal subject	

13.6 Vocabulary¹¹⁹

Person	Gender	Singular			Plural				
1st	common	<i>I</i>	אֲנִי	אֲנֹכִי	.191	<i>we</i>	אֲנַחְנוּ	נַחְנוּ	.183
2nd	masc.	<i>you</i>	אַתָּה		.192	<i>you</i>	אַתֶּם		.184
	fem.	<i>you</i>	אַתְּ		.193	<i>you</i>	אַתֶּן		.185
3rd	masc.	<i>he, it</i>	הוּא	הוּא	.194	<i>they</i> (3 mp pers. pron.); <i>those</i> (mp dem.)	הֵמָּה	הֵם	.186
	fem.	<i>she, it</i>	הִיא	הִיא	.195	<i>they</i> (3fp pers. pron.); <i>those</i> (fp dem.)	הֵנָּה		.187
		<i>Who?</i>	מִי		.196	<i>this</i> (ms dem. pron.)	זֶה		.188
		<i>What?</i>	מָה	מָה	.197	<i>this</i> (fs dem. pron.)	זֹאת		.189
			מָה			<i>these</i> (cp dem. pron.)	אֵלֶּה		.190

13.7 Exercises

After learning the personal and interrogative pronouns, and the demonstratives, *gloss* these clauses, *parsing* any verbal forms.

- Ex 6.8 .1 אֲנִי יְהוָה
- Gn 29.4; Haran; the last two words are a quotation .2 וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִחֶרֶן אֲנַחְנוּ:
- 1 Sam 4.18; אַרְבָּעִים 40 .3 וְהוּא שָׁפַט אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה:
- Ps 110.4; *order of*; Melchizedek .4 אַתָּה־כֹּהֵן לְעוֹלָם עַל־דְּבַרְתִּי מִלְכִי־צְדָק:
- Jr 29.20 .5 וְאַתֶּם שְׁמַעוּ דְבַר־יְהוָה
- Gn 42.23; Joseph .6 וְהֵם לֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי שְׁמַעַ יוֹסֵף
- Ex 18.22; *time* (in the sense of measured, or passing time); *small*; on the second clause, cf. §13.1.2(4) .7 וְשָׁפַטוּ אֶת־הָעָם בְּכָל־עֵת ...
וְכָל־הַדְּבָר הַקָּטָן יִשְׁפֹּטוּ־הֶם
- Ru 3.9; Ruth; *redeemer* .8 וַיֹּאמֶר מִי־אַתָּ וְהֵאמֶר אֲנֹכִי רוּת ...
(ms Q Ptc < *redeem*, גֹּאֵל)
- Ps 115.18; *now*; *praise* (D); Yah .9 וְאַנְחָנוּ נִבְרַחַךְ יְהוָה מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם
הַלְלוּ־יָהּ:
- Is 14.13; *your* (m.s.); *ascend*; *above* .10 וְאַתָּה אִמְרַתְּ בְּלִבְבָךְ הַשָּׁמַיִם אֲעֹלָה מִמֶּעַל
- 1 Chr 17.16; *is* vocative; *my house* .11 וַיֹּאמֶר מִי־אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים וּמִי בֵּיתִי
- Dt 10.10 .12 וְאֲנֹכִי עֹמְדִתִּי בְּהָר

119. The personal pronouns are listed paradigmatically.

Lesson 14

PRONOMINALS (II): SUFFIXES

Independent “subject” pronouns indicate the subject of their clause. In order to show pronominal *possession*, and verbal and prepositional pronominal *objects*, Biblical Hebrew attaches “pieces” of the independent pronouns to substantive and verbal forms. Like the independent pronouns, these suffixes are inflected to agree with the person, gender, and number of their antecedent. There are 45,590 pronominal suffixes in Biblical Hebrew (*versus* about 8,629 independent pronominal forms).

14.1 Form

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
1st	com.	י - <i>my, me</i>	נְנוּ - <i>our, us</i>
2nd	masc.	ךָ - <i>your, you</i>	כֶּם - <i>your, you</i>
	fem.	כִּי - <i>your, you</i>	כֶּן - <i>your, you</i>
3rd	masc.	הּ - הוּ - הוּ - <i>his, him, its</i>	הֶם - <i>their, them</i>
		הוּ - הוּ - הוּ - <i>his, him, its</i>	הֵם - <i>their, them</i>
	fem.	הָ - <i>her, its</i>	הֵן - <i>their, them</i>
		הָ - <i>her, its</i>	הֵן - <i>their, them</i>

- There are no *cases* in Biblical Hebrew (unlike, e.g., Greek, Latin, German), so that the form of the suffix is the same regardless of its function, which is determined entirely from its context.
- There is no difference in function between different forms (i.e., all forms listed under 3ms refer to “he”, “him”, or “his”).
- נְנוּ - (3ms) occurs only in poetry; נָנוּ - (3ms) occurs on verbs.
- Pronominal suffixes are added to nouns as follows:
 - Suffixes are added directly to *masculine* and *feminine singular* nouns, sometimes with a helping vowel. When a feminine noun ends in הָ-, the הָ- is replaced by תְ- (the feminine singular construct ending), and the suffixes are added to the form with תְ- (תּוֹרָה > תּוֹרָתִי, *my teaching*).

Absolute	Construct	Construct + suffix
<i>son</i>	בֶּן	בְּנִי } <i>my son</i> (2 Sam 19.1)
		בְּנֶךָ } <i>your (fs) son</i> (2 Kgs 6.28)
		בְּנֶיהָ } <i>her son</i> (2 Kgs 4.6)
<i>city</i>	עִיר	עִירוֹ } <i>his city</i> (2 Sam 17.23)
<i>land</i>	אֶרֶץ	אֶרְצֵנוּ } <i>our land</i> (Jos 9.11)
<i>maid/servant</i>	שִׁפְחָה	שִׁפְחָתְךָ } <i>your maid/servant</i> (1 Sam 1.18)
<i>teaching</i>	תּוֹרָה	תּוֹרָתִי } <i>my teaching</i> (Is 51.7)
<i>mistress/lady</i>	גְּבִירָה	גְּבִירָתָהּ } <i>her mistress</i> (Ps 123.2)

- b. When suffixes are added to *plural* nouns, there is a ך- between the noun and the suffix; some forms are found only on plural nouns:

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
1st	com.	י - <i>my, me</i>	ינוּ - <i>our, us</i>
	masc.	יך - <i>your, you</i>	יכם - <i>your, you</i>
2nd	fem.	יך - <i>your, you</i>	יכן - <i>your, you</i>
	masc.	יו - <i>his, him, its</i>	יהם - <i>their, them</i>
3rd	fem.	יה - <i>her, its</i>	יהן - <i>their, them</i>

- 1) *Masculine plural* nouns drop the final ם- of their ending and add the suffixes after the ך- of the plural.
- 2) *Feminine plural* nouns add ך- after their plural (ות-) ending, and before the suffix (בנות > בנותיכם, *your* [masc pl] *daughters*). The third plural suffixes ם - and ך -, however, can be added directly to the plural ending (בנותם).

<i>words</i>	דברים	דברי	דבריך	<i>your</i> (ms) <i>words</i> (Josh 1.8)
<i>sons</i>	בנים	בני	בניה	<i>her</i> <i>sons</i> (Is 66.8)
<i>days</i>	ימים	ימי	ימיו	<i>his</i> <i>days</i> (Jb 14.5)
<i>garments</i>	בגדים	בגדי	בגדיך	<i>your</i> <i>garments</i> (1 Kg 22.30)
<i>lands</i>	ארצות	ארצות	בארצותם	<i>in their</i> (mp) <i>lands</i> (Gn 10.5)
<i>daughters</i>	בנות	בנות	בנותיכם	<i>your</i> (mp) <i>daughters</i> (Ezr 9.12)

- c. The 1cs suffix (י-) is added to plural nouns with the vowel *pataḥ*, which is the only difference between “my” used with singular and plural nouns.

	Absolute	Construct + Suffix
<i>horse</i>	סוס	סוסי <i>my</i> horse
<i>horses</i>	סוסים	סוסי <i>my</i> horses
<i>son</i>	בן	בני <i>my</i> son (Pr 3.1)
<i>sons</i>	בנים	בני <i>my</i> sons (1 Sam 12.2)
<i>daughter</i>	בת	בתי <i>my</i> daughter (Ru 3.16)
<i>daughters</i>	בנות	בנותי <i>my</i> daughters (Ru 1.11)

- d. Suffixes are added to the *construct* form of the noun. We may therefore say that a noun with a pronominal suffix is in construct *to the suffix*, and that the pronominal suffix is the last “element” or “member” of the construct chain (even if it is a chain of only one “form”, composed of two elements).
5. Pronominal suffixes are also used to show the pronominal object of a *preposition*. They are combined with prepositions in one of three ways:
- a. Suffixes are added *directly* to ב and ל (their paradigms are identical, apart from the preposition; different glosses illustrate the variety of the prepositions’ function):

1st		בי <i>by me</i>	לנו <i>to us</i>
2nd	m.	לך <i>to you</i> (ms)	בכם <i>with you</i> (mp)
	f.	בך <i>against you</i> (fs)	לכן <i>for you</i> (fp)
3rd	m.	לו <i>for him</i>	בהם <i>in them</i> (mp)
	f.	בה <i>with her</i>	להן <i>to them</i> (fp)

- b. Singular suffixes and 1cp are added to כִּי¹²¹ and to some forms of מִן and עִם with a “helping” syllable:

1st	כְּמוֹנִי	<i>like me</i>	כְּמוֹנוֹ	<i>like us</i>
2nd	כְּמוֹדְךָ	<i>like you (ms)</i>	כְּכֶם	<i>like you (mp)</i> ¹²²
	כְּמוֹדָהּ	<i>like him</i>	כְּהֵם	<i>like them (mp)</i>
3rd	כְּמוֹדָהּ	<i>like her</i>	כְּהֵן	<i>like them (fp)</i>
1st	מִמּוֹנִי	<i>from me</i>	מִמּוֹנוֹ	<i>from us</i> ¹²⁴
	מִמּוֹדְךָ	<i>from you (ms)</i>	מִכֶּם	<i>from you (mp)</i>
2nd	מִמּוֹדְךָ	<i>from you (fs)</i>	מִמּוֹן	<i>from you (fp)</i>
	מִמּוֹנוֹ	<i>from him</i> ¹²³	מִמָּהֶם	<i>from them (mp)</i>
3rd	מִמּוֹדָהּ	<i>from her</i>	מִמָּהֵן	<i>from them (fp)</i>
1st	עִמּוֹדִי ¹²⁴	עִמּוֹי	עִמּוֹנוֹ ¹²⁵	<i>with us</i>
	עִמּוֹדְךָ	<i>with you (ms)</i>	עִמְכֶם	<i>with you (mp)</i>
2nd	עִמּוֹדְךָ	<i>with you (fs)</i>	---	¹²⁶
	עִמּוֹ	<i>with him</i>	עִמָּם	<i>with them (mp)</i>
3rd	עִמּוֹהּ	<i>with her</i>	---	¹²⁷

6. Most prepositions add suffixes by means of a *yod* between the preposition and suffix, so that the suffixes look like those added to plural nouns (each line in this example uses a different preposition, and glosses of the prepositions are varied to show use):

1st	לְפָנַי	<i>in my presence</i>	לְפָנֵינוּ	<i>before us</i>
	אֵלֶיךָ	<i>to you (ms)</i>	אֵלֵיכֶם	<i>to you (mp)</i>
2nd	עֲלֶיךָ	<i>against you (fs)</i>	עֲלֵיכֶן	<i>concerning you (fp)</i>
	אַחֲרָיו	<i>after him</i>	אַחֲרֵיהֶם	<i>after them (mp)</i>
3rd	תַּחְתָּיהָ	<i>under her/it</i>	תַּחְתֵּיהֶן	<i>under them (fp)</i>

N.B.: The noun אֱלֹהִים, *god/God* occurs only with the 1cs suffix (אֱלֹהֵי, *my God*); all other suffixes are added to the construct of אֱלֹהִים (e.g., אֱלֹהֵיךָ, *your God*). The preposition אֶל/אֵל uses *pataḥ* to link the 1cs suffix (אֱלֹהֵי, *to me*); all other forms have *yod*, as in the paradigm.

121. The preposition -כִּי does not occur with 2nd person feminine suffixes.

122. כְּמוֹכֶם occurs once (Jb 12.3).

123. The 3ms and 1cp suffixes with מִן (both are מִמּוֹנוֹ) can be distinguished only by context.

124. Be careful not to confuse this with forms of the verbal root עָמַד *stand*.

125. Cf. עִמּוֹנוֹ-אֱלֹהִים *God [is] with us* (“Immanuel” (with and without *maqfēf*; e.g., Is 7.14; 8.8, 10).

126. The preposition עִם does not occur with 2nd person feminine plural suffixes.

127. The preposition עִם does not occur with 3rd person feminine plural suffixes.

The key to analyzing a compound form is to know the pronominal suffixes and the vocabulary (which will let you identify the central lexeme (content word)).

וּבְבֵיתִי <i>and in my house</i> (Is 3.7)				
י-			בֵּית-	וּ- בְּ-
1cs suffix			noun	prep. cj.
כְּדְבָרֶיךָ <i>according to your words</i> (1 Kg 3.12)				
ך-	י-		דְּבַר-	כְּ-
2ms suffix	plural		noun	prep.
בְּבָנֵינוּ <i>with our sons</i> (Ex 10.9)				
נו-	י-	(supply the final nun)	בֶּן-	בְּ-
1cp suffix	plural		noun	prep.
וּבְנוֹתֵינוּ <i>and with our daughters</i> (Ex 10.9)				
נו-	י-		בְּנוֹת-	וּ- בְּ-
1cp suffix	plural		noun	prep. cj.
מִמְקוֹצוֹתֵיהֶם <i>from their troubles</i> (Ps 107.6, 13, 19, 28)				
הם-	י-		מְקוֹצוֹת-	מִן- [ן]
3mp suffix	plural		noun	prep.

14.2 Function (HBI §1.5.1b)

1. Pronominal suffixes are added to nouns with all of the nuances of the construct chain (possession, relationship, etc.):

דְּבָרֶיךָ	<i>your</i> (ms) words (Josh 1.8)	source: words spoken by “you”
בָּנֵיהָ	<i>her</i> sons (Is 66.8)	relationship: sons born to her
יָמָיו	<i>his</i> days (Jb 14.5)	days during which he lived
בְּגָדֶיךָ	<i>your</i> (ms) garments (1 Kg 22.30)	ownership: garments owned by “you”
בְּאַרְצוֹתָם	<i>in their</i> lands (Gn 10.5)	ownership: lands lived in by “them”

2. Because pronouns are definite, pronominal suffixes make the word to which they are suffixed definite as well, and end the construct chain. Every word with a pronominal suffix is therefore both *construct* and *definite*. In 1 Sam 26.19, **דְּבָרִי** is construct to **עֲבָד**, which is construct to the 3ms suffix:

יִשְׁמַעֲנָא אֲדָנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ	“... may my master the king hear <i>the</i> words of <i>his</i>
אֵת דְּבָרֵי עֲבָדוֹ	servant (1 Sam 26.19)
יָדָיו וְרַגְלָיו	<i>his</i> hands and <i>his</i> feet (Jg 1.6); two construct chains
בִּימֵיכֶם	in <i>your</i> days (Jl 1.2)

3. Pronominal suffixes indicate the *objects* of prepositions:

וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם	He said <i>to them</i> , ... (Gn 9.1)
וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו	And you shall say <i>to him</i> ... (Ex 9.13)
שָׁלַח אֵלַי לְנָשִׁי וּלְבָנֵי	He sent <i>to me</i> for my wives and for my sons and for
וּלְכֶסֶף וּלְזָהָבִי וְלֹא מְנַעַתִּי מִמֶּנּוּ:	my silver and for my gold; and I have not withheld [anything] <i>from him</i> (1 Kgs 20.7).
אֲשֶׁר נֹתְרוּ אַחֲרֵיהֶם בְּאֶרֶץ	who were left <i>behind them</i> in the land ... (2 Ch 8.8)
וַעֲמָשָׂא בָּא לְפָנֵיהֶם	And Amasa went in <i>before them</i> (2 Sa 20.8)

4. Pronominal suffixes indicate the *object of a verb*, either by being suffixed directly to the verbal form, or by being suffixed to the sign of the object. The form of the sign of the object often changes to **את** when a pronominal suffix is added (§14.4).

וְעַבַדְתֶּם אֹתָנוּ:	... then you shall serve <i>us</i> (1 Sam 17.9).
וְאַתֶּם עֲזַבְתֶּם אוֹתִי	..., but you have deserted <i>me</i> , ... (Jg 10.13)
אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר־שָׁלַח אֹתְכֶם	... to the king who sent <i>you</i> (2 Kgs 1.6)

5. As with nouns (§7.1), the preposition **ל** can show pronominal *possession* and *indirect objects* (verbs of speaking occur with both **ל** and **אֵל**).

כִּי־לִי כָל־הָאָרֶץ:	“... for all the earth is <i>mine</i> ” (Ex 19.5).
וְהֵאמֵר אֵלָיו אָבִי	She said <i>to him</i> “Father, ...” (Jg 11.36)
וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם שְׁמֹשׁוֹן	Samson said <i>to them</i> ... (Jg 14.12)

6. Prepositions rarely occur with the relative (**אֲשֶׁר**).¹²⁸ Instead, the preposition that functions with **אֲשֶׁר** falls at or toward the end of the relative clause, with a pronominal suffix that agrees in person, gender, and number with the word being modified by the **אֲשֶׁר**-clause. [The suffix will be, e.g., fp when the referent is *cities* (Gn 19.29), ms when it is *man* (Gn 41.38; Jos 8.24).] In a similar way, when **אֲשֶׁר** refers to a place, **שָׁם**, *there*, comes at the end of the clause (Jg 19.26).

אֲתֵּהֶעָרִים אֲשֶׁר־יָשַׁב בְּהֵן לוֹט:	... the cities <i>in which</i> Lot lived (Gn 19.29)
אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים בּוֹ:	... a man <i>in whom</i> is a divine spirit” (Gn 41.38)
בַּמִּדְבָּר אֲשֶׁר רָדְפוּם בּוֹ	... in the wilderness <i>into which</i> they had pursued them (Jos 8.24)
וְתָפַל פֶּתַח בֵּית־הָאִישׁ	She fell at the door of the man’s house
אֲשֶׁר־אֲדוֹנֶיהָ שָׁם	<i>where</i> her master was (Jg 19.26)
וְעָמַדְתִּי לְיַד־אָבִי	And I will stand beside my father
בְּשָׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה שָׁם	in the field <i>where</i> you are (1 Sam 19.3)

14.3 Definiteness

Comparing the article, construct, and pronominal suffixes reveals that Biblical Hebrew has three ways to indicate that a substantive is definite:

1. *Proper nouns* [names] and *pronominals* are definite, since they refer to a specific person or place:

דָּוִד	David	הוּא	he, it, that (when articular)
אַבְרָהָם	Abraham	חֶבְרוֹן	Hebron
מִי	Who?	הֵם	they, those (when articular)

2. *Articular common substantives* are definite:

הַבַּיִת	the house	לְכַהֵן	to/for the priest
הַחֵג	the feast	אַחֲרֵי־הַמִּלְחָמָה	after the battle

3. Words in *construct* to something that is *definite*, that is when the construct chain ends in:
a) a proper noun:

בֵּית אַבְרָהָם	Abraham’s household (Gn 17.23)
בֶּן־דָּוִד	David’s son (2 Sam 13.1)
אֲנָשֵׁי יְהוּדָה	the men of Judah (2 Sam 2.4)

128. Contrast the routine and common use of relative pronouns as the objects of prepositions in English.

b) an articular substantive:

כָּל-כְּלֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן	<i>all the utensils of the Tabernacle</i> (Ex 27.19)
מֵעֵינֵי הַקְּהָל	<i>from the eyes of the assembly</i> (Lv 4.13)
דְּבַר אִישֵׁי-הָאֱלֹהִים	<i>the word of the man of God</i> (1 Kg 13.4)

c) a pronominal suffix or מִי:

שֹׁמֵרְךָ	<i>he who watches over you</i> (Ps 121.5) [<i>your watcher</i>]
בֵּיתִי וְחִצְרוֹתַי	<i>my house and my courts</i> (1 Chr 28.6)
הַר קְדְשִׁי	<i>my holy mountain</i> (<i>the mountain of my holiness</i> ; Ps 2.6)
דְּבָרֵי פִיךָ	<i>the words of your mouth</i> (Ps 138.4)
וּמִיָּד-מִי לָקַחְתִּי כֶּפֶר	<i>... and from whose hand have I taken a ransom</i> (1 Sa 12.3)

N.B.: A word with a pronominal suffix is both *construct* and *definite*, and the suffix ends a construct chain and makes the entire chain definite. A substantive plus pronominal suffix is thus a miniature construct chain of two elements contained in one form.

14.4 Verbs with Pronominal Objects

Biblical Hebrew indicates pronominal objects either by suffixing the pronominal to the object marker (§14.2.4), or by attaching the suffix directly to the verbal form itself.

14.4.1 Form

- The pronominal suffixes that are attached to verbs are much like those used on prepositions, nouns, infinitives construct, participles, and the sign of the object (above), and can be suffixed to any conjugation except the infinitive absolute (Lesson 16). Like most Hebrew pronouns, they are inflected for person, gender, and number. The variation in some forms depends on whether the verb ends in a consonant or vowel (e.g., 3fs).

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
1st	common	נִי - <i>me, to me</i> י -	נֹו - <i>us, to us</i>
	masc.	ךָ -	כֶּם -
2nd	fem.	ךִי - <i>you, to you</i>	כֶּן - ¹²⁹ <i>you, to you</i>
	masc.	הוּ - <i>him, to him</i> ו -	ם -
3rd	fem.	הָ - <i>her, to her</i> הָ -	םָ - <i>them,</i> ן - <i>to them</i>

- A few pronominal suffixes have an alternate form, with *nun*—which is often assimilated—between the suffix and the verbal form. This paradigm lists all the forms of this type of suffix that occur in Biblical Hebrew. In this form, the 3ms and 1cp suffixes are identical, and can be distinguished only by the context.

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
1st	common	נִי -	נֹו -
2nd	masc.	ךָ -	
	masc.	נֹו -	
3rd	fem.	נָה -	

129. This form (2fp) occurs only on participles.

3. The combination of a pronominal suffix and verbal form means that any form that ends with *-uhû* (either *-יהו* or *-הו* -) is a masculine plural verbal form (the first *-u-*) with a 3ms suffix (*-hû*):

ואם־תִּדְרֹשׁוּהוּ יִמָּצֵא לָכֶם If you seek *him*, he will be found by you, but if you
 ואם־תִּשְׁכַּחְוּהוּ יֵשׁוּב אֲתֶכֶם: abandon *him*, he will abandon you (2 Ch 15.2).
 יִבְלַעְהוּ They will swallow *him* (Ho 8.7)

14.4.2 Function

1. Pronominal suffixes identify the *pronominal object* of the verb:

ויִשְׁלַחְהוּ מֵעֵמֶק חֶבְרוֹן ... and he sent *him* from the valley of Hebron (Gn 37.14)
 וּמִשַּׁחַת אֹתוֹ: “... and you shall anoint *him*” (Ex 29.7)
 וְלֹא הָרְגוּם: and they did not kill *them* (Josh 9.26)
 פֶּן־נִשְׂרֹף אֹתְךָ “... lest we burn *you* ...” (Jg 14.15)
 שְׁפִטְנֵי יְהוָה כְּצַדִּיקִי Judge *me*, YHWH, according to my innocence (Ps 7.9b)
 כִּי שָׁכַחְנִי עַמִּי “... for my people have forgotten *me* ...” (Jr 18.15a)

2. When *parsing* a verb with a pronominal suffix, use the “suffix” column to identify the person, gender, and number of the suffix (e.g., 3fp):

Lemma	Lexical Form	Gloss	PGN	Stem	Conj.	Suffix
שְׁפִטְנֵי	שִׁפַּט	<i>judge</i>	2ms	Q	V	1cs
הָרְגוּם	הָרַג	<i>kill</i>	3cp	Q	P	3mp

14.5 Concepts

definiteness pronominal possession
 pronominal object pronominal suffix

14.6 Vocabulary

<i>cherub</i> (perhaps a winged bull with human head)	כְּרוּב .205	<i>door [way]</i>	דֹּלֶת .197
<i>other side; region beyond</i> [sthg.]	עֵבֶר .206	<i>knowledge, understanding</i>	דַּעַת .198
<i>power, strength</i>	עֶז עָז .207	<i>slaughter; sacrifice</i>	זָבַח .199
<i>rebellion, revolt; transgression</i>	פְּשָׁע .208	<i>tumult, uproar; crowd, multitude</i>	הַמּוֹן .200
<i>be satisfied, satiated</i>	שָׂבַע .209	<i>arm, forearm; strength</i>	זְרוֹעַ .201
<i>in this way/manner, thus, so</i>	כֵּן .210	<i>fat</i>	חֵלֶב .202
<i>in front, east; eastward</i>	קִדְמָה קִדְמָה .211	<i>be pleased [with], delight [in]</i> (st. vb.)	חָפֵץ .203
<i>bull, young bull; steer</i>	שׁוֹר .212	<i>male offspring/child</i> <i>female offspring/child</i>	יָלֵד יִלְדָה .204

14.7 Exercises

1. After learning the pronominal suffixes, gloss these clauses, and be prepared to explain their structure and function. Clauses d-i can be checked against the biblical references.

Nu 22.9	מִי הָאֲנָשִׁים	.g	2 Sam 12.7	אֶתָּה הָאִישׁ	.d	יְהוָה מְלֶכֶךְ עָמוֹ	.a
Ru 2.5	לְמִי הַנְּעֵרָה הַזֹּאת	.h	Est 7.5	מִי הוּא	.e	הוּא אִישָׁה	.b
Is 41.13	אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ	.i	Jg 2.2	מָה זֹאת	.f	הִיא אִשְׁתּוֹ	.c

2. Before glossing these phrases and clauses, circle or mark the pronominal suffixes, and identify their person, gender, and number.

Gn 31.44; נִכְרְתָהּ is cohortative; עֵד <i>testimony, witness</i>	נִכְרְתָהּ בְּרִית אֲנִי וְאָתָּה וְהָיָה לְעֵד בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶיךָ:	.a
2 Sam 5.7; David	הִיא עִיר הַדָּוָד:	.b
Jos 5.2; עֵת <i>time</i> ; Joshua	בְּעֵת הַהִיא אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּשֶׁעc
1 Kgs 13.26; the last three words are a quotation	וַיֹּאמֶר אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים הוּא	.d
Gn 29.4; Haran (place name); the last two words are a quotation	וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִתְּרַן אֲנַחְנוּ:	.e
2 Kgs 10.13; Jehu, Ahaziah; Judah	וַיְהוּא מָצָא אֶת־אָחִי אֲחִזְיָהוּ מִלֶּךְ־יְהוּדָה וַיֹּאמֶר מִי אַתֶּם וַיֹּאמְרוּ אָחִי אֲחִזְיָהוּ אֲנַחְנוּ	.f
Jg 2.2; יָשָׁב <i>inhabitant</i>	וַיֹּאמֶר ... [לָהֶם] וְאַתֶּם לֹא־תִכְרְתוּ בְּרִית לְיוֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְלֹא־שִׁמְעֶתֶם בְּקִלִּי	.g
Gn 27.32; בְּכֹר <i>first-born</i> ; Isaac, Esau	וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יַצְחָק אָבִיו מִי־אַתָּה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי בְּנֶךְ בְּכֹרֶךָ עָשׂוּ:	.h
Ps 22.7; תוֹלַעַת <i>worm</i>	וְאֲנֹכִי תוֹלַעַת וְלֹא־אִישׁ	.i
Jos 20.6	וַיֹּשֶׁב בְּעִיר הַהִיא	.j
Gn 11.31; כְּלָה <i>daughter-in-law</i> (the people identified by the three proper names] are direct objects of “Terah took ...”); Abram, Lot, Haran	... אֶת־אַבְרָם בְּנוֹ וְאֶת־לוֹט בְּנֵי־הָרֶן בְּנֵי־בְנוֹ וְאֶת שָׂרִי כְלָתוֹ אִשְׁתׁ אַבְרָם בְּנוֹ	.k
Dt 5.5	אֲנֹכִי עֹמֵד בֵּין־יְהוָה וּבֵינֵיכֶם בְּעַת הַהוּא	.l

14.8 Enrichment: Ruth 3.16

In Ruth 3.7, Ruth, in obedience to Naomi, went to the threshing floor, and, after he fell asleep, lay down at Boaz's feet. When he awoke in the middle of the night,

וַיֹּאמֶר מִי אַתְּ *He said, “Who are you?”* (Ru 3.9)

Boaz knew that the person lying beside him was female (and therefore used the fs pronoun), but could not identify her.

After Ruth made her request known to Boaz, she slept, but he awakened her early in the morning so that she could get back to the privacy of Naomi's home without anyone knowing that a woman had been at the threshing floor (3.14). Ruth left the threshing floor while it was still dark enough that the two of them could not recognize each other (3.14).

When she arrived at Naomi's house in Bethlehem, Naomi asked:

מִי־אַתְּ בְּתִי *"Who are you, my daughter?"* (Ru 3.16)

This is often glossed with a question that asks about the plan's success, for example, "How did it go, my daughter" (NAS, NIV; cf. ESV). The question, however, shows that even Naomi—who was certainly expecting Ruth, and who would have recognized her better than anyone else in Bethlehem—could only tell that it was a younger female (hence "my daughter"), not that she was Ruth.

The parallel between Naomi's question and Boaz's (3.9) implies that when Ruth arrived home it was still [nearly] as dark as midnight. The author recorded this question in order to assure readers that Boaz's plan had succeeded—that Ruth's visit to the threshing floor remained secret, since she arrived at Naomi's house while it was still too dark for anyone to identify her (cf. 3.14), even if they had recognized that she was a woman.

Lesson 15

STATIVE VERBS & הִיָּה

Languages in general have two major types of verb: stative (or static) and dynamic (sometimes called “fientive”). *Stative* verbs describe their subject’s state or condition, rather than an action, and are therefore intransitive (do not govern direct objects); the closest parallels to stative verbs in English are the verb “to be” with a predicate adjective (*He was old*) and the verb “become” (*He had become unclean*).

Dynamic verbs—which we have been studying since Lesson 4—describe events or actions, including any type of movement. Dynamic verbs are therefore *active*, but not necessarily transitive, since they do not necessarily occur with what we think of as direct objects (“He ran home” means “He ran to his house”).

15.1 Stative Verbs

Stative verbs in Biblical Hebrew describe their subject’s condition or state—the way things are or were—and so are usually glossed with forms of “to be” or “to become”. The forms of “be” that are used to render stative verbs do not have the same function as the forms of “be” found in passive clauses in English.¹³⁰

1. The ball *was thrown*. passive
2. The ball *was red*. stative
3. The ball *was polished*. passive (if “polished” is a participle) or stative (if “polished” is an adjective, as in “It was a polished ball.”).
4. וְעֵגְלוֹן אִישׁ בְּרִיא מְאֹד Now Eglon *was* a very fat man (stative; “fat” is an adjective)
5. יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבָרָךְ May YHWH’s name *be blessed* ... (Ps 113.2; passive)

These are the most common stative verbs in Biblical Hebrew.

כָּבֵד	<i>be heavy, wealthy</i>	גָּבַהּ	<i>be high, exalted</i>
מָלֵא	<i>be full</i>	גָּדַל	<i>be large, great</i>
קָדַשׁ	<i>be holy</i>	זָקֵן	<i>be old</i>
קָרַב	<i>be near</i>	טָהַר	<i>be clean, pure</i>
רָחַק	<i>be far, distant</i>	טָמֵא	<i>be unclean, impure</i>

15.1.1 Form

1. The lexical form of most stative verbs (3ms *qal* perfect) has a vowel other than *pataḥ* after the second radical: either *ḥolem* (גָּדַל, *be[come] large/great*) or *ṣere* (טָמֵא, *be[come] unclean*).
2. Apart from this difference, the paradigm of the stative verbs is the same as that of מָשַׁל in the perfect; strong stative verbs tend to have *pataḥ* after the second radical in the imperfect and preterite. [N.B.: Many of these forms do not occur in Biblical Hebrew.]

130. For the various passive and reflexive functions, Biblical Hebrew uses different forms of the verb, called “stems” or *binyanîm* (Lessons 18-21).

Qal Perfect (גָּדַל *be large, great*)

Person Gender		Singular		Plural	
1st	Common	גָּדַלְתִּי	<i>I was / became great</i>	גָּדַלְנוּ	<i>We were / became great</i>
2nd	Masc.	גָּדַלְתָּ	<i>You were / became great</i>	גָּדַלְתֶּם	<i>You were / became great</i>
	Fem.	גָּדַלְתְּ		גָּדַלְתֶּן	
3rd	Masc.	גָּדַל	<i>He was / became great</i>	גָּדְלוּ	<i>They were / became great</i>
	Fem.	גָּדְלָהּ			

Qal Imperfect / Preterite (כָּבַד *be heavy, wealthy, important*)

Person Gender		Singular		Plural	
1st	Common	אֶכְבֵּד	<i>I was / became wealthy</i>	נִכְבְּד	<i>We were / became important</i>
2nd	Masc.	תִּכְבֹּד	<i>You were / became heavy</i>	תִּכְבְּדוּ	<i>You were / became wealthy</i>
	Fem.	תִּכְבְּדִי		תִּכְבְּדֶנָּה	
3rd	Masc.	יִכְבֵּד	<i>He was / became heavy</i>	יִכְבְּדוּ	<i>They were / became heavy</i>
	Fem.	תִּכְבְּדֶנָּה			

Qal Imperative (קֹדֵשׁ *be holy*)

Person	Gender	Singular		Plural	
2nd	Masc.	קֹדֵשׁ	<i>Be holy!</i>	קֹדְשׁוּ	<i>Be holy!</i>
	Fem.	קֹדְשִׁי		קֹדְשֶׁנָּה	

3. The 3ms *qal* perfect (lexical form) of many stative verbs is identical or nearly identical to the ms form of the adjective of the same root, e.g.:

<i>large, great</i>	גָּדַל	גָּדַל	<i>be large, great</i>
<i>old</i>	זָקַן	זָקַן	<i>be old</i>
<i>strong</i>	חָזַק	חָזַק	<i>be strong</i> (also fientive: <i>hold, seize, grasp</i>)
[ceremonially] <i>clean</i>	טָהַר	טָהַר	<i>be [ceremonially] clean</i>
<i>unclean</i>	טָמֵא	טָמֵא	<i>be [ceremonially] unclean, impure</i>
<i>heavy, wealthy</i>	כָּבַד	כָּבַד	<i>be heavy, wealthy</i>
<i>full</i>	מָלֵא	מָלֵא	<i>be full</i>

4. On the other hand, only one form of a stative verb looks like the adjective: **3ms *qal* perfect** is exactly like the **ms** form of the adjective. In all other forms, the stem (or “theme”) vowel—the vowel after the second radical—varies according to the type of PGN ending, just as in the fientive [action/dynamic] verbs (as the above paradigms show). In the adjectives, however, the vowel does *not* change:

Adjectival Forms

	Singular		Plural		
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	
Masc.	קָרַב	קָרְבִּים	נֶכְבֵּד	נֶכְבְּדִים	<i>heavy,</i>
Fem.	קָרְבָּה	קָרְבוֹת	נֶכְבְּדָה	נֶכְבְּדוֹת	<i>honored</i>

15.1.2 Stative Verbs & Time

Stative verbs can refer to the *present* even when their form is the perfect conjugation, in the sense that they describe a condition that characterizes the subject. This same “presentness” is part of the

function of the perfect of a number of verbs of thought, emotion, and perception (e.g., ידע, אהב), especially when they occur within quotations. In Ezk 22.4, they might be rendered as “you are ...” or “you have become ...”

בְּדַמְךָ אֲשֶׁר־שָׁפַכְתָּ אֶשְׁמָהּ וּבְגִלּוּלֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתָ טְמֵאתָ	because of your blood which you shed, <i>you are guilty</i> , and because of your deeds which you have done, <i>you are unclean</i> (Ezk 22.4)
יֹאמֵר הָעֶבֶד אֶהְבֵּתִי אֶת־אֲדֹנָי אֶת־אִשְׁתִּי וְאֶת־בָּנָי	... the servant shall say, ‘ <i>I love</i> my master, my wife, and my children’ (Ex 21.5)
אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ לֹא יָדַעְתָּ:	... my master, O king, <i>you do not know</i> (1 Kgs 1.18)
וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־שִׁמְעִי אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ אֵת כָּל־הָרָעָה אֲשֶׁר יָדַע לְבַבְךָ	The king said to Shimei, “ <i>You know</i> all the evil which your heart knows, ...” (1 Kgs 2.44)

15.2 *Fientive [Dynamic / Action] Verbs*

Dynamic Verbs (transitive)	Dynamic Verbs (intransitive)
אָהַב <i>love</i>	עָבַר <i>cross over, pass by / through</i>
אָכַל <i>eat, devour, consume</i>	הָלַךְ <i>go, walk</i>
אָמַר <i>say, speak</i>	יָרַד <i>go down, descend</i>
יָרַשׁ <i>possess, dispossess</i>	יָשַׁב <i>remain, sit, settle, stay</i>
כָּתַב <i>write, inscribe</i>	Some verbs can be either dynamic or stative in <i>qal</i> : הָזִק <i>be strong</i> (also dynamic: <i>hold, seize, grasp</i>)
מָלַךְ <i>reign [as king]</i> (also stative: <i>be king</i>)	
עָזַב <i>forsake, abandon, leave</i>	
עָמַד <i>stand, stop, stay</i>	
שָׁכַב <i>lie down, sleep</i>	
שָׁמַע <i>listen, hear; obey</i>	
שָׁמַר <i>guard, watch, keep</i>	

15.3 *The Verb היה*

Although the function of “being” is often implicit (cf. predicate adjectives, participles, and adverbial functions), the verb הָיָה is usually glossed as “be” or “become” (the latter especially when followed by ל).

15.3.1 *Forms of היה*

Because היה ends in a vowel letter rather than a consonant, its forms are not like those of the verbs that we have studied to this point. The primary difference is that the final ה- disappears whenever there is an ending (and in the preterite when there is no ending). [III-ה verbs (הִיָּה and other verbs like it) are discussed in Lesson 25.]¹³¹ היה is so important to the structure and message of Hebrew narrative that we introduce it here. The chief characteristic of III-ה verbs is that the final ה- (which

131. This nomenclature for types of verbal roots was explained in §6.2.

is a vowel letter, not a radical) disappears before PGN endings in all forms. It is replaced by a *yod*, which is a vowel letter for either *hireq* or *šere*:

Qal Perfect of היה

Person	Gender	Singular		Plural	
1st	Common	הָיִיתִי	<i>I was</i>	הָיִינוּ	<i>We were</i>
2nd	Masc.	הָיִיתָ	<i>You were</i>	הָיִיתֶם	<i>You were</i>
	Fem.	הָיִיתְּ		---	
3rd	Masc.	הָיָה	<i>He was</i>	הָיוּ	<i>They were</i>
	Fem.	הָיְתָה	<i>She was</i>		

1. The vowel letter *yod* (as part of *hireq-yod*) “replaces” the final vowel letter ה- before consonantal endings (endings that begin with a consonant).
2. The 3fs ending תָּה- “replaces” the final vowel letter ה-.
3. The 3cp vocalic ending וּ- “replaces” the final vowel letter ה-.
4. Because they are preceded by a vowel, the ת- of the PGN endings does not have *dagesh lene*.
5. The sign—means that this form does occur in the Bible.

Qal Imperfect of היה

Person	Gender	Singular		Plural	
1st	Common	אֶהְיֶה	<i>I am / shall be</i>	נֶהְיֶה	<i>We are / shall be</i>
2nd	Masc.	תֵּהְיֶה	<i>You are / shall be</i>	תֵּהְיוּ	<i>You are / shall be</i>
	Fem.	תֵּהְיִי		תֵּהְיֶינָה	
3rd	Masc.	יֵהְיֶה	<i>He is / shall be</i>	יֵהְיוּ	<i>They are / shall be</i>
	Fem.	תֵּהְיֶה	<i>She is / shall be</i>	תֵּהְיֶינָה	

1. The vowel letter *yod* replaces the final vowel letter ה- before consonantal endings (2/3fp).
2. The vowel before the final ה- is *segol* (this is only for forms without PGN endings).
3. The vocalic endings י- (2fs) and וּ- (2/3mp) “replace” the final vowel letter ה-.

Qal Imperative of היה

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
2nd	Masc.	הָיֶה	הָיוּ <i>Be!</i>
	Fem.	הָיִי	---

Qal Preterite of היה

Person	Gender	Singular		Plural	
1st	Common	וַאֲהִי	[And] <i>I was</i>	וַנֵּהִי	<i>... we were / became</i>
2nd	Masc.	וַתֵּהִי	<i>... you were / became</i>	וַתֵּהִיוּ	<i>... you were / became</i>
	Fem.	---		וַתֵּהִינָה	
3rd	Masc.	וַיֵּהִי	<i>... he was / became</i>	וַיֵּהִיוּ	<i>... they were / became</i>
	Fem.	וַתֵּהִי	<i>... she was / became</i>	וַתֵּהִינָה	

Final ה- drops off in the preterite, so that forms without PGN endings end in *hireq-yod*.

Do not confuse forms of the *Tetragrammaton* (on left) with היה (on right).

		Forms of היה		
יהוה יהוה (Y _{HWH})	הָיָה	<i>He was [became]</i>	3ms Q P	
	יִהְיֶה	<i>He will be[come]</i>	3ms Q F	
	יְהִי	<i>Let him [it] be[come]!</i>	3ms Q J	
	יִהְיוּ	<i>They will be[come]</i>	3mp Q F	
וַיְהִי (and Y _{HWH})	וַיְהִי	<i>And he will be[come]</i>	3ms Q P + <i>waw</i>	
	וַיְהִי	<i>And he was [became]</i>	3ms Q Pr	

1. In the *imperfect*, the vowel after the second radical of היה is *segol*.
2. In the *preterite*, the final ה- (a vowel letter) drops off; the -י prefix is not doubled due to the following *šewa*.

N.B.: You do not need to memorize these paradigms, but you will need to be able to recognize and identify the forms of היה.

15.3.2 *Functions*

The verb היה is usually glossed as “be”, “become”, “happen”, or “come to pass”. Its function is larger than the English verb “to be”, which primarily links a topic with its [adjectival, nominal, or adverbial] comment (e.g., “Goliath was *large*”, “Goliath was a *giant*”, “Goliath was *in front of the Philistine army*”).

The primary distinction in the function of היה is between the 3ms forms and the other forms of היה. Since the non-3ms forms are more easily explained, we discuss them first.

1. All forms of היה can link the subject and predicate; the conjugation of היה indicates the general temporal frame of the clause.

טְמֵאִים הֵם וְטְמֵאִים יִהְיוּ לָכֶם:	They are unclean, and they <i>are/shall be</i> unclean for you (Lv 11.35) [both clauses have predicate adjectives]
יְדֵי־יְהוָה הִתְחַבְּרָם	YHWH’s hand <i>was</i> against them (Jg 2.15)
כַּאֲשֶׁר הָיִיתִי עִם־מֹשֶׁה אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ	As I <i>was</i> with Moses, I <i>shall be</i> with you (Jos 1.5)
לִי הִתְחַהּ הַמְּלוּכָה	The kingdom <i>was</i> mine (1 Kgs 2.15)

2. Furthermore, with an expressed (nominal, substantive) subject, היה is the predicate of a stative clause to which it adds explicit temporal information (past for the preterite and perfect, and present or future for the imperfect and *w*+perfect). This is not primarily a static description, but often signals some sort of change in the subject’s condition or state, and therefore a turn in a story. It thus often marks the beginning of a narrative segment, as these examples illustrate:

וַיְהִי אֹר	and <i>there was</i> light (Gn 1.3)
וַיְהִי עֶרֶב וַיְהִי בֹקֶר	<i>There was</i> a morning and <i>there was</i> an evening, ... (Gn 1.5); or “A morning <i>was</i> and ...”
וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ	<i>There was</i> a famine in the land (Gn 12.10; Ru 1.1); or “A famine <i>came upon</i> the land”
וַיְהִי יְהוָה אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ	YHWH <i>was</i> with Joshua, and his fame <i>was</i> in all
וַיְהִי שְׁמֵעוֹ בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ:	[i.e., throughout] the land (Jos 6.27)

3. When a 3ms form of היה without an expressed (nominal, substantive) subject opens a narrative, the 3ms preterite and *w* + perfect tend to signal a temporal or locational shift in the flow of events which is identified in the next two or three words. Either an *infinitive*

construct (below) with a preposition will follow the form of הִיהַ, or a temporal phrase, with a preposition and one or more nouns.

- a. If the form is וַיְהִי (3ms *qal* preterite of הִיהַ), it opens a section of a past narrative built on a series of preterites (*italicized* in both passages):

וַיְהִי בְעֵת הַהוּא וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ	So at that time, Abimelech <i>said</i> (Gn 21.22)
וַיְהִי בַיָּמִים הָהֵם וַיִּגְדַּל מֹשֶׁה וַיֵּצֵא	Now in those days, Moses <i>grew up</i> , and <i>he</i>
אֶל-אָחִיו וַיֵּרָא בְּסִבְלָתָם וַיֵּרָא אִישׁ ...	<i>went out</i> to his relatives, and <i>he saw</i> their burdens, and <i>he saw</i> a man ... (Ex 2.11)

- b. The form וַהֲיָה (waw + 3ms *qal* perfect of הִיהַ) is either the predicate of a simple clause, or it introduces a series of instruction or prophecy outlined by a series of waw + perfects. This form therefore occurs primarily within direct quotations, rather than on the main storyline of the narrative.

וַהֲיָה שְׁמֹךְ אַבְרָהָם	Your name <i>shall be</i> Abraham (Gn 17.5)
וַהֲיָה כִּי-יֹאמְרוּ אֵלֵיכֶם בְּנֵיכֶם ... וַאֲמַרְתֶּם	When your sons say to you ..., you shall say (Ex 12.26–27)

- c. וַהֲיָה may be followed by a temporal particle, such as כִּי (“when” in this context), which in turn is then followed by one or more verb(s) in the imperfect, preterite, or waw + perfect conjugations; וַיְהִי is rarely followed by these particles.

וַהֲיָה כִּי-יִקְרָא לָכֶם פַּרְעֹה וַאֲמַר	When Pharaoh summons you and says ... (Gn 46.33)
וַהֲיָה כִּי-יִחַטֵּא וְאָשָׁם וְהָשִׁיב	When he sins and is guilty and returns ... (Lv 5.23)

4. The combination of a form of הִיהַ followed by the preposition ל has two predominant functions: possession and change in status.

- a. The combination can indicate *possession* (the “possessive” use of ל), with a temporal nuance added by the conjugation of הִיהַ.

וַיְהִי-לוֹ צֹאן-וּבָקָר ... and *he had* flocks and herds (Gn 12.16)

- b. It can also indicate a *change* in its subject’s *status* or *condition*. The -ל indicates what the subject has “become” (or, in the future, “will become”).

וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה:	The man <i>became</i> a living being (Gn 2.7)
וַהֲיָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית	It shall <i>be</i> a sign of a covenant (Gn 17.11)

- c. These functions can be combined when two words are introduced by ל—one indicates the new “owner”, and the other the subject’s new status.

וַתְּהִי-לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה	... and she became <i>his wife</i> (Ru 4.13); “a wife of his”
וַיְהִי-לָהּ לְבֵן	... and he became <i>her son</i> (Ex 2.10)
וְהָמָּה יִהְיוּ-לִי לְעָם:	... and they shall be[come] <i>my people</i> (Jr 31.33)
הָיְתָה-חֵבְרוֹן לְכָלֵב בֶּן-יִפְנֵה הַקְּנִזִּי	Hebron became <i>the inheritance</i> of Caleb son of Jephuneh the Kenizzite (Jos 14.14)
לְנַחֲלָה	
וְאֶנְחֵנוּ נִהְיָה לְאֲדֹנָי לְעַבְדִּים:	We shall be[come] <i>my lord’s slaves</i> (Gn 44.9)

1 Sam 2.22; Eli	וְעָלִי זָקֵן מְאֹד	.3
Gn 27.2; מוֹת is construct singular of מוֹתֵי: מוֹתֵי יוֹם יָדַעְתִּי	וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה-נָא זָקַנְתִּי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי יוֹם מוֹתֵי:	.4
Lv 18.25; וַתִּקֶּא and it vomited (3fs Pr); וַיֵּשֶׁב inhabitant (ms Q Ptc)	וַתִּטְמָא הָאָרֶץ וַאֲפָקֶד עֲוֹנָה עָלֶיהָ וַתִּקֶּא הָאָרֶץ אֶת-יִשְׁבֵיהָ:	.5
Ex 2.11; Moses	וַיְהִי בַיָּמִים הָהֵם וַיִּגְדַּל מֹשֶׁה	.6
Gn 13.2; מְקַנָּה property; Abram	וַאֲבָרָם כָּבֵד מְאֹד בַּמְקַנָּה בַּכֶּסֶף וּבַזָּהָב:	.7
2 Sa 20.17; הֲאֵתָהּ (2ms pronoun with interrogative -ה) Is it you?; אִמָּה [female] servant; Joab [each line is a separate clause]	וַתִּקְרָא אִשָּׁה חַכְמָה מִן-הָעִיר שָׁמְעוּ שָׁמְעוּ אָמְרוּ-נָא אֶל-יֹאבָב קָרַב עַד-הַנָּה וַאֲדַבְרָה אֵלָיֶךָ: וַיִּקְרַב אֵלֶיהָ וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה הֲאֵתָהּ יוֹאָב וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ שָׁמַע דְּבָרַי אֲמַתְּךָ וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁמַע אָנֹכִי:	.8
Gn 9.1 (¹³⁴ Gn 1.28); רַבָּה be fruitful; multiply (both are 2mp Q imperative)	וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ:	.9

Locate all of the occurrences of וַיְהִי and וַהֲיָה in Genesis 11.27–13.18, as well as any stative verbs, and identify their function.

15.8 Enrichment: Genesis 13.2

Since the 3ms *qal* perfect of stative verbs are identical in form to the masc. sing. adjective, the interpretation of some clauses is open to debate, with potentially significantly different interpretations. In Gn 13.2, for example, does כָּבֵד describe a state or condition, or is it a flashback to Gn 12.16? The three interpretations are all grammatically permissible:

	Now Abram <i>was</i> very wealthy (כָּבֵד as either 3ms <i>qal</i> perfect or ms adj.)
וַאֲבָרָם כָּבֵד מְאֹד	Now Abram <i>became</i> very wealthy (כָּבֵד as 3ms <i>qal</i> perfect)
	Now Abram <i>had become</i> very wealthy (כָּבֵד as 3ms <i>qal</i> perfect)

There is probably not a great deal of difference in the long run—however we translate it, Abram was veru wealthy. The larger question is how this wealth affected his relationship with Lot, and thus we might want to get some idea of when the troubles between Lot’s and Abram’s shepherds may have begun.

Our interpretation of the events of Gn 12, and of the relationship between Gn 12 and 13, will affect how we read this clause. The verb can *only* be interpreted in reference to its clause and the larger context. Gn 12.16 says that however well-to-do Abram had been, his wealth greatly increased after Pharaoh took Sarai, which in turn suggests that Gn 13.2 is meant to remind the reader of what had happened in Egypt (Gn 12.16). This in turn suggests that the third option listed above—the past perfect—is the best in this context. We are here searching in the shadows between philology and interpretation, but its occurrence in a disjunctive clause also suggests a flashback to events before the immediately preceding preterite (“Abram went up from Egypt, ...”; Gn 13.1).

134. A double vertical line (||) means that two texts are identical (or nearly so), or else that they are parallel poetic lines.

Lesson 16

THE INFINITIVES & SUMMARY OF QAL

Hebrew has two forms that are called “infinitives”—the *infinitive construct* (NC) and the *infinitive absolute* (NA). The names refer to whether or not the particular infinitive can occur with affixes; NC routinely occurs with prepositions and pronominal suffixes, whereas NA does not. The term is traditional but unfortunate, for two reasons: (1) their identity as infinitives does not depend on the presence of a preposition as does the infinitive in English (“to ...”); (2) their function overlaps with that of the English infinitive only occasionally. On the other hand, because they seem merely to name an action or event without further specification, they are genuinely “non-finite” in function.

16.1 Form

In nearly all verbs, NC (infinitive construct) is essentially identical to the 2ms imperative. The *qal* infinitive absolute (Q NA) has *qames* after the first radical and *holem* after the second radical. This chart lists 2ms *qal* imperfect and imperative for comparison.

	imperfect (2ms)	imperative (2ms)	infinitive construct	infinitive absolute
משל	תִּמְשַׁל	מְשַׁל	מְשַׁל	מְשַׁל
כתב	תִּכְתֹּב	כְּתֹב	כְּתֹב	כְּתֹב
שכב	תִּשְׁכַּב	שְׁכַּב	שְׁכַּב	שְׁכַּב
שמע	תִּשְׁמַע	שְׁמַע	שְׁמַע	שְׁמוֹעַ

16.1.1 Infinitive Construct (NC): Function (HBI §2.2.6)

1. Infinitives (NC & NA) are inflected for *stem*, but *not* for person, gender, or number. Instead, they use pronominal suffixes to indicate pronominal subjects (“he”, “they”), or nouns to indicate nominal subjects; in some uses the subject is implied from the context.
2. If the subject is a *noun*, it follows the infinitive construct; if the subject is *pronominal* (“he”, “they”), it is suffixed (almost every time a pronoun follows an infinitive construct, the infinitive is *לְאָמַר* and the pronoun begins the direct quotation).
3. If NC has an *object*, the object may be suffixed (in which case the subject will be a noun), or it may follow the infinitive (in which case the subject may be either a suffix or noun). These clauses illustrate the possibilities:

בְּשָׁמְרוֹ	when <i>he</i> guards or that <i>he</i> may guard
בְּשָׁמְרוֹ אֶת־יַעֲקֹב	when <i>he</i> guards <i>Jacob</i>
וַיְהִי אַחֲרַי קָבְרוֹ אֹתוֹ	After <i>he</i> buried <i>him</i> (1 Kgs 13.31)
לְלַמְּדָם מִלְחָמָה	to teach <i>them</i> war (Jg 3.2)
	[the pronominal object may be considered “indirect” in English]
וּכְשָׁמְעוּ אֶת־דְּבָרֵי רֵבֶקָה אָחֹתוֹ	and when <i>he</i> heard the words of <i>Rebecca</i> his sister (Gn 24.30)

4. NC often occurs with prepositions (as the above examples show); the preposition indicates the function of the subordinate clause. When NC occurs with a preposition *other than* ל, it tends to be the predicate of a temporal [circumstantial] clause. In these cases its temporal reference—or “tense”—is relative to that of the main clause. Both prepositions -ב and -כ convey contemporaneous action (*when, while, as*); the temporal aspect depends on the preposition and the cotext.¹³⁵

וְהָיָה כְּשֶׁכַּב אֲדֹנָי־הַמֶּלֶךְ עִם־אָבוֹתָיו	When my lord the king <i>sleeps</i> with his fathers, ... (1 Kg 1.21).
אֲחֵרֵי קָבְרוּ אֶת־אָבִיו:	[The future is indicated by introductory וְהָיָה.] ... <i>after he buried</i> his father (Gn 50.14).
וַיְהִי כִּרְאֵת אֶת־הַנָּזִם	When he saw the gold ring ... and <i>when he heard</i> the words of Rebecca his sister (Gn 24.30).
וּכְשָׁמְעוּ אֶת־דְּבָרֵי רַבְקָה אָחֹתוֹ	[The past is indicated by introductory וַיְהִי.]

5. The prepositions that occur most frequently with infinitives are:

בְּ	when,	בְּדַבַּר יִצְחָק אֶל־עֵשָׂו בְּנוֹ	when Isaac spoke to Esau his son (Gn 27.5)
כְּ	while	כְּשָׁמְעַע עֵשָׂו אֶת־דְּבָרֵי אָבִיו	when Esau heard his father's words (Gn 27.34)
לְ	to	לְשָׁמַע אֶת חִכְמַת שְׁלֹמֹה ...	to hear Solomon's wisdom (1 Kgs 5.14)
	by [X]-ing	וְאִם תֵּלֵךְ בְּדַרְכֵי חֻקֵי	And if you walk in my ways <i>by keeping</i> my statutes (1 Kgs 3.14)
אֲחֵרֵי	after	אֲחֵרֵי שְׁכַב־הַמֶּלֶךְ עִם־אָבוֹתָיו	after the king <i>slept</i> with his fathers (2 Kgs 14.22)
לְפָנֵי	before	לְפָנֵי בּוֹא הַפְּלִיט	before the fugitives <i>came</i> (Ek 33.22) ¹³⁶

6. When the phrase בַּיּוֹם (*in the day [that]*) precedes NC, it usually has the same contemporaneous function as the prepositions -ב and -כ (i.e., *when, while, as*), although it can also refer to a specific period of time (daylight, twenty-four hours, etc.). This sometimes affects our reading of the text—does Nu 30.9 mean that the husband must restrain his wife immediately (“*when he hears*”), or either before sundown or within the next twenty-four hours (“*on the day that he hears*”)?

כְּאֲשֶׁר בַּיּוֹם שָׁלַח אוֹתִי מֹשֶׁה	just as <i>when</i> Moses sent me (Jos 14.11)
בַּיּוֹם בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶדָם	... <i>when</i> God created them (Gn 5.1)
וְאִם בַּיּוֹם שָׁמַע אִשָּׁה יִנְיָא אוֹתָהּ	and if, <i>when</i> her husband hears, he restrains her, ... (Nu 30.9)

7. With a prefixed ל, NC (infinitive construct) has four main functions (not all of these are *gal* NC):

- a. *telic* (purpose, result); this is always the case when it occurs with לִמְעַן, and often when it occurs with prefixed ל:

וַיָּבֹאוּ מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים לְשָׁמַע	They came from all the peoples <i>to hear</i> Solomon's wisdom (1 Kgs 5.14).
אֶת חִכְמַת שְׁלֹמֹה	
וַיִּשְׁלַח תְּעִי אֶת־יֹרָם־בְּנוֹ אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ־	Toi sent Joram his son to King David <i>to ask</i> him for peace and <i>to bless him</i> because he had fought against Hadad-ezer (2 Sa 8.10).
דָּוִד לְשָׁלוֹם	
וּלְבָרְכוֹ עַל אֲשֶׁר נִלְחַם בְּהַרְדְּעוֹר	... in the garden of Eden <i>to serve [till]</i> it and <i>to guard</i> it (Gn 2.15)
... בְּגַן־עֵדֶן לְעַבְדָּהּ וּלְשִׁמְרָהּ:	

135. This function is precisely analogous to the infinitive with prepositions in Greek.

136. The form לְפָנֵי is not common before infinitives construct.

b. *gerundive* (glossed as “by _____ ing”; the blank is filled by the infinitival verb)

שְׁמֹר אֶת־יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ Keep the Sabbath day *by sanctifying* it (Dt 5.12);
 (the main verb is an imperatival infinitive absolute
 (16.1.2.1))

כִּי תִשְׁמַע בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ When you obey YHWH your God *by keeping* all his
 לְשַׁמֵּר אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתָיו commands (Dt 13.18)

c. *complementary*, completing or explaining a “vague verb” (יָכַל “be able”, כָּלָה “finish”, חָדַל “cease”, the *hifil* of יָסַף “do again, repeat”. NC can have this function with or without ל־. [In Jg 3.18 and Ru 1.18, English style suggests their gerundive gloss.]

אִם־תּוּכַל לְסַפֵּר אֹתָם if you are able *to count* them (Gn 15.5)

וַתַּחֲדַל לְדַבֵּר אֵלֶיהָ: She stopped *talking* to her (Ru 1.18); She ceased *to talk* ...

כָּלָה לְהַקְרִיב אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה he finished *offering* the tribute (Jg 3.18)

d. *quotative frame*. The form לְאָמַר (Q NC [*qal* infinitive construct] of אָמַר; trad., *saying*) is the most common infinitive construct in Biblical Hebrew, usually following verbs of speech *other than* אָמַר (although it does occur with אָמַר):

וַיַּעֲנוּ אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ לְאָמַר They answered Joshua, *saying*, “... (Jos 1.16)

וַאֲשַׁלְּחָה עֲלֵיהֶם מַלְאָכִים לְאָמַר I sent messengers to them, *saying*, “... (Ne 6.3)

וַיִּצַו בְּעַז אֶת־נַעֲרָיו לְאָמַר Boaz commanded his servants, *saying*, “... (Ru 2.15)

N.B.: Although ל־ occurs far more frequently with NC than any other preposition, and even though the ל־ is often glossed as “to”, it is *not* the “sign of the infinitive” as the word “to” is in English. [In other words, “go” is not an English infinitive, but “to go” is.] In contrast, מִשְׁל־ *with or without* the prefixed ל־ is an infinitive construct.

8. NC is negated by either בְּלֹאִי or לְבִלְתִּי, expressing negative purpose or result, or a negated gerundive.

צִוִּיתִיךָ לְבִלְתִּי אֲכָל־מִמֶּנּוּ ... I commanded you *not to eat* from it ...
 (Gn 3.11)

הִפְגַּעוּ בַּמֶּלֶךְ לְבִלְתִּי שַׂרְף אֶת־הַמִּגִּלָּה They pressed the king *not to burn* the scroll
 (Jr 36.25)

פֶּן־תִּשְׁכַּח אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ ... lest you forget YHWH your God *by not*
 לְבִלְתִּי שַׁמֵּר מִצְוֹתָיו *keeping* his commandments ... (Dt 8.11)

16.1.2 *Infinitive Absolute (NA): Function (HBI §2.2.7)*

“Absolute” means that no prefixes (e.g., prepositions) or suffixes are affixed to it except the conjunction *waw* (147x) and interrogative הֲ (23x).

	infinitive construct	infinitive absolute
מִשַׁל	מִשַׁל	מִשַׁל
כָּתַב	כָּתַב	כָּתַב
שָׁכַב	שָׁכַב	שָׁכַב
שָׁמַע	שָׁמַע	שָׁמַע

1. NA usually occurs in a clause with a finite form of the same verb. This makes it fairly easy to recognize, because there are *two forms of the same verbal root* in one clause. It apparently

focuses or strengthens the function of the main verb.¹³⁷ Its gloss depends on the function of the main verb (stem and conjugation) and the context.

מִכָּל עֵץ-הַגָּן אֲכַל תֹּאכַל: וּמֵעֵץ הַדַּעַת טוֹב וְרָע ... מוֹת תָּמוּת:	“From [any] tree of the garden you may <i>freely</i> eat, but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ..., you shall <i>surely</i> die” (Gn 2.16–17)
אָמַר אֶמְרָתִי	“I <i>most certainly</i> said ...” (1 Sam 2.30)
קָרַע אֶקְרַע אֶת-הַמְּמֻלְכָה מֵעֲלֶיךָ	I will <i>certainly</i> tear the kingdom from you (1 Kgs 11.11)

2. When NA occurs alone, it serves as the main verb in its clause. When it does this, its function is equivalent to that of any conjugation, but is most often imperatival.

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-הָעָם זָכוֹר אֶת-הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה	Moses said to the people, “ <i>Remember</i> this day!” (Ex 13.3)
הֲלֹךְ וְקִרְאתָ בְּאָזְנֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם הֲלֹךְ וְרָחַצְתָּ ... וְטָהַר:	Go call in the ears of Jerusalem (Jr 2.2) Go and wash ... and you <i>will be clean</i> (2 Kgs 5.10)

3. Infinitive absolutes (NA) of two different verbal roots can occur side-by-side, especially NA of הֲלֹךְ, in the sense of continually or constantly.

וַיִּלְךְ דָּוִד הַלֹּךְ וְנִגְדָל	David <i>continued to grow strong</i> (2 Sam 5.10 [= 2 Ch 11.9]); grew stronger and stronger
... הֲלֹךְ וְתִקְוַע בְּשׁוֹפְרוֹת:	... <i>continually blowing</i> the horns (Jos 6.9)
... וְעָלוּ עִלָּה וּבְכָה:	... and they were <i>weeping as they went up</i> (2 Sam 15.30)

4. NA cannot be directly negated, although the main verb of its clause may be negated with לֹא or אַל.

16.2 Summary of the Qal Stem

It is helpful to think of verbal forms in Hebrew as containing certain “diagnostics” that help us identify the stem and form of the verb. The most basic of these are the PGN prefixes and endings for the perfect, imperfect (cohortative, jussive), preterite, and imperative. You must be able to identify these at sight.

Person	Gender	Perfect		Imperfect		Imperative	
		Sg.	Pl.	Sg.	Pl.	Sg.	Pl.
1st	common	אָ - תִּי	נָ - נוּ	- אָ	- נָ		
2nd	masc.	תָּ - תָּ	תָּם - תָּ	- תָּ	תָּ - וְ	---	וְ - וְ
	fem.	תְּ - תְּ	תְּן - תְּן	יְ - תְּ	תְּ - נָה	תְּ - וְ	נָה - וְ
3rd	masc.	---	וְ - וְ	- יְ	וְ - וְ		
	fem.	תְּ - תְּ		- תְּ	תְּ - נָה		

Since the PGN affixes are common to all stems and types of verbal root, they do not enable us to distinguish a verb’s stem (which often affects or determines the verb’s function). It is instead the vowels that “attach” the subject [PGN] prefixes to the verbal root and the vowel after the second radical that are the primary diagnostic of the verb’s stem. We will address this as we encounter each stem (Lessons 18–21).

137. The vagueness of this statement reflects the generally vague understanding that biblical scholars have of the significance and function of NA in such cases.

16.2.1 *The Qal Stem*

The sign of the *qal* are the *a*-vowels of the perfect, the (occasional) *holem* of the imperfect, imperative, and infinitive construct, and the *holem* and *šureq* of the *qal* active and passive participles. In imperfect and preterite, the primary signal that a verb is *qal* is the **hireq under the prefix**.

The **primary diagnostic for the *qal*** is therefore **negative: no prefix or doubling** in the **perfect, imperative, participle, and infinitives**, and **hireq** as the prefix vowel in the **imperfect (cohortative, jussive)**, and **preterite**. This paradigm summarizes the *qal*. [See also the full paradigm in Appendix D.]

Conjugation	PGN	Fientive Verbs	Stative Verbs
Perfect	3ms	קָשַׁל	כָּבַד
Imperfect	3ms	יִקְשַׁל	יִכְבֹּד
Preterite	3ms	וַיִּקְשַׁל	וַיִּכְבֹּד
Imperative	[2]ms	קְשַׁל	כְּבֹד
Inf. Const.		קְשַׁל	כְּבֹד
Inf. Abs.		קֹשֵׁל	כֹּבֵד
Ptc. (active)	ms	קֹשֵׁל	
Ptc. (passive)	ms	קֹשְׁוֹל	

1. *Qal* perfects tend to have *a*-vowels; *qal* imperfects and preterites tend to have *o*- or *a*-vowels.
2. The prefix vowel in *qal* imperfect and preterite is *hireq*.
3. The “stem” or “theme” vowel (*qal* imperfect, preterite, imperative, infinitives) is either *holem* (fientive roots) or *pataḥ* (stative roots); this only appears when there is no ending or a consonantal ending.
4. *Qal* active participle is nearly the only verbal form with *holem* after the first radical.
5. *Qal* passive participle is the only verbal form with a *u*-vowel between the second and third radicals.
6. *Qal* is the only stem that lacks both a stem prefix (perfect, imperative, infinitives, & participle), and a doubled middle radical. [The significance of this will become clear as we study the other stems.]

16.2.2 *The Conjugations*

We have now reviewed all of the conjugations of the Hebrew verb, as they appear in the *qal* stem of the strong verb. How are the functions of these conjugations related?

1. The *perfect* (P) and *preterite* (Pr) are *complementary*. The predicate of an “interruptive” disjunctive clause may be in the perfect. The predicate of the disjunctive clause may also be either participial or non-verbal, in which case the clause contains background information about the setting. This is one way in which Biblical Hebrew shows a “flashback”—an event that happened before the story—or compares the actions or situations of two characters.
2. The *imperfect* (F) and *w + perfect* (w + P) are *complementary*. If a disjunctive clause “interrupts” the *w + perfect* chain of instructions, commands, or predictions, the predicate of the disjunctive clause will usually be in the imperfect, signaling that the event is secondary to the main line of the instructions, etc.
3. *Infinitives* construct (NC) are either *circumstantial* (often after וַיִּהְיֶה) or *complementary*, filling out “vague verbs”, *telic* (showing purpose or result), or else they function as *gerunds*. They may do this after any finite conjugation (imperfect, preterite, perfect, imperative). Infinitives absolute appear to modify the function of the main verb; if the clause lacks a main verb, their function must be determined by context.
4. Participles (Ptc) are functionally *adjectives*, modifying or functioning as nouns, although they occasionally occur with a form of הִיָּה, apparently as a way of saying that someone “was doing” something.

5. The conjugations can occur with various affixes [in addition to the subject (PGN)]:

This conjugation ...	can be combined with ...			
	conjunction <i>w-</i>	article	prepositions	pronominal suffixes
imperFect	yes	no	no	yes
Preterite	always	no	no	yes
imperatiVe	yes	no	no	yes
Perfect	yes	no	no	yes
Participle	yes	yes	yes	yes
iNfinitive Construct	yes	no	yes	yes
iNfinitive Absolute	yes	no	no	no

- Thus any verbal form with an article, for example, is a participle; a conjunction-less verb cannot be preterite, etc.
- “Yes” does *not* mean “always”.
- “Always” means “always”.
- “No” means “never”.

16.3 Frequency

More than one-tenth (11%) of all verbs in Biblical Hebrew are infinitives (6985 occurrences in Biblical Hebrew), but infinitives construct (9%) are far more common than infinitives absolute (1%).

16.4 Concepts

circumstantial clause	infinitive absolute	temporal clause
gerundive	infinitive construct	vague verb

16.5 Vocabulary

<i>open</i> (vb.)	פָּתַח .236	<i>there is/are not</i> (opp. 317); <i>no</i> ; אֵין often ≈ <i>without</i>	אֵין .228 אֵין
<i>innocence</i> (§2.4/3); <i>righteousness</i>	צָדָקָה .237	<i>not</i> (adv.); <i>except, unless</i> (cj.) us. מִבְּלִיתִי or לְבִלְתִּי	בֵּל .229 בִּלְתִּי
<i>north</i>	צָפוֹן .238	<i>wine</i>	יַיִן .230
<i>abundance, multitude, great quantity</i>	רַב .239	<i>right</i> (hand, side); cf. Benjamin ("son of my right hand"); <i>south</i>	יְמִין .231
<i>chase, persecute, pursue</i>	רָדַף .240	<i>seat, throne</i>	כִּסֵּא .232
<i>rejoice, be glad</i>	שָׂמַח .241	<i>number, total</i>	מִסְפָּר .233
<i>hate</i>	שָׂנֵא .242	<i>dwelling; Tabernacle</i>	מִשְׁכָּן .234
<i>break, smash, shatter</i>	שָׁבַר .243	<i>assembly</i> (trad. "congregation")	עֵדָה .235

16.6 Exercises

After learning the forms of the *qal* infinitives construct and absolute, and reviewing the *qal* system, gloss these clauses, parsing the verbs. Remember that infinitives have no PGN; if they have a pronominal suffix, it is identified by PGN in the “suffix” column.

- 2 Sam 15.10; מְרַגֵּל *spy* (here *secret messengers*); שֵׁפָר *ram's horn*; Absalom; Hebron
1. וַיִּשְׁלַח אֲבִשְׁלוֹם מְרַגְלִים בְּכָל-שְׁבִטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר
כְּשִׁמְעֵכֶם אֶת-קוֹל הַשֹּׁפָר
וְאַמַּרְתֶּם מֶלֶךְ אֲבִשְׁלוֹם בְּחִבְרוֹן:
- Gn 37.8; interrogative הֲ; when followed by אִם, the two clauses express alternatives (real or hypothetical)
2. וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ אַחִיו הַמְּלֶךְ תִּמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ
אִם-מִשׁוֹל תִּמְשָׁל בָּנוּ
- Gn 3.24; וַיִּשְׁכֵּן *he caused to dwell*; מִזְרָם [to the] east of; גֶּן *garden*; Eden; חַיִּים *life*
3. וַיִּשְׁכֵּן מִקְדָּם לְגִן־עֵדֶן אֶת־הַכְּרָבִים
... לְשֹׁמֵר אֶת־דֶּרֶךְ עֵץ הַחַיִּים:
- Qo 3.6, 8; הִשְׁלִיךְ *throw away* (*hifil* of שָׁלַךְ)
4. עַת לְשִׁמּוֹר וְעַת לְהִשְׁלִיךְ:
עַת לְאַהֵב וְעַת לְשֹׂא
עַת מִלְחָמָה וְעַת שְׁלוֹם:
- Jr 45.1; דִּבֶּר *he said*; Jeremiah, Baruch, Neraiah
5. הַדְּבַר אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יִרְמְיָהוּ הַנָּבִיא אֶל־בָּרוּךְ
בֶּן־נְרִיָּה בְּכַתְּבוֹ אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה
עַל־סֵפֶר מִפִּי יִרְמְיָהוּ
- Ex 15.26; this is not a complete sentence
6. וַיֹּאמֶר אִם-שָׁמוּעַ תִּשְׁמַע לְקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ ...
- Pr 6.22; שָׁכַב *lie down*; [the subject of תְּשִׁמֹּר (3fs) is “Wisdom”]
7. בְּשָׁכְבְךָ תִּשְׁמֹר עָלֶיךָ
- 1 Sam 24.21
8. יָדַעְתִּי כִּי מֶלֶךְ תִּמְלֹךְ
- Jos 14.7; בֶּן־אַרְבַּעִים שָׁנָה *40 years old*; בֶּן־אַרְבַּעִים שָׁנָה *40 years old*; מֹשֶׁה עֶבְד־יְהוָה אֹתִי; רַגֵּל *to spy* (D); Moses, Kadeš Barnea
9. בֶּן־אַרְבַּעִים שָׁנָה אֲנֹכִי בְּשִׁלַּח מֹשֶׁה עֶבְד־יְהוָה אֹתִי
מִקְדָּשׁ בְּרַנֵּעַ לְהַגִּיל אֶת־הָאָרֶץ
- 2 Ch 24.1; בֶּן־שֶׁבַע שָׁנָה *7 years old*; Joash
10. בֶּן־שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים יָאֵשׁ בְּמִלְכוֹ
- Dt 6.17 [the *nun* on תִּשְׁמְרוּן does not affect its function]
11. שָׁמֹר תִּשְׁמְרוּן אֶת־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה
- 1 Sa 8.7; מָאָס *reject, spurn; refuse*; the second כִּי *but*
12. כִּי לֹא אֶתְךָ מָאָסוּ
כִּי־אֹתִי מָאָסוּ מִמֶּלֶךְ עָלֵיהֶם:
- 1 Sam 23.15; וַיִּרְא *and he saw* (3ms Q Pr < רָאָה); יָצָא *go out*; בָּקַשׁ *seek*; David, Saul
13. וַיִּרְא דָּוִד כִּי־יָצָא שָׁאוּל לְבַקֵּשׁ אֶת־נַפְשׁוֹ
- Gn 41.49 כִּי + עַד *until*; חָדַל *stop*, *cease*
14. עַד כִּי־חָדַל לְסַפֵּר כִּי־אֵין מִסְפָּר:

- Dt 12.23; רק *only*; תאכל (2ms Q F) רק חזק לבלתי אכל הדם כי הדם הוא הנפש
ולא תאכל הנפש עם הבשר: .15
- Dt 21.14; ומכר *sell* (רנה- 3fs suffix) ומכר לא תמכנה בכסף .16
- 2 Sam 19.6–7; הבשת *you have shamed*;
both NCs are gerundive (“by ____ing”) ויאמר יואב אל המלך הבשת היום
אתפני כל עבדיך לאהבה את שנאיך
ולשנא את אהביך .17

16.7 Enrichment: Gerundive Infinitives Construct

As the functions outlined above suggest, not all infinitives construct are created equal. In Deuteronomy 10.12, for example, the first infinitive construct, *to fear*, presents the basic response of the Israelites, whereas the next three—*by walking ... loving ... serving*—expound what “fear” means in this covenantal context:

ועתה ישראל	Therefore, Israel,
מה יהוה אלהיך שאל מעמך	what does YHWH your God ask from you
כי אם ליראה את יהוה אלהיך	but <i>to fear</i> YHWH your God
ללכת בכל דרכיו	<i>by walking</i> in all his ways
ולאהבה אתו	and <i>by loving</i> him,
ולעבד את יהוה אלהיך	and <i>by serving</i> YHWH your God
בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך:	with all of your heart and all of your being (Dt 10.12).

Lesson 17

QUESTIONS, NEGATIVES, NUMERALS

This lesson addresses three syntactical and functional topics: (1) explicit and implicit questions; (2) negated clauses (at which we have already glanced under the topic of “irrealis” (§6, §6.11, §10.3); and (3) numerals. Combining these in one lesson does not mean that they are unimportant. Numerals occur in nearly 3000 verses (and not just in genealogies and the book of Numbers!), and there are more than 6000 negated statements and nearly 900 explicit questions.

17.1 Asking Questions

Biblical Hebrew asks questions in two basic ways. *Explicit* questions begin with an interrogative form, such as an interrogative pronoun or adverb, or the interrogative particle *וְ*. *Implicit* questions—which are much less common—are required or suggested by the context. Unlike English, Biblical Hebrew has no question mark.

17.1.1 Interrogative Adverbs

1. Biblical Hebrew has a number of interrogative adverbs, which can ask about location, direction (“where”), reason (“why”), or manner (“how”). Since a good many questions in Biblical Hebrew are rhetorical—asked not to gain information, but to make a point (e.g., Gn 4.9; Ps 42.4, 10)—the line between questions and exclamations is often blurred (e.g., אֵיךְ in Is 14.11 and 2 Sam 1.5).

לָמָּה	Why?	178x	לָמָּה שָׁכַחְתָּנִי	Why have you forgotten me?
לָמָּה			לָמָּה־קָדַר אֶלַי	Why do I go about mourning? (Ps 42.10)
מִדּוּעַ	Why?	72x	מִדּוּעַ אֲדַנִּי בִכָּה	Why is my master weeping? (2 Kgs 8.12)
			אֵיךְ נִפְלַת מִשָּׁמַיִם	How you have fallen from heaven! (Is 14.11)
אֵיךְ	How?	61x	אֵיךְ יָדַעְתָּ כִּי־מֵת שָׁאוּל	How do you know that Saul is dead? (2 Sam 1.5)
אֵיכָּה	How!		אֵיכָּה יֹשְׁבָה בְּדָר הָעִיר	How the city sits solitary, ...! (La 1.1)
אֵי	Where [is]?	56x	אֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ:	Where is your God (Ps 42.4)
אֵן אָנָּה	[To] where?	42x	אָנָּה אַתָּה הַלֵּךְ	“Where are you going?” (Zc 2.6)
אֵי	Where?	31x	אֵי הָבֵל אָחִיךָ	Where is Abel, your brother? (Gn 4.9)
עַד אָנָּה	How long?	11x	עַד־אָנָּה תִּמְלַל־אֵלֶּה	How long will you say these things (Jb 8.2)
אֵי־מִזֶּה	From where?	9x	לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אֵי מִזֶּה הֵמָּה:	I did not know where they were from (1 Sam 25.11)

17.1.2 Interrogative -הַ

The interrogative particle -הַ introduces “yes-no” questions by being *prefixed* to the *first* word of a direct or indirect question.¹³⁸

הַכֶּלֶב אֲנֹכִי	Am I a dog? (1 Sam 17.43)
הַעֶבֶד יִשְׂרָאֵל	Is Israel a slave/servant? (Jr 2.14)
הַשֹּׁמֵר אָחִי אֲנֹכִי:	Am I my brother’s keeper? (Gn 4.9)
וְהֲלוֹא עִמָּךְ שָׂם צָדוֹק וְאַבְיָתָר	And are not Zadok and Abiathar there with you? (2 Sam 15.35)

2. The vowel under the interrogative -הַ varies according to the first letter of the word to which it is attached:

Interrogative	If the word begins with ...	Example
-הַ	any non-guttural followed by a full vowel	הַשֹּׁמֵרָה Did she keep watch?
-הַ	any guttural followed by a vowel other than <i>qames̄</i> or <i>qames̄ hatuf</i> ,	הַעֶבֶד Is a servant ...?
	or any non-guttural followed by a half-vowel	הַאֱלֹהִים Did God ...?
-הַ	any guttural followed by <i>qames̄</i> or <i>qames̄ hatuf</i>	הַאֲנֹכִי Am I ...?

3. The compound form הַלֹּא (הַ + לֹא) introduces a *negative rhetorical* question—that is, a question that assumes a positive answer. These might be represented with or without a “tag question” in English (e.g., “Am I not YHWH?” *versus* “I’m YHWH, aren’t I?”), or even “indeed”. The question’s cotext (literary context) and content determine which might be more appropriate).

הַלֹּא אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה:	Am I not YHWH? (Ex 4.11)
הַלֹּא אֲנֹכִי אֶתְּנֶךָ	“Am I not your she-donkey, ...?” (Nu 22.30)
הַלֹּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם עִמָּכֶם	Is not YHWH your God with you? (2 Chr 22.18)

4. *Polar questions*—“yes/no” questions that pose a choice between opposites—end with אִם לֹא (“... or not” questions; e.g., Jg 2.22), introduce each choice with interrogative -הַ (Nu 13.18b), or end with אִם followed by an adjective (Nu 13.18c).

לְמַעַן נִסּוּת בָּם אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל	... in order to test Israel by them—
הַשֹּׁמְרִים הֵם אֶת־דֶּרֶךְ יְהוָה	<i>whether</i> they will observe the way of YHWH
אִם־לֹא: or not (Jg 2.22).
וּרְאִיתֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ מִהֲהוּא	and see the land, what it is,
וְאֶת־הָעָם הַיֹּשֵׁב עָלֶיהָ	and the people who live in it
הַחֹזֵק הוּא הַרְפָּה	— <i>whether</i> they are strong <i>or</i> weak,
הַמְעַט הוּא אִם־רַב:	[<i>whether</i> they are] few <i>or</i> many (Nu 13.18).

5. *Implicit questions* are not marked (interrogative -הַ occurs only 746x). Some questions are semi-explicit, introduced by a verb such as שָׁאַל, “he asked”, but most must be recognized from the context, which means that there is often disagreement about whether or not a

138. It is preceded twice by the conjunction וְ (2 Sa 15.35; Zc 3.1).

particular clause is a question or a statement. In 1 Ch 22.18, David exhorts the leaders of Israel by asking a rhetorical question (introduced by הֲלֹא). Does the force of the interrogative carry over to the next clause or not? It can be read either way:

הֲלֹא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם עִמָּכֶם	<i>Is not YHWH your god with you?</i>
וְהִנֵּיה לָכֶם מְסָבִיב	<i>And has he not given you rest all around? or</i>
	<i>And he has given you rest all around (1 Ch 22.18).</i>

Nor does the rest of the sentence (“for he has given into my hand the inhabitants of the land, and the land has been subjugated before YHWH and his people.”) answer the question, since it fits both readings.

17.2 Negatives

Biblical Hebrew has three main negative clause-level adverbs—לא, אַל, אֵין/אֵין—as well as a number of relatively infrequent negatives (e.g., בְּלֹאֵי, Lesson 16). These largely and usually negate the clause in which they occur.

1. The adverbs לא and אַל negate clauses.

וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה	<i>... but they did not listen to Moses (Ex 6.9)</i>
וַיִּרְאֹת יְהוָה לֹא בָחָרוּ	<i>... but the fear of YHWH they did not choose (Pr 1.29)</i>
לֹא־קָרָאתִי בְנִי	<i>I did not call, my son ... (1 Sam 3.6)</i>
וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשָׁפָט אֶל־יְאֹמְרֵי כֵן:	<i>Jehoshaphat said, “The king should not say so” (1 Kgs 22.8)</i>

2. לא and אֵין can also occur in single-element statements as “No”, when the rest of the sentence is understood from the context:

וַאֲמַר הֲיִשְׁפָּה אִישׁ וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵין:	<i>“... and he says, ‘Is there a man here?’, you shall say, ‘No.’” (Jg 4.20)</i>
וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא כִּי בְּרֹחֵב נֶלְיִן	<i>They said, “No. Instead/But, we will spend the night in the square” (Gn 19.2).</i>

3. אֵין negates non-verbal clauses as “There is/was not/no”. When it negates a participle, its subject is often a pronominal suffix. When the participle itself is the subject, אֵין can function like “without ...” (Lv 26.36).

אֵין כְּמִנִּי בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ	<i>There is none like me in all the earth (Ex 9.14)</i>
כַּאֲשֶׁר אֵינְךָ יוֹדֵעַ מַה־דְּרֹךְ הַרוּחַ	<i>Just as you do not know what the way of the spirit is (Qo 11.5)</i>
וְנָפְלוּ וְאֵין רֹדֵף:	<i>... and they will fall without a pursuer (Lv 26.36)</i>

4. אֵין also occurs with nouns and participles in the sense of “there is no one who” or “without”:

וְאֵין־פֹּתֵר אוֹתָם לְפָרְעָה:	<i>... but there was no interpreter of them for Pharaoh (Gn 41.8);</i>
	<i>... no one to interpret them ...</i>
וְאֵין מוֹשִׁיעַ:	<i>... but there will be no [without a] deliverer (Dt 28.29)</i>
אֵין יוֹצֵא וְאֵין בֹּא:	<i>No one went out and no one went in (Josh 6.1)</i>

5. אֵין occurs with the possessive preposition לְ to indicate that someone “does not have” something. The לְ is prefixed to the person who “does not have”:

וּבֶן אֵין־לוֹ	<i>... and he had no son (Dt 25.5)</i>
וְאִם־אֵין לְאִישׁ גֹּאֵל	<i>but if the man has no “redeemer, ...” (Nu 5.8)</i>

17.3 Numerals

Like English, Hebrew has two sets of numerals, *cardinal* (e.g., “one”, “two”, “three”) and *ordinal*, which identify *order* (e.g., “first”, “second”, “third”).

17.3.1 Cardinal Numerals

Cardinal numerals are words that refer to the amount or quantity of something (“ten years”, “thirty shekels”).

“One” – “Ten”			“Tens”	
“Masculine”	“Feminine”			
אֶחָד	אַחַת	one		
שְׁנַיִם	שְׁתַּיִם	two (the initial <i>šewa</i> is silent in the feminine)		
שְׁלֹשׁ	שְׁלוֹשָׁה	three	שְׁלֹשִׁים	thirty
אַרְבַּע	אַרְבַּעַה	four	אַרְבָּעִים	forty
חֲמִישׁ	חֲמִישָׁה	five	חֲמִישִׁים	fifty
שֵׁשׁ	שֵׁשָׁה	six	שִׁשִּׁים	sixty
שִׁבְעָה	שִׁבְעָה	seven	שִׁבְעִים	seventy
שְׁמוֹנֶה	שְׁמוֹנֶה	eight	שְׁמוֹנִים	eighty
תְּשַׁע	תְּשַׁעַה	nine	תְּשַׁעִים	ninety
עָשָׂר	עָשָׂרַה	ten	עָשָׂרִים	twenty (plural of “ten”)

1. Apart from “one” and “two”, the main difference between the masculine and feminine forms is the “feminine ending” (ה-).
2. When the feminine forms occur in the construct, the final ה- is replaced by ת- (as in nouns); e.g., עֶשְׂרֵת / עֶשְׂרֵתָהּ.
3. The numeral “one” usually follows the noun that it modifies and agrees with it in gender and definiteness. If there is no noun, it functions like an indefinite “one” in English, often with the article.

בְּנֵי אִישׁ-אֶחָד נַחֲנוּ	We are the sons of <i>one</i> man [<i>a</i> man] (Gn 42.11)
תּוֹרַה אַחַת לָהֶם	They [shall] have <i>one</i> law (Lv 7.7)
הַכֹּל הוֹלֵךְ אֶל-מְקוֹם אֶחָד	Everything goes to <i>one</i> place (Qo 3.20)
שֵׁם הָאֶחָד פִּישׁוֹן	The name of [the] <i>one</i> was Pishon (Gn 2.11)

4. The numeral that signals “two” can either precede or follow its noun, which is in the plural. If it precedes, it is in construct, but does not mean “two of ...”. “Two” also occurs with pronominal suffixes:

עַמּוּדִים שְׁנַיִם	two pillars (2 Chr 3.15)
וְאֵת שְׁנֵי בָנֶיהָ	... and her <i>two</i> sons (Ex 18.3)
וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לָהּ שְׁנֵי גּוֹיִם בְּבֶטְנְךָ	YHWH said to her, “ <i>Two</i> nations are in your womb” (Gn 25.23)
וַיֹּאכְלוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו	The <i>two</i> of them ate together (Jg 19.6)

5. The numerals that represent “three” through “ten” *disagree* in *gender* with the noun that they modify.

שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲלֵה בְנֵי-נֹחַ	These <i>three</i> were Noah’s sons (Gn 9.19)
חֲמִשָּׁה שֶׁקֶלִים כֶּסֶף	<i>five</i> shekels of silver (Lv 27.6)

6. Hundreds & thousands:

מָאָה	100
מֵאָתַיִם	200 (dual ending)
שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת	300
...	etc.
אַלְפַּיִם	1,000
אַלְפֵיִם	2,000 (dual ending)
שְׁלֹשַׁת אֲלָפִים	3,000
...	etc.
רִבּוֹת / רִבְבָּה	10,000
רִבּוֹתַיִם	20,000 (dual ending)
שְׁלֹשׁ רִבּוֹת	30,000
...	etc.

7. #6 (above) illustrates how Hebrew forms compound numerals (e.g., “thirteen”, “ninety-nine”, “one hundred forty-two”): numerals are either juxtaposed or linked with the conjunction ׀. Determining whether to multiply or add large numerals is contextual.

כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ אַרְבַּעַה עָשָׂר	<i>fourteen</i> people in all (Gn 46.22)
שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת עָשָׂרִים וְאַחַד	621 (Ez 2.26)
שֵׁשָׁה וְאַרְבַּעִים אֶלֶף וְחֲמִשׁ מֵאוֹת	46,500 (Nu 1.21)

8. The preposition כֹּ- occurs with numerals in the sense of “approximately” or “about”:

כֹּאֲרֵבַע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ:	<i>about</i> four hundred men (1 Sam 22.2)
כֹּעֶשְׂרֵת שָׁנִים	<i>about</i> ten years (Ru 1.4)

9. Age is usually indicated by the phrase “the son of *X* years”:

וְאַבְרָם בֶּן־חֲמִשׁ וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה	Now Abram was <i>seventy-five years old</i> ... (Gn 12.4)
בֶּן־שְׁמוֹנֶה שָׁנָה יָאֻשְׁיָהוּ בְּמָלְכוֹ	Josiah was <i>eight years old</i> when he became king (2 Kgs 22.1)

17.3.2 Ordinal Numerals

Ordinal numerals are adjectives that tell the *order* in which something occurred. Apart from the words for “first”, they are generally formed by adding י - to the cardinal forms. Ordinal numerals are not inflected for gender:

רִאשׁוֹן	<i>first</i> (cf. רִאשִׁית, <i>beginning</i> ; רֵאשׁ, <i>head</i>)
אַחַד	<i>first</i> (occasionally)
שֵׁנִי	<i>second</i>
שְׁלִישִׁי	<i>third</i>
רְבִיעִי	<i>fourth</i> (cf. אַרְבַּע)
חֲמִישִׁי	<i>fifth</i>
שֵׁשִׁי	<i>sixth</i>
שְׁבִיעִי	<i>seventh</i>
שְׁמִינִי	<i>eighth</i>
תְּשִׁיעִי	<i>ninth</i>
עֲשִׂירִי	<i>tenth</i>

1. The ordinals function as attributive adjectives, following their noun and agreeing with it in gender, number, and (usually) definiteness:

וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי	On the <i>seventh</i> day ... (Josh 6.15)
וּבַיּוֹם הָרְבִיעִי פָּרִים עֲשָׂרָה	On the <i>fourth</i> day, ten bulls, ... (Nu 29.23)
אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן וְאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן	I am <i>the first</i> and I am <i>the last</i> (Is 44.6)

2. Ordinals only function from “first” to “tenth”; beyond “tenth”, Biblical Hebrew uses cardinal numerals:

וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת־הַפֶּסַח	They made [celebrated] the Passover in the
בְּרִאשׁוֹן בְּאַרְבַּעָה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ	<i>first</i> [month] on the <i>fourteenth</i> day of the
	month (Nu 9.5).
בְּשָׁנָה שְׁתַּיִם עֲשָׂרָה לְאַחַז	In the <i>twelfth</i> year of Ahaz ... (2 Kgs 17.1)

17.4 Concepts

cardinal numeral	non-verbal clause	polar question
interrogative	negation	rhetorical question
	ordinal numeral	

17.5 Vocabulary

<i>nine</i>	תֵּשַׁע .252	<i>one</i> (m., f.)	אֶחָד אֶחָת .244
<i>ten</i>	עָשָׂר עָשָׂר .253	<i>two</i> (m., f.)	שְׁנַיִם שְׁתַּיִם .245
<i>twenty</i>	עֶשְׂרִים	<i>second</i> (ord.; m., f.)	שְׁנֵי שְׁנִית
<i>hundred</i>	מֵאָה .254	<i>three</i>	שְׁלֹשׁ .246
<i>two hundred</i>	מֵאָתַיִם	<i>four</i>	אַרְבַּע .247
<i>thousand</i>	אַלְפֵי	<i>five</i>	חֲמִישׁ .248
<i>two thousand</i>	אַלְפַיִם .255	<i>six</i>	שֵׁשׁ .249
<i>first</i> (ord.)	רִאשׁוֹן .256	<i>seven</i>	שִׁבְעַת .250
<i>first; beginning</i> (n.)	רֵאשִׁית .257	<i>eight</i>	שְׁמוֹנָה .251
<i>half</i>	חֲצִי .258		
<i>shekel</i> (approx. 11.4 g, 0.5 oz.)	שֶׁקֶל .259		

17.6 Exercises

You will find numerals for the populations of the tribes of Israel in the following verses. Fill in the name of each tribe and its population at the beginning and end of the wandering in the wilderness.

N.B.: The order of two tribes is reversed in Nu 26.

Num 1	Tribe	Population	Num 26	Population
1.21	ראובן		26.7	43,730
1.23			26.14	
1.25			26.18	
1.27			26.22	
1.29		54,400	26.25	
1.31	זבולן		26.27	
1.33			26.37	
1.35			26.34	
1.37			26.41	
1.39			26.43	64,400
1.41	אשר	41,500	26.47	
1.43			26.50	
1.46			26.51	601,730

These verses contain numerals for ages, numbers of people (census lists), etc. Gloss the clauses, transmorphifying the numerals.

- a. ויהיו כל־ימי מתושלח תשע וּשְׁשִׁים שָׁנָה וּתְשֵׁעַ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה Gn 5.27; Methusaleh
- b. וַיִּגְבְּרוּ הַמּוֹם עַל־הָאָרֶץ חֲמֹשִׁים וּמֵאֵת יוֹם: Gn 7.24; *prevail*; the sign *sof pasuq* [:] marks the “end of the verse”
- c. שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי תִשָּׁבֵת Ex 23.12; *you shall do* (2ms Q F < עשה); *work, deed*; *rest*
- d. וַיְהִי מִשָּׁה בַּהֵר אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה: Ex 24.18b; Moses
- e. בְּיָשָׁלְשִׁים שָׁנָה הָדָר בְּמַלְכוֹ אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה מָלַךְ: 2 Sam 5.4–5; *month, new moon*; David, Hebron, Jerusalem, Israel, Judah; each line is a clause
בְּחִבְרוֹן מָלַךְ עַל־יְהוּדָה שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים וְשָׁשֶׁה חֳדָשִׁים
וּבִירוּשָׁלַם מָלַךְ שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁלֹשׁ שָׁנָה עַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהוּדָה:
- f. לֹא יוֹם אֶחָד תֹּאכְלוּן וְלֹא יוֹמִים וְלֹא חֲמִשָּׁה יָמִים
וְלֹא עֶשְׂרֵה יָמִים וְלֹא עֶשְׂרִים יוֹם: Nu 11.19; the second form of יום is dual (i.e., *two days*); the final *nun* on “you shall eat” is not (yet) explained

Gloss these clauses and sentences, *parsing* the verbal forms.

- a. וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לְמָה זֶה אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת־פִּי יְהוָה Nu 14.41; *why?*; Moses
- b. וּלְקַחְתִּי אֶתְכֶם אַחַד מֵעִיר וּשְׁנַיִם מִמִּשְׁפָּחָה Jr 3.14
- c. כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל וּנְאֻלוּ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
אֲנִי רֹאשׁוֹן וְאַנִּי אַחֲרוֹן וּמִבְּלַעֲדֵי אֵין אֱלֹהִים: Is 44.6; *thus*; *redeemer* (Q Ptc); *last*; *apart from, except for, without* (+ 1cs suffix); Israel; the second line is a quotation
- d. וַיֹּתֵר דְּבָרֵי יְהוּא וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וְכָל־גְּבוּרָתוֹ
הַלּוֹאֵהֶם כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים
לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: 2 Kgs 10.34; *[the] rest, remainder*; *עשה*; *do*; *strength, power*; Jehu

17.7 Enrichment: *Irrealis*

If a story is a record of events—a record of “what happened”—why do authors tell their readers that some events did *not* occur? What does negative information (*irrealis*) add to a story?

As Lydia walked down the street, she saw a dog tied in front of a house. The dog barked and lunged at her, breaking its rope. Suddenly realizing that it was free, it ran after her, but *did not bite her*.

In this admittedly simple illustration, the negative clause (in *italics*) tells the reader something that is *contrary to expectation*. We probably expect that a barking dog that breaks loose and chases someone intends to attack that person, but this dog did not, contrary to our expectation (and, perhaps, to our experience). In fact, in this example, the last (negative) statement also leads us to conclude that the dog caught her, since if it did not, the *irrealis* would not make sense (if the dog didn’t catch her, it couldn’t have bitten her).

But what if the story read:

As Lydia walked down the street, she saw a dog tied in front of a house. The dog barked and lunged at her, breaking its rope. Suddenly realizing that it was free, it chased her, but Lydia ran inside *before the dog could catch her*.

In this case the negative information is that the dog did not catch her (most readers would probably infer that if the dog had caught her, it would have attacked her). The *irrealis* is given obliquely and implicitly, in a “privative” clause (related to the root of the word “deprive”), rather than in a negative statement. Furthermore, if we rewrite the last clause so that it reads merely “... but Lydia ran safely inside”, we would not need the clause in italics, since the word “safely” implies that the dog did not catch her.¹³⁹

In the beginning of the story of Abram, we find a number of *irrealis* clauses:

וַתְּהִי שָׂרַי עֲקָרָה אֵין לָהּ יֶלֶד: And Sarai was barren—she had *no child* (Gn 11.30)

This is one of the precipitating crises of the Abram story—his lack of an heir—set over against the divine promise of descendants (e.g., Gn 12.2; 13.16). Since we are told this at the very beginning of the stories about Abram, we might suspect that this will become an important theme in what follows.

In 1 Sa 3.1b, the author uses a form of *irrealis* to warn readers against mis-reading the preceding incident (the prophetic announcement of YHWH’s judgment upon Eli’s house). This prophecy follows Eli’s word to Hannah (1.17), which might encourage us to think that prophetic revelation was relatively commonplace in Israel at that time. As the opening of 1 Sa 3 shows, however, that was not true:

וַדְּבַר־יְהוָה יָקָר בְּיָמִים הָהֵם Now YHWH’s word was rare in those days;
אֵין חֲזוֹן נִפְרָץ: there was *no vision* breaking through (1 Sa 3.1b).

This double statement not only warns against misinterpreting the prophetic activity of the preceding chapter as a normal occurrence, but also helps to set the stage for the restoration of prophetic revelation through Samuel (which is the story of 1 Sa 3).

139. There is another type of *irrealis*, which we might call “semantic”, or “positive”, *irrealis* in which a non-negated verb describes a non-event. In Lv 10.3, Aaron’s response to Moses’ speech was silence: וַיִּדַם אַהֲרֹן, and Aaron was silent, i.e., Aaron did not speak. This raises a host of complex questions about the relationship between positive and negative statements that are better left for another course of study. Note that in this case, the author does not tell us what Aaron actually did.

Part III

LESSONS 18–31 VERBAL GRAMMAR (II) READING HEBREW

This section introduces the forms and functions of the other stems of the verb, the other [“weak”] forms of the verbal root, as well as the basic tools of Biblical Hebrew (the Hebrew Bible and lexica), and the basic steps of beginning to read biblical narrative and poetry.

By the end of these lessons (the end of the book), you should be able to recognize and read nominal phrases with some fluency, as well as recognize a number of fairly standard forms and formulae at sight. You should also be able to identify all of the forms of the verbal stems and roots.

Depending on your teacher and the goals of your course of study, you will have begun to read from the biblical text, and to discuss how to use your knowledge of Hebrew to study the biblical text.

Lesson 18

OTHER STEMS

Verbal function is primarily modified in English by syntax, using various types of pronouns (e.g., reflexive), “helping verbs”, prepositions, etc., as illustrated by the differences between the following sentences:

- (1) John *hid*.
- (2) John *hid* himself.
- (3) John *hid* the ball.
- (4) The ball *was hidden* by John.
- (5) John *made* Jim *hide* the ball.
- (6) John *caused* Jim *to hide* the ball.

Since most readers or speakers of English assume that “hide” without an expressed object is reflexive (the subject hides himself or herself), they will read or hear sentences (1) and (2) as essentially identical—the “reflexive” pronoun (2) merely clarifies the meaning of (1). Sentence (3)—which also uses “hid”, the same form of the verb as in (1) and (2)—shows an entirely different relationship between the subject (“John”) and the object (“the ball”). Sentences (4), (5), and (6) are morphologically and syntactically different from the others; (5) and (6), like (1) and (2), are functionally identical.

18.1 The Concept of “Stem”

Where English uses helping verbs, prepositions, and syntax to indicate verbal nuances, (“David hid the sword”, “David hid [himself]”, “David was hidden [by Samuel]”), Hebrew modifies the shape of the verb itself, using prefixes,¹⁴⁰ different sets of vowels, and a doubled middle radical in patterns which are called “stems” or *binyanim* (“buildings”). These combinations are traditionally called the “derived” stems because the early grammarians viewed *qal* as the basic (“simple”) stem, from which these stems were “derived”. Although the vowel patterns and forms of the stems differ, the PGN affixes and the functions of the conjugations are the same in all stems. In these examples, the verbs have different stems:

וַיִּמְלֹכוּ בְּדַמְשֶׁק	they <i>reigned</i> in Damascus (1 Kgs 11.24)	3mp <i>qal</i> preterite
וַיִּמְלִיכוּ אֶת־אֲבִימֶלֶךְ לְמֶלֶךְ	they <i>made</i> Abimelek <i>king</i> (Jg 9.6) [“caused” Abimelek to be king]	3mp <i>hifil</i> preterite
הֲלֹא מִסְתַּתֵּר עִמָּנוּ	Is not David <i>hiding</i> with us? (1 Sam 23.19)	ms <i>hitpael</i> ptc ¹⁴¹
וְלֹא נִסְתָּרוּ מִלְּפָנַי	They <i>are not hidden</i> from me (Jr 16.17)	3cp <i>nifal</i> perfect
כְּבֹד אֱלֹהִים הִסְתֵּר דְּבָר	The glory of God is <i>to hide</i> a matter (Pr 25.2)	<i>hifil</i> inf. const.

There are eight basic verbal patterns in Biblical Hebrew,¹⁴² but more than two-thirds of all verbal forms in the Bible are *qal*, and three of the main stems (*hitpael*, *pual*, *hofal*) occur fairly infrequently (less than 3% of all verbal forms). Furthermore, only two verbs occur in all eight stems (ten occur in the seven stems not including *qal* passive),¹⁴³ and most occur in various combinations of two to four stems.

140. These are combined with the PGN prefixes of the imperfect (below).

141. This example demonstrates “metathesis”, in which two letters change places (a normal occurrence in the *hitpael* when the verbal root begins with a *sibilant* (“s-sound”). The root is סִתַּר, one of a relatively few verbal roots that occur in these three stems.

142. The existence of the eighth stem—the *qal* passive—has been suspected for several centuries, but not confirmed until relatively recently.

143. Not including *qal* passive (Lesson 21).

18.1.1 *The Names of the Stems*

The stems have been given various names through the centuries, following changes in academic fashion, or the individual grammarian’s convictions. The traditional names, except for the *qal*, are the 3ms perfect form of the verb פָּעַל, “do, make”, which was the original verb for Hebrew paradigms. The early Hebrew grammarians used פָּעַל because the Arabic grammarians used *fa’ala* as their paradigm verb, and the early Jewish grammarians based their study of Hebrew grammar upon that of the Arabs. It is no longer used as the paradigm verb for Biblical Hebrew because פֿ does not double in Hebrew (as it does in Arabic).

Since the mid-18th century, the study of the Semitic languages has shown that Hebrew is only one of a family of related languages, including Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Coptic, as well as various Aramaic dialects and Arabic. In order to use terminology that reflects the relationship of Hebrew to, for example, Akkadian, scholars have developed what might be called “pan-Semitic” names for the stems. These names reflect the distinguishing aspect of that stem that is shared by some or all of the Semitic tongues. This grammar will use the “Semitic” designations for the stems as a sort of shorthand, but will always refer initially to both sets of terms.

N.B.: The standard Hebrew-English lexica use the traditional names of the stems, so you will want to know both sets of terms.

3ms Perfect	Traditional Name	“Pan-Semitic” Name	Stem Prefix Vowels		Doubled II-radical?
פָּעַל	<i>Qal</i>	G (the <i>Grund-</i> , or “basic”, stem)			---
נִפְעַל	<i>Nifal</i>	N (<i>n</i> -prefix)	נִ	הִ	---
פִּעַל	<i>Piel</i>	D (“doubled”)			yes
פֻּעַל	<i>Pual</i>	Dp (passive of D)			yes
הִתְפַּעֵל	<i>Hitpael</i>	Dt (D with t-infix)	הִתְ	יְתְ	yes
הִפְעִיל	<i>Hiphil</i>	H (<i>h</i> -prefix)	הִ	יְ	---
הִפְעִיל	<i>Hophal</i>	Hp (passive of H)	הִ	יְ	---

The name of the stem which we have studied thus far—the *qal* (from the verb קָלַל)—means “light”, because it lacks a stem prefix (unlike N, Dt, H, Hp) and does not have a doubled radical (unlike D, Dp, Dt).

18.1.2 *The Paradigm Verb*

Hebrew grammarians turned from פָּעַל to קָטַל, “kill”, as a paradigm verb, since it has no *b^egad-k^efat* letters (and thus no appearing and vanishing *dageš lenes*), and no gutturals (thus no *hatef*-vowels). קָטַל, however, occurs only three times in Biblical Hebrew (Ps 139.19; Jb 13.15; 24.14), which is rather rare for a “model” verb.¹⁴⁴

Today, different grammars use different verbal roots as their “model” verb. Since the root מָשַׁל meets the requirements of a paradigm verb (three “strong” radicals, no gutturals or *res*, and the first radical is a non-sibilant), we will continue to use it as our paradigm verb. It occurs in only a few stems (which means that most of the listed forms do not exist in Biblical Hebrew), but is fairly frequent in Biblical Hebrew (99x).

18.1.3 *The Functions of the Stems*

The nuances [the plural is deliberate] of a verb’s function in different stems must be determined for each verbal root, but there are some overall tendencies. For example, if a verb is fientive (active) in

144. Transliterated as *qtl*, however, it appears in one of the sets of names for the verbal conjugations: *qatal* (perfect), *yaqtol* (imperfect, jussive), *wayyaqtol* (preterite), &c.

the *qal*, it will probably be passive in *nifal*. On the other hand, a verb that occurs in *nifal* but not in *qal* usually “sounds” active when glossed in English.

<i>Qal</i>	tends to be either fientive or stative
<i>Nifal</i>	tends to be the passive of <i>qal</i> (or <i>piel</i>); if there is no <i>qal</i> or <i>piel</i> , it tends to be reflexive or reciprocal
<i>Piel</i>	fientive, and nearly always transitive; if <i>qal</i> is stative, <i>piel</i> is often causative
<i>Pual</i>	passive of <i>piel</i>
<i>Hitpael</i>	its nuances are difficult to classify, but are usually passive or double-status (reflexive, reciprocal, etc.)
<i>Hifil</i>	causative of <i>qal</i> and <i>nifal</i>
<i>Hofal</i>	passive of <i>hifil</i>

The stems thus correspond in a *very rough* and *approximate* way to the concept of voice (active, middle, reflexive, passive, etc.) in English.

N.B.: Although the vowel patterns and forms of the stems differ, the PGN affixes of each conjugation (perfect, imperfect, etc.) are the same in all stems as those learned for the *qal*, as are also the functions of the various conjugations.

18.2 The N-Stem (*Nifal*)

The name *nifal* comes from the 3ms perfect in the traditional paradigm verb (נִפְעַל). The primary difference between *nifal* and *qal* is a **prefixed** נ (hence its “Semitic” name, “N”). This נ is visible (orthographic) in the perfect and participle, but assimilates (“nunnates”, see §7.2) to the first radical whenever it is followed by silent *šewa*. This means that in every conjugation except the perfect and participle a diagnostic for the *nifal* is a **doubled first radical** preceded by a *hireq* (under the prefix) and followed by *qames*. These examples illustrate this process (* = hypothetical form):

* <i>yinmāšēl</i>	* <i>yimmāšēl</i>	יִמְשַׁל	3ms N F	
* <i>hinmāšēlû</i>	* <i>himmāšēlû</i>	הִמְשַׁלּוּ	2mp N V	

18.2.1 Form

Conjugations with orthographic [written] -נ

In the *nifal* perfect and participle, the prefixed *nun* is visible at the beginning of the verbal form.

***Nifal* Perfect**

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
1st	Common	נִמְשַׁלְתִּי	נִמְשַׁלְנוּ
2nd	Masc.	נִמְשַׁלְתָּ	נִמְשַׁלְתֶּם
	Fem.	נִמְשַׁלְתְּ	נִמְשַׁלְתֶּן
3rd	Masc.	נִמְשַׁל	נִמְשַׁלּוּ
	Fem.	נִמְשַׁלָּה	

1. Every form of the *nifal* perfect begins with -נ-, followed by a silent *šewa* after the first radical.
2. Every form with no ending or a consonantal ending has pataḥ after the second radical.
3. 3ms N P looks just like the 1cp Q F of some verbs, especially statives (e.g., dB;k.nI, “we shall be wealthy”); they can be distinguished by their context.
4. All PGN affixes are the same in all stems.

Nifal Participle

Gender	Singular	Plural
Masc.	נִמְשָׁל	נִמְשָׁלִים נִמְשָׁלֵי
Fem.	נִמְשָׁלָה	נִמְשָׁלוֹת

1. Every form begins with -נִ (nun+hireq), and has silent *šewa* after the first radical and *qameš* after the second radical.
2. The *qameš* after the second radical distinguishes the ms and fs participle from 3ms and 3fs perfect.

Conjugations without orthographic -נִ

The prefixed -נִ appears only in the *nifal* perfect and participle. The other conjugations of the *nifal* have three characteristics in common:

1. The **prefix vowel** is *hireq* in all forms.
2. The first radical is **doubled** in all forms, since the *nun* assimilates to the first radical of the verbal root.
3. The doubled **first radical** is followed by *qameš*.

If there is no PGN ending, the vowel after the second radical is often *sere*, which is thus a secondary diagnostic. *Nifal* preterite is identical to the imperfect (with the prefixed - נִ and *dageš forte* in the PGN prefix).

Nifal Prefix Conjugations

Imperfect (= Preterite)			
Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
1st	Common	אֶמְשָׁל	נִמְשָׁל
2nd	Masc.	תֶּמְשָׁל	תִּמְשָׁלוּ
	Fem.	תִּמְשָׁלִי	תִּמְשָׁלְנָה
3rd	Masc.	יִמְשָׁל	יִמְשָׁלוּ
	Fem.	תִּמְשָׁל	תִּמְשָׁלְנָה

Like *hifil*, *hofal*, and *hitpaal* (H, Hp, Dt, below), but unlike *qal*, *nifal* imperative and infinitives have a prefix. They thus resemble the imperfect, with -הִ instead of the PGN prefix.

Nifal Imperative

Person	Gender	Singular	Plural
2nd	Masc.	הִמְשָׁל	הִמְשָׁלוּ
	Fem.	הִמְשָׁלִי	הִמְשָׁלְנָה

The infinitive absolute occurs in two forms; most verbal roots tend to use one form or the other. As in all stems, the infinitive construct is the same as 2ms imperative.

Nifal Infinitives

NC	הִמְשָׁל
NA	הִמְשָׁל
	נִמְשָׁל

18.2.2 Summary of Nifal Diagnostics

This chart summarizes the main clues for identifying a *nifal* form.

Conjugation	Diagnostic	Example	Parsing
Perfect	נִּ	נִכְבַּד	3ms N P
Participle	נִּ	נִכְבָּדִים	mp N Ptc
Imperfect	יִ	יִכְרַח	3ms N F
	תִּ	תִּמְשֵׁלְנָה	2fp N F
Preterite	וּיִ	וּיִכְתַּב	3ms N Pr
Imperative & Infinitives	הִ	הִכְרַח	N NC
		הִכְרֹא	mp N V

1. All forms of the *nifal* have a prefix, and most have *hireq* as a prefix vowel (like *qal* imperfect and preterite, *hifil* perfect, and all forms of the *hitpa'el*). The exception to this is I-guttural roots, which have *sere* (below). *Nifal* and *qal* are the only stems that use *hireq* as their prefix vowel (except for *hifil* perfect, which has other distinguishing features).
2. All forms of the *nifal* except perfect and participle begin with the same pattern: prefix+*hireq-dageš forte* in first radical+*qames*. This pattern occurs only in *nifal*.
3. Compare *nifal* and *qal* in this skeleton paradigm:

Conjugation	PGN	<i>Qal</i>	<i>Nifal</i>
Perfect	3ms	מָשַׁל <i>he ruled</i>	נִמְשַׁל <i>he was ruled</i>
Imperfect	3ms	יִמְשַׁל <i>he shall rule</i>	יִנְמְשַׁל <i>he shall be ruled</i>
Preterite	3ms	וּיִמְשַׁל <i>he ruled</i>	וּיִנְמְשַׁל <i>he was ruled</i>
Imperative	2ms	מִשַׁל <i>Rule!</i>	הִנְמִשַׁל <i>Be ruled!</i>
Inf. Const.		מִשַׁל <i>to rule</i>	הִמְשַׁל <i>to be ruled</i>
Inf. Abs.		מְשׁוֹל	הִמְשׁוֹל
Participle	ms	מוֹשֵׁל <i>one who rules</i>	הִמְשַׁל
			נִמְשָׁל <i>one who is ruled</i>

18.2.3 Function of the Nifal (HBI §2.1.3)

1. The *nifal* is primarily the **passive** and **reflexive** of the active stems (*qal*, *piel*, *hifil*). Note the difference between the active (2 Kgs 21.26; *qal*) and passive (2 Kgs 21.18; *nifal*) of קבר, “bury”:

וַיִּקְבֹּר אֹתוֹ בְּקִבְרֹתוֹ בְּגִן־עֲזָא וַיִּמְלֹךְ יֹאשִׁיָּהוּ בְּנוֹ תַּחְתָּיו: He buried him [Manasseh] in his tomb in Uzzah’s garden, and Josiah his son reigned in his place (2 Kgs 21.26).

וַיִּשְׁכַּב מְנַשֶּׁה עִם־אָבֹתָיו וַיִּקְבֹּר בְּגִן־בֵּיתוֹ בְּגִן־עֲזָא וַיִּמְלֹךְ אָמוֹן בְּנוֹ תַּחְתָּיו: And Manasseh slept with his fathers, and he was buried in the garden of his palace, in Uzzah’s garden. And Amon his son ruled in his place (2 Kgs 21.18).

2. The sign of the object may precede the *subject* of a passive *nifal*, apparently since the subject is affected by the action of the verb:

וַיִּוְלַד לְחֲנוֹךְ אֶת־עִירָד Irad was born to Enoch (Gn 4.18).

N.B.: Unlike English (or NT Greek), passive clauses in Hebrew rarely identify or mention who or what did the action described by the verb (the agent or the means). We do not

know if the passive was used *in order to* avoid naming the doer of the deed or if, having decided to use a passive, the author was constrained by the rules of Hebrew syntax so that he could not name the actor. This is true of all passives in Biblical Hebrew, not merely of the *nifal*.

3. When the *nifal* is **adjectival**, it can be glossed by words ending in “-ible”, “-able”, “-ful”, “-some”. This function, sometimes called “potential” is common with stative verbs.

מִכֹּל-הָאֲכָל אֲשֶׁר יֵאָכֵל	Any of the food which <i>may be eaten</i> [is ceremonially <i>edible</i>] ... (Lv 11.34) [3 ms N F]
שָׂרִים רַבִּים וְנִכְבְּדִים מֵאַלֶּה	leaders more numerous and <i>honorable</i> than these (Nu 22.15) [ms N Ptc]

4. *Nifal* also has a variety of “**double-status**” nuances, in which the subject both does the action described by the verb and is affected by its own action. These functions are variously called generally “reflexive”, “middle”, “reciprocal”, or “tolerative” (depending on the verbal root), and often sound active when glossed into English (the third verb in Gn 19.17 is a passive *nifal*).

הִמָּלֵט עַל-נַפְשֶׁךָ ...	“ <i>Escape for your life ... to the hill country</i> ”
הִהָרֶה הַמָּלֵט פְּנֵי-תַסְפָּה:	so that you are not [lest you be] <i>swept away</i> ” (Gn 19.17).
וְנִסְתַּרְתָּ בְּנַחַל כְּרִית	... and <i>hide</i> at the Wadi Cherith (1 Kg 17.3)
יְהוּוּהוּ וְלָחֵם לָכֶם	YHWH <i>will fight</i> for you (Ex 14.14).

18.3 Frequency

The *nifal* occurs 4,140 times in the Bible (6% of all verbal forms); it is more frequent in the latter prophets and poetic books than in Genesis – 2 Kings.

18.4 Concepts

active	middle	reciprocal	tolerative
double-status	passive	reflexive	

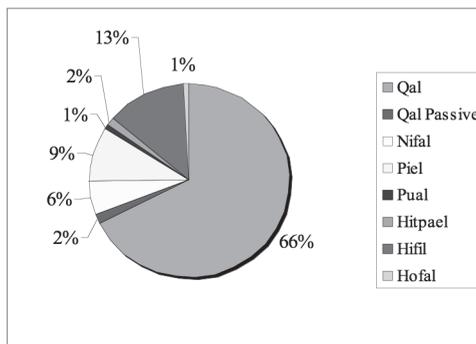
18.5 Vocabulary

<i>still, yet, again; לא עוד, no longer, not [never] again</i>	עוד .269	<i>or (cj.)</i>	או .260
[whole] <i>burnt offering</i>	עֹלָה .270	<i>light (n.)</i>	אֹר .261
<i>now [at this time]</i>	עַתָּה .271	<i>only, surely (adv.)</i>	אָךְ .262
“ <i>therefore</i> ” (esp. when followed by a volitional form cf. §8.6)	וְעַתָּה .271	<i>wise, skilled (adj.)</i>	חָכָם .263
<i>shepherd (Q Ptc)</i>	רֹעֵה .272	<i>court, enclosure, settlement</i>	חֲצָר .264
<i>joy, rejoicing, gladness</i>	שִׂמְחָה .273	<i>therefore (לְ- + בִּן)</i> ; not usually followed by a volitional form)	לְכֵן .265
<i>sun</i>	שֶׁמֶשׁ .274	<i>for the sake of, on account of (prp.); in order that / to (cj.)</i>	לְמַעַן .266
<i>judge (Q Ptc)</i>	שָׁפֵט .275	<i>very, exceedingly (adv.); power, might (n.)</i>	מְאֹד .267
		<i>find; be found (N)</i>	מָצָא .268

18.6 Distribution of the Stems

The occurrence of the stems varies widely, as this table shows. Slightly more than two-thirds of all verbal forms in Biblical Hebrew are *qal*.¹⁴⁵

Stems	Occurrences	% of Total
<i>Qal</i> ¹⁴⁶	49847	67.4%
<i>Qal Passive</i>	1277	1.7%
<i>Nifal</i>	4125	5.6%
<i>Piel</i>	6879	9.3%
<i>Pual</i>	450	0.6%
<i>Hitpael</i>	1177	1.6%
<i>Hifil</i>	9671	13.1%
<i>Hofal</i>	531	0.7%
Total	73957	



18.7 Exercises

After studying the characteristics of the *nifal*, gloss these sentences and clauses, parsing the verbs, which contain both *qal* and *nifal* forms.

1. Jg 8.32; קִבֵּר *tomb of*; Joash וַיִּקְבֹּר בְּקִבְרֵי יוֹאָשׁ אָבִיו
2. Jb 28.12a ... 13b; מֵאֵין [from] where?; חַיִּים *life, living* ("wisdom" is the subject of the clause) וְהַחֲכִמָּה מֵאֵין תִּמְצָא ...
וְלֹא תִמְצָא בְּאֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים:
3. Ex 22.3; בִּידוֹ *in his hand*; גְּנֹבָה *stolen thing* אִם-תִּמְצָא תִמְצָא בִּידוֹ הַגְּנֹבָה ...
4. Lv 25.54; יִגְאֹל *he/it will be redeemed*; אֱלֹהִים *these* [means of redemption]; יֵצֵא *go out*; יוֹבֵל *Jubilee* וְאִם-לֹא יִגְאֹל בְּאֵלֶּה וַיֵּצֵא בְּשָׁנַת הַיָּבֵל
הוּא וּבְנָיו עִמּוֹ:
5. 2 Kg 14.14; וּלְקַח *and he took*; אֶצְרָה *storehouse* וּלְקַח אֶת-כָּל-הַזֹּהָב וְהַכֶּסֶף וְאֵת כָּל-הַפְּלִים הַנִּמְצָאִים
בֵּית-יְהוָה וּבְאֶצְרוֹת בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ
6. Jr 51.8; Babylon נִפְלָה בְּבָל וַתִּשְׁבֵּר
7. Gn 2.4; תּוֹלְדוֹת *generations*; בָּרָא *create* אֱלֹהִים תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ בְּהִבְרָאָם
8. 1 Sa 4.11 [-ן] is due to *hatef-patah* under -ן, not to preterite] וְאֶרֶן אֱלֹהִים נִלְקַח
9. Dn 12.1 כָּל-הַנִּמְצָא כָּתוּב בְּסֵפֶר
10. Ps 37.28; חַסִּיד *pious, godly, kind* (each line is a clause) כִּי יְהוּה אֱהָב מִשְׁפָּט
וְלֹא-יֵעֹזב אֶת-חַסִּידוֹ
לְעוֹלָם נִשְׁמְרוּ
וְזָרַע רְשָׁעִים נִכְרַת:

145. Statistics vary from source to source. Statistics in this book are based on Dean Forbes & Francis I. Andersen, *Vocabulary of the Old Testament* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1975).

146. Some of *qal*'s relative frequency reflects some common verbs (אָמַר, הָיָה), but verbs that occur in *qal* and other stems tend to occur most frequently in *qal*.

- Zc 9.10b; קָשֶׁת *bow*; וְדַבֵּר *he will speak* (3ms D P+w); אָפֶס *end*; מְשָׁל *dominion, rule, realm* (each line is a clause) .11
 וּנְכַרְתָּה קָשֶׁת מִלְחָמָה
 וְדַבֵּר שְׁלוֹם לְגוֹיִם
 וּמְשָׁלוּ מִיָּם עַד-יָם וּמִנְהָר עַד-אֶפְסֵי-אֲרָץ:
- Ne 13.1; קָרָא *read*; יָבוֹא *he may enter* (3ms Q F); קָהָל *assembly*; Moses, Ammonite(s), Moabite(s) .12
 בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא נִקְרָא בְּסֵפֶר מֹשֶׁה בְּאֲזְנֵי הָעָם
 וַנִּמְצָא כְּתוּב בּוֹ
 אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יָבוֹא עִמָּנִי וּמֵאֲבֵי בְּקָהֶל הָאֱלֹהִים עַד-עוֹלָם:
- Ps 139.16; כָּל = כָּל with suffixes .13
 וְעַל-סִפְרָךְ כָּלָם יִכְתְּבוּ
- 1 Sa 1.13 (“her” refers to Hannah) .14
 וְקוֹלָהּ לֹא יִשְׁמַע
- Gn 9.11; מַבּוּל *flood* (only used of “Noah’s flood” and in Ps 29.10); שָׁחַת *destroy* (D); the speaker is YHWH .15
 וְלֹא-יִכְרַת כָּל-בָּשָׂר עוֹד מִמֵּי הַמַּבּוּל
 וְלֹא-יְהִיָּה עוֹד מַבּוּל לְשַׁחַת הָאָרֶץ:
- 2 Kg 22.13; בְּעַד *on behalf of*; עַל *concerning, about* .16
 דָּרְשׁוּ אֶת־יְהוָה בְּעַדִּי וּבְעַד־הָעָם וּבְעַד כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל
 עַל־דְּבַר־יְהוָה הַסֵּפֶר הַנִּמְצָא הַזֶּה ...
 עַל אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁמְעוּ אֲבֹתֵינוּ עַל־דְּבַר־יְהוָה הַסֵּפֶר הַזֶּה
- Ps 34.19a .17
 קָרוֹב יְהוָה לְנִשְׁבָּרֵי־לֵב
- Nu 9.13 .18
 וּנְכַרְתָּה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מֵעַמִּיָּה
- 1 Kg 2.10 .19
 וַיִּשְׁכַּב הָדָד עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּקְבֵּר בְּעִיר הָדָד:
- 1 Sa 4.22; אֵי *no*; גָּלָה *depart* .20
 וַתִּקְרָא לְנֶעֱר אֵי־כְבוֹד לֵאמֹר גָּלָה כְבוֹד מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל
 כִּי נִלְקַח אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים:
- Ps 37.17; זְרוּעַ *arm* (fem.); סָמַךְ *[to] support* [Each line is a clause.] .21
 כִּי זְרוּעוֹת רַשְׁעִים תִּשְׁבְּרֶנָּה
 וְסוּמְךָ צְדִיקִים יִהְיֶה:

18.8 Enrichment: Nifal vs. Hitpael?

A much-debated point of interpretation in Genesis pits the *nifal* and *hitpael* (Lesson 19) against each other—the translation of these verses has even been made a test of the orthodoxy of English translations. In YHWH’s covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the divine promise of widespread blessing is repeated five times—three times using the *nifal*, twice with the *hitpael*:

... וַנְּבָרְכֶךָ בְּכָל מִשְׁפַּחַת הָאָרֶץ:	... and in you all the clans of the earth <i>shall be blessed</i> (Gn 12.3b) [N]
... וַנְּבָרְכֶךָ בְּכָל־מִשְׁפַּחַת הָאָרֶץ וּבְזֶרְעֶךָ:	... and in you all the clans of the earth <i>shall be blessed</i> and in your seed (Gn 28.14) [N]
... וַנְּבָרְכֶךָ בּוֹ כָּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ	... and in him all nations of the earth <i>shall be blessed</i> (Gn 18.18) [N]
... וְהִתְבָּרְכוּ בְזֶרְעֶךָ כָּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ	... and in your seed all nations of the earth <i>shall bless themselves</i> (Gn 22.18) [Dt]
... וְהִתְבָּרְכוּ בְזֶרְעֶךָ כָּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ:	... and in your seed all nations of the earth <i>shall bless themselves</i> (Gn 26.4) [Dt]

The usual approaches to this apparent conundrum assume that all five statements repeat the same promise. They therefore either (1) assign priority to the *hitpael* forms of the promise, claiming that the promise is *middle/reflexive* (“shall bless themselves” i.e., by invoking the name

of Abraham—“May you be blessed [*or* May YHWH bless you] as he blessed Abraham!”); (2) claim that all five statements are *passive* (“shall be blessed in/through Abram”), since that is the primary function of the *nifal*; (3) suggest that there is no real difference between the two forms of the promise.

The first interpretation tends to deny that the *hitpael* can be passive; the second seeks to demonstrate that passivity is a normal function of the *hitpael* (as above). The third refuses to assign priority to one or the other.

Perhaps instead of choosing one of these interpretations as *the* “correct” intent of the divine promise, we should conclude that its different forms were intended to be complementary, and they record what are in fact two separate but interlinked promises. The promise(s) could mean that “clans/nations of the earth shall *be blessed* through the divine covenant with Abraham” (Abraham as a channel or means of blessing), and “shall *bless themselves* by or in Abraham” (invoking Abraham’s blessings on oneself or someone else). This approach allows the different stems to reflect two different—but related—outcomes of YHWH’s prior promise to bless and exalt Abram.

This example illustrates the importance of examining the context(s) within which a verbal root occurs in different stems, and of assuming that morphological differences are intentional and functional, rather than being merely arbitrary, stylistic, or mistaken.

Lesson 19

THE D-STEMS (*PIEL*, *PUAL*, *HITPAEL*)

Piel, *pual*, and *hitpael* are also called “D-stems”, since they all have a **doubled** (or “geminated”) **middle radical**. This *dageš forte* is the primary diagnostic of the D-stems. Like *qal*—but unlike *nifal*—D and Dp have no prefix in the imperative and infinitives; Dt (*hitpael*) always has an orthographic prefix. Further, these stems are relatively stable in form, since the first syllable of the root is closed due to the doubled middle radical.

Many verbs that occur in one or more D-stems also occur in *qal*. The function of the two sets of forms (Q & D) may not be related, just as the functions of *nifal* and *qal* are not necessarily related. Each verbal root-stem combination must be analyzed and evaluated on its own terms, on the basis of its occurrences and use(s) in the biblical text. There is no “pure” or “absolute” one-to-one relationship between them.

The main difference between *piel* and *pual*—in fact, the only difference in many forms—is the vowel under the first radical. If it is a *i*- or *a*-vowel (*hireq* or *pataḥ*) the verb is *piel*; if it is an *o*- or *u*-vowel (*qibbuṣ* or *holem*), it is *pual*. All forms of *hitpael* has a closed prefix syllable (e.g., -הִתְּ-, -הִתְּ-, -הִתְּ-).

19.1 Form

Perfect

	Person	Gender	D	Dp	Dt
Singular	1st	Common	מִשְׁלַחַי	מִשְׁלַחַי	הִתְּמִשְׁלַחַי
	2nd	Masc.	מִשְׁלַחְךָ	מִשְׁלַחְךָ	הִתְּמִשְׁלַחְךָ
		Fem.	מִשְׁלַחְךָ	מִשְׁלַחְךָ	הִתְּמִשְׁלַחְךָ
	3rd	Masc.	מִשְׁלַח	מִשְׁלַח	הִתְּמִשְׁלַח
		Fem.	מִשְׁלַחַהּ	מִשְׁלַחַהּ	הִתְּמִשְׁלַחַהּ
Plural	1st	Common	מִשְׁלַחְנוּ	מִשְׁלַחְנוּ	הִתְּמִשְׁלַחְנוּ
	2nd	Masc.	מִשְׁלַחְתֶּם	מִשְׁלַחְתֶּם	הִתְּמִשְׁלַחְתֶּם
		Fem.	מִשְׁלַחְתֵּן	מִשְׁלַחְתֵּן	הִתְּמִשְׁלַחְתֵּן
	3rd	Common	מִשְׁלַחוּ	מִשְׁלַחוּ	הִתְּמִשְׁלַחוּ

1. The **middle radical** is **doubled** (has *dageš forte*) in all forms of the D-stems.

N.B.: If the middle radical of a verbal form is a *b^gad-k⁶fat* letter, it will have *dageš lene* whenever the first radical is followed by silent *šewa* (e.g., וַיִּשְׁכַּב, and *he lay down*). This means that a *dageš* in the middle radical does not always mean that the verb is a D-form.

2. There is always a full vowel under the first radical in all forms of the D-stems.
3. Like *qal*, *piel* and *pual* have no prefix in the perfect (unlike *nifal*, *hifil*, *hofal*, *hitpael*, which have prefixes in all forms).

- The PGN indicators are the same in all stems.
- The closed syllable does not change; the **vowel after the first radical is consistent** throughout the perfect of each D stem, as are the prefix and first root syllable of *hitpael*:

מִשַׁל	D
מִשַׁלְךָ	Dp
הִתְמַשַׁל	Dt

Prefix Conjugations

Imperfect (= Preterite)						
	Person	Gender	D	Dp	Dt	
Singular	1st	Common	אֶמְשַׁל	אֶמְשַׁלְךָ	אֶתְמַשַׁל	
		Masc.	תִּמְשַׁל	תִּמְשַׁלְךָ	תִּתְמַשַׁל	
	2nd	Fem.	תִּמְשַׁלִּי	תִּמְשַׁלִּיךָ	תִּתְמַשַׁלִּי	
		3rd	Masc.	יִמְשַׁל	יִמְשַׁלְךָ	יִתְמַשַׁל
	Plural	1st	Common	נִמְשַׁל	נִמְשַׁלְךָ	נִתְמַשַׁל
			Masc.	תִּמְשַׁלוּ	תִּמְשַׁלְוּ	תִּתְמַשַׁלוּ
2nd		Fem.	תִּמְשַׁלְנָה	תִּמְשַׁלְנָה	תִּתְמַשַׁלְנָה	
		3rd	Masc.	יִמְשַׁלוּ	יִמְשַׁלוּ	יִתְמַשַׁלוּ
		Fem.	תִּמְשַׁלְנָה	תִּמְשַׁלְנָה	תִּתְמַשַׁלְנָה	

- The **middle radical** is **doubled** in all forms of the D-stems (see note above).
- Piel* and *pual* have the same prefix vowel (*šewa*) in imperfect, preterite (and participle; below); *hitpael* uses the same prefix vowel (*hireq*) throughout its conjugations:

יִמְשַׁל	D, Dp
יִתְמַשַׁל	Dt

- In all forms of *piel* except the perfect, the **first radical** is followed by *pataḥ*.
- In all forms of *pual*, the **first radical** is followed by *qibbuṣ* (usually) or *holem* (if the middle radical is a guttural or *reš*).
- The PGN prefixes replace the initial -הּ of *hitpael* (as in the H-stems, below).
- The preterite of all three stems is identical to the imperfect (with prefixed -ן plus *dages forte*). The exception is the -י prefix (3ms, 3mp), which lacks the *dages*:

וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים	And God <i>spoke</i> with him, ... (Gn 17.3)
וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה בְּעַם אֶת הַנְּחָשִׁים הַשָּׂרְפִים	And YHWH <i>sent</i> among the people fiery serpents,
וַיִּנְשְׁבוּ אֹתָהֶם	and they <i>bit</i> the people (Nu 21.6)

Imperative

	Person	Gender	D	Dt
Sg.	2nd	Masc.	מִשַׁל	הִתְמַשַׁל
		Fem.	מִשַׁלִּי	הִתְמַשַׁלִּי
Pl.	2nd	Masc.	מִשַׁלוּ	הִתְמַשַׁלוּ
		Fem.	מִשַׁלְנָה	הִתְמַשַׁלְנָה

1. The imperative of *piel* looks exactly like the imperfect without the prefix.
2. The **הִתְ-** prefix of *hitpael* occurs in all forms except imperfect, preterite, and participle (below).
3. *Pual* does not occur in the imperative.

Infinitives

	D	Dt
Construct	מִשֵּׁל	הִתְּמִשֵּׁל
Absolute	מִשֵּׁל	הִתְּמִשֵּׁל

1. Both infinitives often look exactly like ms imperative in *piel* and *hitpael*; context will determine which conjugation is being used.
2. *Pual* does not occur as infinitive construct.
3. *Pual* occurs once as infinitive absolute (נִגְבַּתִּי נִגְבַּת, *I was surely stolen*; Gn 40.15).

Participles

	Gender	D	Dp	Dt
Sg.	Masc.	מִמְשֵׁל	מִמְשָׁל	מִתְּמִשֵּׁל
	Fem.	מִמְשָׁלָה	מִמְשָׁלָה	מִתְּמִשָּׁלָה
Pl.	Masc.	מִמְשָׁלִים	מִמְשָׁלִים	מִתְּמִשָּׁלִים
	Fem.	מִמְשָׁלוֹת	מִמְשָׁלוֹת	מִתְּמִשָּׁלוֹת

1. Every form begins with **מִ-**, which is the participial prefix for all stems except *qal* and *nifal*.
2. The prefix vowel is the same as for the imperfect and preterite:

- מִ **D, Dp**
 - מִתְּמִ- **Dt**

N.B.: When the middle radical is followed by vocal *šewa*, the *dageš forte* is often missing from certain consonants, especially **ל**, **מ**, and **ק**. The middle radical of **הלל**, *praise*, for example, is never doubled when followed by a half-vowel, although it is written with two *ls* in English: *Halleluiah*.

הַלְלֵי-יְהוָה *Praise* YAH! (Ps 150.1)
 וּבְקִשׁוּ אֶת-יְהוָה ... and *seek* YHWH! (Ho 3.5)

Summary of the *Hitpael*

1. Due to its prefix (**הִתְ-**, **יָהִ-**, etc.), some forms of Dt differ from those given above.
2. If the verbal root begins with a *sibilant* (ז ס צ ש צ ש), the **ת** of the prefix *metathesizes* (switches places with) the first letter of the verbal root (e.g., וְאִשְׁתְּמַר < (שמר).¹⁴⁷
3. If the verbal root begins with **צ** (e.g., **צדק**), the **ת** of the prefix metathesizes with the **צ**, and partially assimilates to it, becoming **ט** (e.g., הִתְּצַדֵּק).

147. In the only I-ז verb in *hitpael*, the **ת** of the prefix assimilates to, and doubles the **ז** (הִזְזִי, Is 1.16; this parsing is disputed).

4. If the verbal root begins with a *dental* (ד ט ת), the ת of the prefix assimilates to, and thus doubles, it (e.g., מִדַּבֵּר = m.s. *hitpael* Ptc of דבר < **mitdabbēr*).¹⁴⁸
5. The relatively frequent verbal root שחה, “bow, honor, do obeisance; worship”¹⁴⁹ (170x) occurs in forms that begin -הִשָּׁתַּח, etc., which have traditionally been parsed as *hitpael* of שחה, with the expected metathesis of the ת and ש: הִשָּׁתַּחַה, *he bowed*;¹⁵⁰ its participial prefix is גו-. These are all the forms of this verb in Biblical Hebrew (note the subtle difference between **3ms preterite** and **3mp preterite**, which are the most frequent forms):

PGN	Perfect		Imperfect		Preterite		Imv.
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	
1c	הִשָּׁתַּחֲוִיתִי			נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה	וַאֲשַׁתַּחֲוֶה	וְנִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה	הִשָּׁתַּחֲוֶה הִשָּׁתַּחֲוִי
2m	הִשָּׁתַּחֲוִיתָ	הִשָּׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם	תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה				
2fs							
3m	הִשָּׁתַּחֲוֶה	הִשָּׁתַּחֲוּוּ הִשָּׁתַּחֲוּוּ	יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה	יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ	וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ	וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ וַתִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ	
3f							
NC	הִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּת						
Ptc ms	מִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה						
mp	מִשְׁתַּחֲוִים						

19.2 D-Stem Diagnostics

This chart summarizes the main clues for recognizing a D or Dp form.

Conjugation	Diagnostics	Example	Parsing
Perfect	<i>i/e</i> -vowel under I (D)	כָּבַד	3ms D P
	<i>u/o</i> -vowel under I (Dp)	כָּבַדְךָ	3ms Dp P
Imperative & Infinitive	<i>a</i> -vowel under I (D, Dt);	כָּבֹדוּ	mp D V
	these forms not in Dp	כָּבֹד	D NC
Imperfect	<i>šewa</i> under prefix	יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה (Dp) יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה (D)	3ms Dp F
	<i>dages forte</i> in middle radical	יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה (Dp) יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה (D)	2/3fp D F
Preterite	<i>šewa</i> under prefix	וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ (Dp) וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ (D)	3ms D Pr
Participle	<i>šewa</i> under prefix	מִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה	mp D Ptc

148. *in front of a transliterated form means that the form is a hypothetical reconstruction.

149. שחה is often glossed “bow [down]”, but this does not fit a number of contexts in which it describes a person who is already bowing (e.g., 2 Sa 14.4, 22; 1 Kg 1.31; 1 Chr 21.21; 29.20; 2 Chr 7.3), or who cannot “bow” because they are, e.g., in bed (1 Kg 1.47).

150. Although this parsing has been challenged (based on Ugaritic), it remains the simplest interpretation of the forms.

1. All D forms have a **doubled middle radical**.
2. The only forms of D & Dp that have a stem prefix are imperfect, preterite and participle; the **prefix vowel is always a half-vowel**.
3. Dt always has a prefixed stem syllable; the prefix syllable is either הִתְ- (P, V, NC), יִתְ- (F, Pr), or נִתְ- (Ptc).
4. *Comparing the Stems*. This chart reveals the differences and similarities between the various stems. Note the the similarity between the D-stems as a group:

Conjugation	PGN	Q	N	D	Dp	Dt
Perfect	3ms	כָּוּשַׁל	נָכַוְשַׁל	כָּוּשַׁל	כָּוּשַׁל	הִתְכָּוְשַׁל
Imperfect	3ms	יִכְוֹשַׁל	יִכְוֹשַׁל	יִכְוֹשַׁל	יִכְוֹשַׁל	יִתְכְּוֹשַׁל
Preterite	3ms	וַיִּכְוֹשַׁל	וַיִּכְוֹשַׁל	*וַיִּכְוֹשַׁל	*וַיִּכְוֹשַׁל	וַיִּתְכְּוֹשַׁל
Imperative	2ms	כָּוֹשַׁל	הִכְוֹשַׁל	כָּוֹשַׁל		הִתְכָּוֹשַׁל
Inf. Const.		כָּוֹשַׁל	הִכְוֹשַׁל	כָּוֹשַׁל		הִתְכָּוֹשַׁל
Inf. Abs.		כְּוֹשַׁל	הִכְוֹשַׁל	כְּוֹשַׁל	כְּוֹשַׁל	הִתְכָּוֹשַׁל
Participle	ms	כָּוֹשֵׁל	נִכְוֹשֵׁל	כָּוֹשֵׁל	כְּוֹשֵׁל	מִתְכָּוֵשֵׁל

*The *yod* prefix is not doubled in *piel* and *pual* preterite—the other PGN prefixes are doubled, just as in *qal*, *nifal*, and *hitpael*.

19.3 Function of the D-Stems

19.3.1 Piel (HBI §2.1.4)

Piel is an **active** stem. Although the function of verbs in the *piel* is often related to the *qal* of the same stem (if it occurs), the *piel* is not primarily derived from or dependent upon the function of the *qal*, but has its own identify and function, which must be established *for each verb*.

1. If a verbal root occurs in both Q and D, the *piel* often describes the action that **causes** or brings about the state or condition described by the *qal*, especially if the verb is stative in *qal* (1 Ch 29.25; Lam 4.6 is for comparison of both function and form). This use of *piel* is often called “factive” or “resultative” because it is said to describe the action that results in or brings about the state.

וַיִּגְדַּל עֵוֹן בְּתַעֲמֵי מַחֲטָאת סֹדִם	The guilt of the daughter of my people <i>is greater</i> than the sin of Sodom (Lam 4.6; 3ms Q Pr).
וַיִּגְדַּל יְהוָה אֶת־שְׁלֹמֹה	Y ^{HWH} <i>exalted</i> Solomon ... (1 Ch 29.25; 3ms D Pr).
בָּנִים גָּדַלְתִּי	I <i>raised</i> sons ... (Is 1.2; 1cs D P).
טוֹב־לִי כִי־עֲנִיתִי לְמַעַן אֶלְמַד חֻקֶּיךָ:	It is good for me that I have humbled so that I <i>might learn</i> your statutes (Ps 119.71; 1cs Q F).
טוֹב־אֵתָּה וּמְטִיב לְמַדְנִי חֻקֶּיךָ:	You are good and [you] do good; <i>teach</i> me your statutes (Ps 119.68; ms D V + 1cs).
וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־הָעָם וַיְכַבְּסוּ שְׂמֹלֹתָם	He <i>sanctified</i> the people and they <i>washed</i> their clothes (Ex 19.14; 3ms D Pr).
וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־הָעָם הִתְקַדְּשׁוּ	Joshua said to the people, “ <i>Sanctify yourselves</i> ” (Jos 3.5).

2. Many verbs, especially those that occur only or primarily in *piel*, sound merely “active” when glossed in English, without any apparent causative function. This is especially true for verbs that occur in *piel* but not in *qal*, and for so-called “denominative” verbs. Denominative verbs are those that supposedly developed from nouns (e.g., $\text{הִבְרָ} > \text{דְּבַר}$), a claim that

generally means that either there is no parallel verb in another Semitic language, or that the noun is more frequent than the verb. We do not yet know how the lexicon of these roots developed (i.e., from verb to noun, or *vice versa*).

וַיִּמֶן יְהוָה דָּג גָּדוֹל לְבָלַע אֶת־יוֹנָה	YHWH <i>appointed</i> a great fish to swallow Jonah (Jon 2.1; 3ms D Pr).
וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֶל־כָּל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	Moses <i>spoke</i> these words to all the sons of Israel (Nu 14.39; 3ms D Pr).
וַיְדַבֵּר שְׁלֹשָׁת אֲלָפִים מִשְׁלַל	He <i>spoke</i> 3000 proverbs (1 Kgs 5.12).
וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־הָעָם וַיְכַבְּסוּ שְׂמֹלֹתָם	He <i>sanctified</i> the people and they <i>washed</i> their clothes (Ex 19.14; cf. above).
וְאֶת־הָאֹבֶדֶת לֹא בִקְשָׁתָם	... and the perishing one [female] you <i>did not seek</i> (Ezk 34.4).
אֲזַמֵּר לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	I <i>will sing</i> to YHWH, Israel's God (Jg 5.3).
וְלֹא־יָכְלוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים לַעֲמֹד לְשָׁרֵת	The priests could not stand <i>to serve</i> (1 Kgs 8.11).
וַיִּגְדַּל עֹון בְּתַעֲמוֹ מַחַטָּאת סוֹדֵם	The guilt of the daughter of my people <i>has become greater</i> than the sin of Sodom (Lam 4.6).

19.3.2 Pual (HBI §2.1.5)

Pual is the **passive** of *piel*. Many *puals* are participles (40%), perhaps because passive verbs are basically descriptive. These participles often function as adjectives (e.g., Pr 27.5).

וְשׁוֹמֵר תּוֹכַחַת יִכָּבֵד:	But whoever regards reproof <i>shall be honored</i> (Pr 13.18).
וְאֶפְרַיִם עֲנֻלָּה מִלְמֻדָּה	And Ephraim is a <i>trained</i> [taught] heifer (Ho 10.11)
וַיִּבְקַשׁ הַדְּבָר וַיִּמָּצֵא	The matter [plot] <i>was searched out</i> and found (Est 2.23)
... יְהִי מְבֹרָךְ שֵׁם יְהוָה ...	May YHWH's name <i>be blessed</i> ...
שֵׁם יְהוָה מְהֻלָּל:	... YHWH's name is <i>to be praised</i> (Ps 113.2a ... 3b)
טוֹבָה תּוֹכַחַת מְנֻלָּה מֵאֲהָבָה מְסֻתְרָת:	Better an <i>uncovered</i> rebuke than <i>hidden</i> love (Pr 27.5).

19.3.3 Hitpael (HBI §2.1.6)

Much like *nifal*, *hitpael* is **passive, reflexive, or “reciprocal”**. These functions vary from verb to verb, and even from one text to another. Although the *hitpael* occurs more frequently than either *pual* or *hofal* (below), it is relatively uncommon (only twenty-two verbs occur more than ten times in *hitpael*). [In Ps 2.2, the parallel *hitpael* and *nifal* are apparently reflexive and reciprocal, respectively.]

וְהִיא מִתְקַדְּשֶׁת מִטְמֵאָתָהּ	She <i>cleansed herself</i> from her uncleanness (2 Sam 11.4)
וַיִּתְקַשֵּׁר יְהוּא ... אֶל־יֹרָם	Jehu <i>conspired</i> ... against Joram (2 Kgs 9.14).
וְאַבְנֵר הָיָה מְתַחַזֵּק בְּבֵית שָׂאוּל	Now Abner <i>was strengthening</i> [his position] in the household of Saul (2 Sam 3.6).
וַיִּתְצַבּוּ מְלָכֵי־אָרֶץ וְרוֹזְנִים נֹסְדוּ־יַחַד	The kings of the earth <i>take their stand</i> , and the rulers counsel [<i>nifal</i>] together (Ps 2.2).
אִשָּׁה יִרְאֵת־יְהוָה הִיא תִתְהַלָּל	A woman who fears YHWH —she shall <i>be praised</i> (Pr 31.30; final <i>games</i> is due to pausal lengthening).

Compare the *qal, piel, pual* and *hitpael* of גָּדַל (Ps 144.12 is the only *pual* occurrence of גָּדַל):

רַק הַכִּסֵּא אֲנִיגָדַל מִמּוֹדָד	Only [with regard to] the throne <i>am I greater</i> than you (Gn 41.40); 1cs Q F
בָּנִים גָּדַלְתִּי	Sons I <i>have raised</i> (Is 1.2); 1cs D P
כִּי עַל-כֹּל יִתְגַּדֵּל	For he will <i>exalt himself</i> over all (Dn 11.37); 3ms Dt F
בְּנֵינוּ כְּנֹטְעִים מִגְּדָלִים בְּנְעוּרֵיהֶם	Let our sons be like <i>full-grown</i> plants in their youth (Ps 144.12a); mp Dp Ptc

N.B.: It is not uncommon to read—especially in older works—that the D-stems are emphatic or intensifying. This “intensifying” function has never been demonstrated, and has, in fact, been disproved, so that today we discuss the “functions” (plural) of the *piel*, etc., as illustrated above.

19.4 Frequency

There are 8,506 D-forms in the Bible (12% of all verbal forms); *piel* is by far the most common of the three.

D	6,879	9.3%
Dp	450	0.6%
Dt	1,177	1.6%
Total	8,506	11.5%

19.5 Concepts

denominative	factitive	passive	pual	reflexive
D-stem	hitpael	piel	reciprocal	resultative

19.6 Vocabulary

<i>cover</i> (Q); <i>atone</i> [for] (D)	כָּפַד .284	<i>kneel</i> (I: Q); <i>bless</i> (II: D)	בָּרַךְ .276
<i>learn</i> (Q); <i>teach</i> (D)	לָמַד .285	<i>look for, seek, search</i> (D; not in <i>qal</i>)	בָּקַשׁ .277
<i>hasten, act quickly</i> (D) [often in hendiadys: “do X quickly”]	מָהֵר .286	<i>say, speak</i> (D; in Q only as ptc.)	דָּבַר .278
<i>capture, seize</i>	לָכַד .287	<i>living, alive</i> (adj.); <i>life, lifetime</i> (pl. n.)	חַי חַיִּים .279
<i>above</i> (prp., also מִמַּעַל); <i>higher</i> (adv., usually מִמַּעְלָה)	מִמַּעַל .288	<i>wrath, anger; heat</i>	חִמָּה .280
<i>so that not</i> (i.e., פֶּן is a negative telic particle, trad., “lest”)	פֶּן .289	<i>account, regard, value, reckon</i>	חָשַׁב .281
<i>remain, be left over</i> (N); <i>spare, leave</i> [behind] (H)	שָׁאַר .290	<i>young sheep: young ram</i> (m.; rarely written as כֶּשֶׁב); <i>ewe-lamb</i> (f.; also כֶּשֶׁבָה)	כֶּבֶשׂ כֶּבֶשֶׁה .282
<i>serve, minister to</i> (D)	שָׁרַת .291	<i>strength, power</i>	כֹּחַ .283

19.7 Exercises

After studying the characteristics of the D-stems, gloss these sentences and clauses, parsing the verbs.

1. אִם-יִמְצָא הַגָּנֵב יִשְׁלֵם שְׁנָיִם: Ex 22.6; גָּנַב thief; שָׁלַם [re]pay (D)
2. וַיֹּאמֶר חֲטָאתִי עָתָה כִּבְדַנִּי נָא נָגֵד זְקֵנֵי-עַמִּי וַיִּגְדֵּר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְשׁוֹב עִמִּי וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתִי לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: 1 Sam 15.30; חָטָא sin; שָׁחָה worship (Dt); שׁוּב return (2ms Q V)
3. וַיִּדְעֶתְם כִּי שְׁלַחְתִּי אֵלֵיכֶם אֶת הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת לִהְיוֹת בְּרִיתִי אִתְּלוּי אָמַר יְהוָה צָבָאוֹת: Mal 2.4; לָּהֵיוֹת to be (Q NC < היה + ל); אָח (2nd time) with; לֵוִי
4. אֶל-תְּהַלֵּל בְּיוֹם מָחָר Pr 27.1; הִלַּל boast (Dt); מָחָר tomorrow
5. וַיִּקְרָא לְמֹשֶׁה וּלְאַהֲרֹן לֵילָה וַיֹּאמֶר ... עֲבְדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה כְּדַבְּרְכֶם: Ex 12.31 (the speaker is Pharaoh); מֹשֶׁה, אַהֲרֹן
6. וַיִּבְקֶשׂ הַדָּבָר וַיִּמְצָא וַיַּחֲלוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם עַל-עֵץ וַיִּפְתַּח בְּסֹפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ: Est 2.23; תָּלָה impale (trad., hang)
7. יַהֲלִלוּ אֶת-שֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי הוּא צָוָה וַנְּבָרָאוּ: Ps 148.5; צִוָּה he commanded (3ms D P); בָּרָא create
8. וַנְּתַתִּים בְּיַד מִבְּקָשֵׁי נַפְשָׁם וַיִּבְדֹּד נְבוֹכַדְרֶאצַּר מֶלֶךְ-בָּבֶל וַיִּבְדַּע-עַבְדָּיו Jr 46.26; וַנְּתַתִּים and I will give/put them (1cs Q P < נתן + 3mp + ו); בְּיַד in the hand of; when ק precedes vocal šewa it usually lacks dageš forte
9. הַלֹּא-זֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְנוּ אֵלֶיךָ בְּמִצְרַיִם ... Ex 14.12; Egypt
10. לִפְנֵי-שְׂכָלוֹ יַהֲלֵל-אִישׁ Pr 12.8; לְפִי according to; שִׂכֹּל prudence
11. וַעֲבָדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה כִּי אָתָּה אַתָּם מִבְּקָשֵׁים וַיִּגְרַשׁ אֶתְּם מֵאֶת פְּנֵי פְרַעֲה: Ex 10.11; אָתָּה it/that (dir. obj. + 3fs) [i.e., the act of serving YHWH]; גִּרַשׁ drive out/away [D]; מֵאֶת from [את + מן] (Pharaoh); one clause per line; the first line is a quotation.
12. וַיִּרְא דָּוִד כִּי-יָצָא שְׂאוּל לִבְקֶשׂ אֶת-נַפְשׁוֹ וְדָוִד בְּמַדְבַּר-זִיף בַּחֲרָשָׁה: 1 Sam 23.15; וַיִּרְא and he saw (3ms Q Pr < ראה); דָּוִד, שְׂאוּל, זִיף, חֲרָשָׁה
13. וַיַּתְּהַלֵּךְ חֲנוּךְ אֶת-הָאֱלֹהִים וַאֲיִנֹנוּ כִּי-לָקַח אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים: Gn 5.24; וַאֲיִנֹנוּ and he was not (אין + 3ms suffix); אֵנוֹחַ
14. וּמִלְטִי אֶת-נַפְשִׁי וְאֶת-נַפְשׁ בְּנֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה: 1 Kgs 1.12; מָלַט escape (N), רִצַּע (D); נָתַן is speaking to Bathsheba; סֹלֹמֹן
15. וּבְקָשׁוֹ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם וְאֵת דָּוִד מִלְכָּם Ho 3.5
16. וַיִּלְךְ יְהוָה כְּאֲשֶׁר כָּלָה לְדַבֵּר אֶל-אַבְרָהָם וַיִּלְךְ he went (3ms Q Pr < הלך); כְּאֲשֶׁר when; כָּלָה finish (D); אַבְרָהָם
17. וְלֹא בִקְשׁוּהוּ בְּכָל-זֹאת: Ho 7.10
18. מִצָּא עַבְדְּךָ אֶת-לְבוֹ לְהִתְפַּלֵּל אֵלֶיךָ אֶת-הַתְּפִלָּה הַזֹּאת: 2 Sam 7.27; פָּלַל pray (Dt); תְּפִלָּה prayer
19. וַיִּבְרְכֶם יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וַיִּשְׁלַחֶם וַיִּלְכוּ אֶל-אֶהֱלִיָּהִם: Josh 22.6; וַיִּלְכוּ and they went (3mp Q Pr < הלך)

Ps 113.1–3; יהי *let/may it be, it should/must be*
(3ms Q J < היה); מִזְרַח *dawn/east*; מְבוֹא *entrance*;
the jussive (יהי) is “distributed” to the last line as
well

.20 הִלְלוּ יְהוָה
הִלְלוּ עַבְדֵי יְהוָה
הִלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה:
יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבָרָךְ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם:
מִמִּזְרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ עַד־מְבוֹאוֹ מִהַלְלֵי שֵׁם יְהוָה:

Josh 23.14

.21 לֹא־נִפְלַד דְּבַר אֶחָד מִכָּל הַדְּבָרִים הַטּוֹבִים
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם עֲלֵיכֶם

Am 2.14–15; מְנוּס *flight* [i.e., the ability to flee];
קָל *swift*; חֲזָק *strong*; מִלֹּט *escape* (N), *deliver*,
rescue (D); אֲמִיץ *strengthen* (D); תִּפֹּשׂ *use, wield*;
קֶשֶׁת [a] *bow*; רִכָּב *ride*; each line is a clause

.22 וְאָבַד מְנוּס מִקָּל
וְחֹזֵק לֹא־יִאֲמִיץ כַּחַד
וְנִבְוֵר לֹא־יִמְלֹט נַפְשׁוֹ:
וְתִפֹּשׂ הַקֶּשֶׁת לֹא יַעֲמֹד
וְקָל בְּהַגְלִיּוֹ לֹא יִמְלֹט
וְרִכָּב הַסּוּס לֹא יִמְלֹט נַפְשׁוֹ:

1 Ch 17.27; הוֹאֵלֶת *you have been pleased* (2ms
H P < יאל); לְהִיּוֹת *to be* (Q NC < היה + ל)

.23 וַעֲתָה הוֹאֵלֶת לְבָרָךְ אֶת־בַּיִת עַבְדְּךָ
לְהִיּוֹת לְעוֹלָם לְפָנֶיךָ
כִּי־אָתָּה יְהוָה בֵּרַכְתָּ וּמְבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם:

19.8 Enrichment: The Nature of D/Piel

There are two D-forms in Ps 29, both occur in the second of two parallel lines, both parallel *qal* verbs. The *qal-piel* parallel of the same verbal root (Ps 29.5) is often cited as proof that the second of two parallel lines is more “intense” (since the *piel* was said to be an intensifying stem), or that it “focuses” or “extends” the content of the first line (see §19.4/N.B.).

קוֹל יְהוָה שִׁבַּר אֲרָזִים YHWH’s voice *breaks* cedars,
וַיִּשְׁבַּר יְהוָה אֶת־אֲרָזֵי הַלְבָּנוֹן: And YHWH *breaks* Lebanon’s cedars (Ps 29.5).

It is true that Ps 29.5b is more specific than 29.5a, but it is more specific (or focused) because the cedars are identified more specifically as “Lebanon’s cedars”, *not* because of the stem of the predicate. Nor should we necessarily read the act of smashing Lebanon’s cedars as somehow more violent, or more destructive, or more *anything*—at least *not on the basis of the verbal stem*. That reading must come from the broader context, possibly even from the use of “cedars of Lebanon” in Biblical Hebrew (the phrase occurs only five times).

At the end of the psalm (29.11), the two stems are again parallel, but this time in different verbal roots. The point, however, is not that the blessing of peace (11b) is somehow greater than the gift of strength (11a); they are coordinate blessings.

עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן יְהוָה YHWH *gives* strength to his people;
יְהוָה יְבָרַךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם: He *blesses* his people with peace (Ps 29.11).

Lesson 20

THE H-STEMS (*HIFIL*, *HOFAL*)

The *hifil* (H) and *hofal* (Hp) are also called “H-stems”, since they have a **prefixed** -ה in all conjugations except the imperfect and preterite (where the usual PGN prefixes replace the prefixed -ה, as they do in the *hitpael*), and participle (where the participial prefix -נִ- replaces the -ה). This -ה is the primary diagnostic of the H-stems. Like *nifal* and *hitpael* (but unlike *qal*, *piel*, *pual*), the H-stems have a prefix in every form.

The main difference between *hifil* and *hofal* is the **prefix vowel**. If it is *hireq* (perfect only) or *pataḥ* (all other conjugations) the verb is *hifil*; if it is *qameṣ hiatuf* (usually) or *qibbuṣ* (some verbs, e.g., most forms of שָׁלַח), the form is *hofal*. A second difference is the vowel after the **second radical**: in *hofal*, it is always an *a*-vowel (*pataḥ* or *qameṣ*); in *hifil* it is usually an *i/e*-vowel (*hireq*, *ṣere*, *segol*).

20.1 Form

Perfect

No.	Person	Gender	H	Hp
Singular	1st	Common	הִמְשַׁלְתִּי	הִמְשַׁלְתִּי
		Masc.	הִמְשַׁלְתָּ	הִמְשַׁלְתָּ
	2nd	Fem.	הִמְשַׁלְתְּ	הִמְשַׁלְתְּ
		Masc.	הִמְשַׁלְתָּ	הִמְשַׁלְתָּ
	3rd	Masc.	הִמְשַׁלְתָּ	הִמְשַׁלְתָּ
		Fem.	הִמְשַׁלְתְּ	הִמְשַׁלְתְּ
Plural	1st	Common	הִמְשַׁלְנוּ	הִמְשַׁלְנוּ
		Masc.	הִמְשַׁלְתֶּם	הִמְשַׁלְתֶּם
	2nd	Fem.	הִמְשַׁלְתֶּן	הִמְשַׁלְתֶּן
		Common	הִמְשַׁלְתֶּם	הִמְשַׁלְתֶּם
	3rd	Masc.	הִמְשַׁלְתֶּם	הִמְשַׁלְתֶּם
		Fem.	הִמְשַׁלְתֶּן	הִמְשַׁלְתֶּן

1. The **prefixed** -ה occurs in **all** forms of the perfect.
2. The primary **diagnostic** for *hifil* and *hofal* perfect is the prefixed -ה and its vowel.
3. The **first radical** is always followed by silent *ṣewa*, so that the prefixes of the *hifil* and *hofal* form a closed syllable with the first radical (cf. *nifal* perfect & participle, and *qal* imperfect & preterite).
4. Like *nifal* and *hitpael*, the H-stems have a prefix in all forms.
5. The long *hireq* of the *hifil* occurs only in forms that do not have a consonantal ending.
6. The PGN indicators are the same in all stems.

Prefix Conjugations

				Imperfect		Preterite	
		Person	Gender	H	Hp	H	Hp
Singular	1st	Common		אֶמְשַׁל	אֶמְשַׁל	וְאֶמְשַׁל	וְאֶמְשַׁל
	2nd	Masc.		תִּמְשַׁל	תִּמְשַׁל	וְתִמְשַׁל	וְתִמְשַׁל
		Fem.		תִּמְשִׁילִי	תִּמְשִׁילִי	וְתִמְשִׁילִי	וְתִמְשִׁילִי
	3rd	Masc.		יִמְשַׁל	יִמְשַׁל	וַיִּמְשַׁל	וַיִּמְשַׁל
		Fem.		תִּמְשִׁיל	תִּמְשִׁיל	וְתִמְשִׁיל	וְתִמְשִׁיל
	Plural	1st	Common		נִמְשַׁל	נִמְשַׁל	וְנִמְשַׁל
2nd		Masc.		תִּמְשִׁילוּ	תִּמְשִׁלוּ	וְתִמְשִׁילוּ	וְתִמְשִׁלוּ
		Fem.		תִּמְשִׁלְנָה	תִּמְשִׁלְנָה	וְתִמְשִׁלְנָה	וְתִמְשִׁלְנָה
3rd		Masc.		יִמְשִׁלוּ	יִמְשִׁלוּ	וַיִּמְשִׁלוּ	וַיִּמְשִׁלוּ
		Fem.		תִּמְשִׁלְנָה	תִּמְשִׁלְנָה	וְתִמְשִׁלְנָה	וְתִמְשִׁלְנָה

1. The PGN prefixes replace the -הּ of the perfect.
2. The **prefix vowel** is *pataḥ* in all forms of H except the perfect.
3. The **prefix vowel** is *qameṣ ḥatuf* in all forms of Hp.
4. The **first radical** is followed by *šlent šewa* in all forms of H and Hp.
5. The preterite of both stems is like the imperfect, with prefixed -וּ and *dageš forte* in the PGN prefix. *Hifil* preterites without PGN endings have *šere* rather than *hireq yod* after the second radical (1cs, 2ms, 3ms, 3fs, 1cp):

וַיִּבְדֵּל אֱלֹהִים בֵּין הָאֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ:	And God <i>divided</i> the light from the dark [... a separation/division between ...] (Gn 1.4).
וַתִּגְדַּל חַסְדְּךָ ...	And you <i>have exalted</i> your lovingkindness ... (Gn 19.19)
יִגְדִּיל תּוֹרָה וַיִּאֲדִיר	He <i>will exalt</i> and <i>make glorious</i> [the] teaching (Is 42.21b).

Imperative & Infinitives

The imperatives and infinitives resemble the imperfect, except that the prefix -הּ replaces the -תּ PGN prefix (cf. *nifal*):

		Gender	H	Hp	N
Sg.	Masc.		הִמְשַׁל		הִמְשַׁל
	Fem.		הִמְשִׁילִי		הִמְשִׁילִי
Pl.	Masc.		הִמְשִׁילוּ		הִמְשִׁילוּ
	Fem.		הִמְשִׁלְנָה		הִמְשִׁלְנָה
NC			הִמְשִׁיל		
NA			הִמְשַׁל	הִמְשַׁל	

1. *Hofal* imperative occurs only twice in the Bible: (וְהִשְׁכַּבָּה, *Be laid down!* (Ezk 32.19); הִפְנוּ, *Be turned back!* (Jr 49.8)).
2. The **prefix vowel** is *pataḥ* in *hifil* (as in imperfect, preterite, and participle).

3. *Hifil* infinitive absolute and imperative are identical.
4. *Hofal* infinitives construct are extremely rare, and never occur in the strong verb.¹⁵¹

Participles

	Gender	H	Hp	Dp
Sg.	Masc.	מְּוֹשֵׁל	מְּוֹשֵׁל	מְּוֹשֵׁל
	Fem.	מְּוֹשֵׁלָה	מְּוֹשֵׁלָה	מְּוֹשֵׁלָה
Pl.	Masc.	מְּוֹשֵׁלִים	מְּוֹשֵׁלִים	מְּוֹשֵׁלִים
	Fem.	מְּוֹשֵׁלוֹת	מְּוֹשֵׁלוֹת	מְּוֹשֵׁלוֹת

1. Every form begins with **ו-**, which is the participial prefix for all stems except *qal* and *nifal* (cf. D, Dp, Dt, above); the first radical is followed by silent *šewa*, so that the prefix syllable is closed.
2. The **prefix vowel** is *pataḥ* in H and *qameṣ ḥatuf* in Hp.
3. The vowel after the second radical is always *qameṣ* in Hp participle (cf. Dp).

20.2 Summary of H-stem Diagnostics

This chart summarizes the main clues for identifying a H-stem form.

Diagnostics				
Conjugation		Prefix	Example	Parsing
Perfect		-הַ	הִכְבִּיר	3ms H P <i>he honored</i>
			הִכְבֵּר	3ms Hp P <i>he was honored</i>
Imperative	-הַ	-	הִכְבֵּר	2ms H V <i>Honor [someone]!</i>
			הִכְבִּירוּ	2mp H V <i>Honor [someone]!</i>
Infinitives		-הַ	הִכְבִּיר	H NC <i>[to] honor</i>
Imperfect & Preterite	PGN prefix	-יַ	יִכְבִּיר	3ms H F <i>he will honor</i>
			וַיִּכְבֵּר	3ms H Pr <i>and he honored</i>
			וַתִּכְבֵּר	3fs Hp Pr <i>and she honored</i>
Participle	-וֹ	-וֹ	מְּכַבֵּיר	ms H Ptc <i>one how honors</i>
			מְּכַבֵּירֹת	fp H Ptc <i>they who honor</i>
			מְּכַבְּרִים	mp Hp Ptc <i>they who are honored</i>

1. All forms have a **prefix**—either **-הַ** (perfect, imperative, infinitives), **-וֹ** (participle), or **PGN** (imperfect, preterite).
2. *Hifil* perfect has *hireq* as prefix vowel; all other conjugations of H have *pataḥ*.
3. The “stem vowel” (after the second radical of the root) is either an *-i-* or an *-e-* vowel in all forms of H, and an *-a-* vowel in all forms of Hp.
4. All forms of Hp have *qameṣ ḥatuf* as their **prefix** vowel.
5. *Comparing the Stems*. The following chart reveals differences and similarities between the seven stems. Note the similarity between the H-stems:

151. Hp infinitive construct of **יָלַד** (הִלְדָּת) occurs three times (Gn 40.20; Ek 16.4, 5); the other four occurrences of hofal NC are of the root **שָׁמַח** (Lv 26.34, 35, 43; 2 Ch 36.21).

Conjugation	PGN	Q	N	D	Dp	Dt	H	Hp
Perfect	3ms	מָשַׁל	נִמְשַׁל	מָשַׁל	מְשַׁל	הִתְמַשַּׁל	הִמְשִׁיל	הִמְשַׁל
Imperfect	3ms	יִמְשַׁל	יִנְמַשַּׁל	יִמְשַׁל	יִמְשַׁל	יִתְמַשַּׁל	יִמְשִׁיל	יִמְשַׁל
Preterite	3ms	וַיִּמְשַׁל	וַיִּנְמַשַּׁל	וַיִּמְשַׁל	וַיִּמְשַׁל	וַיִּתְמַשַּׁל	וַיִּמְשִׁיל	וַיִּמְשַׁל
Imperative	2ms	מִשַׁל	הִמְשַׁל	מִשַׁל		הִתְמַשַּׁל	הִמְשִׁיל	
Inf. Const.		מִשַׁל	הִמְשַׁל	מִשַׁל		הִתְמַשַּׁל	הִמְשִׁיל	
Inf. Abs.		מְשַׁל	הִמְשַׁל	מִשַׁל	מְשַׁל	הִתְמַשַּׁל	הִמְשִׁיל	הִמְשַׁל
Participle	ms	מִשַּׁל	נִמְשַׁל	מְמַשַּׁל	מְמַשַּׁל	מִתְמַשַּׁל	מְמַשִּׁיל	מְמַשַּׁל

N.B.: If the second radical is a *b^egad-k^efat* letter, it will have *dageš lene* in all forms of *hifil* and *hofal*, *qal* imperfect and preterite, and *nifal* perfect and participle; all forms of the D-stems have *dageš forte*.

20.3 Function of the H-stems

The basic relationship between H and Hp is that *hifil* is always active, and *hofal* is its corresponding passive. Many reference works call *hifil* the “causative” of the *qal*, but many verbal roots occur in *hifil* but not in *qal*, or occur in both stems with little apparent relationship between their functions.

20.3.1 *Hifil* (HBI §2.1.7)

The *hifil* is an **active** stem. Beyond that it is necessary to determine the nuance of the *hifil* for each verbal root, and, even within each root, for each occurrence of the *hifil*, since its function depends, not only upon the verbal root, but also upon its context, and especially the subjects, objects, and even prepositions with which it occurs.

1. If a verb does not occur in Q, *hifil* is often simply transitive (also “singly” transitive, since it governs *one* object).

וַיִּהְיֶה הַשְּׁלִיף עֲלֵיהֶם אֲבָנִים גְּדֹלוֹת	And YHWH <i>threw</i> great stones at them ... (Josh 10.11; 3ms H P)
וְאֲנֹכִי הַסְתַּר אֶסְתִּיר פָּנַי בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא	I will most surely <i>hide</i> my face on that day (Dt 31.19; H NA & 1cs H F)
וְהִשְׁמַדְתִּי אֶת־בְּמֹתֵיכֶם	... and I will <i>destroy</i> your high places (Lv 26.30; 1cs H P + w)

2. When a verb occurs in Q or N and H, *hifil* is usually **causative** of Q or N. When glossing a *hifil*, it is often helpful to first translate it by saying “A *caused* B *to do* X”, and then to look for an appropriate gloss for the entire expression.
 - a. The first pair of examples shows עבר in Q and H; the second shows אבד in N and H, and the third illustrates the use of שמע in all three stems (Q, N, H). Note the relationship between the subject, object, and action of the *hifil* verb.

וַיֵּלֶךְ לְעֵבֶר אֶל־בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן	He went <i>to cross over</i> to the Ammonites (Jer 41.10; Q NC + ל)
לְהַעֲבִיר אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־יַרְדֵּן	<i>to cause</i> the king <i>to cross</i> [= <i>to bring</i> the king <i>over</i>] the Jordan (2 Sa 19.16; H NC)
וּפְשָׁעִים נִשְׁמְדוּ יַחְדָּו	but transgressors will <i>be destroyed</i> together (Ps 37.38; 3cp N P)
וְאֲנֹכִי הִשְׁמַדְתִּי אֶת־הָאֲמֹרִי מִפְּנֵיכֶם	But I <i>destroyed</i> the Amorite(s) before you (Am 2.9; 1cp H P)

הֲלוֹא שָׁמַעְתָּ כִּי מֶלֶךְ אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ	Have you not <i>heard</i> that Adonijah has become king? (1 Kgs 1.11; 2fs Q P)
תִּשְׁמָע זַעֲקָה מִבְּתֵיהֶם	A cry <i>shall be heard</i> from their houses (Jr 18.11; 3fs N F)
תִּשְׁמִיעֵנִי שְׂשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה	You <i>cause me to hear</i> joy and gladness (Ps 51.10a; 2ms H F + 1cs)

- b. If the verb is transitive in *qal*, H is *doubly* transitive, that is, it takes two objects. The first object is the person (or thing) that the subject causes to perform the action of the verb; the second object is the direct object of that action. In this example the subject is 3ms (“he”), the first object us 1cp (“us”), and the second object is 3fs (“it” [the commandment]):

וַיִּשְׁמַעְנוּ אֹתָהּ ... that he may *cause us to hear* it (Dt 30.12; 3ms **H F**)

- c. If the verb is stative in *qal*, H is factitive or resultative (see on *piel*, above), a type of causative in which a verb describes or names the process or action that brings the object to the condition or state described by the *qal*:

כָּל-הַבְּכוֹר ... תִּקְדֹּשׁ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ	Every firstborn ... you shall <i>sanctify</i> [<i>≈ set apart</i>] to YHWH your God (Dt 15.19; 2ms H F).
הִגְדַּלְתִּי מַעֲשֵׂי	I <i>increased</i> my works (Qo 2.4; 1cs H P)

3. In some cases, however, the nature of the object suggests that a *hifil* verb is less than causative. In Is 8.13, the prophet contrasts the Judahites’ fear of the northern kings with the fear due YHWH:

וְאַתְּיִהְיֶה צְבָאוֹת אֲתוֹ תִקְדִּישׁוּ ... but [instead] you shall *sanctify* [*≈ recognize as holy*] YHWH Sabaoth (Is 8.13; 2mp **H F**)

4. H can also be called “tolerative” or “permissive”, that is, the subject *allows* something [not] to happen:

וְלֹא-תִשְׁמָעוּ אֶת-קוֹלְכֶם	Do not <i>let</i> your voice <i>be heard</i> <i>≈ cause</i> [someone] to hear your voice (Jos 6.10; 2mp H F)
וְלֹא-הָפִיל מִכָּל-דְּבָרָיו אֶרְצָה:	And he [YHWH] did not <i>allow</i> any of his words to <i>fall</i> to the ground [i.e., to fail] (1 Sam 3.19; 3ms H P [נפל])

20.3.2 *Hofal* (HBI §2.1.8)

The *hofal* [Hp] is consistently passive. When it corresponds to *hifil* forms of the same verbal root, it makes the **causative** part of the *hifil* passive. If a verbal root occurs only in Q and Hp, then it will be a simple passive in Hp:

לִיהוּה אֲזַ וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל	Then Moses and the sons of Israel <i>sang</i> this song to YHWH (Ex 15.1); 3ms Q F
אֶת-הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת	
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יוֹשֵׁר הַשִּׁירָה־זֹה	In that day this song <i>will be sung</i> (Is 26.1a); 3ms Hp F

The following examples compare Q, H, and Hp (עמד) and Q, H, and Hp (בזר). We have not yet studied the hollow verbs, but the point here is the *function* of the various stems, not their form). [Cf. also §20.3.1(2a).]

אֶךְ אִם-יֹוֹם אוֹ יוֹמִים יַעֲמֹד	..., but if he <i>stands</i> for a day or two days (Ex 21.21; 3ms Q F)
מֶלֶךְ בְּמוֹשָׁפֶט יַעֲמִיד אֶרֶץ	A king <i>causes</i> a land to <i>stand</i> [<i>preserves</i>] by justice (Pr 29.4a); 3ms H F
יַעֲמֹד-חַי לְפָנַי יְהוָה	... [the goat] <i>shall be caused to stand</i> alive before YHWH (Lv 16.10); 3ms Hp F
<hr/>	
וַיָּמָת וַיִּקָּבֵר בְּשָׁמִיר:	He <i>died</i> and was buried in Shamir (Jg 10.2; 3ms Q Pr).
... וַיָּמִיתוּ אֶת-הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּבֵיתוֹ:	... and they caused the king to die (<i>killed</i>) in his house (2 Kgs 21.23; 3mp H Pr).
... וְהוּמָת שָׁם:	... and there she was caused to die (<i>was put to death</i>) (2 Kgs 11.16; 3fs Hp Pr)

20.4 Frequency

There are 10,102 H-forms in the Bible (14% of all verbal forms). *Hifil* is the second most frequent stem in Biblical Hebrew; *hofal* is one of the least frequent.

H	9,671	13.1%	
Hp	531	0.7%	
Total	10,102	13.8%	of all verbal forms

20.5 Concepts

causative	permissive	tolerative
doubly transitive	stative	

20.6 Vocabulary

<i>fight</i> (N)	לָחַם .300	<i>then, at that time</i>	אָז .292
		<i>formerly, since</i> (אָז + מֶן)	מֵאָז
<i>escape</i> (N); <i>rescue, deliver</i> (D)	מָלַט .301	<i>be trustworthy, faithful; steady, firm</i> (N); <i>believe, trust</i> (H)	אָמַן .293
<i>relent, be sorry, rue</i> (N); <i>comfort, console</i> (D)	נָחַם .302	<i>truth; trustworthiness</i>	אֱמוּנָה .294
<i>hide, conceal</i> [oneself] (N, Dt); <i>be hidden/concealed</i> (N); <i>hide</i> [someone] (H)	סָתַר .303	<i>[the] firstborn</i>	בְּכֹר .295
<i>cow</i> (female)	פָּרָה .304	<i>there is/was, here is/was</i> (trad., <i>Behold!</i>)	הִנֵּה .296
<i>bull</i> (male)	פָּר	<i>[city] wall</i>	חוֹמָה .297
<i>be ruined, spoiled, corrupt</i> (N); <i>ruin, spoil, corrupt</i> (D); <i>destroy</i> (H)	שָׁחַת .305	<i>ordinance, rule, prescription</i> [something prescribed, required, commanded]	חֻק חֻקָּה .298
<i>be destroyed, exterminated</i> (N); <i>destroy, exterminate</i> (H)	שָׁמַד .306	<i>together, simultaneously</i> (adv.); phps. twice as <i>community</i> (Dt 33.5; 1 Ch 12.18)	יַחַד יַחְדָּו .299

20.7 Exercises

After learning the characteristics of the H-stems, *gloss* these sentences and clauses, *parsing* the verbs.

- 1 Kgs 3.7; David ועתה יהוה אלהי אתה המלכת את-עבדך תחת הוד אבי .1
- Ps 8.7 תמשילוהו במעשי ידוך .2
- Ps 22.11; רחם womb; בטון belly, womb עליך השלכתי מרחם .3
מבטן אמי אלי אתה:
- Dt 32.20 ויאמר אסתירה פני מהם .4
- Ps 143.8; בטח trust השמיעני בבקר חסדך פירבך בטחתי .5
- Lv 21.17 איש מזרעך ... לא יקרב לתקריב לחם אלהיו: .6
- Lv 20.24; ברל separate (H) אני יהוה אלהיכם אשר-הבדלתי אתכם מן-העמים: .7
- Is 8.17; קיה wait [for] (D); קיה wait [for] (D) וחיפיתי ליהוה המסתיר פניו מבית יעקב וקויתו-לו: .8
- Ex 24.4; שכם arise / awake / do [X] early; ויבן and he built (3ms Q Pr < בנה); מצבה standing stone; add the numerals for the total ויכתב משה את פלדבריו יהוה וישפם בבקר ויבן מזבח תחת הקר ושמים עשרה מצבה לשנים עשר שבטי ישראל: .9
- Gn 1.14; מארת lights [-givers/bearers]; ויהיו (3cp Q P < היה be, become; ברל (see #7); אות [a] sign ויאמר אלהים יהי מארת ברקיע השמים להבדיל בין היום ובין הלילה והיו לאת ולמועדים ול ימים ושנים: .10
- Zc 13.2; נאם declaration, utterance; עצב idol; טמאה uncleanness; each line is a clause והיה ביום ההוא נאם יהוה צבאות אכרית את-שמות העצבים מן-הארץ ולא יזכרו עוד וגם את-הנביאים ואת-רוח הטמאה אעביר מן-הארץ: .11
- 1 Ch 23.1; שבע be full, satisfied with; have one's fill of; David, Solomon ודויד זקן ושבע ימים וימלך את-שלמה בנו על-ישראל: .12
- Nu 3.6; Levi, Aaron (in the following verses YHWH assigns duties to the Levitical clans) ויאמר יהוה אל-משה לאמר הקרב את-מטה לוי והעמדת אתו לפני אהרן הפתח ושרתו אתו: .13
- Ps 17.8; אישון apple; צל shadow; כנף wing שמרני כאישון בתעין בצל כנפיד תסתירני: .14
- Dt 31.18; על because of, on account of; עשה do, make (3ms Q P); פנה turn (3ms Q P) ואנכי הסתר אסתיר פני ביום ההוא על כל-הרעה אשר עשה פי פנה אל-אלהים אחרים: .15
- Est 4.4; Esther is the subject of ותשלח Mordecai ותשלח בגדים להלביש את-מרדכי .16
- 1 Sam 25.15; כלם humiliate, trouble; בהיותנו while we were (Q NC < היה + 1cp + ב) והאנשים טובים לנו מאד ולא הכלמנו ולא-פקדנו מאומה כל-ימי התהלכנו אתם בהיותנו בשדה: .17

Ps 119.19; גַּר *sojourner; alien*
(i.e., non-native)

Ps 46.10; שָׁבַת *cease, stop*; קֶצֶה *end, edge*; קֶשֶׁת *bow*; קָצַץ *break (D)*; חַנִּית *spear*; עֲגֹלָה *wagon, chariot*

Ho 2.20 [final ת of כרת doubles the perfect subject ending]; חַיָּה *living thing*; עוֹף *bird*; רֹמֵשׂ *creeping thing*; קֶשֶׁת *bow*; בְּטָח *securely*

18. גַּר אֲנֹכִי בְּאֶרֶץ
אֶל־תִּסְתַּר מִמֶּנִּי מִצֹּתִידִי:

19. מִזְשָׁבִית מַלְחָמוֹת עַד־קֶצֶה הָאֶרֶץ
קֶשֶׁת יִשְׁבֵּר וְקָצַץ חַנִּית עַגְלוֹת יִשְׂרָף בְּאֵשׁ:

20. וְכִרְתִּי לָהֶם בְּרִית בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא עַם־חַיֵּית הַשָּׂדֶה
וְעַם־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְרֹמֵשׂ הָאֲדָמָה
וְקֶשֶׁת וְחָרֵב וּמַלְחָמָה אֲשַׁבֵּר מִן־הָאֶרֶץ
וְהִשְׁכַּבְתִּים לְבָטָח:

20.8 Enrichment: Modality

English uses “helping verbs” to modify the function of the main verb in other ways than causation. Auxiliary verbs modify either the *temporal* reference (“they *have* gone”, “they *shall have* gone”) or can be *modal* (“you *must/could/should have* gone”). With rare exceptions Biblical Hebrew does not use helping verbs (יָכַל, *be able*, is the main exception), either modal or temporal. Modality and “tense” are translational (i.e., exegetical) decisions, so that, for example, Ps 5.12 could be rendered in various ways, all of which are grammatically defensible, even though they are not all equally probable. This does not mean that verbal function is somehow inherently ambiguous or indeterminate, but it does underline the importance of lexical value (semantic load) and context, alongside conjugation and stem.

וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ כָל־חֹסֵי בְךָ	And let all [those] who take refuge in you rejoice
	And all [those] who take refuge in you shall rejoice
	And all [those] who take refuge in you rejoice
	And all [those] who take refuge in you should/must rejoice
	And all [those] who take refuge in you may rejoice
	And may all [those] who take refuge in you rejoice
יִרְנְנוּ לְעוֹלָם	For ever let them shout
	For ever shall they shout (etc.)
וְתִסְדֵּךְ עָלֵימֹו	And may you shelter them
	And you shall shelter them (etc.)
וַיִּעְלְצוּ בְךָ אֲהַבֵי שְׁמֶךָ:	And may those who love your name exult in you
	That those who love your name may exult in you (etc.)

Lesson 21

THE QAL PASSIVE / IDENTIFYING (PARSING) VERBAL FORMS

A number of verbs occur in forms which look like *pual* or *hofal*, but which have come to be recognized as the remnants of a *qal* passive [Qp] stem.¹⁵³

21.1.1 Form

The primary criteria for identifying forms as Qp rather than as Dp or Hp is that (1) the verbal root does not occur in *piel* or *hifil*; or (2) these forms function as the passive of the *qal* (i.e., rather than the passive of the *piel* or *hifil*); or both. Note, for example, the function of these verbs in their various stems:

	Q	Qp and N	D	H
אכל	<i>eat; consume, destroy</i>	<i>be eaten, consumed</i>	---	<i>feed</i>
ילד	<i>bear, give birth to</i>	<i>be born</i>	<i>deliver</i> (as a midwife)	<i>beget, become</i> father/ancestor of
לקח	<i>take</i>	<i>be taken</i>	---	---
נתן	<i>give</i>	<i>be given</i>	---	---
שרד	<i>destroy</i>	<i>be destroyed</i>	<i>assault, mistreat</i>	---

This charts some forms of the *qal* passive in these stems (not all are listed, forms not listed do not occur), as well as how relatively infrequent they are.¹⁵⁴

153. The existence of a *qal* passive stem was suggested by Ibn Jikatilla in the 10th century. On the *qal* passive, cf. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (Oxford: Oxford University), §52e, 53u; Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. Trans., Takamitsu Muraoka (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991), §58; Bruce K. Waltke & M. O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1993), §22.6, 23.6.1, 24.6a, 25.1a, 27.1a; Ronald J. Williams, "The Passive *Qal* Theme in Hebrew" *Essays on the Ancient Semitic World*, ed. J.W. Wevers & D.B. Redford (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1970), 43-50.

154. The perfect and participle tend to follow the forms of *pual*, whereas the imperfect and infinitive construct are analogous to *hofal*, as the following distribution for these verbs shows.

Verbal Root "Stem"	Perfect	Participle	Imperfect	Inf. Const.
אכל "Pual"	3	1	1	
ילד "Pual" "Hofal"	26	1		3
לקח "Pual" "Hofal"	8	1	6	
נתן "Hofal"			8	
שרד "Pual" "Hofal"	20		2	
	all ≈ "Dp"	2/3 ≈ "Dp"	16/17 ≈ "Hp"	all ≈ "Hp"

Verbal Root	Perfect	Imperfect/ Preterite	Infinitive Construct	Participle	Gloss	Occurrences (Qp/total)
אכל	אָכַל	יֹאכַל		אֹכֵל	be eaten	5/809
ילד	יָלַד		הוֹלֵדָה	יֹלֵד	be born	30/499
לקח	לָקַח	יִקַּח		לֹקֵחַ	be taken	15/938
נתן		יִתֵּן			be given	8/2007
שרד	שָׂרַד	יִשָּׂרַד			be destroyed	22/43

21.1.2 Function (HBI §2.1.2)

As shown above, the *qal* passive is the passive of the function of the *qal* of the same verbal root.

וְהָאֲשֵׁרָה אֲשֶׁר-עָלְיוּ כִרְתָּהּ ... and the Asherah which was beside it *had been cut down* (Jg 6.28)
 וּבָנוּת יָלְדוּ לָהֶם ... and daughters *were born* to them (Gn 6.1)

21.1.3 Frequency

It is difficult to garner statistics for the frequency of the *qal* passive. Whether or not to include the “regular” Qp participle, such as בְּרוּךְ, “blessed” (which occurs fairly frequently, and in a number of verbs, but which has a different morphology (i.e., not *pual*- or *hofal*-“like”) is problematic. Reference works tend to either (1) identify these forms as *pual* or *hofal* (e.g., DCH); or (2) mention the *qal* passive as a possible identification of *pual* or *hofal* (e.g., BDB, HALOT). The statistics used in this grammar suggest that *qal* passive occurs 1,277 times in Biblical Hebrew (1.7% of all verbal forms).

21.2 Identifying (Parsing) Verbal Forms

You may well wonder why we spend so much time identifying [parsing] verbs, especially given the availability of analytical lexicons (which parse every form in Biblical Hebrew), computerized databases, interlinears, and parsing guides. This emphasis does not imply that verbs are somehow more important or “key” to Biblical Hebrew. It merely reflects the nature of the language—Hebrew verbs are more complex than, for example, nouns or numerals, and therefore require more study.

As we begin reading the biblical text, and see verbal forms in their larger linguistic contexts, we will find that they are both more and less complex: more complex because their function is a direct reflection of their literary context (the words, clauses, and sentences around them), and less complex, because they become increasingly easier to recognize as we spend more time in the text itself.

Helpful as they can be, the tools mentioned above form yet another layer between the reader and the Hebrew text, one of the barriers that the study of Hebrew attempts to overcome. Furthermore, the greater our dependence on the “tools”, the more tools we need to gather and refer to in order to study the text. If we need to look up the parsing of every other verb form, we spend our study time interacting primarily with the tools, rather than the text. Also, no parsing guide—computerized or not—is infallible, and there are valid differences of opinion between grammarians and commentators regarding the parsing of some forms (most tools identify only one possibility).¹⁵⁴ A major reason for studying Hebrew is to enable the student of Scripture to interact with the text on a more immediate level,¹⁵⁵ as directly as possible with the Hebrew text.

21.2.1 Verbal Diagnostics (summary)

This section presents some diagnostics for identifying verbal forms in Hebrew. If one does not seem to work, try another! You will probably recognize something about most verbal forms (an ending,

154. These are more common when the verbal form is based on a weak verbal root (Lessons 24-31).

155. “[More] immediate” describes the relationship of the interpreter to the text, not to “layers” of meaning within the text itself (as might be implied by “deeper”). Students of the languages should *apprehend* or *interact with* the text in a different way than those who read it in their native tongue.

the stem, conjugation, lexical form, etc.). Begin from what you recognize, and then develop a routine method that allows you to identify the verb's subject, conjugation, stem, and lexical form.

Stem	Perfect	Imperfect & Preterite	Imperative	Infinitives	Participle
Q	no prefix; a-vowels	ִּי יִי	no prefix	no prefix	no prefix; <i>holem</i> after first radical
N	נִּ	ִּי יִי	הִּ	הִּ נִּ	נִּ
D	no prefix	ִּי יִי	no prefix	no prefix	נִּ
Dp	no prefix	ִּי יִי	---	no prefix	נִּ
Dt	הִּ	יִּתִּ יִּתִּ	הִּ	הִּ	תִּ
H	הִּ	ִּי יִי	הִּ	הִּ	נִּ
Hp	הִּ	ִּי יִי	---	---	נִּ

21.2.2 Diagnostic Questions

1. Is there a *pronominal suffix* or *syntactical prefix* (conjunction, preposition, article, interrogative -ה)?
 - a. The conjunction *waw* and interrogative -ה can be prefixed to any verbal form.
 - b. A preposition occurs only with infinitives construct and participles.
 - c. The article occurs only with participles.
 - d. Pronominal suffixes can affect the pointing of, e.g., the prefix vowel; they can also obscure the subject ending of the verb.
2. Is there a *PGN suffix* (i.e., an affix that identifies the person, gender, number of the subject)?
3. Is there a *PGN prefix* (i.e., a prefix that is part of the verbal form, not a syntactical prefix [above], that identifies the person, gender, number of the subject)? Identify the *prefix vowel* (if any).
4. In imperfect and preterite, if the prefix vowel is *hireq*, is the *first radical* of the verbal root *doubled*?
 - a. Yes → *nifal*
 - b. No → *qal* (unless root is I-נ or [certain] geminate verbs)
5. Does the *second radical* of the verbal root have *dagesh forte* (i.e., *dagesh* preceded by a full vowel)?
Yes → *piel*, *pual*, *hitpael*
6. If you can answer questions 1-5, and know only two forms of each stem (3ms P, 3ms F), you can parse nearly any form.

	Q	N	D	Dp	Dt	H	Hp
3ms perfect	מִשַׁל	נִמְשַׁל	מִשַׁל	מִשַׁל	הִתְמַשַׁל	הִמְשַׁל	הִמְשַׁל
3ms imperfect	יִמְשַׁל	יִמְשַׁל	יִמְשַׁל	יִמְשַׁל	יִתְמַשַׁל	יִמְשַׁל	יִמְשַׁל

All stems except *qal* and *nifal* prefix the letter נִ- to form the participle; in those stems the prefix vowel for the participle is the same as the prefix vowel of the imperfect and preterite.

21.2.3 Summary

Forms Without a Prefix

1. A verbal form without a prefix must be *qal* (perfect, imperative, participle, infinitive) or *piel* or *pual* (perfect, imperative, infinitive).

Forms with a Prefix

1. A tri-radical form with a prefixed -ן is either *nifal* perfect or participle, or 1cp imperfect or preterite (any stem).
2. A tri-radical form with a prefixed -ה is either *hifil*, *hofal*, or *hitpael* perfect, imperative, or infinitive; or *nifal* imperative or infinitive.
3. A tri-radical form with a prefixed -נ is a participle in either *piel*, *pual*, *hitpael*, *hifil*, or *hofal*; or a participle or infinitive construct with prefixed *min* (-נ).

Prefix Vowel

1. If the prefix is -ה and there is -י - after the second radical, the form is *hifil* perfect.
2. If the prefix is -ה and the second radical is doubled, the form is *hitpael* (perfect, imperative, or infinitive).
3. If the prefix is -ה the form is *hofal* (perfect or infinitive).
4. *Hifil* is the only stem with a *pataḥ* prefix vowel in imperfect, preterite, imperative, infinitives, and participle (i.e., all conjugations except perfect).
5. If the prefix vowel of an imperfect or preterite form is *hireq*, the form is *qal*, *nifal*, or *hitpael*.

Doubled Radical

1. A tri-radical form with a doubled second radical must be *piel*, *pual*, or *hitpael* (all conjugations).
2. A tri-radical form with a doubled first radical must be *nifal* imperfect, preterite, imperative, or infinitive.

N.B.: As always, the goal is the ability to “figure out” a verbal form, not to memorize a set of “rules”.

21.3 Vocabulary

<i>gather, assemble</i>	קָבַץ .316	<i>sister, female relative</i>	אָחוּת .307
<i>burn incense; cause a sacrifice or incense to smoke (D, H)</i>	קָטַר .317	<i>trust, be confident in / of</i>	בָּטַח .308
<i>meet, encounter (only as NC)</i>	קָרָא	<i>burn, consume (Q, D)</i>	בָּעַר .309
<i>happen, occur</i>	קָרָה .318	<i>walk, step on, tramp; cause to march, tread down, tread [string] a bow (both Q & H)</i>	דָּרַךְ .310
<i>toward, against, opposite (Q inf. const. + ל)</i>	לְקִרְאָת	<i>like, just like (variant of -כֵּ)</i>	כָּמוֹ .311
<i>hunger, famine</i>	רָעַב .319	<i>leader, member of ruling class</i>	נָשִׂיא .312
<i>burn (oft. specified with בָּאֵשׁ)</i>	שָׂרַף .320	<i>surrounding, [all] around (adv.)</i>	סָבִיב .313
<i>rise early (H; often in hendiadys: “do X early”); often with בְּבֹקֶר “in the morning”</i>	שָׁכַם .321	<i>surrounding, [all] around (adv.);</i> <i>מן + סָבִיב</i>	מִסָּבִיב
<i>throw, cast, hurl (H)</i>	שָׁלַךְ .322	<i>close, shut (Q); give into someone’s power [hand] (H)</i>	סָגַר .314
		<i>pillar, column</i>	עַמּוּד .315

21.4 Exercises

After studying the diagnostics of the stems, *gloss* these clauses, *parsing* all verbal forms. If a verb's function is not clear due to its stem, consult a lexicon.

- Lv 9.13; מוצא *present* (H); נתח *piece*
[of a cut-up carcass]; ל- by
1. וְאַתְּ-הֶעֱלָה הַמְצִיאֵי אֵלָיו לְנִתְחִיהָ וְאַתְּ-הָרַאשׁ
וַיִּקְטֹר עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ:
- 1 Ch 14.12; David; אמר probably functions here as “commanded”
2. וַיַּעֲזֹבוּ-שָׁם אֶת-אֱלֹהֵיהֶם וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד וַיִּשְׁרְפוּ בָאֵשׁ:
- 1 Kg 15.24; Asa; Jehoshaphat
3. וַיִּשְׁכַּב אָסָא עִם-אֲבָתָיו
וַיִּקְבֹּר עִם-אֲבָתָיו בְּעִיר דָּוִד אָבִיו
וַיִּמְלֹךְ יְהוֹשָׁפָט בְּנוֹ תַחְתָּיו:
- Is 22.22; ונתתי *I will put/place/set* (< נתן);
מפתח *key* (something showing that the wearer
has authority or ability to open & close?); שכם
shoulder; David
4. וְנָתַתִּי מִפְתַּח בֵּית-דָּוִד עַל-שִׁכְמוֹ
וּפְתַח וְאֵין סֹגֵר וְסֹגֵר וְאֵין פְּתַח:
- Jr 7.15; Ephraim
5. וְהִשְׁלַכְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מֵעַל פָּנָי
כַּאֲשֶׁר הִשְׁלַכְתִּי אֶת-כָּל-אֲחֵיכֶם אֶת כָּל-זֶרַע אֲפָרָיִם:
- Isai 36:15; נתן *give*; ביד *in[to] the hand of*; Heze-
kiah; Assyria; the first verb is volitional
6. וְאֵל-יִבְטַח אֶתְכֶם חֲזָקִיהוּ אֶל-יְהוָה לֵאמֹר
... לֹא תִנָּתֵן הָעִיר בְּיַד מְלֹךְ אַשּׁוּר:
- Josh 10.6; אל *against* (אל and על often overlap
in function); Amorite(s)
7. נִקְבְּצוּ אֵלָינוּ כָּל-מַלְכֵי הָאֲמֹרִי יִשְׁבִי הָהָר:
- 1 Sam 28.4; ויבאו *they came/went*; ויחנו *they*
camped; Philistines, Shunem, Saul, Gilboa; note
the difference in function between the N & Q of
קבץ
8. וַיִּקְבְּצוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיָּבֹאוּ וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּשׁוֹנָם
וַיִּקְבְּצוּ שָׂאוּל אֶת-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּגִלְבָּעַ:
- Gn 3.19; the suffix on מן is 3fs because it refers
to אדמה *dirt, dust*; אדמה *you shall return*
(2ms Q F < שוב)
9. כִּי מִמְּנָה לָקַחְתָּ
כִּי-עָפָר אָתָּה וְאֶל-עָפָר תָּשׁוּב:
- Is 15.1; מושא *oracle; burden*; לילה *|| ליל*;
שרד *destroy, ruin, devastate* (3ms Dp P); Ar
(capital?) city [cf. עיר of Moab]; נדמה *it is*
destroyed/undone (3ms N P); 1a is a “title”; 1b-d
are clauses
10. מוֹשֵׁא מוֹאָב
כִּי בְלִיל שָׁדַד עָר
מוֹאָב נִדְמָה
כִּי בְלִיל שָׁדַד קִיר-מוֹאָב נִדְמָה:
- 1 Kg 2.21; Abishag; Shunamite; Adonijah
11. וְהֹאמֵר יָתֵן אֶת-אֲבִישַׁג הַשֻּׁנַמִּית
לְאֲדֹנֶיהָ אַחִידָה לְאִשָּׁה:
- 2 Chr 18.5; הנלך *shall we go*;
Ramoth-gilead
12. וַיִּקְבְּצוּ מְלֹךְ-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-הַנְּבָאִים אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ
וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים הַנְּלַךְ אֶל-רָמֹת גִּלְעָד לְמִלְחָמָה
- Ps 119.35; נתיב *path, way*
13. הֲדַרְיִכְנִי בְּנִתִּיב מִצֹּתִידָי כִּי-בֹ חָפְצָתִי:
- Ps 125.1; Zion; ימוט *it/he moves/shall be moved*;
ישב *it/he endures/shall endure*; these singular
verbs are collectives; their subject is the first word
14. הַבְּשָׁחִים בִּיהוּהָ כִּהְרִצִּיּוֹן
לְאִימוֹט לְעוֹלָם יֵשֵׁב:
- Ps 31.9; מרחב *wide* [i.e., open] *place* (cf. רחב, *be*
wide)
15. וְלֹא הִסְגַּרְתִּנִּי בְיַד-אוֹיֵב
הַעֲמַדְתָּ בְּמִרְחָב הַגְּלִי:

21.5 Enrichment: Nominal Formation

The lexicon of Biblical Hebrew has many words that are related to each other, so that knowing a verbal root can help you recognize new words, even when they are quite infrequent (e.g., רָפְאוּת, below). These lists also show that noun formation is not arbitrary in Biblical Hebrew. In English, for example, suffixing “-r” to a verb yields the noun that identifies someone characterized by that activity, such as “write+r” (one who writes), but adding “-r” to the beginning of a word does not change its function, since initial “-r-” is not a functional prefix in English.

1. Nouns formed by suffixed **ית-** are *feminine*, and tend to be abstract:

מֶלֶךְ	<i>reign, rule, be king</i>	מַלְכוּת	<i>royalty, royal authority; kingdom; reign</i>
סָבַל	<i>be insolent, foolish</i>	סְבָלוֹת	<i>folly, insolence (7x; all in Qo)</i>
רָפָא	<i>heal</i>	רְפָאוּת	<i>healing (only Pr 3.8)</i>
אַלְמָנָה	<i>widow</i>	אַלְמָנוּת	<i>widowhood</i>

2. Nouns can be formed by prefixing **מ-** to a root:

יָרָא	<i>fear, be afraid of</i>	מִוְרָא	<i>fear</i>
יָשַׁב	<i>sit, stay; settle, live, dwell</i>	מִוֹשָׁב	<i>dwelling[-place]</i>
סָפַר	<i>count</i>	מִסְפָּר	<i>number, total</i>
עָשָׂה	<i>work, do, make, act</i>	מַעֲשֵׂה	<i>deed, act; thing done, work</i>
צִוָּה	<i>command, order, demand</i>	מִצְוָה	<i>command, order, demand</i>
קָנָה	<i>purchase, buy; acquire</i>	מִקְנָה	<i>property, acquisition(s); cattle</i>
קָרָה	<i>happen, befall; meet</i>	מִקְרָה	<i>happening, occurrence</i>
רָאָה	<i>see, observe, look [at]</i>	מִרְאָה	<i>sight, appearance</i>
שָׁפַט	<i>judge</i>	מִשְׁפָּט	<i>judgment; justice; custom</i>

3. Some of these designate the *place* of the activity described by the corresponding verb:

זָבַח	<i>sacrifice</i>	מִזְבֵּחַ	<i>altar; place of sacrifice</i>
מֶלֶךְ	<i>reign, rule, be king</i>	מַמְלָכָה	<i>kingdom; sovereignty, rule, reign, dominion</i>
צָפָה	<i>watch, guard</i>	מִצְפָּה	<i>watchtower (Mizpah)</i>
קָדַשׁ	<i>be[come] holy</i>	מִקְדָּשׁ	<i>sanctuary; holy place</i>
קָוַם	<i>stand</i>	מָקוֹם	<i>place; standing place</i>
רוּם	<i>be high, exalted</i>	מָרוֹם	<i>height</i>
רָכַב	<i>ride</i>	מִרְכָּבָה	<i>chariot (cf. רֶכֶב, chariot, chariotry)</i>
שָׁכַב	<i>lie down, sleep</i>	מִשְׁכָּב	<i>bed</i>
שָׁכַן	<i>live, dwell</i>	מִשְׁכָּן	<i>living / dwelling place; “tabernacle”</i>

4. *Participles* can be substantival so frequently that they essentially function as nouns:

יָשַׁב	<i>live, dwell, settle, remain</i>	יֹשֵׁב	<i>inhabitant; citizen (Q Ptc)</i>
כָּהֵן	<i>be / act as priest</i>	כֹּהֵן	<i>priest (Q Ptc)</i>
רָגַל	<i>go about on foot; spy</i>	מְרַגֵּל	<i>spy, scout (D Ptc)</i>
שָׁפַט	<i>judge, administer justice</i>	שֹׁפֵט	<i>[a] judge (Q Ptc)</i>

5. Nouns “from” *geminate* roots can retain the repeated radical of the root (cf. *dageš forte*):

הָלַל	<i>praise</i>	תְּהַלֵּה	<i>praise</i>
פָּלַל	<i>pray</i>	תְּפַלֵּה	<i>prayer</i>

6. *False cognates*—words that share the same radicals, but have a different root (i.e., homonyms), as English “Put the money in the *bank*”, “a hole in the river *bank*”, and “The pilot put the plane into a *bank*”—are usually distinguished by Roman numerals (I, II, etc.) in the lexica; related adjectives, nouns, etc. are identified by the same Roman numeral.

I מוֹשַׁל	<i>compare(?); use a proverb</i>	מִוְשָׁל	<i>proverb, saying; parable</i>
II מוֹשֵׁל	<i>reign, rule</i>	מְמוֹשָׁל / מְמוֹשָׁלָת	<i>rule, dominion, kingdom</i>

Lesson 22

GUTTURAL VERBS

Verbal roots that have א, ה, ח, or ע as one of their root consonants belong to a subset of the basic verb called *guttural* verbs. There are five types, identified according to the position of the guttural consonant. Some verbs with ר also share the characteristics of the guttural verbal roots, since ר does not double.¹⁵⁶

I-guttural (and I-ר)	פ-guttural	עבר	<i>cross over</i>
I-א	א"פ ¹⁵⁷	אמר	<i>say</i>
II-guttural (and II-ר)	ע-guttural	בער	<i>burn</i>
	ע"ר	ברך	<i>bless</i>
III-guttural	ל-guttural	שלח	<i>send</i>
III-א	ל"א	מצא	<i>find</i>

22.1 The Basic Differences

Four characteristics of the gutturals (one of which they share with ר) cause the vowels of some forms to differ from those of the basic verb.

- א, ה, ח, ע, ר *do not double* (geminate). In forms of the strong verb that have *dageš forte* in a position occupied by a guttural or ר (e.g., the middle radical in D, Dp, and Dt), the *dageš* is absent; this non-gemination often causes the preceding vowel to lengthen, because a syllable is open rather than being closed by *dageš forte*.
- א, ה, ח, ע are followed by *hatef*-vowels instead of *šewa* (i.e., the half-vowel is *under* the guttural and thus “follows” it in pronunciation).
 - I-guttural verbs often have a *hatef*-vowel after the first radical instead of *šewa*
 - II-guttural roots have *hatef*-vowels instead of vocal *šewa* after the second radical (i.e., before vocalic endings)
- ה, ח, ע tend to occur with *a*-vowels, either full vowels or *pataḥ furtivum*, so that *pataḥ* may occur where the basic verb (משל) has *holem* or *šere*.
- Since א does not close a syllable, verbs whose roots end in א tend to have long vowels after the second radical. Although ה (i.e., without *mappiq*) does not close a syllable, verbs that end in ה are a type of weak root (below); verbs ending in ה- are strong, and considered III-guttural.

These characteristics cause most of the differences between guttural verbs and the basic verb. In this table, each pair of examples has the same parsing; the second example is the basic verb.

156. This lesson presents a great deal of information about guttural verbal roots; the rules merely demonstrate that the patterns are predictable, regular, and reflect the effect of the gutturals on vocalization.

157. The " means that this is to be read as an abbreviation or symbol, not a word. Labels such as א"פ are read from right to left (*pe-'alef*).

Guttural Verb	Basic Verb	Parsing	Nature of the Difference	Reason for the Difference
יִאָבֵק בִּרְךָ	יִמְשַׁל מִשַׁל	3ms N F 2ms D V	no <i>dageš forte</i> ; long vowels instead of short	Since gutturals don't double, the syllable is open; this also affects roots I/II-ר in certain stems (below).
יִשְׁמַע יִשְׁמַע	יִמְשַׁל יִמְשַׁל	3ms Q F 3ms D F	<i>a</i> -vowels (esp. <i>pataḥ</i>) after the second radical	Word-final gutturals tend to be preceded by an <i>a</i> -vowel.
בִּחְרוּ עִמְדוּתָם	מְשַׁלוּ מְשַׁלְתָּם	3cp Q P 2mp Q P	<i>hatef</i> -vowels instead of vocal <i>šewa</i>	Gutturals have <i>hatef</i> -vowels where the basic verb has vocal <i>šewa</i>
יַעֲמִיד יַעֲמִיד	יִמְשַׁל יִמְשִׁיל	3ms Q F 3ms H P	<i>hatef</i> -vowels under the first radical instead of silent <i>šewa</i> in forms with prefixes (F, Pr)	Initial guttural that closes the prefix syllable (i.e., where the first radical is followed by silent <i>šewa</i> in the basic verb) is often followed by the <i>hatef</i> -vowel that matches the prefix vowel.
יַחְדָּל	יִמְשַׁל	3ms Q F	<i>segol</i> as prefix vowel instead of <i>hireq</i>	Initial gutturals, especially ח, may have <i>segol</i> as a prefix vowel where the basic verb has <i>hireq</i> .
מִצְאָתִי יִמְצֵא	מְשַׁלְתִּי יִמְשַׁל	1cs Q P 3ms Dp F	long vowel after the second radical, no <i>šewa</i> before PGN ending; no <i>dageš</i> in ח of PGN ending	III-נ forms generally have a long vowel after the second radical of the verbal root. The ח of PGN endings lacks <i>dageš lene</i> since it is “preceded” by a vowel (final נ is not considered consonantal).
צְמִית מְצַחִי וַיְבֹ	מְשַׁלְתִּי מְשַׁלְתִּי וַיְמַשֵּׁל	2fs Q P 1cs Q P 3ms Q Pr	lack final נ	[Silent] נ drops out of some III-נ forms (usually noted in <i>Mp</i> ; Lesson 29).

22.2 I-Guttural Roots

These verbal roots differ from the basic verb wherever the first radical is followed by *šewa* (*qal* imperfect and preterite; *nifal* perfect and participle; all forms of *hifil* and *hofal*) or doubled (*nifal* imperfect, imperative, infinitive construct). The **D**-stems are **not** affected.

- 2mp and 2fp *qal* perfect have *hatef-pataḥ* under the first radical (משל is for comparison).

עִבְדִּתָּם *You served* 2mp Q P מְשַׁלְתָּם

- Wherever the basic verb has silent *šewa* after the first radical, guttural roots have a *hatef*-vowel, with the corresponding full vowel under the prefix (משל is for comparison).

הֶעֱבִיד *He enslaved* 3ms H P הַמְשִׁיל
אֶחְזֹק *I [will] seize* 1cs Q F אֶמְשַׁל

- Whenever the initial radical of the basic verb is doubled (*nifal* F, V, NC), the prefix vowel is long (*šere*). Since ר does not geminate, this also applies to verbs that are I-ר.

יַעֲזֹב *He/It will be forsaken* 3fs N F הַמְשִׁיל *You/she will be ruled*
וַתִּרְאֶה *and she/it will appear* 3ms N Pr וַתִּמְשַׁל *and she/it will appear*

22.3 I-נ Roots

This sub-set of the I-guttural roots (cf. §6.2), contains only five verbs (אמר, אכל, אבד, אבה, אפה). They differ from other I-guttural verbs (above) only in *qal* imperfect (Q F) and *qal* preterite (Q Pr).

22.4 II-Guttural Roots

These verbal roots differ from the basic verb wherever the second radical is doubled (all three D-stems), or followed by vocal *šewa* (all forms with vocal PGN sufformatives, in all stems except *hifil*). The forms of II-guttural verbs are not affected in *hifil*.

1. The D-stems follow one of two patterns:

- a. In some II-guttural roots the vowel after the first radical is *long* (*qames* or *sere* in *piel*, *hitpael*; *holem* in *pual*), since that syllable is open.

בָּרַךְ	<i>He blessed</i>	3ms D P	מָשַׁל
בָּרַךְ	<i>He was blessed</i>	3ms Dp P	מָשַׁל
מְבָרַךְ	<i>Blessed</i>	ms Dp Ptc	מְמַשֵּׁל

- b. Other II-guttural roots look just like the basic verb, but without *dages forte*, so that the vowel after the first radical is *hireq* or *pataḥ* (*piel*, *hitpael*) or *qibbuṣ* (*pual*).¹⁵⁸

בָּחַר	<i>He chose</i>	3ms D P	מָשַׁל
נִבְחָר	<i>We will be chosen</i>	1cp Dp F	נִמְשָׁל

2. With vocalic PGN suffixes (וֹ-, הֶ-, יִ-, -), these roots have a *ḥatef*-vowel after the second radical instead of vocal *šewa* (all stems):

גָּאָלוּ	<i>They redeemed.</i>	3cp Q P	מָשַׁל
בְּחָרוּ	<i>Choose!</i>	2mp Q V	מָשַׁל
הִנְאָלוּ	<i>Redeem yourselves!</i>	2mp N V	הִמְשָׁלוּ

22.5 III-Guttural Roots (III-ה/ע/ה only)

These verbal roots differ from the basic verb mainly by having *pataḥ* after the second radical, or *pataḥ furtivum* after its vowel. *Mappiq* in the final ה of these roots means that the ה is a consonant, not a vowel letter (as it is in roots III-ה; below).

1. If a form has no ending or suffix, the vowel after the second radical is *pataḥ*, except in H (which will, nonetheless, have *pataḥ furtivum*):

יָבַחַח	<i>He flees</i>	3ms Q F	יָמַשַׁל
יִשְׁמִיעַ	<i>He causes ____ to hear</i>	3ms H F	יָמַשִּׁיל
וַיִּשְׁמַע	<i>and he heard</i>	3ms Q Pr	וַיִּמְשָׁל
וַיִּשְׁמִיעַ	<i>and he caused ____ to hear</i>	3ms H Pr	וַיִּמְשִׁיל

2. If the vowel after the second radical is written with a vowel letter, *pataḥ furtivum* is added (see also the last example in #1, above):

שָׁמַעַע	<i>Heard</i>	ms Qp Ptc	מְשַׁמֵּעַ
יִשְׁמִיעַ	<i>He will cause ____ to hear</i>	3ms H F	יָמַשִּׁיל

3. 2fs P (all stems) has *pataḥ* after the third radical instead of silent *šewa*:

שָׁמַעַת	<i>You heard</i>	2fs Q P	תְּמַשֵּׁלְת
הִשְׁמַעַת	<i>You were caused to hear</i>	2fs Hp P	תְּמַשִּׁילְת

158. This is called “virtual doubling” or “gemination”, because the Masoretes pointed the word with a short vowel (since the syllable would have been closed if the radical had been doubled)—the term is confusing, since nothing is in fact doubled.

22.6 III-א Roots

These forms differ from the basic verb because א cannot close a syllable; at the end of a syllable it becomes silent and the preceding vowel is long, usually *qames* or *sere*. Forms with vocalic endings (י, י, -, ה, -), where א begins the final syllable, are like the basic verb.

1. The vowel after the second radical is long, and the PGN ending (ת) does not have *dageš lene*, because the א is silent (and therefore ignored in pronunciation).

מָצָא	<i>He found</i>	3ms Q P	מָשַׁל
מָצָאתָ	<i>You found</i>	2ms Q P	מָשַׁלְתָּ

Silent א may even be missing (the verbal root is צנא; see table, §22.1):

צָמָה	<i>You are thirsty</i> (Ru 2.9)	2fs Q P	מָשַׁלְתָּ
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2. With the ending תָּ- (2/3fp F, Pr, V), the vowel after the second radical is *segol* (all stems):

תִּמְצְאוּנָה	<i>You / they [will] find your / themselves</i>	2/3pf Dt F	תִּמְשַׁלְּנָה
תִּמְצְאוּנָה	<i>You / they [will] find</i>	2/3fp Q F	תִּמְשַׁלְּנָה

22.7 Common Guttural Roots

This table lists all guttural roots with pointing *that is affected* by the presence of a guttural or ר that occur more than two hundred times in Biblical Hebrew, listed by type. Verbs are listed according to the type of weakness that actually occurs (e.g., ירא, “fear”, does not occur in the D-stems, and so is listed as III-א, but not as II-ר; ירד, “descend, go down”, does not occur in the D-stems, and so is not listed).

I-א	I-guttural (not I-א)
אמר <i>say, speak</i> (> 5000x)	עשה <i>do, make; act</i> [perform a deed] (2573x)
אכל <i>eat, devour, consume</i> (795x)	ראה <i>see</i> (1294x)
אהב <i>love</i> (205x)	עלה <i>go up, ascend</i> (879x)
III-guttural	עבר <i>cross / pass over / through / by</i> (539x)
שמע <i>hear, listen [to]; obey</i> (1136x)	עמד <i>stand; stop</i> (519x)
ידע <i>know, understand; notice, recognize</i> (924x)	ענה <i>answer; testify</i> (314x)
לקח <i>take, get, acquire</i> (964x)	עבד <i>serve, be servant to</i> (289x)
שלח <i>send [away], let go; stretch out, reach, extend</i> (839x)	חזק <i>be[come] strong (Q); seize, grab; hold (H)</i> (288x)
ישע <i>save, deliver, triumph</i> (205x)	חיה <i>live, be alive</i> (281x)
III-א	חטא <i>sin, miss [a target]</i> (237x)
בוא <i>come, go [in], enter</i> (2530x)	אסף <i>gather, collect</i> (203x)
יצא <i>go out, leave, exit</i> (1055x)	עזב <i>leave, forsake, abandon</i> (212x)
קרא <i>call; name; invite; read</i> (730x)	II-guttural (or ר)
נשא <i>lift up, carry, bear; forgive</i> (651x)	ברך <i>bless, worship (D)</i> (328x)
מצא <i>find, discover</i> (451x)	
ירא <i>fear, be afraid [of]</i> (377x)	
מלא <i>be[come] full</i> (250x)	
חטא <i>sin, miss [a target]</i> (237x)	

22.8 Concepts

doubling	I-guttural	II-guttural	III-guttural	mappiq
gemination	פ-guttural	ע-guttural	ל-guttural	“virtual doubling”

22.9 Vocabulary

<i>south, Negev</i>	נָגֵב .332	<i>length</i>	אָרֶךְ .323
<i>skin, leather</i>	עוֹר .333	<i>turn, overturn, destroy</i>	הִפְךָ .324
<i>cloud(s)</i>	עָנָן .334	<i>animal(s) [coll.], living thing</i>	חַיָּה .325
<i>footstep; time (i.e., once, thrice)</i>	פְּעָם .335	<i>wounded, slain, dead (adj.)</i>	חָלַל .326
<i>twice (dual)</i>	פְּעָמַיִם	<i>male donkey/ass</i>	חֲמוֹר .327
<i>rest, sabbath</i>	שַׁבָּת .336	<i>on account of, for the sake of (prp.); because [of] (cj.)</i>	עַן .328
<i>forget</i>	שָׁכַח .337	<i>vineyard</i>	כֶּרֶם .329
<i>regularly, continually (adv.)¹⁵⁹</i>	תָּמִיד .338	<i>sell</i>	מָכַר .330
		<i>sight, appearance (cf. רָאָה)</i>	מֵרָאָה .331

22.10 Exercises

After studying the characteristics of the guttural verbs, *gloss* these clauses, *parsing* the verbs.

1. Jg 8.18; *איפה* Where? אֵיפֹה הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר הִרְגָתָם
2. Gn 37.5; *חלום* dream; Joseph וַיַּחְלֹם יוֹסֵף חֲלוֹם
3. Joel 3.4; *ירח* moon הַשָּׁמֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לְחֹשֶׁךְ וְהַיָּרֵחַ לְדָם
4. Gn 41.56; *חזק* sieze, be strong וַיַּחֲזֶק הָרָעֵב בְּאָרֶץ מִצְרָיִם:
5. 2 Ch 20.20; *צלח* succeed, prosper; Judah, Jerusalem וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמֹעוּנִי יְהוּדָה וַיֵּשְׁבִי יְרוּשָׁלַם
הָאֲמִינוּ בִיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְתֵאֱמָנוּ
הָאֲמִינוּ בְנִבְיָאִיו וְהִצְלִיחוּ:
6. Josh 1.2; *קום* stand, rise (2ms Q V; this form often introduces another imperative); Jordan וַעֲתָה קוּם עֲבֹר אֶת-הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה אַתָּה וְכָל-הָעָם הַזֶּה
אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לָהֶם לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
7. Ps 38.22 *יהוה* and *אלהי* are vocative; each line is a clause אֱלֹהֵי-תַעֲזֹבֵנִי יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֹהֵי-תִרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי:
8. Ps 143.8a, bβ (in reading poetry, “bβ” refers to the second half (“β”) of the second poetic line (“b”)) הַשְּׁמִיעֵנִי בִבְקָר חֶסֶדְךָ כִּי-בָךְ בִּטְחֹתִי
... כִּי-אֵלֹהֶיךָ נִשְׁאֲתִי נַפְשִׁי:
9. Lv 26.38 (each line is a clause) וַאֲבֹדְתֶם בַּגּוֹיִם
וְאָכַלְתָּ אֶתְכֶם אֶרֶץ אֹיְבֵיכֶם:
10. Ex 6.6 לָכֵן אָמַר לְבְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי יְהוָה

159. In a construct chain, תָּמִיד refers to something repeated, regular, or perpetual (*perpetual offering*).

Lesson 23

BASIC TOOLS

In addition to the Hebrew Bible itself, there are many tools designed to help you understand the biblical text. *Lexical aids* suggest glosses (lexicons and word lists), or discuss the use, distribution, and broader function of individual words (theological dictionaries and wordbooks). There are also *grammatical aids* (e.g., reference grammars), and guides to *textual criticism*, the *masora*, and other technical aspects of the biblical text. Most of these are discussed briefly in Appendix F (below). This Lesson focuses on the text of BHS and the major lexical tools.

23.1 Hebrew Bible

23.1.1 *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS)

Since its completion, BHS has been the basis for nearly every Bible translation, Hebrew-based commentary, and reference work on Biblical Hebrew, whether in print and or electronic. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS), named for its place of publication, is the fourth “scholarly” edition of the Hebrew text. It began to appear in 1967 and was complete ten years later; several corrected versions have appeared since then. A fifth edition, to be known as *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (5th) is now being released (2010).

Prolegomena	III
Foreword (in German, English, French, Spanish, Latin)	III
Part I. A history of this edition of the Hebrew Bible, explains the differences between it and its predecessor, referred to as either BH ³ [3rd ed.] or BHK [“Kittel”, its editor].	
Part II. Explains the basis of the masora in <i>BHS</i> , and some of the masoretic notes and readings. The English version of this material is on pp. XI-XVIII.	
<i>Sigla et Compendia Apparatum</i> (List of Signs & Abbreviations)	XLVII
I. <i>Apparatus criticus</i> (The [Text-] Critical Apparatus)	XLVII
Sources	XLVII
An alphabetical list of abbreviations used in the textual apparatus (at the bottom of each page of the biblical text), with the documents to which they refer.	
Abbreviations	LIX
An alphabetical list of abbreviated Latin expressions used in the textual apparatus, with the full Latin terms.	
II. <i>Apparatus masorae</i> (The Masoretic Apparatus)	LIII
Lists alphabetically abbreviations used in the textual apparatus to refer to masoretic materials.	
<i>Index Siglorum et Abbreviationum Masorae Parvae</i> (Index of Signs & Abbreviations of the <i>Masora Parva</i>)	LIII
Lists the abbreviations in the margins of <i>BHS</i> in alphabetical [Hebrew] order; its Latin translations can be deciphered with the help of Kelley, <i>et al.</i> (1998).	
<i>Index Librorum Biblicorum</i> (Index of the Biblical Books)	[no page number]
Lists the biblical books in the order in which they are printed in <i>BHS</i> ; titles are in Latin & Hebrew.	

The Hebrew Bible 1

The order of the books differs slightly from that found in English Bibles, because they follow the general order of the Septuagint (pre-Christian, Greek translation of the Hebrew text), rather than the Hebrew Bible:

- Ruth, Lamentations, Daniel, Esther, Ezra-Nehemiah, & Chronicles are among the Writings, rather than the historical and prophetic books.
- Samuel, Kings, Ezra-Nehemiah, & Chronicles are each a single book; there is no new title page for the second “book”, although the second “half” begins again with chapter 1.
- Because the Latin titles are used, some will not look familiar (e.g., *Regum* = Kings, *Threni* = Lamentations).
- Although BHS claims to reproduce the text of the codex, the book of Chronicles precedes Psalms in the codex, rather than concluding the Bible, as it does in BHS.

Text Pages

The name of the biblical book is listed at the top of each page (Hebrew on the right page, Latin on the left). Page numbers are on the upper inside corners; chapter/verse references on the upper outside corners.

There are four blocks of material on each page. In the center of each page is the biblical text itself. This reproduces the text of Codex Leningrad, which is considered the oldest representative of the best masoretic scribal tradition, manuscripts copied and corrected by the family of Ben Asher. This text therefore represents a single manuscript, and is therefore a single witness to the biblical text (much as Alexandrinus or Vaticanus is to the text of the GNT). The UBS and Nestle-Aland Greek New Testaments contain an *eclectic* text that represents a committee’s conclusions about the best reading for each verse, based on a comparison of many manuscripts, so that there is probably no single manuscript of the Greek NT with exactly the same text as the UBS/Nestle-Aland NT. *BHS* presents a single manuscript, and is thus no different in principle from a Greek NT that reproduces the text of only one manuscript, such as B (Codex Vaticanus).

In the outside margin are masoretic notes—*masora parva* [*mp*] or *masora marginalis*—which contains the Masorettes’ comments on anything that they thought worthy of note, often unusual or rare forms. Written in Hebrew and Aramaic, they refer to the words in the text with small circles over them. We will discuss some of these, and how to read them.

At the bottom of each page are two sets of footnotes. The first set, consisting of raised numbers followed by “Mm” and a number, refer you to Weil (1971) for further information about some of the notes in *mp*. The second set of footnotes records whatever variants the editor of that biblical book thought worthy of notice, along with suggested alternate readings that are unsupported by manuscript evidence.

Each verse is preceded by its number. In *prose* passages, the verse number is repeated on the *inner* margin of the line on which the verse begins (but not on the left page if the verse begins at the right margin). In *poetry*, most verses begin at the right margin of the page. There are many differences in verse numbering between the Hebrew and English texts, and quite a few differences in chapter divisions. You need to know which system a commentary or reference work is using, so that you can be sure that you are looking at the verse that the reference work is discussing.

Some Marks in the Text

: *sof pasûq*, “end of *pasûq*”, marks the end of nearly every “verse”, *not* the end of a sentence. The final masora (at the end of each biblical book) lists the number of *pasûqîm* in the book

ס/פ Solitary unpointed *samek* and *pe* mark textual breaks that were apparently based on content. These “paragraph” endings, called פְּתוּחָה (“open”) or סְּתוּמָה (“closed”) were separated by either *samek* or *pe*, to indicate whether the next section began on the same line (ס) or on the next line (פ), i.e., “Leave the rest of this line open”. Because these have been collated from various reading traditions their occurrences in BHS are no longer consistent with this principle.

In the inner margin large *samek* headed by a rotated *qameš* marks the beginning of a *seder*, a system of indicating the weekly reading in the synagogues. Each is numbered by a small letter with a superscript dot under the *samek*. The final masora for each book also lists the total number of *s’darîm* in that book (except the Minor Prophets, which the rabbis considered one book).

accents Nearly every biblical word is marked with an accent that shows which syllable is accented, how the word should be sung (cantillated), and how closely it is related to the following word. Your copy of *BHS* should include a card marked *Tabula Accentum* that lists disjunctive and conjunctive accents from strongest to weakest. There are two lists because the accents have different musical value in Psalms, Job, and Proverbs (*Accentus poetici*). See Lesson 27 and HBI §4.

23.1.1 *Biblia Hebraica Quinta (BHQ)*

This newest edition of *Biblia Hebraica* began to appear in 2004; it will eventually comprise two volumes, the first a biblical text much like BHS, and intended to replace it. The main differences between BHQ and BHS are the inclusion of the text of the *Masorah finalis* at the foot of the biblical text on each page, the *Masorah parva/marginalis* as it stands in Codex Leningradensis (i.e., not as corrected and expanded by Weil for BHS), a much more full textual apparatus that includes abbreviated explanations of the reason for each textual variant. You will also immediately notice the use of English rather than Latin (e.g., titles of books).

The second volume of BHQ will include a text-critical introduction to each biblical book (primarily a descriptive list of the witnesses used in compiling the apparatus), commentaries on textual variants and the *Masorah parva*, and a translation of the *Masorah magna*. These materials will be part of each fascicle as it is published; when the project is complete, the materials will be divided to create the two-volume set.

Since most of the material that describes BHS (above) also applies to BHQ, this section notes only some of the differences.

General Introduction (English, German, Spanish)

The main purpose of this section is to explain the differences between BHQ and BHS (i.e., what justifies the enormous investment of time, effort, and money), and especially to explain the critical apparatus of BHQ. Since the textual apparatus is the reason for this new edition, this is the most extensive section of the Introduction, and describes “The Selection of Cases and Inclusion Witnesses”, “The Evaluation of the Evidence”, “The Structure and Presentation of Cases”, “The Layout of a Page”, and so forth.

Following the general introduction are two figures: a “Sample of an Apparatus Entry Illustrating the Presentation of the Text Critical Cases” and a “Sample Page Illustrating the Features of the Layout”.

Sigla, Symbols and Abbreviations

Sigla for Textual Witnesses (alphabetical list of abbreviations used in the textual apparatus, with the documents to which they refer).

Symbols Used in the Apparatus.

Abbreviations (alphabetical list of abbreviated English terms used in the textual apparatus).

Definitions and Abbreviations for the Terms Used to Characterize Readings

The Typology Underlying the Characterizations (a “characterization” is the editor’s explanation of the reason for a textual variant), followed by an “Index by Type of Characterization” and an “Alphabetical List of the Characterizations and Their Definitions”.

Glossary of Common Terms in the Masorah Parva (Index of Signs & Abbreviations of the Masora Parva). An alphabetical list of the abbreviations in the margins of BHQ.

Table of Accents

Accents for the Twenty-One Prose Books

Accents for the Three Poetic Books (Psalms, Job, Proverbs)

Text Pages

The pages of the biblical text are similar to those of BHS. There are four blocks of material on each page.

In the center of each page is the *biblical text* itself—the “text block”, which reproduces the text of Codex Leningrad, as in BHS.

In the outside margin the *Masora parva* [*mp*] or *Masora marginalis*, is again much as in BHS.

At the bottom of each page are two sets of footnotes. The first set, consisting of unpointed text, is the *Masora magna*, reproduced from Codex L, with the addition of chapter-and-verse numbers.

The second set of footnotes records those textual variants that the editor of that particular portion of the Bible thought worthy of notice, along with a suggested reason for each variant.

The name of the biblical book is listed at the top of each page (Hebrew on the right page, English on the left).

23.2 Lexica

As the term is commonly used today, “lexicon” refers to a bi-lingual dictionary that offers a set of glosses to render words from one language into another. As noted above (Lesson 2), however, these are *glosses*, not definitions. For discussions of a word’s function within the language as a whole, it is necessary to turn to a theological wordbook or dictionary, which usually discusses each word’s frequency, patterns of occurrence, and suggests nuances of function, as well as its relationship to any synonyms and antonyms.

23.2.1 Lexicons

BDB Brown, Francis, S.R. Driver, & Charles A. Briggs. 1907. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament with an appendix containing the Biblical Aramaic*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Words are grouped according to putative root (e.g., nouns, adjectives, and prepositions follow the verbal root from which they supposedly developed; so-called “denominative” verbs follow the noun which was their “source”). The list of abbreviations is helpful; the list of *sigla*—“signs” (p. xix)—is crucial. In addition to its eighteenth-century linguistics, major twentieth-century archaeological and epigraphic finds were not available to the editors. [See the appendix on BDB.]

HALOT Köhler, L., and W. Baumgartner, eds. 2001. *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Study Edition. 2 vols. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000.

The most complete modern lexicon of Biblical Hebrew. It generally follows the same classical approach as BDB, except that words are listed alphabetically rather than by root. [Holladay (below) contains the English portion of an earlier German-English edition, without the etymological and cognate information, and fewer references.] The third edition contains a plethora of bibliographic references, supplemented by an extensive bibliography at the end of the second volume.

DCH Clines, David J.A., *et al.*, eds. *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Vols. 1 - . Sheffield: University of Sheffield, 1991.

Projected to fill ten volumes, DCH covers all Hebrew (Biblical Hebrew, seals, inscriptions, Ecclesiasticus, DSS) except rabbinic Hebrew. All words, including proper names, are listed alphabetically by actual spelling, which makes nouns and adjectives much easier to find. It includes no etymological or other cognate information, even when the suggested gloss depends on a cognate. It is essentially an analytical concordance, which lists, for example, every subject, object, and preposition with which every verb occurs, as well as synonyms and antonyms. This is unique to DCH; a computerized database should yield similar results.

HOLLADAY Holladay, W.L. 1971 *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

An abridgement of an earlier edition of KBL (above), Holladay is more current than BDB (i.e., cognate and extra-biblical evidence), but does not have nearly as much information about usage, occurrences, collocations, etc. as BDB, DCH, or KBL. Words are listed alphabetically, rather than grouped by root, and so are easier to find than in BDB. Popular because it is easy to use, but diligent students will outgrow its resources fairly rapidly.

23.2.2 Theological Dictionaries

TDOT Botterweck, G.J., and H. Ringgren 1974 - *Theological Dictionary of the OT*. Vols. 1 - . Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

A translation into English of a massive German work, appearing at the rate of one volume every 2-3 years. Copious information on etymology, usage, context, discussions of function, related terms, etc.

NIDOTTE van Gemeren, Willem, ed. 1997 *The New International Dictionary of OT Theology & Exegesis*. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Detailed studies of nearly every word (even words occurring only one or two times), essays on theological topics (e.g., “Theology of Retribution”), and an essay on the theology of every biblical book (e.g., “Theology of Samuel”). First volume includes essays on exegesis and theology (but not on the language itself).

TWOT Harris, R.L., G.L. Archer Jr., and B.K. Waltke, eds. 1980 *Theological Wordbook of the OT*. 2 vols. Chicago: Moody.

A basic tool with brief essays. A handy quick reference with more semantic information than a lexicon, but much less than either TDOT or NIDOTTE.

23.3 The challenges of Lexicons

If you don’t find what you are looking for in a few minutes, then you are looking in the wrong place, or have misidentified the form. Skip it and come back later, or ask your teacher (bring the lexicon for reference). Difficulty often arises from:

1. Confusing letters that look alike (especially ה and ח, ש and שׁ);
2. Confusing letters that sound alike (especially נ and ע) when you say the word to yourself as you look for it;
3. Looking for a word that is written defectively (i.e., without a vowel letter) in your passage, but is listed in its “full” spelling in the lexicon (i.e., with the vowel letter);
4. Looking in the Aramaic section for a Hebrew word (especially words at the end of the alphabet, since the Aramaic section usually follows the listings for Hebrew);
5. Looking under the wrong “root” (for lexica arranged by “root”).
6. Having the wrong parsing.

23.4 Vocabulary

<i>bone; essence</i> (i.e., the inmost part)	נֶצֶם .347	<i>cult center</i> (trad., “high place”)	בְּמִזְבֵּחַ .339
<i>dust, dirt, soil</i>	עָפָר .348	<i>redeem, purchase as a kinsman-redeemer; redeemer</i> (Q Ptc.)	גָּאֵל גֹּאֵל .340
<i>fruit; descendants, offspring</i>	פְּרִי .349	<i>straight, upright; honest</i> (adj.)	יָשָׁר .341
<i>chariot(s); chariot force</i>	רֶכֶב .350	<i>put on, clothe</i> (oneself); <i>wear</i>	לָבַשׁ .342
<i>who, which, what</i> (with <i>dageš forte</i> in the following consonant); = אֲשֶׁר	שֵׁ- .351	<i>tongue, language</i>	לָשׁוֹן .343
<i>pour [out]; shed [blood]</i>	שָׁפַךְ .352	<i>reject, refuse</i>	מָאָס .344
<i>lie, falsehood; deception</i>	שָׁקַר .353	<i>kingdom, realm; kingship, dominion, royal power authority</i>	מַמְלָכָה מַלְכוּת .345
<i>abomination</i> (something horrific)	תּוֹעֵבָה .354	[permanent] <i>river</i> ; both הַנְּהַר & הַנְּהַר הַגְּדוֹל refer to Euphrates (rarely as נְהַר פְּרַת)	נְהַר .346

23.5 Exercises: The Hebrew Bible

1. Fill in the information missing from the following chart (not all biblical books are included):

Hebrew Title	Gloss the Hebrew Title	Latin Title (BHS)	English Title (BHQ)	Page No.
בראשית				1
ויקרא	And he called	Leviticus		
שמואל			Samuel	
		Reges		
ירמיה				
		Micha		
תהלים	Praises			1087
משלי				
שיר השירים		Canticum		
איכה				
דברי הימים				

2. Gloss these clauses, parsing the verbal forms, and using the lexicon where necessary.

Ps 19.10

a. יִרְאֵת יְהוָה טְהוֹרָה עוֹמֶדֶת לְעַד
מִשְׁפָּטֵי יְהוָה אֱמֶת צְדָקוֹ יַחֲדוּ:

Ho 8.1; the context suggests that עבר (*cross over / through*) signifies a trespass or transgression; פָּשַׁע *revolt, rebel, transgress*

b. עָבְרוּ בְרִיתִי וְעַל-תּוֹרָתִי פָּשְׁעוּ:

Jr 51.62; לְבַלְתִּי הָיִיתָ *so that there would not be*;
אָל used here as עַל *desolation, devastation*

c. יְהוָה אַתָּה דִּבַּרְתָּ אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה
לְהַכְרִיתוֹ לְבַלְתִּי הָיִיתָ-בּוֹ יוֹשֵׁב
לְמֵאדָּם וְעַד-בְּהִמָּה כִּי-שָׁמְמוֹת עוֹלָם תִּהְיֶה:

Jos 24.9; וַיָּקָם *he rose* (< קוּם); וַיִּקְרָא *curse; belittle*;
Balak, Zippor, Moab, Balaam, Beor

d. וַיָּקָם בָּלָק בֶּן-צִפּוֹר מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב וַיִּלְחֶם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל
וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיִּקְרָא לְבַלְעָם בֶּן-בְּעוֹר לְקַלֵּל אֹתָם:

1 Kgs 2.42; Shimei

e. וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּקְרָא לְשִׁמְעִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו
הֲלוֹא הִשְׁבַּעְתִּיךָ בַיהוָה

Gn 42.4; Benjamin, Joseph, Jacob; אָסוֹן *trouble, disaster*

f. וְאַתָּה-בְּנִימִין אַחִי יוֹסֵף לֹא-שְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב אֶת-אָחָיו
כִּי אָמַר פֶּן-יִקְרָאוּ אֹסוֹן:

Lv 1.5; שָׁחַט *slaughter, kill*; זָרַק *sprinkle*; Aaron;
since this is a set of instructions, the main verb
form (“backbone”) is *w^oqatal* (*waw+perfect*)

g. וְשָׁחַט אֶת-בֶּן הַבָּקָר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה
וְהִקְרִיבוּ בְנֵי אֶהֱרָן הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת-הַדָּם
וְזָרְקוּ אֶת-הַדָּם עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ
סָבִיב אֲשֶׁר-פָּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד:

Jr 36.4; מְגִלָּה *scroll* (“something rolled up” < גָּלַל);
Jeremiah, Baruch, Neraiah

h. וַיִּקְרָא יִרְמְיָהוּ אֶת-בְּרוּךְ בֶּן-נְרִיָּה
וַיִּכְתֹּב בְּרוּךְ מִפִּי יִרְמְיָהוּ אֶת כָּל-דְּבָרֵי יְהוָה
אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו עַל-מְגִלַּת-סֵפֶר:

Nu 27.1 ... 2; Zelophehad, Moses

וַתִּקְרַבְנָה בְּנוֹת צִלְפָּחָד ... וַתַּעֲמִדְנָה לְפָנַי מִשָּׁה

1 Kgs 15.7; Abijam; Jeroboam; Judah

וַיִּתֵּר דְּבָרֵי אָבִים וְכָל-אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הַלְוֵאִים
 כְּתוּבִים עַל-סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה
 וּמְלַחְמָה הִיְתָה בֵּין אָבִים וּבֵין זָרְבָעָם:

23.6 Enrichment: Using the Lexicon

Lexicons list *glosses*, not definitions, meanings, or descriptions. They therefore rarely give more or less information than a mere word-list *when it comes to exegesis*; their great benefit is the topical or functional arrangement of the occurrences of the word(s), as well as identifying collocations in which they occur, such as a particular combination of a verbal root with certain subjects or prepositions.

The glosses suggested for the various stems often assume that, for example, the *hifil* is the causative of the *qal*, or that the function of *any* stem in which a verb occurs is somehow related to its function in *qal*. This is often (but not always) true, and should *never* be assumed. Since lexica offer glosses instead of definitions, other tools, such as theological dictionaries and wordbooks, are often more helpful than a lexicon when determining the range of a word's function, and where within that range its use in a given passage lies.

The lexica will suggest this if the listing is exhaustive, by assigning each lemma to either a gloss or functional category. You will then need to examine the other passages listed under that gloss or function to be sure that they are related to passage that you are studying.

As an example, consider the verbal root בִּרַךְ, glossed as *kneel* (Q) or *bless* (D). Many contemporary translations of the Bible render the *piel* as “bless” when its object is human, but “praise” when the object is divine. Ps 103.1, for example, has traditionally been rendered as “Bless the LORD, O my soul” (KJV, NAS, ESV), but many contemporary translations read “Praise the LORD, O my soul”, apparently to avoid implying that anyone can somehow do something that will benefit YHWH.

HALOT suggests that the function of בִּרַךְ is either to “endue with special power” (with God as subject), or “declare God to be the source of special power = bless” (with a human subject and a divine object) (HALOT, I:160). Discovering the word's function requires searching the biblical text, looking for patterns of usage, and, perhaps asking whether or not “bless” (in this case) is still the best basic gloss for this verbal root, especially given our cultural understanding of the word “bless”.

A question that often concerns students is how to determine the precise “meaning” of a given word—why the author chose this word for this point in the text. This question is not always helpful.

The first danger in asking this question is that it assigns greater precision to the biblical authors than we are willing to accept ourselves. When someone asks us what we meant by a particular word, we are usually quite willing to list two or three synonyms (based on our internal “thesaurus”), rather than replying with the kind of definition found in a dictionary. Only when the word is a so-called technical term, such as might be used within a particular field of study (e.g., “synecdoche” (poetry), “synthetic compound” (organic chemistry)), might we resort to a dictionary-like explanation. Their question might also help us realize that we had chosen the “wrong” word for our hearer(s) (we assumed that they would understand it), or for the occasion (perhaps we used a highly formal word in an informal setting), or for some other reason.

Since they were human beings, using a human language to communicate with other people, we can assume that the biblical authors also used words “as they thought”, that is, without necessarily worrying about whether or not it was the “precise” term. Furthermore, there are many constraints upon an author's choice of terms, some of which we can [sometimes] determine, most of which we cannot. In attempting to discern the significance of a particular choice, therefore, we need to be aware of these constraints—or at least to realize *that* the author was constrained—before trying to assess or assign any special meaning or function to a particular word. What are some of those constraints?

1. The immediate *context* is the most obvious constraint. A word must fit its linguistic environment, contribute to the function of the overall text, and generally “make sense” to its hearers or readers. It is in this sense that we may, for example, find ourselves “stuck” for “just the right word” when writing a letter, paper, or sermon.

2. A less obvious constraint is that the author must *know* the word (syntagm, etc.) in order to use it, and would have known its *connotative "load"*—socially emotive associations that are lost to us. This load may privilege or neutralize a particular linguistic expression (lexical choice, morphosyntactic choice, etc.) for the author *and* for that context, in light of his purpose(s) for writing, his own background and his assumptions about his hearers. Further, since connotation is both personal and contextual, as well as societal, we must be extremely cautious about extrapolating the author's motivation by merely studying its occurrences in Biblical Hebrew. This is far more important than the "root" or "basic" meaning of a word, which (cf. Lesson 2) is illusory.

None of this is intended to make us despair, but merely to caution us against over-reading the biblical text, seeking out "hidden treasures" of meaning. The languages in which the Bible was written were ordinary, working languages, spoken, written, and read by ordinary people. They are not secret or hidden "codes" which we need to decipher, but stories, poems, and sermons (and genealogies, and ...) written for us to read and enjoy, and to profit from reading them.

Reading the text in Hebrew (or Greek) forces us to slow down, to give more attention to the text itself, rather than to merely skim over its surface or "reading" it through the lenses of sermons heard or read, lessons learned, or other interpretations. We cannot rid ourselves of every assumption or prejudgement, but we can force ourselves to read more carefully, paying attention to *how* the biblical authors wrote, as well as to *what* (and *why*) they wrote it.

Since reading in Hebrew forces us to slow down, we are prone to pay far more attention to specific linguistic elements of the biblical text than we would ever pay to a book in our own language, such as an author's choice of verbal tense. This is a good thing, but it also encourages us to lose sight of the forest for the trees, which is not helpful.

We need to be sure, therefore, to read the entire story, not merely the individual words that make up that story; the entire poem, not merely the words and lines of that poem; the entire sermon (prophecy), not merely its forms and lexical choices, just as we read any other text in a language that is more familiar to us.

Lesson 24

OTHER KINDS OF VERBAL ROOTS

There are two main types of verbal roots in Biblical Hebrew: those which “have three unchangeable root consonants” (Jouion-Muraoka 1991, §40c), and which are called “strong”, and those which lack one or more of their radicals in some forms, and may be called “weak” or “variable”.¹⁶⁰ Up to this point we have studied only the forms of verbs with strong roots, but we now turn to the other types.

Although it is tempting to think in terms of “regular” and “irregular” verbs, Hebrew verbs are more or less regular. Even the types of roots to which we now turn are fairly consistent. There are five main types of variable verbs in Biblical Hebrew, named according to the position of the weak letter, using either Roman numerals or the letters of the traditional paradigm verb **פעל** (“do, make”).

24.1 The Types & Effect of Root Weakness

Name	Lexical Form	The Nature of the Variation (effect of the weakness)
Initial Weak	I-נ פ"ן נפל <i>fall</i>	Initial נ assimilates to (and doubles) the second radical of the verbal root whenever the first radical is followed by silent <i>šewa</i> .
	I-ו/י פ"ו/י ישב <i>sit, settle</i>	Initial ו either disappears or becomes a vowel letter whenever the first radical is followed by silent <i>šewa</i> (and in a few other forms).
Middle Weak (Hollow)	II-ו/י ע"ו/י שיר <i>sing</i>	Lacking a second radical (thus “hollow”), these roots differ from the basic verb in all forms except the D-stems (where they are rare). Unlike other verbs, their lexical form is Q NC.
Final Weak	ע"ע geminate סבב <i>surround</i>	The second and third radicals are the same (“geminate” means “twinned”); they are weak in most forms except the D-stems.
	III-ה ל"ה בנה <i>build</i>	The final ה of the lexical form is a vowel letter, replacing an original ו, which is still present before verbal (PGN) endings; the most consistent weak verbs.

The nature and location of the different weaknesses means that not all forms of a weak verb are, in fact, weak (i.e., some forms look just like the forms of **בָּנִי**). This chart shows how each type relates to the strong verb.

Weakness	Qal	Nifal	D-stems	H-stems
I-נ I-ו/י	Weak in imperfect, preterite imperative, infinitive construct	Weak in perfect & participle	Strong in all forms	Weak in all forms
II-ו/י Geminate	Weak in nearly all forms		Replaced by <i>polel</i> , <i>polal</i> , <i>hitpolel</i>	
III-ה	Weak in preterite, jussive, infinitive construct, & all forms with PGN endings			

160. English distinguishes strong from weak verbs by the form of their past tense. Verbs which add “-ed” to form the past are called “strong”, since the form of the verbal root does not change (“look”, “looked”), whereas verbs that indicate the past by changing a vowel (“run”, “ran”), or all or part of their form (“go”, “went”; “teach”, “taught”; “be”, “are”) are “weak”.

Any verbal form with only two root consonants has a weak root, which you can discover by elimination or by knowing vocabulary. For example, the form יִבְכֶּה must be from one of the following roots: נִבַּךְ , יִבַּךְ , בִּכָּה , בִּוַךְ , בִּיַךְ , בִּכַךְ . Checking the lexicon shows that only two of these roots occur in Biblical Hebrew: בִּכָּה , “weep, cry” (c. 100x) and בִּוַךְ , “be confused” (3x). Context should let you choose the correct root.

24.1.1 Consistency among Verbal Forms

Each verbal stem is fairly consistent, using, for example, the same prefix vowel for each type of weakness. In addition, the III- ה verbs (for example) are weak in many forms, but their weakness is consistent across all stems and conjugations, and—this is especially important—their weakness does not affect any of the diagnostics that we learned for the basic verb, which means that they are fairly easy to recognize.

It is tempting to see the strong and weak forms as vastly different, but they are in fact quite closely tied to the forms of the strong verb (more strongly than, e.g., “be”, “was”, “are”, and “am”, or even $\beta\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\pi\omega$ and $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\delta\omicron\upsilon$).

1. The subject [PGN] affixes are the same in all verbal forms (e.g., נִי is always 1cp perfect, whether the stem is strong or weak).
2. The weaknesses of these verbal roots are only morphological—they only affect the *shape* of the verbal form. They do not affect the function or syntax of the stems or conjugations (i.e., the preterite delineates the narrative backbone, and the *hifil* is generally transitive [occurs with an object]).

24.2 III- ה Verbs

The final ה - of the lexical form of these verbal roots is a vowel letter, not a consonant. These verbs originally ended in י , which thus “replaces” the final ה - before consonantal PGN endings and in Q passive participle. This weakness does not affect anything in front of the second radical of the verbal root, which means that their stem diagnostics are identical to those of the basic verb. These roots are also called ל"ה and “final ה ”.

N.B.: Verbal roots ending in ה - (ה with *mappiq*) are *not weak*, but III-guttural (above); *mappiq* shows that the final ה is a consonant, not a vowel letter (e.g., גִּבְהַה , “be high”; נִגְהַה , “shine/be bright”).

24.2.1 Form

1. If there is *no PGN ending*
 - a) All forms except jussive, preterite, and infinitive construct end in ה . Each *conjugation* has a specific vowel before the final ה , regardless of the stem (on J, Pr, and NC, see below).

Ending	Conjugation	Example	Parsing	Where this Ending Occurs	
הָ -	perfect	בָּנָה	3ms Q P	3ms P only	
הֶ -	imperfect	יִבְנֶה	3ms Q F	1cs F, 2ms F, 3m/fs F, 1cp F only	
	participle	מִבְּנֶה	ms H Ptc	ms Ptc only	
הֵ -	imperative	בְּנֵה	ms Q V	2ms V only	
	infinitive absolute	הִבְנֵה	H NA	H & Hp NA	H & Hp only
הִ -	infinitive absolute	הִתְבְּנֵה	Dt NA	NA only	all stems except H & Hp
וֹת -	infinitive construct	בְּנוֹת	Q NC	NC f.p. Ptc	all stems

- b) In the jussive and preterite of all stems, the final ה drops off forms without a PGN ending, and a “helping” vowel—usually *segol*—is added between the first and second radicals of the root.

	Perfect	Imperfect	Jussive	Preterite	
Q 3ms	בָּנָה	יִבְנֶה	יִבֹּן	וַיִּבֶן	<i>and he built</i>
1cp	גָּלִינוּ	נִגְלֶה	נִגְלֹ	וַנִּגַּל	<i>and we revealed</i>
N 3ms	נִרְאָה	יִרְאֶה	[יִרְאֵ]	וַיִּרְאֵ	<i>and he appeared</i>
D 3ms	צִוָּה	יִצְוֶה	יִצֹּ	וַיִּצְוֶ	<i>and he commanded</i>
Dp 3ms	צִוָּה	יִצְוֶה	יִצֹּ	וַיִּצְוֶ	<i>and he was commanded</i>
Dt 3ms	[הִתְכַּסֶּה]	יִתְכַּסֶּה	[יִתְכַּסֵּ]	וַיִּתְכַּסֵּ	<i>and he hid [himself]</i>
H 3ms	הִשְׁקָה	יִשְׁקֶה	יִשְׁקֹ	וַיִּשְׁקֹ	<i>and he poured out</i>
Hp 3ms	הִשְׁקָה	[יִשְׁקֶה]	[יִשְׁקֹ]	[וַיִּשְׁקֹ]	<i>and it was poured out</i>

- c) In the *qal* passive (Qp) participle the final radical is י instead of ה:

בָּנוּי	<i>built</i>	ms Qp Ptc
גָּלוּי	<i>revealed</i>	

2. If there is a *PGN ending*:

- a) *Vocalic* PGN endings are added directly to the second radical of the root. This occurs with י- and י', -, but not with the 3fs perfect ending (הָ, -; #3 below):

יִבְנוּ	<i>They will build</i>	3mp Q F
תִּבְנִי	<i>You (fs) will build</i>	2fs Q F
בְּנִי	<i>Build!</i>	2fs Q V
צִוּוּ	<i>Command!</i>	mp D V

- b) With *consonantal* endings י replaces the ה of the lexical form,¹⁶¹ and comes between the verbal root and the ending. It is preceded by *hireq* or *sere* (in P), or *segol* (F, V).

בְּנִיתִי	<i>I built</i>	1cs Q P
הִשְׁקִיתְּ	<i>You (ms) watered</i>	2ms H P
תִּבְנִינָה	<i>You / they (fp) will build</i>	2/3fp Q F

3. In 3fs P (all stems), תָּה- is added to the second radical of the root:

בְּנִתָּה	<i>She built</i>	3fs Q P
הִבְנִתָּה	<i>She was caused to build</i>	3fs Hp P
הִפְנִתָּה	<i>She caused to turn</i>	3fs H P

4. The infinitive construct in all stems is formed by replacing the final ה with וּת- :

בְּנוּת	<i>to build</i>	Q NC
הִבְנוּת	<i>to be built</i>	N NC
הִפְנוּת	<i>to cause to build</i>	H NC

161. As mentioned above, י' - was the original final letter of the III-ה verbs.

5. The cohortative and imperfect look alike (i.e., cohortative ה is not used), so that it can only be detected from the context.

נבנה	<i>Let us build!</i>	1cp Q C or
	<i>We shall build</i>	1cp Q F

6. III-ה roots which are also I-ע (עשה, ענה, עלה) have *hatef-patah* under the ע and *patah* as prefix vowel in both Q and H. When this is combined with the loss of the final ה in the preterite (#1b, above), some forms of *qal* and *hifil* look exactly alike, and can be distinguished only from the context. Many of these verbs are intransitive in *qal* (e.g., עלה), and so will *not* have a direct object (*He went up*), but will have one in H (*He took [X] up*).

עשיתם	<i>You (mp) made</i>	2mp Q P
תעלו	<i>You (mp) go up/ascend or</i>	2mp Q F or
	<i>You (mp) take [cause to go] up</i>	2mp H F
	[requires an object]	
ויעל	<i>He went up (Q) or</i>	3ms Q Pr or
	<i>He [caused to go] took up (H)</i>	3ms H Pr
	[requires an object]	
ענה	<i>Answer [ms]!</i>	2ms Q V

24.3 The Verb היה (Review)

The verb היה (introduced in §15.2) is the most common verb in the Bible (more than 3500x), Its forms are rather unusual due to its final ה- and medial י-. Since it is a III-ה root, it follows the patterns described above, but whenever the *yod* ends a verbal form (in, e.g., 1cs, 2ms, 3ms, and 3fs preterite), it becomes a vowel letter and the form ends in long *hireq* (ִי-).

24.3.1 Common Forms of היה (all *qal*)¹⁶²

P 1cs	הייתי	<i>I was</i>	Pr 3ms	ויהי	<i>Now he/it was</i>
					<i>Then there was a/some ...</i>
3cp	היו	<i>They were</i>	3mp	ויהיו	<i>They were</i>
F 3ms	יהיה	<i>He shall be</i>	J 3ms	יהי	<i>Let/May he/it be/happen</i>
3mp	יהיו	<i>They shall be</i>	NC	היות היות	<i>to be/[by] being</i>

24.3.2 Function of היה (cf. §15.2.2)

Although היה is often glossed “be” or “become”, its most common function in biblical narrative is to introduce a change of setting or circumstance—a shift of scene or focus—in a biblical narrative. The form most commonly used for this function is 3ms *qal* preterite (ויהי), which functions as a discourse-level particle except when followed by a nominal subject.² In Ruth 1.1, for example, the first ויהי is *introductory* and thus not represented in the translation, but the second is followed by a subject (רעב), and therefore is predicate (and glossed in English). The circumstantial clause is formed with NC, as is frequent in Biblical Hebrew:

ויהי	[signals past reference]
בימי שפט השפטים	<i>In the days when the judges were judging,</i>
ויהי רעב בארץ	there was a famine in the land [ויהי has a subject],
וילך איש	and [so] a man went ... (Ru 1.1)

162. היה also occurs in *nifal*. For a complete paradigm of the III-ה verb, see Appendix D.

The circumstantial element can also be a nominal prepositional phrase, usually with a word of time or place:

וְהָיָה	[signals future reference]
בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים	<i>at the end of the days</i>
יִהְיֶה הַר בֵּית־יְהוָה נִבְנוֹן	the mountain of YHWH's house [temple] will be established (Mi 4.1)

24.4 Frequency

This lists all III-ה verbal roots that occur *fifty times or more* in Biblical Hebrew, in order of descending frequency.

היה	c. 3500x	חנה	<i>camp, encamp</i>	143x	
עשה	<i>do, make, act</i>	2573x	פנה	<i>turn (aside)</i>	134x
ראה	<i>see</i>	1294x	בכה	<i>weep</i>	114x
עלה	<i>go up, ascend</i>	879x	ידה	<i>throw (D); thank, praise (H)</i>	115x
נכה	<i>hit, wound, defeat</i>	504x	זנה	<i>fornicate</i>	95x
צוה	<i>command (D)</i>	494x	חרה	<i>be(come) angry, hot</i>	94x
בנה	<i>build</i>	373x	(II) ענה	<i>be humbled, humiliated (Q)</i>	79x
(I) ענה	<i>answer</i>	314x	שקה	<i>water, give to drink (H)</i>	79x
חיה	<i>live</i>	281x	חלה	<i>be(come) weak, sick</i>	77x
רבה	<i>increase, multiply</i>	226x	קנה	<i>acquire, get, buy</i>	78x
כלה	<i>cease, finish, end</i>	204x	הזה	<i>see</i>	72x
נטה	<i>stretch out, turn</i>	215x	פדה	<i>buy, ransom</i>	56x
שתה	<i>drink</i>	217x	אבה	<i>agree, accept</i>	54x
גלה	<i>reveal, uncover</i>	187x	(III) ירה	<i>teach, instruct (H)</i>	54x
(I) רעה	<i>feed, graze, tend</i>	171x	רצה	<i>be pleased with, like</i>	50x
כסה	<i>cover, conceal (D)</i>	157x	תעה	<i>wander (lost)</i>	50x

24.5 Concepts

circumstantial strong verb weak verb

24.6 Vocabulary

<i>answer, reply; respond</i>	(I) עָנָה	.363	<i>build</i>	בָּנָה	.355
<i>be humbled, afflicted; humble, afflict (D)</i>	(II) עָנָה	.364	<i>uncover, reveal</i>	(√I) גָּלָה	.356
			<i>go into captivity/exile</i>	(√II) גָּלָה	
<i>do, make; act</i>	עָשָׂה	.365	<i>live, be/stay alive</i>	חָיָה	.357
<i>command, order (D)</i>	צָוָה	.366	<i>cease, finish, end, complete (often with inf. const.)</i>	כָּלָה	.358
<i>see</i>	רָאָה	.367	<i>cover, conceal (D)</i>	כָּסָה	.359
<i>increase, multiply</i>	רָבָה	.368	<i>stretch out; turn</i>	נָטָה	.360
<i>feed, graze, tend; herd</i>	רָעָה	.369	<i>hit, wound, defeat (H)</i>	נָכָה	.361
<i>drink</i>	שָׁתָה	.370	<i>go up, ascend</i>	עָלָה	.362

24.7 Exercises

After you have studied the III-ה verb, *gloss* these sentences, *parsing* all verbal forms.

Is 40.5; יחדו *together*

1. וַנְּגַלָּה כְּבוֹד יְהוָה
וּרְאוּ כָּל-בָּשָׂר יַחְדָּו כִּי פִי יְהוָה דִּבֶּר:

Jr 35.17; these are parallel poetic lines, each consisting of two clauses joined by וְ-

2. דִּבַּרְתִּי אֱלֹהִים וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ
וְאִקְרָא לָהֶם וְלֹא עָנּוּ:

Jonah 1.10; the conjunction כִּי has two different functions

3. וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו מִה-זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ
כִּי-יִדְעוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים
כִּי-מִלְפָּנֵי יְהוָה הוּא בָרַח

Ps 30.11 [EV 30.10]; נִי = 1cs suffix; הֲנִן *be gracious, show favour*; there are three imperatives in this v.; both occurrences of יְהוָה are vocative

4. שְׁמַע־יְהוָה וְחַנּוּנִי
יְהוָה הִיְהֶ-עֲזֵר לִי:

2 Ch 19.6

5. רְאוּ מַה-אַתֶּם עֹשִׂים

Gn 13.1; Egypt; Abram, Lot; Negev

6. וַיַּעַל אַבְרָם מִמִּצְרַיִם הוּא וְאִשְׁתּוֹ
וְכָל-אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ וְלוֹט עִמּוֹ הַנְּגֵבָה:

Gn 1.3–4a; the *athnah* (the accent under the first occurrence of אֹרֶר means “pause here”; see §27.3)

7. וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אֹרֶר וַיְהִי-אֹרֶר:
וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאֹרֶר כִּי-טוֹב

Gn 1.9; קוּה *be gathered* (N)

8. וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יִקְוּ הַמַּיִם מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם
אֶל-מְקוֹם אֶחָד וְתִרְאָה תִּבְּשָׂה וַיְהִי-כֵן:

Gn 2.18; לְבַד *only, alone*, here with 3ms suffix

9. לֹא-טוֹב הָיִיתָ הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ

Gn 2.24

10. וְהָיוּ לְבָשָׂר אֶחָד

Gn 8.20; Noah

11. וַיִּבֶן נֹחַ מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה

Gn 20.12

12. וַתְּהִי-לִי לְאִשָּׁה

Ex 33.18 [נִי = 1cs suffix]

13. וַיֹּאמֶר הָרֵאנִי נָא אֶת-כְּבוֹדְךָ:

Ex 32.4; יִשְׂרָאֵל is vocative; Egypt

14. וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
אֲשֶׁר הָעֶלְוֶה מֵאַרְצָן מִצְרַיִם:

Dt 9.9

15. לָחֶם לֹא אָכַלְתִּי וַיְמִים לֹא שָׁתִיתִי:

1 Sa 4.9; פְּלִשְׁתִּים is vocative; Philistines, Hebrews

16. הִתְחַזְּקוּ וְהָיוּ לְאֲנָשִׁים פְּלִשְׁתִּים בְּן תַּעֲבָדוּ
לְעִבְרִים
כַּאֲשֶׁר עָבְדוּ לָכֶם וְהָיִיתֶם לְאֲנָשִׁים וְנִלְחַמְתֶּם:

1 Sa 26.23; אָבָה *be willing*

17. וְלֹא אָבִיתִי לְשַׁלַּח יָדִי בַּמְּשִׁיחַ יְהוָה:

1 Sa 14.35; Saul

18. וַיִּבֶן שָׂאוּל מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה

Ne 9.18; נִאֲצָה *contempt, blasphemy*; Egypt

19. וַיֹּאמְרוּ זֶה אֱלֹהֵיךָ אֲשֶׁר הָעֶלְףָּה מִמִּצְרַיִם
וַיַּעֲשׂוּ נִאֲצוֹת גְּדֹלוֹת:

Lv 18.8; עֲרוּהָ *nakedness* [The “nakedness” commandments occur in Lv 18.6-19.]

20. עֲרוֹת אִשְׁתְּ-אָבִיךָ לֹא תִגְלֶה עֲרוֹת אָבִיךָ הוּא:

24.8 *Enrichment: Narrative Aperture*

Circumstantial clauses or phrases, as discussed above, often signal narrative onset (or “aperture”), and thus can signal the author’s organization of the story (cf. the examples under in §24.3.2). The significance of this is that we need to beware the tendency to rearrange a text in order to suit our own purposes (i.e., the temptation to use the text merely to make our point). To take the first point of a sermon or exposition from the middle of the story (or poem), the second point from the beginning, and our final point from near the end is merely a way of announcing to others that we would have written the passage differently. It is, in other words, to subordinate our own interests to the interests and concerns of its author.

Our message—which purports to re-present the text to our readers or hearers—must serve the text; the text does not exist to serve our sermon.

Noting narrative aperture is one means of being sure that we are paying attention to the authors’ arrangement of the material, and that we are attempting to follow their lead rather than to replace it with our own. Since every aperture also means that the previous section has closed, identifying apertures enables us to note the “breaks” in the story that correspond to the paragraphs, etc. of stories in English. Since the chapter breaks in our modern Bibles were not original, we need to be careful not to assume their priority in the organization of the story, even though they may indicate a “shift” of perspective within a larger, more general topic (cf. §26.8).

Semantic markers of aperture are mainly words that signal a change of some type—especially shifts in time (chronology), place (location), and participants (characters). By the same token, continuity of characters across chapter breaks suggests that the break is ill-placed. In Gn 18 (see §26.7) and 44, for example, the main character in the first unit of the chapter is not identified by name, implying in each case that he is the same person identified as the subject of the preceding clause(s). This in turn implies that the stories now separated by the chapter break are a single story that should be read and studied as a whole.

Lesson 25

“PRE-READING” BIBLICAL NARRATIVE

This lesson outlines six steps that will help you find your way through a biblical story by “pre-reading” it in order to prepare to read [translate]. The first four steps—marking preterites, *wayhi*, Masoretic accents, and clause-initial particles—are purely mechanical, and can be done after only a few weeks’ study; the last two—quotation formulae and disjunctive clauses (especially)—strengthen our interpretation. This process will prepare you to read, study, and understand biblical stories but without, of course, guaranteeing a valid reading or interpretation. Nor can these the process of itself (i.e., merely by applying it) yield an expository outline. Used carefully, however, it should both help you avoid misinterpreting the story and suggest how the passage might be well interpreted and explained.

25.1 Preterites

Preterites (also called “imperfect + *waw*-consecutive” or *wayyiqtol*) form the “backbone” of biblical narratives, and tie them together, much as sticking to the past tense in English tells the reader or hearer “what happened then” or “next”. **Locate and mark the preterites** in the narrative by circling, highlighting, underlining, etc. This does at least three things:

1. *Syntax*. Since a preterite always “opens” (comes first in) its clause, marking the preterites indicates where many, or even all, of the main narrative clauses begin. Each preterite clause should be read as a syntactical unit—do not move words “across” a preterite (e.g., we should not read אַבְרָם *Abram*, the last word in Gn 12.7a, as part of the following preterite clause).¹⁶³
Since the subject is often the second word in the preterite clause, marking the preterites also suggests where the subject of each clause can be found (this is far more of a tendency than a “rule”).
2. *Flow & Pace*. Preterites outline the story by their spacing and content (lexical function). If the preterites occur in clusters, with relatively larger stretches of material between clusters, there will probably be a great deal of direct quotation, or a large amount of descriptive material (background), introducing or supporting the chain of events (e.g., 1 Sam 3.1-3). They may also be spaced relatively evenly throughout the narrative.
3. *Content*. The content (semantic load) of the preterites also suggests the nature of the story. For example, in Gn 12.1-9, the preterite that opens the discourse (וַיֵּאָמֶר) introduces three verses of direct quotation (12.1-3), which is followed by a stretch of six preterites (4-6), five of which are verbs of motion or travel. The next two preterites (7a) introduce another, very brief, divine speech (7b), followed by six more preterites, two of which describe the act of building (7c, 8b), and two of which are again verbs of motion (8a, 9a). Simply noting this suggests that the narrative contained in these verses centers on a person or persons moving from one place to another. Reading the story, therefore, you expect to find information about this type of activity (see Table I, below).

163. This does not address whether a particular translation might need or choose to place “Abram” in the following clause.

Preterites in Gn 12.1-9

Gloss	Next Form	Preterite	V.
<i>*and YHWH said</i>	יהוה	וַיֹּאמֶר	1
<i>and Abram went</i>	אַבְרָם	וַיֵּלֶךְ	4a
<i>and he went with him</i>	אִתּוֹ	וַיֵּלֶךְ	4b
<i>and Abram took</i>	אַבְרָם	וַיִּקַּח	5a
<i>and they left to go</i>	לָלֶכֶת	וַיֵּצְאוּ	5b
<i>and they entered the land</i>	אֶרֶצָהּ	וַיָּבֹאוּ	5c
<i>and Abram crossed / passed</i>	אַבְרָם	וַיַּעֲבֹר	6
<i>and YHWH appeared</i>	יהוה	וַיֵּרָא	7a
<i>and he said to your seed</i>	לְזַרְעֶךָ	וַיֹּאמֶר	7b
<i>and he built there</i>	שָׁם	וַיִּבֶן	7c
<i>and he moved on from there</i>	מִשָּׁם	וַיַּעֲתֵק	8a
<i>and he pitched his tent</i>	אֶהְלֵה	וַיִּט	8b
<i>and he built there</i>	שָׁם	וַיִּבֶן	8c
<i>and he called on the name</i>	בְּשֵׁם	וַיִּקְרָא	8d
<i>and Abram set out</i>	אַבְרָם	וַיִּסַּע	9

Words in italics represent the verbal predicate;
regular type glosses the word after the preterite.

If, on the other hand, most or all of the preterites are verbs of speaking (e.g., Gn 17), you know that the “story” largely records a conversation, which in Scripture will tend to be one person telling another what to do (instruction, exhortation) or what he or she [the speaker] will do (prophecy, promise). In fact, in Gn 12.1-3, this is what we find. God tells Abram what to do (1), and then makes certain promises to him (2-3). This leads directly to a second aspect of narrative.

Identifying the preterites in a narrative reveals the beginning of the main narrative clausees, divides the narrative into smaller, more manageable pieces, outlines the flow of the story, suggests its pacing, and reveals some of its content.

25.2 wayhî-Clauses

A special preterite is וַיְהִי (3ms Q Pr of היה), which has two primary syntagmatic functions, each of which is related to its function within the larger discourse.

1. *Circumstantial*. When wayhî is followed by a **temporal** expression—either a nominal phrase or a verbal clause (e.g., וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַהוּא preposition + infinitive construct)—its clause is *circumstantial*. These usually indicate a change in the temporal or locative setting (cf. Gropp 1995, 202).
2. *Predicate*. When a **subject** follows wayhî, the clause introduces a person or object, or describes a change in the larger setting or circumstances of the story.

Taking the next passage in Genesis as an example, the form wayhî occurs four times in Gn 12.10-16 (Table II). The first (10) and fourth (16b) have subjects and are therefore predicate, introducing changes in the narrative situation; the second (11) and third (14) are circumstantial, introducing [events at] stages in Abram’s journey to Egypt.

WAYHÎ in Gn 12.10-16

Narrative Shift	Gloss	wayhî Clause	Gn
A change in situation, implying that the famine began after Abram was in the land (background information for what follows)	<i>There was a famine</i> in the land	וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ	12.10
The second “stage” of Abram’s journey to Egypt (cf. v. 10b)	<i>When he was about to enter</i> Egypt, ...	וַיְהִי הִקְרִיב לְבוֹא מִצְרַיִם	12.11
The conclusion of Abram’s journey to Egypt	<i>When Abram entered</i> Egypt, ...	וַיְהִי כְּבוֹא אַבְרָם מִצְרַיִם	12.14
A change in Abram’s circumstance because of Sarai	<i>He had</i> flocks and herds, ...	וַיְהִי לוֹ צֹאן וּבָקָר	12.16

The beginning of 12.10 implies that when Abram had arrived and received the promise of God there was no famine; the clause in 12.16 implies that he now had [much?] more than before Pharaoh took Sarai.

When *wayhî* is *predicate* (as defined above), it is *morphologically* bound to (or cohesive with) the main storyline since it is a preterite, which suggests that *wayhî* clauses raise the description of a state or condition to the status of the narrative backbone, even though *they do not narrate a sequential or consequential event* (e.g., Gn 12.10).¹⁶⁴

This function is analogous to that of a preterite of a non-dynamic stative verb. For example, “Abram *was* very wealthy”, describes a general state or condition, while “Abram *became* [or *had become*] very wealthy”, describes either the beginning of his wealth (“became”) or his prior arrival at a state of wealth (“had become”). There is thus the possibility that predicate *wayhî* clauses may be inceptive, as in the traditional translation of the prophetic formula: וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֶל-יוֹנָה בֶן-אֲמֹתִי: “YHWH’s word *came* to Jonah ...” [Jon 1.1]; Gn 12.10 would then signal “A famine *came* upon the land”.

In fact, since both types of *wayhî* clauses can signal a change in setting or circumstance (e.g., Gn 12.10), they reveal some of the discontinuities in the story that mark what can be called narrative “seams” or “boundaries”, or the onset of the story’s narrative “chunks”.

Although we need to check our impressions of the function of *wayhî* against the relationship between the content of the *wayhî* clause and the rest of the discourse (especially the preceding clauses), this helps us look beyond the individual form to its literary cotext, and thus to avoid merely “literal” renderings such as “and it happened/came to pass”.

25.3 Rabbinic Accents

The Masoretic accents were inserted into the text c. 500-900 CE to help readers pronounce and understand what they read;¹⁶⁵ each is associated with a brief melody that tells the cantor how to chant the text during services. Most of them indicate the accented (“tone”) syllable, but they also signal each word’s relationship to the following word.¹⁶⁶ There are two types of accents, disjunctive¹⁶⁷ and conjunctive.¹⁶⁸

164. The exception to this “rule of non-narration” is when וַיְהִי (and other forms of *hayah*) are followed by a ־ in order to show a change in the subject’s status; the combination is generally rendered by a form of the verb “become”.

165. There are two accentual systems, one used in Psalms, Job, and Proverbs, the other in the rest of the Hebrew Bible.

166. Accents thus testify to a now-codified rabbinic reading of the verse; like the paragraphing and punctuation of a modern English version, they are part of the history of biblical interpretation, not part of the text *per se*.

167. The rabbis called these *melakhîm* (“kings”); Christian grammarians called them *domini* (“lords”).

168. The rabbis called these *meshartîm* (“servants”); Christian grammarians called them *servi* (“servants”).

A *disjunctive* accent means “Pause after this word”, that is, *separate* this word from the next one. The pause may be large or small, depending on the relative strength of the accent. The accent’s function applies only to the individual word that it marks. These six disjunctive accents are numbered according to the *Tabula Accentum* (included in *BHS*) according to their approximate “weight” or “strength” (there is little difference between #5 and #6).¹⁶⁹

Major Disjunctive Accents		
1. <i>sillûq</i>	מְלִיץ	marks the last word in the verse; it is followed by the two “diamonds” called <i>sof pasuq</i> (“end of verse/pasuq”)
2. <i>’atnach</i>	מְלִיץ	divides the verse into two major sections (often called “halves”, but logical halves, not in number of words); there is only one <i>’atnach</i> per verse ¹⁷⁰
3. <i>s’gôltā</i>	מְלִיץ	the primary divider of the first “half” of the verse (as indicated by <i>’atnach</i>); written after its word (i.e., “postpositive”), and so does not mark the accented syllable
5. <i>zāqēf parva</i>	מְלִיץ	divides either “half” or both “halves” of the verse ¹⁷¹
6. <i>zāqēf magna</i>	מְלִיץ	essentially a variant of #5
7. <i>r’bîa’</i>	מְלִיץ	resembles holem, but higher, larger, and diamond-shaped
8. <i>tifka</i>	מְלִיץ	regularly precedes words with <i>’atnach</i> (#2) and <i>silluq</i> (#1), i.e., before the major divisions of the verse ¹⁷²

The Masoretes used these accents to create divisions that were semantic, syntactical, or (often) both, much like English (European) punctuation. Furthermore, these disjunctive accents often precede preterites (and other clauses), reinforcing the first step (above). Just as preterites mark the ebb and flow of the story’s events, the major disjunctive accents suggest smaller units of textual organization that also help us “think our way through” the narrative.

We can read “between” the disjunctive accents (much like reading “between” preterites), since the material (words) between disjunctive accents functions as a unit. Although the accents are not original, and occasional accentual interpretations may even be questionable (e.g., 1 Sam 3.3b), they are quite venerable, and often help us read the text; at the very least, they are an important witness to the history of interpretation.

You will soon notice a certain amount of coordination and overlap between these two systems—preterites are normally preceded by disjunctive accents.

When pre-reading, putting a vertical line after words marked with one of these accents visibly divides the text into “meaningful” or “functional” clusters of words. The major disjunctive accents divide 1 Kings 1.1 into five “pieces”; the last word is not separate, but part of the verbal clause, despite *tifka*.

1 Kings 1.1		
וְהַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד זָקֵן	Now King David was old,	<i>zaqef</i>
בָּא בַיָּמִים	advanced in days,	<i>’atnach</i>
וַיְכַסְּהוּ בַּבְּגָדִים	and they covered him with garments,	<i>zaqef</i>
וְלֹא יָחַם לוֹ	but he was not warm.	<i>tifka – silluq</i>

169. This table does not include *silluq* (#1), which tends to coincide with *sof pasuq* at the end of (nearly) every verse, or with the relatively rare accent *šalšelet* (#4).

170. It may be missing from short verses (e.g., Gn 18.1; Nu 27.5, 6; 28.1; Jon 1.1), or even longer ones (e.g., Dt 6.22).

171. *Zaqef* can occur more than once in either “half” of the verse.

172. *Tifka* can precede a short word cluster in which the last word has *’atnach* or *silluq*, and so can break up a “longer” string of words that might begin with, e.g., a word following *zaqef* and end with *silluq*. In Jon 1.6, *tifka* occurs before the last two words, which are a preterite clause.

The *conjunctive* accents, on the other hand, mean “Don’t pause after this word”, that is, *link* this word to the next one—they belong together. The strength of the link depends on the relative strength of the accent. The most important conjunctive accent (and the only one that this pre-reading exercise uses) is *munach* (מְנַחֵךְ). *Munach* can occur several times in a verse, and even under consecutive words, linking, for example, words in a construct chain. When *munach* occurs under a word that is also marked with a disjunctive accent, the disjunctive accent takes priority (cf. הַשְׁוֹנֵמִית in 1 Kgs 1.3). Noticing and marking *munach* keeps together words that belong together.

N.B.: Not every accent occurs in every verse (e.g., Gn 18.1 lacks *’atnach*; many verses lack *zaqef*, *r^ebîa’*); *munach* is often lacking.

25.4 Clause-Initial Particles

Another step of this pre-reading process is to mark any “clause-leading” or “clause-initial” particles. These function words usually begin or “introduce” their clause.¹⁷³ Having a basic idea of the function of these words, we can strengthen our expectations about the story by noting the relationships that these particles signal between clauses and larger chunks of the narrative.

Clause-Initial Particles		
אֲשֶׁר	<i>which, who, that</i>	introduces relative clause that usually refers to the preceding word
וְעַתָּה ¹⁷⁴	<i>therefore</i>	introduces volitional conclusions (i.e., calls for action/response: imperative, cohortative, jussive)
כְּאֲשֶׁר	<i>as, just as</i>	introduces comparison
כֹּה	<i>thus, so</i>	introduces clause of manner
	<i>that</i>	introduces content of indirect quotation
כִּי	<i>because, for</i>	introduces reason for, cause of
	<i>when / if</i>	introduces conditions (e.g., laws)
לְמַעַן	<i>in order that, so that</i>	introduces purpose or result (goal)
עַל־כֵּן	<i>therefore</i>	introduces logical conclusion (never calls for action/response)

25.5 Quotation Formulae

The narrative burden of many stories is carried by direct quotations, which are often introduced by preterites that someone said, spoke, commanded, etc.

Direct quotations are normally introduced by a verb of speaking (אָמַר, דִּבֶּר, שָׁאַל, etc.) that is often followed by the subject and addressee (introduced by the preposition -ל). The syntagm (e.g., “YHWH said to Abram”) helps us locate the beginning (*aperture*) of the quotation; if the form לְאָמַר occurs, the next word almost always begins the quotation. The end of a speech is not as easily recognized, since other clauses may come between the end of the quotation and the next preterite. For now, merely noting the quotation formulae will alert you to the presence of speeches in the passage.

Many quotation formulae are preterites, but they also occur in other types of clauses (e.g., in Gn 12.12a וְאָמְרוּ, *and they will say*, is a quote within a quote—it falls within Abram’s speech), which means that it is not enough merely to check the marked preterites for verbs of speaking; other clauses must also be examined.

173. Contrast the conjunction *waw*, which functions at all syntagmatic levels, from phrase to discourse.

174. Without the prefixed *waw*-, עַתָּה; refers to the present: “now”. *W^eattā* clauses are disjunctive (see below) by definition (*w*+non-verb), and mark the transition from argument to conclusion (and action or decision).

When a character instructs or directs another to do something, the narrator often says merely that “and he did so” (וַיַּעַשׂ כֵּן) (Jg 6.20; 1 Kg 20.25; Est 2.4; Is 20.2) or “so they did what Moses [Josuha] had commanded”, without describing their actions or repeating the instructions. This means that although the preterites of quotation formulae may carry the narrative *flow* of the story, the content of the quotations often provides much of its *substance*. Key to pre-reading a narrative is therefore **identifying the quotations**.

Quotation formulae also serve another purpose: when *repeated* within a unified speech (i.e., a speech made by one person), they do not so much re-introduce the speaker (as though the author expects the reader to have forgotten who was speaking), but signal topical shifts within the speech. Here are three examples from Genesis.

Throughout the creation account (Gn 1.3-26), each occurrence of the quotation formula וַיֹּאמֶר signals the next divine creative activity. There was no one else to speak, so we must ask why the verb and its subject (וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים) are repeated. Typically in Biblical Hebrew, the repeated quotation formulae break up and “outline” extended speeches; here, divine speech initiates each creative act.¹⁷⁵ These three examples demonstrate this function of quotation formulae.

1. At the end of that chapter, two quotation formulae divide, or “outline”, the divine speech to the newly created man and woman topically (Gn 1.28-30):

Topic	Gloss	Quotation Formula	Gn
The blessing of abundance & dominion	<i>God blessed them ... and God said to them, “...”</i>	וַיְבָרֵךְ ... וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם	3.28
The provision of food	<i>And God said, “...”</i>	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים	3.29

2. In Gn 9.1-17, the author uses quotation formulae to organize a long divine speech:

Topic	Gloss	Quotation Formula	Gn
	<i>And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “...”</i>	וַיְבָרֵךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נוֹחַ וְאֶת־בָּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם	9.1
Divine covenant with all life	<i>And God said to Noah & his sons with him [saying], “...”</i>	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־נוֹחַ וְאֶל־בָּנָיו אִתּוֹ לֵאמֹר	9.8
The sign of the covenant	<i>And God said, “...”</i>	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים	9.12
Reiteration: sign & scope of covt.	<i>And God said to Noah, “...”</i>	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־נֹחַ	9.17

3. Genesis 17 illustrates both points about quotation formulae, including the difference between an extended speech and conversation. The announcement of the covenantal sign of circumcision (Gn 17.3b-17) is divided into three sections by further quotative frames:

New Topic	Gloss	Quotation Formula	Gn
YHWH’s rôle in the covenant	<i>And God spoke with him [saying], “...”</i>	וַיְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר	17.3b
Abraham’s responsibility under the covenant (circumcision)	<i>And God said to Abraham, “...”</i>	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם	17.9
Sarah’s rôle in the covenantal promise	<i>And God said to Abraham, “...”</i>	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם	17.15

175. More precisely, as is often pointed out, the divine speech *is* the creative act; this theological issue is separate from its function within the *structure* of the narrative.

This is followed by three preterites that describe Abraham’s response (*He fell ... he laughed ... he said to himself ...* [17.17]),¹⁷⁶ after which two further quotation formulae introduce the next part the conversation between Abraham and YHWH:

Topic	Gloss	Quotation Formula	Ref.
Abraham asks about Ishmael	<i>And Abraham said to God, “...</i>	וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים	17.18
God reassures him about Ishmael	<i>And God said, “...</i>	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים	17.19

Noting quotational formulae should fill some of the visual “gaps” in the preterite chain. Just as the preterite chain suggests the pace of the story, quotation plays a rôle in pacing by slowing a narrative.¹⁷⁷ While we read a quotation, no other events are being narrated, which stops the flow of events—the only “event” is the words of the quotation.

If a passage consists largely of quotation (as in, e.g., Gn 1.3-26; 9.1-17; 17.3b-21), not much “happens”, even if the passage is fairly lengthy, although, to be fair (and to invoke a false dichotomy), *what* is said (the content of the quotations) often overshadows *that* something is being said (the narrated event).

25.6 Disjunctive Clauses

Another key to reading a biblical narrative is the location and content of disjunctive clauses. A *clause* consists of a **topic** (the subject) and a **comment** about that topic (the predicate).¹⁷⁸ A sentence always consists of at least one clause, but a single clause can also be a sentence. In Biblical Hebrew, topics and comments can belong to several “classes” of words, and nearly anything that can be a topic can also be a comment (nearly all of these combinations occur; this chart does not imply that any are more frequent or prominent than others):

“Word-classes” in Clauses

Topic (word-classes)		Comment (word-classes)	
noun (generic)	נְבִיא	noun (generic)	מְלֶכֶךְ
noun (proper)	אַבְרָם	noun (proper)	הָיָד
pronoun (independent)	אַתָּה	participle (predicate)	סֹפֵר
pronoun (suffixed to NC)	לְלִכְתֹּךְ	participle (substantive)	הַפֹּתֵב
pronoun (subject PGN affix)	כְּתִבְתָּן	adjective (predicate)	רַע
participle (substantive)	הַפֹּתֵב	adjective (substantive)	הַגְּדוּלִים
adjective (substantive)	הַגְּדוּלִים	infinitive construct	לִכְת
infinitive construct	לִהְיוֹת	prepositional phrase (usually locative)	בְּבֵית
		finite verb (perfect, imperfect, preterite, imperative)	יִשְׁכַּב לֵךְ

Clauses often have other elements that relate primarily to the entire clause—to the relationship between the topic and comment, rather than specifically to one or the other. For example, a prepositional phrase that tells us *where* something occurred may also tell us where the subject/topic was when it happened. Such a phrase relates to the entire predication, not just to one of its elements.

176. This rapid succession of preterites—which is quite unlike the surrounding narrative—suggests that the author saw these actions as some sort of narrative “peak” or “climax”.

177. In a movie, for example, dialogue often controls pace. Unlike a movie (in which we can both listen to and watch a speaker or listener), text can only mention one thing at a time.

178. The term “comment” seeks to avoid the confusion caused by “predicate”, which connotes “verb” to many readers (verbs are only one of a number of potential grammatical forms that can function as a comment in Biblical Hebrew).

Disjunctive clauses begin with the conjunction *waw* + a **non-verb** (i.e., *anything except* a finite verbal form). Backgrounded actions, activities, setting, and *irrealis* (i.e., what *didn't* happen) tend to occur in disjunctive clauses, but it is not primarily the verbal conjugation that determines the relative status or function of a clause. Instead, a disjunctive clause signals the reader that it (the clause) is not on the narrative “backbone”, or the preterite “story-line”. After noting this, we can address the separate question of what the clause suggests about its status relative to the storyline. Disjunctive clauses have two primary functions:

1. They describe an activity or state that *parallels* that described in the previous clause. The syntax of the disjunctive clause often reverses or inverts the syntax of the clause that it parallels. After Naomi’s second statement urging Orpah and Ruth to return to Moab, the contrasting responses of her daughters-in-law are described in a preterite clause (“and Orpah kissed ...”) and a disjunctive clause (“but Ruth clung ...”):

וַתִּשַׁק עֹרְפָה לְחִמּוֹתָהּ and-she-kissed Orpah her-mother-in-law,
 וְרוּת דָּבְקָה בָּהּ but-Ruth she-clung to-her. (Ru 1.14b; cf. 1 Sam 1.2b)

On the other hand, the wives of Abram and Nahor are introduced in parallel clauses with no implied contrast, the first is asyndetic, and the second disjunctive (Gn 11.29b):

שֵׁם אִשְׁת־אַבְרָם שָׂרָי The-name-of the-wife-of Abram [was] Sarai,
 וְשֵׁם אִשְׁת־נְחוֹר מִלְכָּה and-the-name-of the-wife-of Nahor [was] Milkah.

2. Disjunctive clauses also present *parenthetical* information, which tends to be either flashback (information about earlier events), setting, or other information that the reader will need in order to understand events upcoming in the narrative. For example, the Canaanite presence in the land, noted in a disjunctive clause (Gn 12.6) creates narrative tension with Abram’s preceding call (Gn 12.1) and YHWH’s following promise (Gn 12.7):

וְהִכְנַעְנִי אֵן בְּאֶרֶץ: Now-the-Canaanite [was] then in-the-land.

This information is expanded in a later disjunctive clause that helps the reader understand why Abram and Lot could not stay together (Gn 13.7b):

וְהִכְנַעְנִי וְהַפְרִזִי אֵן יֹשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ: Now-the-Canaanite and-the-Perizzite then lived in-the-land.

Genesis 12 contains four disjunctive clauses. They identify Abram’s age, which becomes increasingly important in his ongoing search for an heir (Gn 12.4b); the potential tension between YHWH’s promise and the Canaanite presence (Gn 12.6b); Pharaoh’s good treatment of Abram for Sarai’s sake (Gn 12.16a), as he had predicted (Gn 12.13b); and what Abram was to do after Pharaoh discovered his deception about his relationship to Sarai (Gn 12.19b); it therefore begins with *וַעֲתָהּ*, *therefore* (see “clause-initial particles”, above).

Marking disjunctive clauses highlights information that is *crucial* to the story; it also reminds us that they probably do *not* describe the next event in the narrative sequence.

25.7 What’s Next?

After pre-reading, the next step is to *translate* the passage *in writing*; this has at least four purposes: (1) it slows down our reading, compelling us to pay attention to the text itself; (2) it forces us to choose a rendering (rather than merely note all of the possibilities); (3) it quickly reveals that translation entails far more than choosing the “right” gloss or creating a “word-for-word” running gloss; and thus (4) it should protect us against the arrogance that can come from a facility with the biblical languages, as we realize the number and nature of choices and compromises entailed in preparing a written translation.

25.8 Vocabulary

<i>teach, instruct</i> (H)	יָרָה (III) .379	<i>be willing, agree</i>	אָבָה .371
<i>ransom, buy</i> (back)	פָּדָה .380	<i>weep, mourn, wail</i>	בָּכָה .372
<i>turn</i> (toward)	פָּנָה .381	<i>fornicate, commit illicit sex</i>	זָנָה .373
<i>acquire, get, buy</i>	קָנָה .382	<i>see, observe, gaze</i> [at]	חָזָה .374
<i>be pleased with, like</i>	רָצָה .383	<i>be / become weak, sick, ill</i>	חָלָה .375
<i>pleasure, favor</i>	רָצוֹן .384	<i>camp, encamp</i>	חָנָה .376
<i>water, give a drink</i> [to someone or something] (H)	שָׁקָה .385	<i>be / become angry, hot</i>	חָרָה .377
<i>wander</i> (lost)	תָּעָה .386	<i>thank, praise</i> (H)	יָדָה .378

25.9 Exercise

In the reading passage for the next class, (1) mark (highlight, underline) the preterites; (2) quotation formulae; and (3) any occurrences of *wayhi* (and identify their function as either circumstantial or predicate).

25.10 Enrichment: Pre-reading Ruth 2.1-7

What is the result of pre-reading a passage of biblical narrative? In Ru 2.1-7 the underlining and shading show that the author used two disjunctive clauses flanking two appositional phrases to describe Boaz (1). The next disjunctive clause in these verses also refers to Boaz, this time to his arrival at the field (4). The shading (quotations) shows the increasingly dialogical nature of the story (5-7), as well as the use of preterites within the direct speech of the servant's report on Ruth's actions (v. 7). The sequence of three preterites (3) stands out from the rest of the passage (there are no other consecutive preterites), suggesting that these actions form some sort of anticipatory climax.

Having been pre-read, these verses no longer consist of either a single block of text or 105 individual concatenated words, but are revealed as a series of brief functional units of two to four words that together tell a well-crafted story:

וַיִּלְנַעַמִי מִיָּדַע לְאִישָׁהּ || אִישׁ גִּבּוֹר חַיִל || מִמְשַׁפַּחַת אֵלִימֶלֶךְ || וְשָׁמוּ בָעֵז: וַתֹּאמֶר רוּת
 הַמּוֹאָבִיָּה אֶל־נַעֲמִי || אֶלְכֶּה־נָּא הַשָּׂדֶה וְאֶלְקָטָה בַשִּׁבְלִים || אַחֵר || אֲשֶׁר אֲמַצֵּא־חֵן בְּעֵינָיו ||
 וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ לְכִי בָתִּי: וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתְּבוֹא וַתִּלְקַט בַּשָּׂדֶה || אַחֲרֵי הַקּוֹצְרִים || וַיִּקֶּר מִקְרָהּ || חִלְקַת
 הַשָּׂדֶה לְבָעֵז || אֲשֶׁר מִמְשַׁפַּחַת אֵלִימֶלֶךְ: וַיְהִי־בָּהּ בָּעֵז || בָּא מִבֵּית־לֶחֶם || וַיֹּאמֶר לְקוֹצְרִים יְהוּה
 עִמָּכֶם || וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ יִבְרַכְךָ יְהוּה: וַיֹּאמֶר בָּעֵז לְנַעֲרוֹ || הִנְנֶנּוּ עַל־הַקּוֹצְרִים || לָמִי הִנְעָרָה הַזֹּאת:
 וַיַּעַן || הִנְעָר הִנְנֶנּוּ עַל־הַקּוֹצְרִים וַיֹּאמֶר || נַעֲרָה מוֹאָבִיָּה הִיא || הַשָּׂבָה עַם־נַעֲמִי מִשָּׂדֶה מוֹאָב:
 וַתֹּאמֶר || אֶלְקָטָה־נָּא וְאֶסְפְּתִי בְּעִמְרִים || אַחֲרֵי הַקּוֹצְרִים || וַתְּבוֹא וַתַּעֲמוֹד || מֵאֵז הַבָּקָר וְעַד
 עֵתָהּ || זֶה שְׁבֹתָהּ הַבַּיִת מֵעַתָּה:

Key

<u>Double underline</u>	preterite (<i>wayyiqtol</i>)
<u>Single underline</u>	disjunctive clause (<i>waw</i> +non-finite-verb)
<u>Wavy double underline</u>	clause-initial particle
Shaded	quotation
	major disjunctive accent (as described above)

Lesson 26

I-נ VERBS

Verbal roots that begin with נ are weak whenever the first radical of a verbal form is followed by silent *šewa*, since the נ assimilates to the following consonant. Verbs I-נ are therefore weak throughout *hifil* and *hofal*, and in some forms of *nifal* (P, Ptc) and *qal* (F, Pr, V, NC). They are strong throughout all three D-stems, and in some conjugations of *nifal* (F, Pr, V, NC) and *qal* (P, NA, Ptc). This general pattern is the same as the I-י verb (below), so that some forms of these roots are exactly alike, and the lexical form can be determined only by knowing the vocabulary or from context, or both.

Stem	Weak Forms	Strong Forms
Q	F, Pr, V [NC,NA]	P, Ptc [NC, NA]
N	P, Ptc	F, Pr, V [NC,NA]
D, Dp, Dt	None	All forms
H, Hp	All forms	None

When the first radical of a verbal form is followed by silent *šewa* (e.g., יִמְשַׁל), the initial נ assimilates to the following consonant and doubles it. Each of the following pair of forms has the same parsing; the second verb of each pair is I-נ.

Form	Root	Parsing	Gloss	<i>Dageš forte</i>
יִמְשַׁל	מִשַׁל	3ms N P	<i>He was kept</i>	In יִנְשַׁל the initial –נ of נִנְשַׁל has assimilated to the נ; the –נ is the prefix of the <i>nifal</i> perfect.
נִנְשַׁל	נִנְשַׁל		<i>He approached</i>	
יִמְשַׁל	מִשַׁל	3ms Q F	<i>He keeps (will keep)</i>	In יִפֵּל the initial –נ of נִפֵּל has assimilated to the פ.
יִפֵּל	נִפֵּל		<i>He falls (will fall)</i>	
הִמְשִׁיל	מִשַׁל	3ms H P	<i>He caused to keep</i>	In הִצִּיל the initial –נ of נִצִּיל has assimilated to the צ.
הִצִּיל	נִצִּיל		<i>He rescued</i>	

1. The primary clue that a verbal form is from a I-נ root is that there are only two radicals, the first of which is doubled (if there is any type of stem or subject prefix).
2. If the second radical of a I-נ root is a guttural or ר, the root is like the basic verb (נ does not assimilate).
3. Roots that are both I-נ and hollow (vowel-medial, e.g., נוּס) follow the rules of the hollow verbs (Lesson 28), not I-נ verbs.
4. Some forms of I-נ roots in Q look exactly like I-י forms (Lesson 30).

26.1 I-נ Verbal Roots in Qal

There are three main types of I-נ verb (creatively called Types I, II, and III). Type I occurs in all stems, Type II in Q of some verbal roots; Type III consists of only one verb (נִרְחַן). There is no distinction in the other stems (i.e., the differences between Types I, II, & III only appear in *qal*).

26.1.1 Type I (Q F with holem)

This is the most common type of I-נ verb; when the initial נ is followed by silent *šewa* it assimilates to the second radical and doubles it. Type I verbal forms from I-נ roots are therefore weak throughout the H-stems (*hifil*, *hofal*), in *qal* imperfect (Q F) and preterite (Q Pr), and in *nifal* perfect (N P) and participle (N Ptc). This skeleton paradigm shows the forms of Type I verbs that are affected (*weak*):

Type I		Q	N	H	Hp
P	3ms	נָפַל	נָפַל	הִפִּיל	הִפִּיל
F	3ms	יִפֹּל	יִנָּפַל	יִפִּיל	יִפִּיל
V	ms	נָפַל	הִנָּפַל	הִפִּיל	---
	mp	נִפְּלוּ	הִנָּפְּלוּ	הִפִּילוּ	---
NC		נָפַל	הִנָּפַל	הִפִּיל	הִפִּיל
Ptc	ms	נֹפֵל	נֹפֵל	מִפִּיל	מִפִּיל

1. Forms in shaded spaces are not weak (“---” means that this form does not occur).
2. The prefix and its vowel are unaffected (except in Hp, where the prefix vowel is always *qibbus*).
3. The endings and vowels after the second radical are the same as those of the basic verb.

26.1.2 Type II (Q F with patah)

These verbs differ from Type I only in *qal* imperfect, preterite, imperative, and infinitive construct; all other forms are the same as Type I (above). The paradigm shows only the *weak* forms of this type of I-נ verb, using נגַשׁ and לַקַּח, and lists Q forms only, since the other stems are the same as Type I (above).

Type II (Qal)	נַגַּשׁ	לַקַּח	
F	3ms	יִגַּשׁ <i>he approaches / will approach</i>	יִקַּח <i>he takes / will take</i>
	3mp	יִגַּשׁוּ <i>they approach / will approach</i>	יִקַּחוּ <i>they take / will take</i>
Pr	3ms	וַיִּגַּשׁ <i>and he approached</i>	וַיִּקַּח <i>and he took</i>
	3mp	וַיִּגַּשׁוּ <i>and they approached</i>	וַיִּקַּחוּ <i>and they took</i>
V	ms	גַּשׁ <i>Approach!</i>	קַח <i>Take!</i>
	mp	גַּשׁוּ <i>Approach!</i>	קַחוּ <i>Take!</i>
NC	גַּשְׁתָּ	[to] approach	קַחְתָּ [to] take

1. The root sign (√) is used in studying Hebrew to show that we are discussing or describing forms from a particular verbal root.
2. *Qal* imperfect has *patah* after the second radical.
3. In Q imperative and infinitive construct the initial נ drops off (apocopates).
4. A final ת- is added to Q NC, which has two *seghols* (two *patahs* in II- and III-guttural roots), and looks just like Q NC of some I-י verbs (below).
5. The forms of the verb לַקַּח look just like the forms of a I-נ verb (Type II); any verbal form with קַח- or -קַח is therefore a form of לַקַּח. It is the only I-ל verb that does this. The medial ק loses *dages forte* before *šewa*; cf. 3 mp Q F (above).

26.1.3 Type III (*נתן* only)

The most common I-*נ* verb (nearly 2000x in Biblical Hebrew), *נתן*, is the only verb of this type. In *nifal* (the only non-*qal* stem in which it occurs), it is like Type II (above). Its main difference from other verbs in *qal* is that the final *ן* assimilates to consonantal PGN endings:

Q P	1cs	נָתַתִּי	<i>I gave</i>
N P	2 mp	נָתַתֶּם	<i>You were given (put, set, made)</i>

The other forms of *נתן* look like Type II (above), except that its stem vowel is *šere*. In addition, Q NC lacks both *נ*'s.

F	3ms	יָתַן	<i>He gives/will give</i>
	3mp	יָתְנוּ	<i>They [will] give</i>
Pr	1cs	וְנָתַתִּי	<i>I gave</i>
	3ms	וְנָתַתֵּן	<i>He gave</i>
V	2ms	תֵּן	
		תִּתְּנָה	<i>Give!</i>
	2mp	תִּתְּנוּ	
NC		תַּת	<i>to give</i>
	+1cs sfx	תַּתִּי	<i>my giving</i>
	+2ms sfx	תַּתֶּיךָ	<i>your giving</i>

A paradigm listing all forms of *נתן* that occur in Biblical Hebrew follows the I-*נ* paradigm (Appendix E).

26.2 *Nifal* of I-*נ* Verbal Roots

Like the strong verb (Lesson 18), I-*נ* verbal roots appear in two basic forms in *nifal*, with a doubled second radical (P, Ptc) or a doubled first radical (F, Pr, V):

			נִפְּלַ
P	3ms		נִפְּלָ
F	3ms		יִנְפֹּל
Pr	3ms		וַיִּנְפֹּל
V	ms		נִפְּלֵ
NC			נִפְּלֵ
Ptc	ms		נִפְּלֵ

1. In the perfect and participle, the initial *נ* assimilates to the second radical. The *נ* is the *נ* prefix of the *nifal*.
2. In the other conjugations, the *נ* of the *nifal* prefix assimilates to the initial *נ* of the verbal root; these forms look just like the strong verb. The visible *נ* is the initial radical of the verbal root.
3. Unlike *qal*, the *nifal* of I-*נ* verbal roots appears in only one set of forms.

26.3 Hifil & Hofal (H, Hp) of I-נ Verbal Roots

Since the *nun* is assimilated in all forms of the *hifil* and *hofal*,¹⁷⁹ the initial –נ of I-נ verbal roots that occur only in the H-stems (e.g., נגד, נשג) *never* appears:

		נגד√		נשג√
		H	Hp	H
P	3ms	הִגִּיד	הִגִּיר	הִשִּׁיג
F	3ms	יִגִּיד	---	יִשִּׁיג
Pr	3ms	וַיִּגִּד	וַיִּגִּר	וַיִּשִּׁג
V	ms	הִגֵּד	---	---
NC		הִגִּיד	---	---
Ptc	ms	מִגִּיד	---	מִשִּׁיג

*Forms marked with “---” do not occur; Hp of נשג does not occur.

26.4 Frequency

This table lists all I-נ verbs that occur fifty times or more in Biblical Hebrew.

נתן	<i>give</i>	1994x	נבא	<i>prophecy</i> (N)	115x
נכה	<i>hit, wound, defeat</i> (H; once each in N, Dp)	504x	נצב	<i>take one's stand/place</i> (N, H)	75x
נשא	<i>lift, carry, forgive</i>	651x	נבט	<i>look at, pay attention</i> (once in D; therefore “always” בט-)	70x
נפל	<i>fall</i>	433x	נצח	<i>lead</i> (D)	65x
נגד	<i>tell; declare, report, announce</i> (H; always ג-)	369x	נצר	<i>watch, guard</i>	63x
נטה	<i>stretch out; turn</i>	215x	נטע	<i>plant</i>	57x
נצל	<i>snatch, rescue, deliver</i> (H)	208x	נדה	<i>be scattered</i> (N); <i>scatter</i> (H)	51x
ננע	<i>touch; reach, come to</i>	150x	נכר	<i>recognize</i> (H); a few times in N, D; therefore usually כר-	50x
נסע	<i>depart, break camp</i>	146x	נשג	<i>overtake</i> (H; always שג-)	50x
ננש	<i>approach, come near</i>	125x			

179. This assimilation always takes place because the first radical of every form in H and Hp is followed by silent *šewa*.

26.5 Vocabulary

<i>depart, break camp, travel</i>	נָסַע .395	<i>prophecy</i> (N)	נְבִיא .387
<i>fall</i>	נָפַל .396	<i>look at, pay attention to</i> (H)	נָבַט .388
<i>take one's stand/place; be assigned</i> (N)	נָצַב .397	<i>tell; report, declare, announce</i> (H)	נָנַד .389
<i>lead</i> (D)	נָצַח .398	<i>touch; reach, come to</i>	נָנַע .390
<i>rescue, deliver; snatch</i> (all H)	נָצַל .399	<i>blow, assault; plague</i>	נָנַע .390
<i>watch, guard, keep, protect</i>	נָצַר .400	<i>come near, approach</i>	נָנַשׁ .391
<i>lift, carry; forgive</i>	נָשָׂא .401	<i>be scattered</i> (st. vb.)	נָרַח .392
<i>give</i>	נָתַן .402	<i>plant</i>	נָטַע .393
		<i>pretend</i> (N); <i>recognize</i> (H)	נָכַר .394

26.6 Exercises

After you have studied the I-נ verb, *gloss* these texts, *and then* parse all of the I-נ verbs in Genesis 11.27-13.14.

1. Gen 32.30; 2ms V with הָ - ending; Jacob
וַיִּשְׂאֵל יַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמֶר הַגִּידָה נָא שְׁמֶךָ
2. Ex 17.2; 3ms Q Pr); Moses
וַיִּרֶב הָעָם עִם־מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמְרוּ תִנוּלְנוּ מִיָּמַי וְנִשְׁתָּה
3. 1 Sa 8.6; *but it was wrong (evil, wicked)*; 2ms V with הָ - ending; Samuel
וַיִּרַע הַדָּבָר בְּעֵינַי שְׂמוּאֵל כִּי־אָשֶׁר אָמְרוּ תִנְהַלְנוּ מֶלֶךְ לְשִׁפְטֵנוּ וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל שְׂמוּאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה:
4. 1 Sa 14.43; Saul, Jonathan
וַיֹּאמֶר שְׂאוּל אֶל־יוֹנָתָן הַגִּידָה לִּי מָה עָשִׂיתָ וַיַּגִּיד לוֹ יוֹנָתָן
5. Is 63.15; *dwelling*
הַבֵּט מִשָּׁמַיִם וּרְאֵה מִזְבֵּל קִדְשֶׁךָ וְתִפְאַרְתֶּךָ
6. Jr 1.8; *fear, be afraid*
אֶל־תִּירָא מִפְּנֵיהֶם כִּי־אֶתְּךָ אֲנִי לְהַצִּילְךָ נְאֻם־יְהוָה:
7. Am 7.15 לֵךְ (2ms QV (הלך); the speaker is Amos
וַיִּקְחֵנִי יְהוָה מֵאַחֲרֵי הַצֹּאן וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי יְהוָה לֵךְ הִנְבֵּא אֶל־עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
8. Gen 3.6
וְתִקַּח מִפְּרִיָו וְתֹאכַל וְתָתֵן גַּם־לְאִשְׁתּוֹ עִמָּה וַיֹּאכַל:
9. Ps 56.14a [ET 15a]; this nomenclature means that the English and Hebrew texts are divided differently; in English this verse is Ps 56.15
כִּי הִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמוֹת
10. Ps 121.6; כֶּה - is a 2ms suffix; יָרַח *moon*
יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא־יִכְפֶּה וַיָּרַח בַּלַּיְלָה:
11. 1Kg 20.35
וְאִישׁ אֶחָד מִבְּנֵי הַנְּבִיאִים אָמַר אֶל־רַעְהוּ בְּדַבַּר יְהוָה הַכִּינִי נָא וַיִּמָּאֵן הָאִישׁ לְהַכְתּוֹ:
12. Gn 9.13; *bow* (n.)
אֶת־קִשְׁתִּי נָתַחֵי בְּעֵגֶן וְהָיְתָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵין הָאָרֶץ:

Gn 34.16	וַנִּתְּנוּ אֶת־בְּנֹתֵינוּ לָכֶם וְאֶת־בְּנֹתֵיכֶם נִקְחָלְנוּ וַיִּשְׁבְּנוּ אִתְּכֶם וְהָיִינוּ לְעַם אֶחָד:	.13
Ex 20.7; שׁוּא <i>vanity, in vain</i> ; נִקָּה <i>acquit, leave unpunished</i>	לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת־שֵׁם־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשׁוּא כִּי לֹא יִנְקֶה יְהוָה אֶת אֲשֶׁר־יִשָּׂא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ לְשׁוּא:	.14
Jos 3.6; Joshua	וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־הַפְּהָנִים לֵאמֹר שָׂאוּ אֶת־אָרוֹן הַבְּרִית וְעָבְרוּ לִפְנֵי הָעָם וַיִּשָּׂאוּ אֶת־אָרוֹן הַבְּרִית וַיֵּלְכוּ לִפְנֵי הָעָם:	.15
Jg 4.7; מִשָּׂךְ <i>draw [pull] [out]</i> ; הַמּוֹן <i>host, multitude; tumult, confusion</i> ; Kishon, Sisera, Jabin	וּמִשְׁכָּתִי אֵלַיךְ אֶל־נַחַל קִישׁוֹן אֶת־סִיסְרָא יָבִין וְאֶת־רֶכְבוֹ וְאֶת־הַמּוֹן וַנִּתְּתִיהוּ בְיָדְךָ: שֶׁר־צָבָא	.16
2 Kgs 19.7; שְׂמוּעָה <i>report, rumour</i> ; וָשׁוּב <i>return, go back</i>	הֲנִי נֹתֵן בּוֹ רוּחַ וְשָׁמַע שְׂמוּעָה וָשׁוּב לְאַרְצוֹ וְהַפְּלִתִיו בַּחֶרֶב בְּאַרְצוֹ:	.17
3ms Q P + w < שׁוּב, <i>return, go back</i>	וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה אֶת־דָּוִד וַיִּנַּע עַל־פִּי וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי הִנֵּה נֹתַתִּי דְבָרִי בְּפִיךָ:	.18
Jr 1.9; נֹתַתִּי may be performative (§10.9)		

26.7 Enrichment: Participant Reference

Noting the preterites, quotation formulae, and *wayhî*-clauses in a biblical narrative helps us study the text more carefully (Lesson 25), but other types of information in narrative also need to be recognized and accounted for. One that can be especially helpful in understanding the author's intention in a passage is *participant identification*. You have probably noticed that the biblical authors tend to identify the main characters (actors) in the story, either by name, or title, or both.

In Genesis 16, for example, the use of appositional descriptors underlines the dysfunctionality of the triad of Sarai, Hagar, and Abram (to name them in the order in which they appear in the story). The passage begins with three disjunctive clauses (Gn 16.1) that set the stage for the story by identifying the major participants, Sarai and Hagar:

1a	וְשָׂרַי אִשְׁת־אַבְרָם לֹא יָלְדָה לוֹ	Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not born [a child] to/for him,
1b	וְלָהּ שִׁפְחָה מִצְרַיִת	and she had an Egyptian maid,
1c	וּשְׁמָהּ הָגָר:	and her name was Hagar (Gn 16.1).

Sarai is identified by her relationship to Abram, and Hagar in relationship to her, as well as by her ethnicity. Abram is mentioned only to establish his relationship to Sarai—to “remind” readers that Sarai was his wife.

In Gn 16.2, Sarai is explicitly named as the subject of the leading preterite, but this is a necessary identification. Since two women were named in v. 1, the 3fs preterite וַתֹּאמֶר requires an explicit subject in order for the reader to know—as the quotation begins—which woman spoke to Abram. At the end of the verse, when Abram acquiesced to Sarai, both actors, already named at the beginning of the verse, are again called by name. On the other hand, Sarai does not mention Hagar's name, referring to her merely as “my maid” (שִׁפְחָתִי).

וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרַי אֶל־אַבְרָם ...	And Sarai said to Abram, “... וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם לְקוֹל שָׂרַי: (Gn 16.2).
----------------------------------	---

In Gn 16.3, both Sarai and Hagar are identified as fully as they were in v. 1, and Abram is named “in both directions”—Sarai as his wife, and he as her husband, probably to highlight the tangled relationships that are being created:

וַתִּקַּח שָׂרַי אִשְׁת־אַבְרָם אֶת־הַגֵּר הַמִּצְרִית שִׁפְחָתָהּ	And <i>Sarai</i> , <i>Abram's wife</i> , took <i>Hagar</i> , <i>the Egyptian</i> , her maid, ...
וַתִּתֵּן אֹתָהּ לְאַבְרָם אִשָּׁה לּוֹ לְאִשָּׁה:	and she gave her to <i>Abram her husband</i> , to become his wife (Gn 16.3).

When the relationship between Hagar and Sarai deteriorates (Gn 16.4), the author places Sarai and Abram on the same level by introducing both of their quotations with both names:

... וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרַי אֶל־אַבְרָם ...	And <i>Sarai</i> said to <i>Abram</i> , "... (Gn 16.5)
... וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֶל־שָׂרַי ...	and <i>Abram</i> said to <i>Sarai</i> , "... (Gn 16.6)

Throughout this brief conversation, Hagar is again demoted implicitly, since she is not called by her name, but merely called “my/your maid”. At the end of the story, however, Hagar is named three times—always as the subject of the verb יָלַד (a preterite [15a], a perfect in a relative clause [15b], and an infinitive construct in a temporal clause within the final disjunctive clause [16]).

וַתֵּלֶד הַגֵּר לְאַבְרָם בֶּן	And <i>Hagar</i> bore <i>Abram</i> a son,
וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָם שֵׁם־בְּנוֹ	and <i>Abram</i> called the name of his son,
אֲשֶׁר־יָלְדָהּ הַגֵּר	whom <i>Hagar</i> bore ... (Gn 16.15)
וְאַבְרָם בֶּן־שְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה וְיָשׁ שְׁנַיִם	(now <i>Abram</i> was eighty-six years old when
בָּלְדָתָהּ הַגֵּר אֶת־יִשְׁמָעֵאל לְאַבְרָם:	<i>Hagar</i> bore <i>Ishmael</i> to <i>Abram</i>). (Gn 16.16)

Although she is not called Abram’s “wife” after v. 3, at the end of the story she is no longer defined in terms of her relationship to Sarai, but in her own right as the mother of Ishmael, which implies some change in her standing within the home.

In Genesis 18.1-5, the author’s ways of referring to the participants suggests that Gn 18.1-15 (the story of Abraham’s hospitality and the repeated promise of an heir) was meant to be read as the consummation of the story recorded in Gn 17 (the institution of the covenantal sign of circumcision and its attendant promises).

The narrator identifies the subject of the first clause by name (יהוה), but does not name another subject until Gn 18.6a (below); he instead uses pronominal suffixes, an independent pronoun, and PGN affixes. Nor does he identify the pronominal object of the preposition (אֵלָיו). The significance of this lack of identification again comes from the tendency of Hebrew narrative to identify participants (one of the functions of the passive stems is to *avoid* identifying the subject).

In fact, apart from “YHWH” (18.1a) the participants in these verses are identified only by pronouns and generic nouns (i.e., שְׁלֹשִׁים אָנָשִׁים; 18.2a):

וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה בְּאֵלֵי מַמְרֵא	YHWH appeared to <i>him</i> among the oaks of Mamre	1a
וְהוּא יָשָׁב פֶּתַח־הָאֵהֶל ...	(now <i>he</i> was sitting at the entrance to the tent ...)	1b
וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו	and <i>he</i> lifted <i>his</i> eyes	2a
וַיֵּרָא ... עָלָיו	and <i>he</i> saw ... near <i>him</i>	2b
וַיֵּרָא	and <i>he</i> saw	2c
וַיָּרֵץ לִקְרֹאתָם ...	and <i>he</i> ran to meet <i>them</i> ...	2d
וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אֶרְצָה:	and <i>he</i> bowed to the ground.	2e
וַיֹּאמֶר ...	and <i>he</i> said, "... (18.3)	3a
וַיֹּאמְרוּ ...	and <i>they</i> said, "...	5d

During his speech (3b-5c), he does not identify himself except as “I” (as 1cs verbal PGN affix) and עַבְדְּךָ “your servant”. There is no contextual clue to his identity, except that he was a male, who was authorized to offer the hospitality of his home to three strangers, and who was also conscious of the social niceties of abasing himself (“your servant”).

Only after the “three men” accept this unnamed person’s offer of hospitality (18.4-5) does the author call him “Abraham” (18.6a), and then, as if to confirm or reinforce his identity, names “Abraham” as the subject of two of the next three narrative clauses:

וַיַּמְהַר אַבְרָהָם הָאֵלֶּהָ אֶל־שָׂרָה	And <i>Abraham</i> hastened to the tent, to Sarah,	6a
וַיֹּאמֶר ...	and <i>he</i> said, “ ...	6b
וַאֲלֵהֶבֶקֶר רָץ אַבְרָהָם	and [then?] to the herd ran <i>Abraham</i> , and ...	7a

The point is that this repeated “non-identification” of the subject, followed by his repeated identification *by name* is that these verses—and the story that they open—were written as part of the preceding story: they do not record a meal isolated from the promises and commandments of Gn 17, but rather the meal that ratifies the covenant that had just been sealed by circumcision (17.23-27).¹⁸⁰ This contextual setting also explains the promises about Sarai’s rôle in the covenant’s fulfillment (18.9-15; cf. 17.15-16), and YHWH’s musings about telling Abraham what he [YHWH] was about to do (18.17-19).

Because we read the biblical stories having heard them in sermons and Bible lessons, we often find it difficult to read them *as they were written*, so that in this case (for example), we already “know” that Abraham is the main participant in verses 1-5, even though he is never identified (English versions tend to supply “Abraham” in these verses). Paying close attention to the Hebrew text—especially in light of the normally explicit nature of Hebrew narrative—reveals the misleading nature of this chapter break, and encourages us to read the story *in light of* the covenantal statements of Gn 17.

Finally, this table lays out all participant references in Ruth 2.1-7. You can study the manners of reference (proper name, noun, independent pronoun, pronominal suffix, verbal PGN affix), and their relationship to the person(s) mentioned. This sort of exercise will help you focus on *how* the author is telling his story, which is in turn a clue to how he or she intends us to understand it.

Person referred to & Manner of Mention

Others	Boaz	Ruth	Naomi	“Voice”	V.
	לְנַעֲמִי		נַעֲמִי	author	1
	מִיָּדַע לְאִשָּׁה				
	אִישׁ גְּבוּר חֵיל				
	מִמְשַׁפַּחַת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ				
	וְשֵׁמוֹ בַעַז				
		וְתֹאמֶר רוּת הַמֹּאֲבִיָּה		author	2
	אֲשֶׁר אִמְצָא־חֵן בְּעֵינָיו			Ruth	
			נַעֲמִי	author	
		לָהּ	וְתֹאמֶר	author	
		לְכִי בְּתִי		Naomi	

180. For another account of a covenant ratification followed by a meal between the parties, see Ex 24.4-11.

	וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתָּבוֹא	author	3
הַקְּצָרִים	וַתֵּלֶקֶט	author	
	מִקְרָהּ	author	
	אֲשֶׁר מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ בְּעֹז	author	
	בְּעֹז	author	4
לַקְּצָרִים	וַיֹּאמֶר	author	
עִמָּכֶם		Boaz	
וַיֹּאמְרוּ	לוֹ	author	
לְנַעֲרוֹ הַנָּצֵב עַל-הַקְּצָרִים	וַיֹּאמֶר בְּעֹז	author	5
	הַנְּעָרָה הַזֹּאת	Boaz	
וַיַּעַן הַנַּעַר הַנָּצֵב עַל-הַקְּצָרִים וַיֹּאמֶר		author	6
	נַעֲרָה מִזֹּאבֵיהָ הִיא הַשָּׂבָה עִם-נַעֲמִי מִשָּׂרָה מִזֹּאֵב	נַעֲמִי Boaz's servant	
	וַתֹּאמֶר וַתָּבוֹא וַתַּעֲמֹד שְׂבִתָּהּ	Boaz's servant	7

Lesson 27

PRE-READING A BIBLICAL POEM

Poetry has been called the “other use [or “kind”] of language”; it does not communicate like “ordinary” speech or thought, but rather functions as language “for its own sake”; this suggests that it needs to be read in a different manner. Nor is this “other kind” of language limited to the “poetic books” (so-called), but also occurs widely throughout the prophetic books, so that nearly one-half of the Hebrew Bible is poetic.

A major challenge in reading a biblical poem in Hebrew is that a careful translation will often not “sound right”. There are several reasons for this: (1) poetry’s linguistic “compression” often yields ambiguous syntax, especially in non-verbal clauses; (2) poetry often uses unusual or rare vocabulary; (3) verbal conjugations in poetry do not have the same functions as in narrative; (4) scholars disagree about the nature and structure of biblical poetry, so that the results of their studies differ; and (5) the translation tradition in English often controls or determines the English text.

All of these reasons (there are more) mean that it is crucial to translate the Hebrew text *before* studying, or checking, published translations.¹⁸¹

This lesson presents some points to consider when trying to understand a biblical poem; it aims to protect us from interpreting the text based only on our impressions by encouraging us to pay close attention to specific aspects of the text itself. These “steps” should prepare you to begin to read a biblical poem as a poetic text.

27.1 Lineation: One Clause per Line

Begin by dividing the poetic text into clauses, and then making each clause a separate poetic line. [A clause consists of a subject (topic) and predicate (comment).]¹⁸² In doing this, you *must not assume* (1) that a verse contains a certain number of lines; or (2) the validity of the layout in either BHS or the English versions.

27.1.1 Nominal/Substantive Subjects & Objects

First, list the nouns in the poem, keeping construct chains together. There are nine in Ps 117, three of which are in construct:

Nouns	Construct	Absolute
1	כָּל־גּוֹיִם	יְהוָה
	כָּל־הָאֲמִיּוֹת:	
2	וְאֲמַת־יְהוָה	חֲסִדוֹ
		יְהוָה

181. You will also find that commentaries and reference grammars often justify traditional renderings. These comments are not meant to disparage the work of Bible translators, in light of the very severe constraints under which translators work—there is simply not time to do detailed research, and so the tendency is to default to the standard. [Other considerations also skew the process, such as the public’s desire for what is familiar.]

182. Poetic passages in BHS were arranged typographically by the editor(s); don’t assume that the lines, or even the half-lines (separated by an extra space, called a *caesura* [Lat., “cut”]), correspond to poetic lines—they may or may not.

Nouns tell us what a poem is *about*—its topic. Two of these six nominal phrases refer to humanity (“all” people), the other four refer to YHWH. The repeated divine name (in two forms) suggests an *inclusio* or “envelope” (because the same form “envelops” a section of text).

27.1.2 Verbal Predicates

After listing the nominal forms, list the verbs, again in sequence; it can be helpful to divide this list by conjugation (there is no column for conjugations that do not occur), and to parse each verbal form.

Verbs	Imperative	Perfect	Parsing
1	הִלְלוּ		2mp DV
	שִׁבְחוּהוּ		2mp DV+3ms
2		נָבַר	3ms QP
	הִלְלוּ		2mp DV

Verbs tell us what the poet says *about* the topic revealed by the list of nouns: three of these forms (all *piel* imperative) describe an act of worship or praise, one (נָבַר) describes rank or position. The *inclusio* suggested by the list of nouns (above) is even more apparent here where the same form (הִלְלוּ) is repeated. As it does in Ps 117, any aspect of verbal morphology (conjugation, PGN, stem)—or more than one, in combination—can reveal the poem’s structure.

27.1.3 Clausal Lineation

In order to have some control over our “reconstruction” of the poem, we can make each clause a single poetic line, based on its subject and predicate (no matter how long or short the resultant line).¹⁸³ When the two lists are thus combined, they yield very nearly all of Psalm 117, except for one conjunction (2a) and two prepositional phrases (2a, 2b):

	Subject	Object	Imperative	Perfect
1a ¹⁸⁴	כָּל־גּוֹיִם	יהוה	הִלְלוּ	
1b	כָּל־הָאֲמִים:		שִׁבְחוּהוּ	
2a	חֲסֵדוֹ			נָבַר
2b	וְאֶמֶת־יהוה			
2c		יה	הִלְלוּ	

When we add the conjunction and prepositional phrases to the lines, we realize that the first prepositional phrase is “part of” the predicate of 2a, and that the second *is* the predicate of 2b. The resultant full text is organized by line, so that we can translate the poem and then begin to analyze the particulars of its semantics and syntax.

	Predicate	Subject	Object	Predicate	Conj.
1a		כָּל־גּוֹיִם	יהוה	הִלְלוּ	
1b		כָּל־הָאֲמִים:		שִׁבְחוּהוּ	
2a		חֲסֵדוֹ		נָבַר עָלֵינוּ	כִּי
2b	לְעוֹלָם	וְאֶמֶת־יהוה			
2c			יה	הִלְלוּ	

183. A quick glance at nearly any translation of a biblical poem will reveal single clauses divided between two lines (or more), largely based on the theory that poetic lines had roughly the same length.

184. Each line is identified by its verse number and a letter; this is conventional in reference works, commentaries, and other sources.

You may wonder what you have learned that makes it worth doing this rather than merely translating the poem. The point is that this is intended to help ensure that you read *this* text in Hebrew, rather than merely repeat what you have heard or read that it says. This is only a beginning—the first few of many things to consider in studying a biblical poem—but it should help give some form to the poetic text before you.

27.5 Vocabulary

sanctuary, holy place	מִקְדָּשׁ .411	[a] blessing	בְּרָכָה .403
dead (adj.)	מֵת .412	breath, idol; vanity; Abel	הֶבֶל .404
[a] witness	עֵד עֵדָה .413	cry out [for help], shout (cf. צַעַק)	זָעַק .405
reach, overtake (H)	נָשַׁג .414	strange, foreign; illicit	זָר .406
only, surely (often begins clause)	רַק .415	disgrace, reproach	חֲרָפָה .407
cry out [for help], shout (cf. זַעַק)	צַעַק .416	sin, miss [a mark]	חָטָא .408
bird, insect [any flying thing]	עוֹף .417	sin, error, fault; sin-offering	חַטָּאת .409
bow, worship, do obeisance; show respect or honor (mainly Dt)	שָׁחָה .418*	Why?	מָדוּעַ .409
		sunrise, east	מִזְרָח .410

* Because of its initial sibilant, the root שחה never appears as שחה, but only with the initial -ש and the -ת- of the prefix inverted: -שְׁת- (metathesized). Forms that end in šureq (וֹ) are singular, those in -וֹי or -וֹי (waw followed by šureq) are plural. Since it is fairly frequent (172x), here is a skeleton paradigm:

		שחה/√		Dt	
P	3ms	הִשְׁתַּחֲוָה	F	3ms	יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה
	3cp	הִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ		3mp	יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ
V	mp	הִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ		3fp	תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶינָה
Ptc	ms	מִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה		NC	הִשְׁתַּחֲוִים ¹⁸⁵

27.6 Exercises

This is the text of **Ps 114**, laid out more or less as in the Hebrew Bible. Divide it into lines (you should end up with sixteen), list the verbal predicates, and identify any repetitions.

1. בְּצֵאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם בֵּית יַעֲקֹב מֵעַם לְעֹז:
2. הֵיטָה יְהוּדָה לְקִדְשׁוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמְּשֻׁלוֹתָיו:
3. הַיָּם רָאָה וַיִּנָּס הַיַּרְדֵּן יָסַב לְאַחֲזֹר:
4. הַהָרִים רָקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים גִּבְעוֹת כְּבְנֵי־צֹאן:
5. מִה־לֵּךְ הַיָּם כִּי תָנוּס הַיַּרְדֵּן תִּסַּב לְאַחֲזֹר:
6. הַהָרִים תִּרְקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים גִּבְעוֹת כְּבְנֵי־צֹאן:
7. מִלְּנִי אֲדוֹן חוּלֵי אֶרֶץ מִלְּפָנֵי אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב:
8. הַהִפְכֵי הַצּוּר אֲגַם־מַיִם חִלְמִישׁ לְמַעֲיֵנו־מַיִם:

In this psalm you should see three sections that are clearly defined by the parallels between lines. The the question is *not* “Does this line parallel the other line of this *verse*?” but rather “How can we describe the relationship between this line and the next line (and the preceding)?”

185. The end of this word is pronounced as though there were two *waws*, the first a consonant, the second the *mater lectionis*: -wōt.

27.7 Enrichment: Reading a Poem

Analyzing the lineation, semantics, syntax, and morphology of a biblical poem often reveals patterns that are obscured by the differences between languages. This table presents one approach to the preliminary study of a poem—“preliminary”, because this analysis is not the poem’s meaning, but is instead a way of forcing ourselves to pay attention to every aspect of a poem. We have no way of knowing in advance what will or will not help us establish the meaning of any particular poem; we therefore pay as close attention as possible to everything.

Ps 117

L.	MT/BHS	Semantics	Word Count	Syntax	Predicate
1a	הִלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה כָּל־גּוֹיִם	a . b . c	5: 1.2.2	P/v – O – S/cc	2mp DV
1b	שִׁבְּחוּהוּ כָּל־הָאֲמִיּוֹת:	a ¹ +b ¹ . c ¹	3: 1.2	P/v+O – S/cc	2mp DV
2a	כִּי נָבַר עָלֵינוּ חֲסֵדוֹ	a . b . c	4: 2.1.1	ki – P/v – pp – S/cc	3ms QP
2b	וְאִמְתֵּי־יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם	c ¹ . a ¹	3: 2.1	w+S – P/pp	
2c	הִלְלוּ־יְהוָה:	a . b	2: 1.1	P/v – O	2mp DV

Key

L.	line no.
MT/BHS	The Masoretic text as represented by BHS
Semantics	Each letter represents a functional semantic unit in the line (a construct chain, e.g., is a single functional unit); repeated units in parallel lines have the same letter, with a superscript numeral if they are not exactly identical.
Word Count	The total number of words—groups of letters between spaces or linked by <i>maqfef</i> —in the line, followed by the number of forms in each of the semantic units identified in the “semantics” column.
Syntax	The syntax of the clause (these are all that apply to Ps 117):
	P Predicate
	/ consists of
	v [finite] verb
	pp prepositional phrase
	O object (“direct” or “indirect”)
	S subject
	/ function
	cc construct chain
Predicate	The parsing of the verbal predicate.

Translation can be done in at least two stages: a very wooden, “interlinear” translation, designed to show the underlying Hebrew text, followed by a rendering into “sensible” and well-formed English:

1a	praise-ye! Y ^H WH all-of nations
1b	commend-ye-him all-of peoples
2a	for he-is-strong over-us his-lovingkindness
2b	and-the-truth-of Y ^H WH for-long-time
2c	praise-ye! Y ^H
1a	Praise Y ^H WH, all nations!
1b	Commend him, all peoples!
2a	For his lovingkindness is strong over us,
2b	And Y ^H WH’s truth is strong for a long-time.
2c	Praise Y ^H !

Lesson 28

HOLLOW (II-ו/י) VERBS

Hollow verbal roots consist of two root consonants with a medial vowel. Their lexical form is *qal* infinitive construct (they are the only verbs not listed by 3ms *qal* perfect). Some verbs, for example, קום, *rise, stand*, have medial *šureq* (- ו -), others have medial *hireq* (- י -), e.g., שׂיר, *sing*. The lexica identify their roots in different ways, so if you do not find the root listed with medial -ו-, try the same root with -י- (or *vice versa*). This skeleton paradigm compares the basic forms of the verb:

קום√		Q	N	H	Hp
P	3ms	קם	נְקום	הִקום	הוֹקם
F	3ms	יְקום	יְקום	יְקום	יּוֹקם
V	2ms	קום	הִקום	הִקום	
NC		קום	הִקום	הִקום	הוֹקם
Ptc	ms	קם	נְקום	מְקום	מוֹקם

The hollow verbs are weak in all forms (apart from rare occurrences in the D-stems, when they have doubled medial -י-, regardless of the stem vowel of the lexical form).

28.1 Hollow Verbs in Qal (Q)

	<i>Qal</i>	קום√ (II-ו)	שׂים√ (II-י)
P	3ms	קם	שָׂם
	2mp	קַמְתֶּם	שָׂמְתֶם
	3cp	קָמוּ	שָׂמוּ
F	3ms	יְקום	יְשׂים
	2fs	תְּקוּמִי	תְּשׂוּמִי
	2fp	תְּקַמְנָה	תְּשׂוּמְנָה
Pr	3ms	יִקְוֶם	יִשְׂשֶׂם
	3mp	יִקְוֹמוּ	יִשְׂשֹׂמוּ
V	2ms	קום	שׂים
	2mp	קוּמוּ	שׂוּמוּ
NC		קום	שׂים
NA		קום	שׂום
Ptc	ms	קם	שָׂם
	fs	קָמָה	שָׂמָה

1. There is no difference between II-י and II-ו in the *qal* perfect and participle.
2. Since the 3ms Q perfect and ms Q participle are identical, they cannot always be identified with certainty.
3. The original [lexical] vowel appears in the conjugations other than the perfect and participle.
4. In Q jussive and 2/3fp Q F, the stem vowel is often *holem* in verbs II-ו and *segol* in roots II-י:

	<i>Qal</i>	√קום	√שים
J	2/3fp	תִּקְמוּנָה	תִּשְׁמְנָה
	3ms	יָקָם	יָשָׁם

28.1a Unique Hollow Verbs

Although most hollow verbs have either medial ו- (like קום) or י- (cf. שים), three are unique in *qal*:

1. בוא, “come, go, enter” (c. 2350x in Biblical Hebrew), is III-א, so its stem syllable is always open, and its stem vowel is always long (*qameš* in Q P and Ptc; and ו- elsewhere in Q):

	<i>Qal</i>	√בוא
P	2ms	בָּאתָ
F	3ms	יָבוֹא
Pr	2ms/3fs	וְתָבוֹא
V	2ms	בֹּא
	2mp	בֹּאוּ בֹּאוּ
NC		בֹּא

2. בוש, “be ashamed” (126x in Biblical Hebrew), has *holem* (with or without ו) in all forms of Q, and *seve* as its prefix vowel in Q F and Pr.

	<i>Qal</i>	√בוש
P	1cp	בוֹשְׁנוּ
F	2mp	תִּבוֹשׁוּ
Pr	3mp	וַיִּבוֹשׁוּ
V	2fp	בוֹשְׁנָה
NC		בוֹשׁ
Ptc ¹⁸⁶	mp	בוֹשִׁים

3. מות, “die” (737x in Biblical Hebrew) has *siere* in Q P forms without consonantal endings, as well as in Q Ptc. Its other forms look like קום (above).

	<i>Qal</i>	√מות
P	3ms	מָתָה
	3fs	מָתָהּ
Ptc	mp	מֹתִים

186. There is one *qal* participle of בוש (Ek 32.30).

28.2 Hollow Verbs in Nifal (N)

	<i>Nifal</i>	קום√ (II-ו)	שיר√ (II-י)
P	3ms	נָקוּם	נָשׂוּר
	2mp	נָקוּמוּתֶם	נָשׂוּרוֹתֶם
	3cp	נָקוּמוּ	נָשׂוּרוּ
F	3ms	יָקוּם	יָשׂוּר
	2fs	תָּקוּמִי	תָּשׂוּרִי
	2mp	תָּקוּמוּ	תָּשׂוּרוּ
Pr	3ms	וַיָּקוּם	וַיָּשׂוּר
V	2ms	הָקוּם	הָשׂוּר
	2mp	הָקוּמוּ	הָשׂוּרוּ
NC		הָקוּם	הָשׂוּר
Ptc	ms	נָקוּם	נָשׂוּר

1. The stem vowel in N is either *holem* (most forms) or *šureq* (*nifal* perfect with consonantal PGN endings).
2. The prefix vowel in N is either *qameš* (P, Ptc) or *hireq* (F, V, NC, NA).
3. As in H (below), there is a helping vowel before consonantal PGN endings.
4. As in the basic verb, the prefixed -נ is orthographically present in N P and Ptc, and assimilates to the first radical in the other conjugations in *nifal*.
5. Unlike the basic verb, the prefix vowel in the perfect and participle is long, since the syllable is open.
6. The form is identical for either type of stem vowel (-û- or -î-).

28.3 Hollow Verbs in Hifil & Hofal (H, Hp)

	קום√	H	Hp	Q (II-י)	Q (II-ו)
P	3ms	הָקִים	הוֹקֵם	שָׁם	קָם
	1cp	הָקִימוּנוּ	הוֹקֵמוּנוּ	שָׁמוּנוּ	קָמוּנוּ
	3cp	הָקִימוּ	הוֹקֵמוּ	שָׁמוּ	קָמוּ
F	3ms	יָקִים	יּוֹקֵם	יָשִׁים	יָקִים
	2fs	תָּקִימִי	תּוֹקֵמִי	תָּשִׁימִי	תָּקִימִי
	2fp	תָּקִימִינָה	תּוֹקֵמִינָה	תָּשִׁימִינָה	תָּקִימִינָה
Pr	3ms	וַיָּקִים	וַיּוֹקֵם	וַיָּשִׁם	וַיָּקִים
	3mp	וַיָּקִימוּ	וַיּוֹקֵמוּ	וַיָּשִׁימוּ	וַיָּקִימוּ
V	2ms	הָקֵם	---	שִׁים	קֵם
	2mp	הָקִימוּ	---	שִׁימוּ	קִימוּ
NC		הָקֵם	הוֹקֵם	שִׁים	קֵם
NA		הָקֵם	הוֹקֵם	שׁוּם	קֵם
Ptc	ms	מִקִּים	מוֹקֵם	שָׁם	קָם
	fs	מִקִּימָה	הוֹקֵמָה	שָׁמָה	קָמָה

Hifil

1. The stem vowel in *hifil* is *hireq* in all forms except infinitive absolute and 2ms imperative (which have *šere*).
2. Its prefix vowel is *qameš* (H F, V, NC, NA) and *šere* (H P, Ptc).
3. In *hifil*, a helping vowel (י) joins consonantal PGN endings to the verbal root.
4. Q F and H F look alike in II-י verbs, and must be distinguished by context; in the II-י verbs they are distinguished by the stem (central) vowel, which will be a *u/o*-vowel in Q and an *i/e*-vowel in H.

Hofal

1. In Hp, the prefix vowel is always *šureq* (י). Its stem vowel is *pataḥ* or *šewa*. This skeleton paradigm displays the H-stems with *qal* of two hollow verbs.

28.4 Hollow Verbs in *Polel*, *Polal*, *Hitpolel* (P, Pp, Pt)

In the hollow verbs the D-stems are usually replaced by another set of stems in which the second radical is reduplicated to create a tri-radical “root”.

These stems, *polel* (P), *polal* (Pp), and *hitpolel* (Pt) correspond in function to *piel* (D), *pual* (Dp), and *hitpael* (Dt), respectively.

	קוּם	Polel	Polal	Hitpolel
P	3ms	קוּם	קוּם	הִתְקוּם
	1cs	קוּמְתִי	קוּמְתִי	הִתְקוּמְתִי
	3cp	קוּמוּ	קוּמוּ	הִתְקוּמוּ
F	3ms	יְקוּם	יְקוּם	יְהִתְקוּם
	3mp	יְקוּמוּ	יְקוּמוּ	יְהִתְקוּמוּ
V	2ms	קוּם	---	הִתְקוּם
	2mp	קוּמוּ	---	הִתְקוּמוּ
NC		קוּם	קוּם	הִתְקוּם
Ptc	ms	מְקוּם	מְקוּם	מְהִתְקוּם
	fs	מְקוּמָה	מְקוּמָה	מְהִתְקוּמָה

1. *Šewa* is the prefix vowel in the imperfect, preterite, and participle of both *polel* and *polal*.
2. *Holem* follows the first radical, either with or without the vowel letter (י).
3. If the form has a sufformative, *polel* and *polal* are identical, and can only be distinguished by context.
4. *Hitpolel* is directly analogous to Dt (*hitpael*), looking just like P with prefixed הִתְ-. As in Dt, the הִתְ- of the prefix switches places (metathesizes) with the initial sibilant of the verbal root:

מִה־תִּשְׁתַּחֲחִי נַפְשִׁי Why do you despair [melt?], my soul? (Ps 42.6; שח)
 וְאֶשְׁתוֹמֵם עַל־הַמְרָאָה ... and I was astonished at the vision (Dn 8.27; שמו)

5. Hollow verbs rarely occur in D, Dp, or Dt. When they do, their middle radical is doubled *yod* (י):

קִיְמוּנִי כְדַבְרְךָ: Restore me according to your word (Ps 119.28b); 2ms D V + 1cs

28.5 Frequency

This table lists all **twenty-three** hollow verbs that occur fifty times or more in Biblical Hebrew.

בוא	come, go (in), enter	2530x	בוש	be(come) ashamed	126x
שוב	turn, turn back, return; repent	1055x	רוץ	run	103x
מות	die	737x	טוב	be(come) good, pleasant	90x
קום	rise, stand	624x	שיר	sing	88x
טוב	be good ¹⁸⁷	612x	שית	put, place, set	87x
שים	put, place, set	584x	גור	reside as alien, sojourn	81x
סור	turn (aside); remove (H)	298x	עור	awake, arouse	76x
כון	be established; prepare (H)	219x	לין	spend the night, lodge	71x
רום	be(come) high, exalted	195x	פוזן	scatter, disperse (intrans.)	65x
בין	understand, perceive	171x	ריב	sue, strive, contend	64x
נוס	flee	160x	חיל	be [writhe] in labor	57x
ניח	rest (Q); deposit (H)	143x			

28.6 Vocabulary

die	מות	.427	come, go [in], enter	בוא	.419
rest (Q); deposit (H)	ניח	.428	be/become ashamed (st. vb.)	בוש	.420
flee	נוס	.429	understand, discern	בין	.421
turn (aside); take away, remove (H)	סור	.430	reside as an alien (i.e., live in a land other than your native land; trad., sojourn)	גור	.422
awake, arouse	עור	.431	alien; stranger (trad., sojourner)	גר	
scatter, disperse (intrans.)	פוזן	.432	writhe, tremble; [be in] labour	חיל	.423
sue, strive, contend	ריב	.433	be/become good, pleasant (st. vb.)	טוב	.424
[law]suit, strife, contention (n.)	ריב	.434	be established, fixed (in place); prepare (H)	כון	.425
			lodge, spend the night	לין	.426

N.B.: The lexical form of hollow verbs is *qal* infinitive construct (= ms *qal* imperative).

28.7 Exercises

After studying the hollow verbs, gloss these texts, parsing all verbal forms, and then locate and identify all hollow verbal forms in Genesis 14–15.

Is 60.1; זרח dawn, shine; אור shine, give light

1. קומי אורי כי בא אורך
 וכבוד יהוה עליך זרח:

Ps 103.19

2. יהוה בשמים הכין כסאו
 ומלכותו בכל משלה:

187. It is often difficult to distinguish the verb from the (predicate) adjective טוב. Furthermore, this verb does not occur in the imperfect; the imperfect function uses the I-י root יטב.

- Ps 100.4; תודה thanks, thanksgiving; תָּצַר court; 2mp H V < ירה praise, profess; thank (H) 3. באו שִׁעְרוּ בַתּוֹדָה חֲצֵרְתִּי בַתְּהַלָּה הוֹדוּ-לוֹ בְּרָכוּ שְׁמוֹ:
- Ps 96.1-2; תְּשׁוּעָה proclaim, announce; בִּשְׂרָר victory, salvation 4. שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה כָּל-הָאָרֶץ: שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה בְּרָכוּ שְׁמוֹ בְּשָׂרוּ מִיּוֹם-לְיוֹם יְשׁוּעָתוֹ:
- Gn 4.8; Cain, Abel 5. וַיֹּאמֶר קַיִן אֶל-הָבֶל אָחִיו וַיְהִי בְהִיּוֹתָם בְּשָׂדֵה וַיִּקָּם קַיִן אֶל-הָבֶל אָחִיו וַיַּתְּרַגְּמֵהוּ:
- Gn 2.17 6. וּמַעֲזֵן הַדַּעַת טוֹב וְרָע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ כִּי בַיּוֹם אֲכָלְךָ מִמֶּנּוּ מוֹת תָּמוּת:
- 2 Sam 21.17; Philistine 7. וַיִּדָּ אֶת-הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיְמִיתֵהוּ
- Ps 23.3; מַעְגָּל path, track 8. נִפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבֵב וַיִּנְחַנִּי בַמַּעְגָּלִי-צֶדֶק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ:
- Is 58.1; שׁוֹפָר ram's horn; trumpet; רוּם be high, exalted; Jacob 9. כְּשׁוֹפָר הָרָם קוֹלְךָ וְהִגַּד לְעַמִּי פִּשְׁעָם וּלְבֵית יַעֲקֹב חַטָּאתָם:
- 2 Sam 4.10; Saul 10. הִנֵּה-מַת שְׂאוּל
- Josh 9.8; מֵאֵין from where?; Joshua 11. וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל-יְהוֹשֻׁעַ עֲבָדֶיךָ אֲנַחְנוּ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יְהוֹשֻׁעַ מִי אַתֶּם וּמֵאֵין תָּבֹאוּ:
- 1 Sam 8.5 12. וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו הִנֵּה אַתָּה זָקֵנָה וּבְנֶיךָ לֹא הִלְכוּ בְּדַרְכֶיךָ עֲתָה שִׁמְהוּ-לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ לְשַׁפְּטֵנוּ כְּכָל-הַגּוֹיִם:
- 2 Kgs 4.20; 3ms Q Pr < ישב stay, sit; בֶּרֶךְ knee; צָהָרִים noon 13. וַיִּשְׁאַהֻּ וַיְבִיאֵהוּ אֶל-אִמּוֹ וַיֵּשֶׁב עַל-בְּרֶכְיָה עַד-הַצָּהָרִים וַיָּמָת:
- Gn 2.22; צֶלַע piece [trad., rib] 14. וַיִּבֶן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הַצֶּלַע אֲשֶׁר-לָקַח מִן-הָאָדָם לְאִשָּׁה וַיְבָאָהּ אֶל-הָאָדָם:
- 1 Sam 2.31; גָּרַע cut / chop off 15. הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים וְגִדַעְתִּי אֶת-זֶרְעֶךָ וְאֶת-זֶרַע בֵּית אָבִיךָ מֵהַיּוֹת זָקֵן בְּבֵיתְךָ:
- Ex 20.24 16. בְּכָל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֲזַכִּיר אֶת-שְׁמִי אָבּוֹא אֵלֶיךָ וּבִרְכֹתֶיךָ:
- Ne 2.18 17. וַיֹּאמְרוּ נָקוּם וּבְנִינוּ וַיַּחֲזְקוּ יְדֵיהֶם לְטוֹבָה:
- 2 Kgs 6.22; when waw + imperfect follows an imperative, it is often telic (purpose or result) 18. שִׁים לָחֶם וַמִּים לִפְנֵיהֶם וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתּוּ וַיֵּלְכוּ אֶל-אֲדֹנֵיהֶם:

Ps 119.73	יִדְרֹךְ עֲשׂוּנִי וַיְכַוְנֵנוּנִי הַבִּינֵנִי וְאֶלְמֹדֶה מִצְוֹתֶיךָ:	.19
Ps 1.5-6	עַל-כֵּן לֹא-יִקְמוּ רְשָׁעִים בְּמִשְׁפָּט וְחַטָּאִים בְּעֵדֹת צְדִיקִים: כִּי-יִוָדַע יְהוָה דְרֹךְ צְדִיקִים וְדְרֹךְ רְשָׁעִים תֵּאבֵד:	.20
Is 40.9; <i>high</i> (not III-ה); <i>messenger</i> (f.s. D Ptc); Zion, Jerusalem	עַל הַר-גְּבוּהָ עָלִי-לֶךְ מִבְּשֻׂרַת צִיּוֹן הָרִימִי בְכַף קוֹלְךָ מִבְּשֻׂרַת יְרוּשָׁלַם הָרִימִי אֶל-תִּירְאֵי אֲמַרִי לְעַרְי יְהוּדָה הִנֵּה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:	.21

28.8 Enrichment: Dating Haggai

One of the most carefully dated biblical books contains the prophecy of Haggai, חַגִּי (Ezekiel is a close second), with five date formulae in thirty-eight verses (the second and third are divided between two verses).

לְחֹדֶשׁ בְּשַׁנַּת שְׁתַּיִם לְדָרְיוֹשׁ הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁשִׁי בְּיוֹם אֶחָד	In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, ... (Hg 1.1)	29 August 520
בְּיוֹם עֲשָׂרִים וָאַרְבָּעָה לְחֹדֶשׁ בְּשַׁשִּׁי	... on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month (Hg 1.15a).	21 September 520
לְחֹדֶשׁ בְּשַׁנַּת שְׁתַּיִם לְדָרְיוֹשׁ הַמֶּלֶךְ: בְּשַׁבְּעֵי בְּעֲשָׂרִים וָאֶחָד	In the second year of Darius the king, in the seventh [month], on the twenty- first day of the month (Hg 1.15b–2.1)	17 October 520
בְּעֲשָׂרִים וָאַרְבָּעָה לְחֹדֶשׁ בְּשַׁנַּת שְׁתַּיִם לְדָרְיוֹשׁ	In the twenty-fourth [day] of the ninth [month], in the second year of Darius ... (Hg 2.10)	18 December 520
וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה שֵׁנִית אֶל-חַגִּי בְּעֲשָׂרִים וָאַרְבָּעָה לְחֹדֶשׁ	The word of YHWH came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth [day] of the ninth [month] (Hg 2.20)	18 December 520

Such careful dating allows us to identify precisely the time of Haggai's ministry, and demonstrates the ancient Near Eastern tendency to date events by the king (cf. also Dn 1.1; Ezk *passim*) and other important figures (cf. the cross-references to the kings of Israel and Judah in the book of Kings), and events (cf. Amos 1.1). Although the result is not always a precise chronology in the modern sense, it nonetheless lets us see Israel's development and some of their history (or, in this case, the circumstances of the Persian province of Yehud).

In this case (as also in, e.g. the books of Ezekiel and Jeremiah), it establishes a relative chronology for the prophet's messages, and allows us to see how he adapted his message to the changing times (even if we do not know exactly what changes he was addressing).

Lesson 29

THE MASORA

In the outer margin and directly below the text block of BHS lie two sets of notes. The *masora*¹⁸⁸ *marginalis* (marginal *masora*)—also called *Masora parva* ([Mp]; “Small Masora”)—consists of single letters, and unpointed words and expressions in Hebrew and Palestinian Aramaic, often with overhead dots, along with occasional superscript Arabic numerals. Below the text block, the first set of footnotes, which in BHS consists largely of “Mm” followed by a numeral, is a cross-reference system, the *Masora magna* ([Mm]; “Great Masora”), which directed the scribe to similar occurrences of the same or similar word(s).

Both parts of the *masora* are parts of an elaborate system designed to encourage scribal accuracy in copying the text, by telling the scribe to copy the word or phrase just as it stood in the text. The Masoretes—the “scribes” who copied biblical manuscripts, and developed the *masora*. were thus concerned to protect the text from scribes who might take it upon themselves to correct what they thought were mistakes. Masoretic notes, in essence, admit that the textual form was strange, unusual, disputed, or even wrong, but warn the copyist that it was better to leave a known error than for every scribe to begin “correcting” the text as he saw fit.¹⁸⁹ The Masoretes were saying in essence, “We know that this form is unusual—it only occurs a few other times in the Bible—but copy it as it stands. Don’t change it to something more familiar or ‘correct’.”

29.1 Reading the Masora

29.1.1 The Masora Marginalis

1. A *circellus* (“little circle”) over a word or between words refer to notes in Mp. A *circellus* over a word (מִרְחֵק; Gn 37.18) means that the note refers only to that word; a *circellus* between two words (אֶל-בְּנֵי; Gn 37.35), or a series of *circelli* between more than two words means that the note refers to that sequence of words. These are occasionally interwoven, so that a note refers to a single word in the middle of a marked series of words. You have to sort out which note refers to which piece of the text.

In Gn 13.10 (בְּנֵי-יְהוּדָה) the circles mean that the first note is to בְּנֵי and the second to the entire phrase (בְּנֵי-יְהוּדָה). In Gn 37.25, seven consecutive words are marked, but the circles are over the words, not between them. There are seven marginal notes, one for each word.

2. The usual syntax of a masoretic note is the main statistic first, followed by any further explanation or discussion, including real or apparent exceptions or limitations to the number. The first example in Gn 37.18 (זו חֵם בְּחֹרֶ), above, restricts the statistic to the Torah (בְּחֹרֶ ≈ *in Torah*).
3. Heavy dots separate masoretic notes, which are read from right to left. The rightmost note, therefore, refers to the first marked word or group of words in the line, *in the order of the Hebrew text*.
4. Superscript dots have several purposes:
 - a. A dot over a *single* letter means that it is a *numeral*, and that the form in the text occurs that many times (e.g., Gn 37.18 ז̇ = 7 times).

188. It seems that the *masora* was originally so-called because the notes restricted the interpretation of the text (מִסְרָה, “fetter” or “bond”, occurs only in Ezk 20.37) by eliminating discrepancies (as they thought). It was later connected to the root מִסַּר (“to assign”, “hand down/over”; it occurs only in Nu 31.5, 16) in the sense of “received tradition”.

189. For an extended description of the *masora* and how to read and use it, see Kelley, Mynatt, & Crawford (1998).

- b. A dot over *every* letter in a group of letters means that it is a compound *numeral* (e.g., in Gn 37.18 יז = 17 (10 + 7); Gn 37.22 הי = 15 (10 + 5)).
- c. A dot over the *last* letter in a group of letters means that the word is *abbreviated* (e.g., in Gn 37.18 חט בתור represents, respectively, חסר (*lacking or defective*; i.e., without the expected vowel letter) and בתורה (*in Torah*)).
5. Numerals mean that the particular form of the word (morphological form, along with any prefixes and suffixes) occurs only that number of times (e.g., the 1cp Q F + 3ms suffix + *w* of the verb הרג occurs only in Gn 37.20; the root הרג occurs 168 times in all).
6. In the *Prolegomena* of BHS is the *Index siglorum et abbreviationum masorae parvae* (“Index of the Signs & Abbreviations of the Mp”). This lists most of the words and abbreviations used in Mp in alphabetical order, and glosses them into Latin. Glosses for these Latin terms are listed in “An English Key to the Latin Words and Abbreviations and Symbols of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia” (Rüger 1985), which is printed as a separate booklet, or included in newer printings of BHS immediately following the Latin index.
7. Superscript numerals in Mp (cf. Gn 37.20: ²⁰י) refer to the first set of footnotes in BHS, which consists of a list of notes in the form: “Mm” followed by a numeral (in this case “Mm 276”). These refer in turn to numbered lists in G. Weil (*Massorah Gedolah*. Vol. 1. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1971), which lists the verses containing the occurrences of the form described in the note. You can check this quickly with a modern concordance (e.g., Even-Shoshan).
8. ק̇ in Mp stands for *qere*, Aramaic for “Read!” (קרא, ms imperative), and means that the vowels in the text should be read with the consonants written above the ק̇ in the margin. The consonants in the text are known as the *ketib* (כתיב, “[that which is] written”), which is a combination of consonants and vowel points that cannot be pronounced as written. The *qere* “corrects” the problem by suggesting the appropriate reading, but putting it in the margin meant that they did not have to change the consonantal text. These *qere/ketib* readings are important in textual criticism; they are referred to as Q and K, respectively, in the textual footnotes. In Gn 39.20, for example:

Interpretation	Masora	Lemma
Read אֲסִירִי as though it were written אֲסִירִי. The text (K) has the consonants of the Qp Ptc (אֲסִירִי, <i>prisoners</i> ; as in Gn 40.3, 5); the Masoretes preferred the tradition that read this as mp of the noun אֲסִיר, <i>prisoner</i> , which occurs in Gn 39.22. [For further examples, see “Enrichment”, below.]	אֲסִירִי	אֲסִירִי

9. Finally, remember that although you can use a lexicon, Hebrew concordance (e.g., Even-Shoshan, Mandelkern), or electronic database to look up the form that is described in the note, such resources had not yet been invented when the Masoretes were at work—a testimony to their knowledge of the text!

29.1.2 The Ending Masora

1. At the end of every biblical document, the Masoretes appended a list of statistics for that text. In order to help them ensure that they had not left out or doubled any verses, the scribes counted the number of verses (הפסוקים *pasûqîm*, marked off by *sof pasûq*), and wrote the total at the end, as well as the first word(s) of the middle verse (והציי, *and its half*). A scribe could thus determine which half of the document had an extra or missing *pasûq*. [*Pasûqîm* do not always correspond to verses, since a few “verses” do not end with *sof pasûq*].
2. They also totaled the *sedarîm* (סדרים) for each text, “reading sections” for reading through the Torah on the Sabbath in three years, which are marked by a large *samek* in the inner margin, “crowned” by a sideways *qamesi*, and numbered by small Hebrew letters within square brackets. One of these (#33) comes at Gn 37.1, which also coincides with the beginning of a much larger unit called a *paraš* (marked פֶּרֶשׁ in the inner margin), which were used to read through the Torah on the Sabbath in one year (*parašôt* were not listed in the final

- Masora). Within the text block a Hebrew numeral in small letters records the number of *pasûqîm* in the previous *paraš* (קנד = 154 *pasûqîm*).
3. Since the Masoretes treated the Minor Prophets as a single entity—"The Twelve"—their final masora lists only the number of verses; Malachi also lists the central verse for the entire prophetic corpus (Joshua – Malachi) and the number of *sedarîm* for the Twelve. More elaborate lists follow Deuteronomy and Chronicles.
 4. This is the ending *masora* for Qohelet (Ecclesiastes):

סכום הפסוקים של ספר רכב וחציו מזה שהיה כבר ²¹ וסדרים ד	The total of the "verses" of the work [is] 222 and its middle/half [is the verse that begins] מזה שהיה כבר ²¹ and sedarim [are] 4.
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The superscript (²¹) at the end of the line that identifies the middle verse (והציו) directs us to #21 in the first set of notes at the bottom of the page—the apparatus for the *Masora Magna*, which then sends us to Qo 6.10; where Mp reads הספר בפסוקים הצוי ("the middle of the work in verses").

29.2 Masoretic Numerals

These are the values of the letters of the alphabet in the *masora* (note the superlinear dot that indicates their numerical function).

Numeral	Value	Notes	Numeral	Value	Notes
א	1	used in combinations only (see ל, below)	ק - ה	100-400	
ב	2	On מ ב see below.	ך	500	
ג - ט	3-9		ם	600	
י	10		ן	700	
כ	20		ף	800	
ל	1	used alone for unique forms	ץ	900	
	30	used in combinations for 31-39 (e.g., לא = 31)	א	1000	The dot is supposed to be slightly larger than the numeral for "one" (and so down the alphabet); some traditions use two dots to show thousands; in BHS the letter's position shows that it refers to thousands.
מ	40	This can also be an abbreviation for מן, from; the combination מ ב means either "two of" or "except for, with the exception of".			
נ	50		ב	2000	
ס - ט	60-90			etc.	

29.3 Summary

The Masoretes' aim was to safeguard the continued integrity of the biblical text as it was copied by hand from one MS to another. Thus was the biblical text preserved for many centuries until the printing press began to make their work superfluous. With the passage of time, the masora came to be viewed as more ornamental than helpful, and [at least some of] its purpose and function was lost. We pay attention to the masoretic notes because they offer ancient suggestions about difficult readings (e.g., *qere/ketib*), because they signal unusual forms (e.g., *malē/hasēr*), and because they

may point out interesting statistical coincidences that we might otherwise overlook (e.g., the clause *וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ*, “there was a famine in the land”, occurs twice in the Bible, Gn 12.10; Ru 1.1).

29.4 Vocabulary

<i>rise, stand</i>	קום .443	<i>goat; goat hair</i>	עז .435
<i>be / become high, exalted</i>	רום .444	<i>be wonderful, amazing, miraculous</i>	פֶּלֶא .436
<i>run</i>	רוץ .445	<i>wall, city</i>	קיר .437
<i>put, place, set</i> (cf. שִׁית) ¹⁹⁰	שים .446	<i>wash (oneself)</i>	רָחַץ .438
<i>turn (back), return, repent</i>	שוב .447	<i>rest; stop (doing something)</i>	שָׁבַת .439
<i>sing, chant</i>	שִׁיר .448	<i>ram's horn (“trumpet”)</i>	שׁוֹפָר .440
<i>song, chant (n.)</i>	שִׁיר .448	<i>inherited / owned property (real estate)</i>	אֲחוּזָה .441
<i>put, place, set</i> (cf. שִׁים)	שִׁית .449	<i>friend (n), familiar (adj); chief (n)</i>	אֵלֹף .442

29.5 Exercises

- Using the final masora, how many verses (פסוקים) and reading sections (סדרים) are in each of these biblical books? Locate the middle verse and its page no.

Book	פסוקים ("Verses")	סדרים ("Sections")	Middle verse (חציו)	
			Ref.	Page no.
Genesis				
Kings				
Ezra-Nehemiah				

- Interpret one or two masoretic notes on the assigned reading passage, and check their accuracy with a concordance or electronic database (see the example on the next page). Do any of them affect the reading or function of the text? If so, how, and how will you determine which reading to prefer?

29.6 Enrichment: The Masora Marginalis to Genesis 37.18-22

Interpretation	Masora	Lemma	V.
[This word is written] seven times “defectively” [חסר] (i.e., with <i>holem</i> rather than <i>holem-waw</i>) in Torah. You could find the other six occurrences (Gn 22.4; Ex 2.4; 20.18, 21; 24.1; Nu 9.10) in a Hebrew concordance. Checking all of its occurrences shows that the note refers to the entire form (preposition + adjective).	ז חס בתור	מִרְחַק	18
[This word occurs] three times in the Bible (cf. Jr 1.5; 13.16).		וּבְטָרָם	
[This word is written] seventeen times “full” [מלא] (also called <i>plene</i> , Latin for “full”), i.e., with the vowel letter ך. The occurrences are listed in Mm #250 (the same form and note occur in cf. Gn 37.6).	יז מל בתורמ	אֵלֵיהֶם	

190. Although these two verbs are nearly synonymous, שִׁית occurs more than 550 times, whereas שִׁית occurs only about 80 times (and never in a book in which שִׁית does not also occur).

This is the only occurrence of this form in the Bible.	וַיִּתְנַפְּלוּ ל	
[This word is written] two times <i>defectively</i> [חסר] (i.e., without the vowel letter [<i>holem</i> without <i>waw</i>]) in the Bible (cf. Gn 42.9).	הַחֲלֹמוֹת ב חס	19
This form occurs twice in the Bible (cf. Gn 24.65)	הַלְיָזָה ב	
This is the only occurrence of this form in the Bible.	וַנְּהַרְגֵהוּ ל	20
This form occurs four times in the Bible (cf. Gn 37.33; Ezk 15.5; 19.12).	אֶכְלָתְהוּ ד	
This form occurs four times in the Bible, listed in #276 (cf. 2Kg 7.13; Is 41.23; 66.5).	וַנְּרָאָה ד ²⁰	
This form occurs three times in the Bible (cf. Gn 37.8; Dn 2.2).	חֲלֹמוֹתָיו ג	
This is the only defective occurrence of this word (i.e., without the vowel letter ם) in the Bible. Even-Shoshan's concordance shows that this is the only time that a form of נצל could have the <i>yod</i> but does not.	וַיַּצְלֵהוּ ל וחס	21
This form occurs twice closely following [i.e., immediately after] the accent <i>zarqa</i> (over ראיבן; it is the “hook”, and occurs right before words marked with <i>segolta</i> —the “upside-down supra-linear <i>segol</i> ”).	לזרקא ²¹ ב דסמיכ דם	22
This form occurs three times in the Bible (cf. Ezk 18.31; 20.7).	הַשְּׁלִיכוּ ג	
This form occurs fifteen times in the Bible (the numerals are reversed to avoid abbreviating the divine name), three of which [מנר] have <i>qames</i> (abbreviated קמ).	הי ג מנה קמ ויד	

None of these notes affects the readings or interpretation (content) of the text, although they should keep a scribe from changing less common forms to match what was more familiar. This may seem mere pedantry in a world after Gutenberg; it is nonetheless a reminder of the faithfulness of many generations of now-unknown scribes without whose work the Bible as we know it would not exist.

Lesson 30

I-י/ו VERBS

Like I-י roots (Lesson 26), I-י/ו verbs are weak whenever the initial letter of the root is followed by silent *šewa*—that is, throughout the H-stems, as well as in some forms of *qal* (F, Pr, V, NC) and *nifal* (P, Ptc). They are strong throughout the D-stems. Some I-י forms therefore look just like I-י forms, but whereas I-י forms tend to have two radicals with *dageš forte* in the first letter, I-י forms tend to have a *long* prefix vowel, *without* a doubled second radical.¹⁹¹

Stem	Weak Forms	Strong Forms
Q	F, Pr, V [NC,NA]	P, Ptc [NC, NA]
N	P, Ptc	F, Pr, V [NC,NA]
D, Dp, Dt	None	All forms
H, Hp	All forms	None

30.1 *Nifal, Hifil, Hofal* (N, H, Hp)

The original initial -י appears as a long vowel in N P and Ptc (-י-), and throughout H (-י-) and Hp (-י-). The other forms of N are strong, with doubled *waw* [+ *qames*] (-י-) as the first radical. The long prefix vowel, or the doubled *waw*, is the main clue to the presence of a I-י root:

Prefix/ Prefix Vowel	Stem	Conjugations
- נו	N	perfect, participle
	H	1cs imperfect, preterite
- ין	N	imperfect, preterite (strong, with doubled -י- for initial -י)
- הן	N	imperative, infinitive construct
- י -	H	
- י -	Hp	all forms

The skeleton paradigm of these stems illustrates the basic principle:

	יִשְׁבֵּן	Q	N	H	Hp
P	3ms	יִשְׁבֵּן	נוֹשֵׁב	הוֹשִׁיב	הוֹשֵׁב
F	3ms	יִשְׁבֵּן	יִנְשֵׁב	יִוְשִׁיב	יִוְשֵׁב
V	2ms	שֵׁב	הִנְשֵׁב	הוֹשֵׁב	---
NC		שִׁבְתָּ	הִנְשֵׁב	הוֹשִׁיב	הוֹשֵׁב
Ptc	ms	יֹשֵׁב	נוֹשֵׁב	מוֹשִׁיב	מוֹשֵׁב

191. This chart of weak and strong forms is identical to that for I-י roots.

30.2 *Qal* (F, Pr, V, NC)

I-י verbs are **strong** in the *qal* perfect and participle, which are therefore not discussed. I-י verbs have three forms in *qal* F, Pr, V, & NC. Some verbs are mixed in type.

1. **Type I** (*qal* imperfect with *šere*). The prefix and stem vowels are both *šere*, and the initial -י of the verbal root is missing in Q F, Pr, V, NC. הלך is not I-י, but follows this pattern as well (it is the only non-I-י verbal root that does this). The skeleton paradigm shows forms that *differ* from the basic verb.

	<i>Qal</i>	יָשַׁב	הִלְךָ
F	3ms	יָשַׁב	הִלְךָ
	2fs	תִּשְׁבִּי	תִּלְכִי
	3mp	יָשְׁבוּ	יִלְכוּ
Pr	3ms	וַיֵּשֶׁב	וַיֵּלֶךְ
V	2ms	שָׁב	לֵךְ
	2mp	שְׁבוּ	לְכוּ
NC		שֹׁבֵת	לֹכֵת

N.B.: Some forms of these roots look just like forms from I-י roots, and can be distinguished from them only by knowing the vocabulary, or from the context. There is a paradigm of similar forms from different roots in Appendix D.

2. **Type II** (*qal* imperfect with *pataḥ*). In these roots the initial י is a vowel letter in Q F, but disappears in Q V and NC of some verbs. The prefix vowel is *hireq* and the stem vowel *pataḥ*.

	<i>Qal</i>	יָרַשׁ	יִרְשֵׁוּ
F	3ms	יָרַשׁ	יִרְשֵׁוּ
	2fs	---	תִּירְשִׁי
	3mp	יָרַשׁוּ	יִרְשׁוּ
Pr	3ms	וַיִּירַשׁ	וַיִּירְשׁוּ
V	2ms	רָשׁ	רְשׁוּ
	2mp	---	רְשׁוּ
NC		רֹשֵׁת	רֹשְׁתִּי

3. **Type III** (original I-י roots). There are only six verbs of this type (יָמַן, יָקַץ, יָשַׁר, יָלַל, יָנַק, יָטַב). They all occur primarily in Q and H. Since the initial -י is present in all forms, either as a vowel letter or consonant, these are also called I-י roots. The prefix vowel is *hireq-yod* in Q (like Type II, above), and *šere-yod* in H.

	יָטַב	<i>Qal</i>	<i>Hifil</i>
P	3ms	יָטַב	הִיטִיב
	3cp	יָטְבוּ	הִיטִיבוּ
F	3ms	יִיטֵב	יִיטִיב
	2fs	תִּיטְבִי	תִּיטִיבִי
	3mp	יִיטְבוּ	יִיטִיבוּ
Pr	3ms	וַיִּיטֵב	וַיִּיטִיב
V	2ms	יָטַב	הִיטִב
	2mp	יָטְבוּ	הִיטִיבוּ
NC		יָטֵב	הִיטִיב
Ptc	ms	יָטֵב	מְטִיב

30.3 Frequency

These are all **nineteen** I-י verbs that occur fifty times or more in Biblical Hebrew, listed by frequency.

ישב	<i>sit, dwell, remain</i>	1078x	יטב	<i>be(come) good</i>	120x
יצא	<i>leave, go out</i>	1055x	ידה	<i>throw (D); thank (H)</i>	115x
ידע	<i>know</i>	924x	יתר	<i>remain, be left (N), leave (H)</i>	106x
ילד	<i>bear, give birth, beget</i>	488x	יעץ	<i>counsel, advise</i>	82x
ירד	<i>go down, descend</i>	380x	יצר	<i>shape, form, mold</i>	64x
ירא	<i>fear, be afraid [of]</i>	377x	יכח	<i>dispute (N); rebuke (H)</i>	56x
ירש	<i>subdue, [dis]possess</i>	231x	יבש	<i>be(come) dry</i>	55x
יסף	<i>add (Q), repeat (H)</i>	212x	ירה	<i>throw; teach (H)</i>	54x
ישע	<i>save (H)</i>	205x	יצק	<i>serve (food); pour (liquid)</i>	53x
יכל	<i>be able, prevail</i>	194x			

30.4 Vocabulary

<i>serve (food); pour (liquid)</i>	יצק	.457	<i>be[come] dry, dry up (st. vb.)</i>	יבש	.450
<i>shape, form, mold</i>	יצר	.458	<i>know, understand</i>	ידע	.451
<i>inhabitant, citizen, dweller (Q Ptc)</i>	ישב	.459	<i>be[come] good (cf. טוב, טוב)</i>	יטב	.452
<i>save, deliver (implied: by winning a victory) (H)</i>	ישע	.460	<i>dispute (N); correct, rebuke (H)</i>	יכח	.453
<i>deliverance, salvation; victory</i>	ישועה		<i>repeat, do again (with inf. const.); add (H); add (Q)</i>	יסף	.454
<i>remain, be left [behind/over] (N)</i>	יתר	.461	<i>counsel, advise</i>	יעץ	.455
<i>be[come] small, insignificant (st. vb.); small, insignificant (adj.)</i>	קטון	.462	<i>advice, counsel</i>	עצה	
			<i>leave, go out, exit, depart</i>	יצא	.456

30.5 Exercises

- After learning to recognize the I-י verbs, locate and identify (parse) any I-י verbs in whatever biblical passage your teacher assigns.
- Gloss these verses, parsing all verbal forms.

S2 15.19; נכרי *foreigner*

1. למה תלך גם־אתה אתנו
שוב ושב עם־המלך כי־נכרי אתה

Ps 100.3; מרעית *flock; pasturing, shepherding; pasturage*

2. דעו כִּי־יהוה הוא אלהים
הוא־עֲשָׂנוּ וְלוֹ אֲנַחֲנוּ
עִמּוֹ וְצֹאן מִרְעִיתוֹ:

Ps 100.4

3. באו שְׁעָרָיו בְּתוֹרָה
חֲצֵרֹתָיו בְּתִהְלָה
הוֹדוּ־לוֹ בְּרִכּוֹ שְׁמוֹ:

4. וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־גִּדְעוֹן עוֹד הָעָם רָב
הוֹרֵד אוֹתָם אֶל־הַמַּיִם ...
וְהָיָה אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהִים זֶה יִלְךְ אַתָּה הוּא יִלְךְ אַתָּה
וְכָל אֲשֶׁר־אָמַר אֱלֹהִים זֶה לֹא־יִלְךְ עִמָּךְ
הוּא לֹא יִלְךְ:
5. וְלֹא יָכֹלוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָקוּם לִפְנֵי אִיבֵיהֶם
עֲרָף יִפְנוּ לִפְנֵי אִיבֵיהֶם
6. וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים בֶּן־מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה אָנֹכִי הַיּוֹם
לֹא־אוּכַל עוֹד לָצֵאת וּלְבוֹא
וַיְהִינָה אָמַר אֵלָי לֹא תַעֲבֹר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה:
7. כָּעֵת מָחָר אֲשַׁלַּח אֱלֹהִים אִישׁ מֵאַרְצָךְ בְּנֵימִן
וּמִשְׁחָתוֹ לְגַנִּיד עַל־עַמֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת־עַמֵּי מִיַּד פְּלִשְׁתִּים
כִּי רָאִיתִי אֶת־עַמֵּי כִּי בָאָה צַעֲקוּתוֹ אֵלָי:
8. וַיְהִי כִּהְיוֹם הַזֶּה וַיִּבֹא הַבִּיתָּה לַעֲשׂוֹת מְלֹאכְתּוֹ
וַאִין אִישׁ מֵאֲנָשֵׁי הַבַּיִת שָׁם בְּבֹת:
9. אֲבָרְהָם הוֹלִיד אֶת־יִצְחָק:
10. וַיִּשְׁמַע הָאֱלֹהִים בְּקוֹל מְנוּחַ
וַיִּבֹא מִלֶּאךָ הָאֱלֹהִים עוֹד אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה
וְהִיא יוֹשֶׁבֶת בַּשָּׂדֶה וּמְנוּחַ אִשָּׁה אֵין עִמָּה:
11. וַנִּתְתַּיֵּד לָעָם הַזֶּה לַחֹמֹת נֹחֶשֶׁת בְּצוּרָה
וְנִלְחַמוּ אֱלֹהִים וְלֹא־יִכְלוּ לָךְ
כִּי־אַתָּה אָנִי לְהוֹשִׁיעַךָ וּלְהַצִּילְךָ נְאֻם־יְהוָה:
12. אָנֹכִי אֲרַד עִמָּךְ מִצְרַיִמָּה וְאָנֹכִי אֲעֲלֶךָ
13. כִּי־יִלְד יִלְד־לָנוּ בֶן נֹתָן־לָנוּ
וְתָהִי הַמְּשֻׁרָה עַל־שִׁכְמוֹ
וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ פְּלֹא יוֹעֵץ אֶל גְּבוּר אָבִיעַד
שֶׁר־שָׁלוֹם:
14. כִּי יִדַע אֱלֹהִים כִּי בְיוֹם אֲכַלְכֶם מִמֶּנּוּ
וְנִפְקַחוּ עֵינֵיכֶם וְהִייתֶם כְּאֱלֹהִים יָדְעֵי טוֹב וְרָע:
15. וְאַתֶּם־שֵׁם קָדְשִׁי אוֹדִיעַ בְּחוּף עַמֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְלֹא־אֲחַל אֶת־שֵׁם־קָדְשִׁי עוֹד
וַיִּדְעוּ הַגּוֹיִם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה קָדוֹשׁ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:
16. וְאַתֶּם עֹזְבֹתֶם אוֹתִי וַתַּעֲבְדוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים
לָכֵן לֹא־אוֹסִיף לְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶתְכֶם:
17. וְלֹא יָכֹלוּ בְנֵי מְנַשֶּׁה לְהוֹרִישׁ אֶת־הָעָרִים הָאֵלֶּה
וַיִּוָּאֵל הַכְּנַעֲנִי לְשֹׁבֶת בְּאַרְצָךְ הַזֹּאת:
18. וַיֹּאמֶר צֹא וְעַמְדָתָּ בְּהָר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה
וְהִנֵּה יְהוָה עֹבֵר וְרוּחַ גְּדוּלָּה וְחֹזֶק מִפְּרֹק הָרִים
- Jg 7.4
- Josh 7.12; עֲרָף [back of] neck
- Dt 31.2
- 1 Sam 9.16; נְגִיד leader; Benjamin, Israel, Philistines
- Gn 39.11
- Gn 25.19; Abraham, Isaac
- Jg 13.9; Manoah
- Jr 15.20; בְּצוּרָה fortified; overcome (without a complementary NC)
- Gn 46.4; Egypt
- Is 9.5; מְשֻׁרָה, rule, dominion; שֶׁכֶם, shoulder; עד + אב < אביעד, Eternal Father
- Gn 3.5; פָּקַח, open (vb.)
- Ezk 39.7; חָלַל, pollute, defile (1cs H F)
- Jg 10.13
- Josh 17.12; יָאֵל, be determined; Manasseh, Canaanite(s)
- 1 Kgs 19.11; פָּרַק, tear/break off (D)

Pr 27.1; מָחָר, *tomorrow*

19. אֶל־תִּתְהַלֵּל בְּיוֹם מָחָר
כִּי לֹא־תִדַּע מַה־יִּגְדֹּל יוֹם:

Gn 12.19

20. לְמַה אָמַרְתָּ אֲחֵתִי הוּא וְאָקַח אֶתְהָ לִּי לְאִשָּׁה
וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה אֲשַׁדְּדָךְ קַח וְלֵד:

30.6 Enrichment: Pay Attention While Reading

One way to strengthen our grasp of Biblical Hebrew is to choose some aspect of grammar or syntax, note its occurrences as we read, and analyze its function. Paying attention to one aspect of the text will encourage you to pay attention to other things as well, but—and far more important—it will help you form a view of how Hebrew actually functions, as opposed to merely reading a description in a book and translating a few exercises. If we then write a brief description of our results; we have a resource on the grammar or syntax (or even vocabulary) of a biblical book (with a cross-reference in your favourite reference grammar or lexicon), so that we can interact with statements like “The participle in ... always/never/rarely ...” based on our knowledge of what actually happens in the text.

We might, for example, try to note all of the asyndetic clauses in a passage to see if they have anything in common, such as type of material, morphology, syntax, or some other characteristic. Or to describe the function of the infinitive construct in the book of Judges, or the participle in Jonah (below).

This is an example of how you might describe all of the participles in the book of Jonah.

Participles in the Book of Jonah

As noted in Lessons 11 and 12, the participle (so-called) in Biblical Hebrew has three functions, which are precisely the same as the functions of the adjective, hence it is often called a “verbal adjective”. Its three functions are: (1) verbal/predicate; (2) nominal/substantive; and (3) adjectival/attributive. In a syntagm of a different type, it (4) accompanies the verbal root *hyh*, apparently as a temporally specific parallel to the verbal/predicate function.¹⁹²

This paper tests the validity of the three-fold division of participial function in Biblical Hebrew by reviewing all of the participles in the biblical book of Jonah. Only the first three functions occur in the book of Jonah, as this table shows:

Attrib.	Pred.	Subst.	<i>hyh</i>
2	10	1	---
15%	77%	7.5%	

Description

The first and last participles in the book are *attributive/adjectival*; both are anarthrous, describing a grammatically indefinite noun: “a ship [that was] *going* to Tarshish (1.3). The second modifies YHWH, but here Jonah refers to him as “a god ... *relenting* [who relents] over the evil” (4.2), which follows four other attributes: “a god [who is] gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and great in lovingkindness”. Since the phrases all modify the anarthrous אֱלֹהִים “god”, they are themselves anarthrous and attributive.

The single *substantive/nominal* occurs in the poem found in Jonah 2. The participle מְשַׁמְרִים “those who regard” is the only *piel* occurrence of the root שָׁמַר/šmr in the Bible. (This substantive function of the participle is extremely frequent in biblical poetry, apparently as a means of syntactic compression.)

192. The “predicate adjective” function is rarely fulfilled by *hyh* + adjective, but rather by the verbal/predicate function of stative verbs. This (the fourth) function does not occur in the book of Jonah.

The majority of participles in Jonah (8 or 10/11) are *predicate/verbal*, functioning as the predicate of their clauses. The repeated hendiadys הוֹלֵךְ וְסָעַר “continuing to rage/storm” (1.11, 13) accounts for four of these occurrences. If they are counted individually, they account for ten of thirteen occurrences; if they are counted as “compound” forms (i.e., as genuine cases of hendiadys), they account for eight of eleven.

These predicate participles modify pronominal subjects (1.10, 12; 3.2, 9), nominal subjects (1.11a-b, 13a-b, 3.4); one occurs in a syntagm that is difficult to identify: מַה־לְךָ נִרְדָּם “What’s with you—asleep?” (perhaps i.e., “Why are you sleeping?”), but in which the participle, being masculine singular, seems to modify the 2 ms pronominal suffix that is the object of the preposition.

All of the participles in Jonah can be assigned to one of the three functions (above); there are no “exceptions” or unexplained “remainders”.

Examples (all)

A	P	S	H		
A				וַיִּמְצֵא אָנִיָּה בָּאָה תְּרִישִׁישׁ	1.3
	P			וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מַה־לְּךָ נִרְדָּם	1.6
	P			כִּי מִלְפָּנַי יְהוּה הוּא בִּרְחַ	1.10
	P(<i>bis</i>)			כִּי הֵימָּה הוֹלֵךְ וְסָעַר:	1.11a-b
	P			כִּי יוֹדַע אָנִי כִּי ...	1.12
	P(<i>bis</i>)			כִּי הֵימָּה הוֹלֵךְ וְסָעַר עֲלֵיהֶם:	1.13a-b
		S		מִשְׁמָרִים הַבְּלִי־שָׂוֵא חֲסָדָם יַעֲזֹבוּ:	2.9
	P			אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי דֹבֵר אֵלֶיךָ:	3.2
	P			וַיֹּאמֶר עוֹד אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְנִינִיָּה נִהְפָּכֶת:	3.4
	P			מִי־יֹדַע יָשׁוּב וְנַחֵם הָאֱלֹהִים וְשָׁב מִחֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ	3.9
A				יִדְעֵתִי כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְרַחוּם אַרְךָ אַפִּים וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְנַחֵם עַל־הָרָעָה:	4.2

In this case, the goal is not to establish a new theory of participial function, but rather to force ourselves to pay attention to how the text means what it says, how the author used his language to convey his message, and thus allow us to learn how we ought to expect that language to function as we read other parts of the Bible. It is obviously much easier to do this for a short book like Jonah than for, e.g., the book of Judges, with nearly two hundred participles. But the work that we do on Jonah ought to prepare us for the larger task of studying Judges.

Nor is it necessary to do this for an entire (long) book. Looking at the function of *wayhî* or of the participle (as here), or of any particular aspect of syntax or morphology for a few chapters will both stretch and strengthen our understanding of how Biblical Hebrew “works”.

Lesson 31

GEMINATE (ע"ע) VERBS

Geminate verbs have the same consonant as their second and third radicals, such as רעע and סבב (the term “geminate”, or “twinned”, reflects the theory that they were coined from biradical roots by repeating the second radical). They are strong in three forms of Q P (3ms, 3fs, 3cp), and in Q Ptc and NA. They are weak in all other stems and conjugations. Some verbs occur in *polet*, *polal*, and *hitpolel*, like the hollow verbs (above), others (e.g., הלל, *praise*, פלל, *pray*) occur primarily in the regular D-stems and so look like the basic verb (i.e., all three radicals are present in all forms).

31.1 Forms

The prefix vowel of the geminate verbs is nearly always the same as that of the hollow verbs (Lesson 28); a “helping [anaptyctic] vowel” joins PGN endings to the verbal root (-ו- in perfect; -י- in imperfect, preterite, & imperative). The second and third radicals often coalesce and are written once with *dageš forte*. The verbal root occurs in three basic forms:

Form of the Verbal Root	Occurs in
סב	forms without PGN endings
-סב	forms with PGN endings (but not imperative)
סבב	a few forms (<i>all</i> forms in the D-stems)

This skeleton paradigm illustrates these characteristics:

√סבב	Q	N	H	Hp	Po
P 2ms 3ms 3cp	סבֹּוֹתְ	נְסבֹּוֹתְ	הְסבֹּוֹתְ	הוּסבֹּוֹתְ	סוּבֹּבְתְ
	סִבְּבִי	קִלְ	הְסִבְּבִי	הוּסִבְּבִי	סִבְּבִי
	סִבְּבוּ	קִלוּ	נְסִבְּבוּ	הְסִבְּבוּ	הוּסִבְּבוּ
F 3ms 2fs 2fp	יִסְּבִי	יִקְלִי	יִסְּבִי	יִסְּבִי	יִסְּבִי
	יִסְּבִי				
	תִּסְּבִי	תִּסְּבִי	תִּסְּבִי	תוּסְּבִי	תִּסְּבִי
V 2ms	סִבְּבִי	תִּסְּבִי	תִּסְּבִי	תוּסְּבִי	תִּסְּבִי
	סִבְּבִי	תִּסְּבִי	תִּסְּבִי	תוּסְּבִי	תִּסְּבִי
NC	סִבְּבִי	תִּסְּבִי	תִּסְּבִי	תוּסְּבִי	תִּסְּבִי

31.2 Geminate Verbs in *Qal*

<i>Qal</i>		√סבב	√קלל
P	1cs	סְבוּחִי	קְלוּחִי
	2ms	סְבוּחַתְּ	קְלוּחַתְּ
	2fs	סְבוּחוֹתְ	קְלוּחוֹתְ
	3ms	סָבַב	קָלַל
	3fs	סָבְבָה	קָלְלָה
	1cp	סְבוּנוּ	קְלוּנוּ
	2mp	סְבוּחֶם	קְלוּחֶם
	2fp	סְבוּחוֹתֵן	קְלוּחוֹתֵן
	3cp	סָבוּ	קָלְלוּ
F	1cs	אָסַב	אָקַל
	2ms	תָּסַבְתָּ	תָּקַלְתָּ
	2fs	תָּסַבְתְּ	תָּקַלְתְּ
	3ms	יָסַב	יָקַל
	3fs	יָסַבְתְּ	יָקַלְתְּ
	1cp	נָסַבְתְּ	נָקַלְתְּ
	2mp	תָּסַבוּ	תָּקַלוּ
	2fp	תָּסַבְינָה	תָּקַלְינָה
	3mp	יָסַבוּ	יָקַלוּ
3fp	יָסַבְינָה	יָקַלְינָה	
Pr	3ms	וַיָּסַב	וַיָּקַל
V	2ms	סָב	
	2fs	סָבִי	
	2mp	סָבוּ	
	2fp	סָבִינָה	
NC		סָב	קָל
Ptc	ms	סָבֵב	קָלֵל

1. *Qal* participle and infinitive absolute are **strong**, as are *qal* perfect forms with vocalic or no PGN sufformative (i.e., 3ms, 3fs, 3cp).
2. The stem syllable looks like the second syllable of the basic verb (*pataḥ* in Q P, *holem* in Q F and V).
3. The three forms of the *qal* are compared in this table (their vertical alignment is merely for convenience; it does *not* imply that these would have been thought of as “types”).
4. The middle column shows alternate forms, which in Q imperfect, look exactly like I-נ roots (cf. נָפַל, §26.1); they can be distinguished only in context by knowing the vocabulary.

31.3 Geminate Verbs in Nifal

This is a skeletal paradigm (the full paradigm is in Appendix D).

Nifal		סבב
P	3ms	נָסַב
	1cp	נָסְבוּנוּ
F	3ms	יָסַב
	3mp	יָסְבוּ
Pr	3ms	וַיָּסַב
V	2ms	הָסַב
	2mp	הָסְבוּ
NC		הָסַב
Ptc	ms	נָסְבָּ

1. The prefix looks exactly like the hollow verbs (*qameṣ* or *šewa* in *nifal* perfect and participle; *hireq* with doubled first radical in all other forms).
2. Some forms (e.g., 3ms N F) look exactly like 3ms Q F of a I-נ verbal root (cf. יָפַל, *he will fall*).
3. The stem vowel is *pataḥ*, except in N P forms with consonantal PGN endings (see paradigm, above).

31.4 Geminate Verbs in Hifil & Hofal

This skeleton paradigm lists the H-stems of both סבב and שׁוּב for comparison.

		Hifil		Hofal	
		סבב	שׁוּב	סבב	שׁוּב
P	1cs	הִסְבֹּתִי	הִשְׁבֹּתִי	הוֹסְבֹתִי	הוֹשְׁבֹתִי
	3ms	הָסַב	הָשִׁיב	הוֹסֵב	הוֹשֵׁב
F	3ms	יָסַב	יָשִׁיב	יּוֹסֵב	יּוֹשֵׁב
	3mp	יָסְבוּ	יָשִׁיבוּ	יּוֹסְבוּ	יּוֹשְׁבוּ
Pr	3ms	וַיָּסַב	וַיָּשִׁיב	וַיּוֹסֵב	וַיּוֹשֵׁב
V	2ms	הָסַב	שׁוּב		
	2mp	הָסְבוּ	שׁוּבוּ		
NC		הָסַב	שׁוּב		הוֹשֵׁב
Ptc	ms	מְסַבֵּ	שׁוֹבֵ	מוֹסְבֵ	מוֹשְׁבֵ

1. The prefix in *hifil* looks exactly like the hollow verbs (*šere* in H P and Ptc; *qameṣ* in all other forms).
2. The stem vowel is *šere* or *hireq* (before consonantal PGN endings). It is similar to the hollow verbs; geminate verbs tend to have *šere* rather than *hireq* as a stem vowel.
3. In *hofal*, the prefix vowel is always *šureq*, as in the I-י verbs, and the stem vowel is *pataḥ* in all forms, so that Hp geminates without PGN endings look exactly like Hp of I-י verbs without endings.

31.5 Geminate Verbs in *Polel*, *Polal*, & *Hitpolel*

Geminate verbs that use these forms look just like hollow verbs. This skeleton paradigm lists forms of a hollow verb (קום) for comparison. *Hitpolel* (Pt) looks exactly like *polel* with the prefixes הַתְּ- (perfect, etc.) and הִתְּ- (etc.).

P-stems		√סבב	√קום	Pt (both roots)
P	1cs	סִבַּבְתִּי	קִמַּמְתִּי	הִתְסַבַּבְתִּי
	3ms	סִבַּב	קִמַּם	הִתְסַבַּב
	1cp	סִבַּבְנוּ	קִמַּמְנוּ	הִתְסַבַּבְנוּ
F	3ms	יִסְבַּב	יִקְמַם	יִתְסַבַּב
	3mp	יִסְבְּבוּ	יִקְמְמוּ	יִתְסַבְּבוּ
Pr	3ms	וַיִּסְבַּב	וַיִּקְמַם	וַיִּתְסַבַּב
V	2ms	סִבַּב	קִמַּם	
	2mp	סִבְּבוּ	קִמְמוּ	
NC		סִבַּב	קִמַּם	
Ptc	ms	מְסַבֵּב	מְקַמֵּם	

1. The only way to know whether a form in *polel*, *polal*, or *hitpolel* is from a hollow or geminate root is to know the vocabulary (which word best fits the context) or check a lexicon (most lexica cross-reference these forms to their putative root).
2. *Polal*, *et al.* occur with and without the vowel letter (וּ). The stem vowel only distinguishes the active (*polel*) from the passive (*polal*; not listed) when there is no ending, so that the function of most forms must be determined from the context.

31.6 “Double” Verbs

A number of hollow, III-ה, and geminate roots are apparently “double” verbs—different roots that share some of their consonants and overlap in function. For example,

הָמַם	הָיַם	<i>be in turmoil</i>
פָּרַר	פָּוַר	<i>break, destroy</i>
צָרַר	צָוַר	<i>bind, be in distress</i>
רָבַב	רָבַה	<i>be numerous, many</i>
שָׁגַב	שָׁגַה	<i>go astray, sin</i>

31.7 Identical & “Ambiguous” Verbal Forms

The results of the particular weaknesses of weak verbal roots creates two additional complications:

1. Forms can appear to be based on different verbal roots (one of which may not be attested). For example,

וַיִּסַּב	3ms <i>qal</i> preterite < סִבַּב	<i>He went around</i>
	looks like 3ms <i>qal</i> preterite < נִסַּב	[The root does not exist in Biblical Hebrew.]

2. Some forms of a verbal root can be parsed in more than one way—that is, they are ambiguous *apart from a context*. A form may be located in more than one conjugation (below, מִזַּח, שָׁרַח) or stem (below, וַיִּשָּׂם, וַיִּעַל). A form does not have several functions in a given context—its cotext restricts every form’s function, but the same form may be ambiguous *apart from its context*. This means that a form must be read and its function identified only within the requirements of its context.

מָוַת	3ms <i>qal</i> perfect ms <i>qal</i> participle	<i>He died</i> [one who] [is] <i>dead</i>
שָׁרַח	3ms <i>qal</i> perfect ms <i>qal</i> participle	<i>He sang</i> [one who] <i>sings</i>
וַיִּשֶׂם	3ms <i>qal</i> preterite 3ms <i>hifil</i> preterite	<i>He placed/set</i> [someone/something] (one object) <i>He caused</i> [someone] <i>to place/set</i> [something] (two objects)
וַיַּעַל	3ms <i>qal</i> preterite 3ms <i>hifil</i> preterite	<i>He went up</i> (intransitive—no object) <i>He brought up</i> (transitive)

31.8 Frequency

This is a list of all **sixteen** geminate verbs that occur fifty times or more in Biblical Hebrew, in descending order of frequency.

סָבַב	<i>surround, go around</i>	162x	הִמַּם	<i>be complete, have integrity</i>	64x
הִלַּל	<i>praise (P); boast (Dt)</i>	145x	צָרַר	<i>wrap up, be hostile to, confine</i>	61x
חָלַל	<i>be defiled (N); defile (D); begin (H)</i>	134x	אָרַר	<i>curse</i>	59x
רָעַע	<i>be evil, wicked, bad</i>	99x	שָׁדַד	<i>devastate, destroy, lay waste</i>	56x
שָׁמַם	<i>be astonished, desolate</i>	95x	חָתַת	<i>be shattered, dismayed</i>	53x
קָלַל	<i>be light, swift; slight, trifling, accursed</i>	82x	מָדַד	<i>measure</i>	52x
פָּלַל	<i>pray (Dt)</i>	80x	רָנַן	<i>shout (in joy, triumph)</i>	52x
חָנַן	<i>be gracious to, favor</i>	77x	פָּרַר	<i>break out, burst forth (H)</i>	50x

31.9 Concepts

anaptyctic coalesce double verbs gemination

31.10 Vocabulary

<i>confine, constrain, wrap up, be hostile to</i>	צָרַר		<i>curse</i>	אָרַר	.463
<i>distress, trouble; confinement</i>	צָרָה	.469	<i>praise, exult in (D); boast (Dt)</i>	הִלַּל	.464
<i>enemy, foe</i>	צָר		<i>praise, glory</i>	תְּהִלָּה	
<i>be[come] light, swift; slight, trifling, accursed (st. vb.)</i>	קָלַל	.470	<i>measure</i>	מָדַד	.465
<i>shout (in joy, triumph, celebration)</i>	רָנַן	.471	<i>surround, go around; encircle; turn around</i>	סָבַב	.466
<i>be[come] bad, evil, wicked (st. vb.)</i>	רָעַע	.472	<i>pray (Dt)</i>	פָּלַל	.467
<i>devastate, lay waste; cf. §21.1</i>	שָׁדַד	.472	<i>prayer</i>	תְּפִלָּה	
<i>be[come] astounded, astonished, dumbfounded; desolate</i>	שָׁמַם	.473	<i>break out, burst forth (H)</i>	פָּרַר	.468

31.11 Exercises

1. After learning to recognize geminate verbs, identify any geminate verbal forms in whatever biblical passage your teacher assigns.
2. Gloss these verses, parsing all verbal forms.

- Jb 31.40; Job תָּמוּ דְּבָרַי אִיּוֹב: 1.
- Nu 22.12; Balaam וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-בְּלַעַם לֹא תִלְךָ עִמָּהֶם
לֹא תֵאָר אֶת־הָעָם כִּי בְרוּךְ הוּא: 2.
- Lv 9.24 וַתֵּצֵא אִשׁ מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה
וַתֹּאכַל עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֶת־הָעֹלָה וְאֶת־הַחֲלָבִים
וַיֵּרָא כָּל־הָעָם וַיִּרְאוּ וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם: 3.
- Ps 146.1; נַפְשִׁי is vocative הַלְלוּ־יְהוָה הַלְלֵי נַפְשֵׁי אֶת־יְהוָה: 4.
- Gn 12.3 וַאֲבָרְכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ אָאֵר
וּנְבָרְכֻךָ בְּךָ כָּל מְשֻׁפָּחַת הָאָדָמָה: 5.
- Ps 145.3; גְּדוּלָה, *greatness*; חָקַר, *searchable*; *searching* גְּדוּל יְהוָה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד וְלֹגְדָלְתוֹ אֵין חָקַר: 6.
- Josh 6.7 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהֵי־הָעָם עֲבְרוּ וְסָבוּ אֶת־הָעִיר 7.
- Ps 114.3; אָחֹר, *back, rear* (n.); Jordan הַיָּם רָאָה וַיִּנָּס
הַיַּרְדֵּן יָסָב לְאַחֹר: 8.
- Nu 11.11; מוֹצָא lacks its final א; מוֹשָׁא, *burden* וַיֹּאמֶר מוֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה לָמָּה הִרְעַתָּ לְעַבְדְּךָ
וְלָמָּה לֹא־מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ
לְשׂוּם אֶת־מִשְׁאָ כָּל־הָעָם הַזֶּה עָלַי: 9.
- Lv 26.32 וְהִשְׁמַתִּי אֲנִי אֶת־הָאָרֶץ
וְשָׂמְמוּ עָלֶיהָ אִיבֵיכֶם הַיֹּשְׁבִים בָּהּ: 10.
- Ps 145.2; עֵד, *age* (a duration of time) בְּכָל־יּוֹם אֲבָרְכֶךָ
וַאֲהַלְלָה שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד: 11.
- Zp 3.14; רוּעַ, *shout*; עֲלוּ, *exult*; Zion רְנִי בַת־צִיּוֹן הֲרִיעוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל
שִׂמְחִי וְעֲלוּי בְּכָל־לֵב בַּת יְרוּשָׁלַם: 12.
- Jr 2.12; חָרַב, *dry up*; שֹׁעַר, *bristle* [with horror] שָׂמוּ שָׁמַיִם עַל־זֹאת וּשְׁעָרוֹ חָרְבוּ מְאֹד
נֹאם־יְהוָה: 13.
- Ps 37.22 כִּי מְבָרְכֻי וַיִּרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ וּמְקַלְלֵי וַיִּכְרְתוּ: 14.
- Jr 7.26; עֵרַף, *neck* וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ אֵלַי וְלֹא הִטּוּ אֶת־אָזְנָם
וַיִּקְשׂוּ אֶת־עַרְפָּם הִרְעוּ מֵאֲבוֹתָם: 15.
- S2 22.6; חָבַל, *cord*; קָדַם, *precede, go before*; מוֹקֵשׁ, *snare; bait, lure*; Sheol חָבַלִי שָׂאוֹל סִבְנֵי קֶדְמֵנִי מִקְשֵׁי־מוֹת: 16.
- Jn 2.4; מוֹשֶׁבֶר, *breaker* (wave); גֹּל, *heap* (wave) וְנָהָר יִסְבְּבֵנִי כָּל־מִשְׁבְּרֶיךָ וְגִלְיָד עָלַי עֲבְרוּ: 17.
- Jr 21.4; סָבַב, *turn back, reverse* [Most of this v. is a quotation.] כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
הֲנִנִי מִסָּב אֶת־פְּלִי הַמְּלַחֲמָה אֲשֶׁר בְּיַדְכֶם
אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם נֹלְחָמִים בָּם אֶת־מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל
וְאֶת־הַכַּשְׂדִּים הַצָּרִים עֲלֵיכֶם מִחוּץ לַחֻמָּה
וְאֶסְפְּתִי אוֹתָם אֶל־תּוֹךְ הָעִיר הַזֹּאת: 18.

Dt 3.24; גָּדֹל, *greatness* (n.); the first occurrence of אֲשֶׁר is probably causal (*because*)

19. אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה אֲתָהּ הַחֲלוּת לְהִרְאוֹת אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ
אֶת־גְּדֹלְךָ וְאֶת־יָדְךָ הַחֲזָקָה
אֲשֶׁר מִי־אֵל בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ
אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה כַּמַּעֲשֵׂיךָ וְכַגְּבוּרֹתֶיךָ:

Dt 15.10; בְּגִלְל, *on account of, because of*;
מִשְׁלַח, *outstretching* (i.e., *attempt*)

20. נָתַן תַּחֲנוּן לּוֹ וְלֹא־יִרַע לְבַבְךָ בְּתַחֲךָ לּוֹ
כִּי בְּגִלְל הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה יִבְרַכְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
בְּכָל־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וּבְכָל מִשְׁלַח יָדְךָ:

K1 8.35; עָצַר, *be closed, shut up* (N);
מִטֶּר, *rain*; this is not a complete sentence, but the protasis ["if"-clause] of a conditional sentence; the next verse contains the the apodosis ["then"-clause]

21. בְּהַעֲצֹר שָׁמַיִם וְלֹא־יְהִיָּה מִטֶּר כִּי יַחֲטְאוּ־לְךָ
וְהִתְפַּלְלוּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וְהוֹדוּ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ
וּמִחֲטָאתָם יִשׁוּבוּן כִּי תַעֲנֵם:

31.12 *Some Encouragement*

Congratulations! Having invested a great deal of time, effort, and energy (not to mention money) on Biblical Hebrew, how can you continue to grow in your ability to use what you have learned?

1. Continue to *read* the Hebrew text *aloud*, in order to strengthen your ability to see and hear “in Hebrew”.
2. Continue to *gloss* the Hebrew text into another language, preferably *in writing*, but orally is better than nothing. Don’t worry at this point about getting every word, or even getting every word “right” (when I first did this, I just skipped words that I didn’t yet know or couldn’t recognize and often ran into the same root in another context and recognized it there, so that I could go back and “insert” it in its earlier occurrence). It is more important that you see as much text as possible.
3. Continue to develop a *vocabulary* base by learning the words in the passage that you are reading. As you come across unknown words, check a tool such as Armstrong, Busby, & Carr (1988) or a concordance to see how frequently they occur in Biblical Hebrew. If they are relatively infrequent (fewer than ten times), you may not want to invest the time to learn them, but if they have the same root of a word that you already know, you can add them to your stock of vocabulary without much effort.
4. Use the *reading notes* (online at www.fredputnam.org) to review what you have already read, and to explore new passages.
5. The most important contribution to growing in your understanding of Biblical Hebrew is continued exposure to *passages* of text, not merely to a verse here or there. This is because the minimal unit of communication is not the word, but the sentence, and in order to think about *how* the biblical writers communicated, it is necessary to read their communications as they intended them to be read—as stories, poems, songs, oracles, &c., not as isolated phrases, clauses, or even verses.

The main benefit of seeing a lot of Hebrew is that you will gradually begin to say, “I’ve never seen that before”, or “That’s the fourth time in this chapter that the author repeated that word [syntagm, etc.]”—that is, you will begin to sense what is and is not significant, and to gain appreciation for the craft of the biblical authors. Since much of interpretation is asking questions about the text, the greater your familiarity with that text, the more appropriate—and therefore helpful—the questions will be.

You will also gain the ability to understand commentators’ remarks, since you will have a fund of information on which to draw in interpreting both the accuracy and significance of what they say.

Appendices

- A. **Supplementary Vocabulary.** Ten lists that, together with the vocabulary lists in the lessons, entail all words that occur *fifty times or more* in Biblical Hebrew.
- B. **Hebrew – English Glossary.** An alphabetic list of all words in the lessons and Appendix A of this grammar.
- C. **Glossary.** Grammatical and linguistic terms used in this grammar.
- D. **Paradigms.** Pronominal and verbal forms, including a brief comparison of the forms of several weak verbs that may be confused due to their similarity.
- E. **Bibliography.** An annotated list of [primarily] reference works on Biblical Hebrew and the Hebrew Bible.

Appendix A

SUPPLEMENTARY VOCABULARY

Supplementary Vocabulary 1

<i>declaration, utterance; often in the prophets as נאם יהוה</i>	נאם .483	<i>wickedness, guilt, iniquity</i>	און .475
<i>there, in that place</i>	שם .484	<i>not</i>	בלי .476
<i>area inside something else</i>	תוך .485	<i>also, even, indeed (adv., cj.)</i>	גם .477
<i>in, within, inside [always construct to the following word]; trad. in the midst of</i>	בתוך	<i>prefixed interrogative particle (not directly translated)</i>	ה- .478
<i>seize, take hold of</i>	תפש .486	<i>daily, by day, daytime (cf. יום)</i>	יומם .479
<i>ornament, decoration</i>	תפארת .487	<i>bear, give birth [to] (of women); father; become the father of (of men)</i>	ילד .480
<i>tribute; [heave-] offering</i>	תרומה .488	<i>wing; edge / end of, e.g., garment (hem) or the earth/land</i>	כנף .481
		<i>why? (ל + מה)</i>	למה למה .482

Supplementary Vocabulary 2

<i>[the] dark, darkness</i>	חשך .496	<i>treasury, storehouse</i>	אוצר .489
<i>testimony, command, precept (of divine law)</i>	עדה עדות .497	<i>[miraculous] sign</i>	אות .490
<i>help, assist</i>	עזר .498	<i>bind, tie, imprison</i>	אסר .491
<i>cliff, crag, outcropping; rock</i>	צור .499	<i>lion</i>	אריה ארי .492
<i>end, edge; border</i>	קצה .500	<i>iron</i>	ברזל .493
<i>offering, gift (cf. Mk 7.11)</i>	קרבן .501	<i>large building; palace, temple (cf. בית)</i>	היכל .494
<i>slaughter, kill</i>	שחט .502	<i>man (male); male being (animal)</i>	זכר .495

Supplementary Vocabulary 3

<i>bury</i>	קָבַר .511	<i>cedar</i>	אַרְזוֹ .503
<i>horn</i> (oft. as symbol of strength)	קָרָן .512	<i>belly, abdomen; womb</i>	בֶּטֶן .504
<i>bow</i> (weapon); <i>rainbow</i>	קִשְׁתָּה .513	<i>lot; allotment</i> (what the lot reveals/awards)	גּוֹרָל .505
<i>ride</i>	רָכַב .514	<i>property, possession(s)</i>	מִזְקָנָה .506
<i>succeed, prosper; understand</i> (H)	שָׁכַל .515	<i>guard; obligation, duty</i>	מוֹשְׁמֶרֶת .507
<i>remainder, what is left</i> (cf. שאר)	שְׂאֵרִית .516	<i>afflicted, poor, humble</i>	עָנִי .508
<i>table</i>	שְׁלֵחָן .517	<i>arrange, set in order</i>	עָרַךְ .509
<i>plunder, booty, spoil</i>	שָׁלַל .518	<i>valley, lowland</i>	עֵמֶק .510

Supplementary Vocabulary 4

<i>shoulder[blade]</i>	כָּתֵף .527	<i>cistern, well</i> (i.e., a hole dug for water; cf. Gn 37.22; Jr 2.13)	בוֹר .519
<i>anoint</i>	מָשַׁח .528	<i>man</i> (male)	אָדָם .520
<i>here, in this place</i>	פֹּה פֹּה פֹּה .529	<i>dream</i>	חֵלֶם .521
<i>spread out</i>	פָּרַשׁ .530	<i>favor, grace</i>	חֵן .522
<i>tomb, grave</i> (usually hollowed out of rock, not dug in soil)	קָבַר .531	<i>remainder, left-over</i> (n.)	יֵתֵר .523
<i>assembly, congregation</i> ; refers to assembly of Israelite adult males	קָהָל .532	<i>loaf, talent, region</i> (all were, or could be, roughly “circular”)	כֶּכֶר .524
<i>heal, cure</i> (vb.)	רָפָא .533	<i>foolish, insolent</i> (often substantive)	כְּסִיל .525
<i>female slave / servant</i>	שִׁפְחָה .534	<i>according to</i> (כִּי- + פֶּה, לִי- + פֶּה); always followed by a noun	לְפִי .526 כְּפִי

Supplementary Vocabulary 5

<i>stumble, fall, sway, rock, waver</i>	כָּשַׁל .543	<i>grasp, seize, hold</i>	אָחַז .535
<i>shield</i>	מָגֵן .544	<i>burnt offering, offering by fire</i> (contrast אִשָּׁה, woman, wife)	אִשָּׁה .536
[young] girl, maid	נַעֲרָה .545	<i>hill; [cultic] high place; Gibeah</i>	גִּבְעָה .537
<i>end; limit, boundary</i>	קֵץ .546	<i>be defiled, polluted</i> (N); <i>defile, pollute</i> (D); <i>begin</i> (H)	חָלַל .538
<i>succeed, be effective / strong</i>	צָלַח .547	<i>share, portion, part</i> (cf. חֵלֶק)	חֵלֶק .539
<i>Sheol</i>	שְׂאוֹל .548	<i>be gracious to, compassionate toward, favour; request favor / compassion</i> (Dt)	חָנַן .540
<i>be complete, have integrity</i> (st. vb.)	תָּמַם .549	<i>be shattered, dismayed</i> (st. vb.)	חָתַת .541
<i>whole, blameless, entire</i>	תָּמִים .549	<i>large river</i> (esp. the Nile)	יָאֵר .542

Supplementary Vocabulary 6

<i>feast, festival; procession</i>	חג .557	<i>poor, needy, destitute, oppressed</i>	אֶבְיוֹן .550
<i>violence, wrong, injury</i>	חַמָּס .558	<i>end, outcome</i>	אַחֲרִית .551
<i>vow, oath</i>	נִדָּר .559	<i>How? How!</i> (either interrogative or exclamatory); אֵיכָּה is the first word in Lam 1, 2, 4, and the Hebrew title of Lam	אֵיךְ .552 אֵיכָּה
[to] <i>vow; swear an oath / vow</i>	נָדַר		
<i>inherit, obtain</i>	נָחַל .560	<i>side (n.); beside, near (prp.)</i>	אַצֵּל .553
<i>drink offering, libation</i>	נִסְךְ .561	<i>flee, run away</i>	בָּרַח .554
<i>pour [out] (as a drink offering)</i>	נָסַךְ	<i>strength, power (cf. גִּבּוֹר, גִּבּוּר)</i>	גְּבוּרָה .555
<i>plain, desert (often Jordan plain or valley & wilderness of Judah)</i>	עֲרֵבָה .562	<i>love, loved one, beloved</i>	דּוֹר .556

Supplementary Vocabulary 7

<i>before, not yet (a following imperfect functions as past: וְטָרָם יִגְלֶה אֵלָיו דְּבַר־יְהוָה: Yahwh's word had not yet been revealed to him (Sam 3:7)</i>	טָרָם .572 בְּטָרָם	<i>drive, thrust (a weapon); blow (a horn/trumpet)</i>	תָּקַע .563
		<i>widow</i>	אַלְמָנָה .564
		<i>female slave / servant</i>	אִמָּה .565
<i>undergrowth, thicket, woods</i>	יַעַר .573	<i>path, way</i>	אֶרֶח .566
<i>thought, intention, plan</i>	מַחְשָׁבָה .574	<i>grapevine</i>	גִּפְנוֹ .567
<i>rock, crag, cliff</i>	סֵלַע .575	<i>sow, plant (cf. זָרַע, seed)</i>	זָרַע .568
<i>highest (trad. Most High); upper</i>	עֲלִיוֹן .576	<i>strong; hard</i>	חֲזָק .569
<i>distress, trouble; labour</i>	עָמַל .577	<i>divide, apportion, assign (cf. חִלְקָה)</i>	חָלַק .570
<i>incense; smoke (from incense)</i>	קִטְרֶת .578	<i>arrow; arrows</i> חֲצִים	חֵץ .571

Supplementary Vocabulary 8

<i>cease, stop (with inf. const.)</i>	חָדַל .587	<i>prp. after, behind; last (adj.)</i>	אַחֲרוֹן .579
<i>new, renewed; fresh</i>	חֲדָשׁ .588	<i>Where [is/are]?</i>	אַיִה .580
<i>shadow, shade</i>	צֵל .589	<i>trustworthiness, faithfulness</i>	אֲמוּנָה .581
<i>be angry, furious</i>	כָּעַס .590	<i>split, cleave</i>	בָּקַע .582
<i>horseman (coll.); horse</i>	פָּרָשׁ .591	<i>virgin, [marriageable] young woman</i>	בְּתוּלָה .583
<i>reed (for measuring)</i>	קָנָה .592	<i>camel</i>	גְּמֹל .584
<i>tear (esp. clothing)</i>	קָרַע .593	<i>cling / stick to</i>	דָּבַק .585
<i>fellowship [trad., peace] offering</i>	שָׁלֵם .594	<i>honey</i>	דְּבַשׁ .586

Supplementary Vocabulary 9

<i>break through, burst out</i> (cf. Perez; Gn 38.29))	פָּרַץ .602	<i>destroy utterly</i> [as belonging to YHWH] (trad. <i>devote to the ban</i>)	חָרַם .595
<i>smell, odor, scent</i>	רִיחַ .603	<i>wash, clean</i>	כָּבַס .596
<i>left</i> [side / hand]	שְׂמאל .604	<i>measure</i> (n.) (cf. מִדָּר)	מִדָּה .597
<i>worthlessness, in vain</i>	שָׁוָא .605	<i>correction, discipline, instruction</i>	מוֹסָר .598
<i>desolation, devastation; horror</i> (cf. שָׁמָם)	שְׁמֹמָה .606	<i>tomorrow</i>	מָחָר .599
<i>tooth; crag, outcropping</i>	שֵׁן .607	<i>unleavened bread</i>	מִצָּה .600
<i>do, make</i>	פָּעַל .608	<i>height</i> (cf. רוֹם)	מָרוֹם .601

Supplementary Vocabulary 10¹⁹³

The function of this word is unknown. [Pss]	סִלָּה .616	<i>pedestal, socket</i> [Ex] (N.B.: not “Eden”, which is עֵדֶן)	אֲדָן .609
<i>finely ground wheat flour</i> [43/53 in Lv, Nu]	סֹלֶת .617	<i>porch, vestibule</i> (of the Temple [1 Kg, 2 Chr, Ezk])	אוֹלָם .610
<i>nakedness</i> [Lv (32/54)]	עֲרוּהָ .618	<i>porch, vestibule</i> [Ezk]	אֵילָם .611
<i>corner, rim, side</i> [Ex & Ezk (63/86)]	פֶּאֶה .619	[tent] <i>fabric / curtain</i> [44/54 in Ex]	יִרְיעָה .612
<i>east</i> [Ezk (53/67)]	קְדִיִּים .620	<i>pasture, uncultivated land</i> [Josh & 1 Chr (98/110)]	מִגְרָשׁ .613
<i>plank, board, beam</i> [Ex (48/51)]	קֶרֶשׁ .621	<i>psalm</i> (this transliterates LX: <i>yavlmō</i>) [Ps]	מִזְמוֹר .614
		<i>choir leader, conductor</i> (?) [Ps]	מְנַצֵּחַ .615

193. The words in this list occur fifty times or more, but they occur entirely or primarily in one or two biblical “books” (identified in brackets [Ps]); the number of occurrences is given as a fraction following the abbreviation of the title of the “book” (e.g., “Lv 35/54” (עֲרוּהָ) means that עֲרוּהָ occurs 35 times in Leviticus out of a total of 54 occurrences in Biblical Hebrew).

Appendix B

HEBREW – ENGLISH GLOSSARY

1. An alphabetical list of all Hebrew words in the lessons and Appendix A of this grammar (i.e., all words that occur fifty times or more in Biblical Hebrew), together with one or more glosses. [This is not intended to replace the need to learn to use the lexicon.]
2. Each gloss is preceded by an abbreviation (“n.,” “v.,” etc.) identifying its main function as, e.g., “noun,” “verb,” etc.
3. followed by the number of the vocabulary list in which the word is introduced (e.g., (3) = Lesson 3). An “S” before the numeral means that it appears in a supplementary list (Appendix A).
4. Multiple forms are either alternate forms or singular and plural of the same word.
5. Unpredictable plurals (e.g., נְשִׁים / אִשָּׁה) are listed twice—with their singular and alphabetically.
6. Occasionally nouns that occur with both masculine and feminine forms are listed with both (e.g., סוּס, סוּסָה).
7. Gender is indicated only when the grammatical and morphological gender do not match. Feminine nouns that do not end in הַ - or תּ / יָ, etc. are marked as “(f.)” (e.g., עֵיר); masculine nouns with those endings are marked “(m.)” (e.g., לַיְלָה).
8. If no stem is marked for the verb, the gloss reflects its function in the *qal*.
9. If a verb does not occur in *qal*, it is listed without vowels (e.g., שָׁכַם).
10. Words listed with a numeral followed by “x” occur that many times in Biblical Hebrew (e.g., (2x) = two occurrences).

Abbreviations

adj.	adjective	N	N-stem (<i>nifal</i>)
adv.	adverb	pl.	plural
D	D-active (<i>piel</i>)	prn.	pronoun
Dp	D-passive (<i>pual</i>)	prp.	preposition
Dt	D-t-infix (<i>hitpael</i>)	Q	<i>qal</i>
f.	feminine	Qp	<i>qal</i> -passive
H	H-active (<i>hifil</i>)	st. vb.	stative verb
Hp	H-passive (<i>hofal</i>)	trad.	“traditionally translated by/as ...”
m.	masculine	us.	usually
n.	noun	v.	verb

N.B.: Other abbreviations may be added as needed.

n. <i>father, male ancestor</i> (2) (pl. אָבוֹת)	אָב	Where is / are ...?	אֵיפֶה
v. <i>perish</i> (10)	אָבַד	n. <i>man</i> (not Man), <i>husband</i> each (as subject of a plural verb)	אִישׁ
v. <i>be willing, agree</i> (often with NC) (25)	אָבָה	(pl. אֲנָשִׁים) (2)	
n. <i>fathers</i> (pl. of אָב) (2)	אָבוֹת	n. <i>pupil</i> [of eye] (3x); <i>darkness</i> (2x)	אִישׁוֹן
n. <i>poor, needy, destitute, oppressed</i> (S6)	אָבִיוֹן	adv. <i>only, surely</i> (adv.) (18)	אָךְ
n. <i>stone</i> (cf. אֶבֶן הַעֲזָרָה, Ebenezer, “the stone of help”) (8)	אָבֶן	v. <i>eat, devour, consume</i> (3)	אָכַל
n. <i>lord, master; (my) Lord, Master</i> (4)	אָדוֹנָי אָדוֹן	there is / are not / no; without (וְאֵין) (16)	אֵין אֵין
n. <i>humanity, humankind, man; Adam</i> (3)	אָדָם	adv. <i>no, not</i> (5)	אֵל
n. <i>ground</i> (cf. אָדָם, Gn 3.19) (8)	אָדָמָה	prp. <i>to, toward</i> (7)	אֶל
n. <i>pedestal, socket</i> [Ex] (S10)	אָדָן	n. <i>God; god, gods</i> (used of YHWH, the God of Israel, and of pagan gods) (2)	אֱלֹהִים אֵל
v. <i>love, like; desire</i> (cf. Amnon & Tamar) (9)	אָהַב	dem. <i>these</i> (cp) (13)	אֵלֶּה
n. <i>tent; occasionally home, house</i> (4)	אָהֶל	n. <i>friend; adj. familiar; n. chief</i> (29)	אֵלוֹף
cj. <i>or</i> (18)	אוּ	n. <i>widow</i> (S7)	אֵלְמָנָה
n. <i>enemy</i> (ms Q Ptc < אֵיב) (6)	אוֹיֵב	thousand (17)	אֵלֶף
n. <i>porch, vestibule</i> [Ezk]; also אֵילָם (S10)	אוּלָם	two thousand (17)	אֵלְפַיִם
n. <i>wickedness, guilt, iniquity</i> (S1)	אוֹן	cj. <i>if, then</i> (15)	אִם
n. <i>treasury, storehouse</i> (S2)	אוֹצָר	n. <i>mother; ancestress</i> (9)	אִם
n. <i>light</i> (18)	אוֹר	n. <i>female slave / servant</i> (S7)	אִמָּה
n. [miraculous] <i>sign</i> (pl. אֲתוֹת) (S2)	אוֹת	n. <i>cubit; forearm</i> (7)	אִמָּה
adv./cj. <i>then, at that time; formerly, since; cf. בְּמֵאָז</i> (20)	אָז	n. <i>trustworthiness, faithfulness</i> (S8)	אִמּוּנָה
n. <i>ear, hearing</i> (10)	אָזֶן	v. <i>be trustworthy, faithful; steady, firm</i> (N); <i>believe, trust</i> (H)f (20)	אָמֵן
n. <i>brother, male relative</i> (3)	אָח	st. v. <i>be[come] strong, bold</i>	אָמִץ
n. <i>one</i> (17)	אָחָד	v. <i>say, speak; think</i> (3)	אָמַר
n. <i>inherited / owned property</i> (real estate) (29)	אֲחֻזָּה	n. <i>truth; trustworthiness</i> (20)	אֲמִתּוּת
n. <i>sister, female relative</i> (21)	אָחוֹת	prn. <i>we</i> (1cp) (13)	אֲנַחְנוּ
v. <i>grasp, seize, hold</i> (S5)	אָחַז	prn. <i>I</i> (1cs); also אֲנֹכִי (13)	אֲנִי
n./adj. <i>other, another</i> (11)	אֲחֵר	prn. <i>I</i> (1cs); also אֲנִי (13)	אֲנֹכִי
prp. <i>behind, after</i> (7)	אַחֲרַי אַחֵר	n. <i>men, husbands</i> (2)	אֲנָשִׁים
prp. <i>after, behind; adj. last</i> (S8)	אַחֲרוֹן	v. <i>gather, take in</i> (9)	אָסַף
n. <i>end, outcome</i> (S6)	אַחֲרִית	v. <i>bind, tie, imprison</i> (S2)	אָסַר
Where [is/are]? (S8)	אֵי	(I) <i>even, also; all the more</i> (cj.) (6)	אָף
n. <i>enemy</i> (m.s. Q Ptc < אֵיב) (6)	אֵיב	n. (II) <i>nose, nostril; anger</i> (6)	אָף
How? How! (interrogative & exclamatory); אֵיכָּה is the Hebrew title of Lamentations (S6)	אֵיכָּה אֵיךְ	n. <i>end, edge, limit; כִּי אֵפֶס but</i>	אָפֶס
n. <i>ram</i> (12)	אֵיל	n. <i>side; pr. beside, near</i> (S6)	אָצֵל
n. <i>porch, vestibule</i> [Ezk]; also אֵילָם (S10)	אֵילָם	n. <i>treasure; treasury, storehouse</i> (pl. אוֹצְרוֹת)	אֹצָר
adv. <i>no, not; There is / was not</i> (opp. of וְיֵשׁ); can occur with pronomial suffixes) (16)	אֵין אֵין	<i>four</i> (17)	אַרְבַּע
		n. <i>chest, box; ark</i> (of the covenant) (9)	אָרוֹן
		n. <i>cedar</i> (S3)	אַרְזוֹ
		n. <i>path, way</i> (S7)	אַרְחוֹ
		n. <i>lion</i> (S2)	אַרְיֵוֹ
		n. <i>length</i> (22)	אַרְזוֹ

n. <i>land</i> (geo-political region), <i>earth</i> (as in “heaven and earth”) (f.) (2)	אַרְצָן	n. <i>son, male descendant</i> (cf. בְּנֵי־מִיָּן, Benjamin, “son of [my] right hand”) (2)	בֶּן
v. <i>curse</i> (31)	אַרַר	v. <i>build</i> (24)	בָּנָה
n. <i>fire</i> (4)	אֵשׁ	n. <i>daughters</i> (pl. of בַּת) (3)	בָּנוֹת
n. <i>woman, wife</i> (pl. נָשִׁים) (2)	אִשָּׁה	prp. <i>on behalf of, about; away from;</i> <i>behind</i> (7)	בְּעַד
n. <i>burnt offering, offering by fire</i> (not אִשָּׁה) (S5)	אִשָּׁה	n. <i>master, owner, husband, Baal</i> (10)	בַּעַל
rel. <i>who, which, what; that, because, ...</i> (11)	אֲשֶׁר	v. <i>burn, consume</i> (Q, D) (21)	בָּעַר
prp. <i>with; sign of the direct object</i> (not translated); with suffixes -אֶת־ or -אֵת (5)	אֶת־ אֵת	v. <i>fortify, reinforced</i> (4x)	בָּצַר
prn. <i>you</i> (2ms) (13)	אַתָּה	n. <i>morning</i> (9)	בֹּקֶר
prn. <i>you</i> (2fs) (13)	אַתְּ	n. <i>herd</i> (large cattle) (10)	בָּקָר
prn. <i>you</i> (2mp) (13)	אַתֶּם	prp.+n. <i>inside, within</i> (קָרַב [q.v.] + בָּ) (9)	בְּקָרֵב
prn. <i>you</i> (2fp) [4/5x are in Ezekiel] (13)	אַתְנָה אַתֶּן	v. <i>search, seek</i> (D) (19)	בָּקַשׁ
		v. <i>flee, run away</i> (S6)	בָּרַח
		n. <i>knee</i>	בִּרְךָ
		v. <i>kneel</i> (I: Q); <i>bless</i> (II: D) (19)	בִּרְךָ
		n. <i>blessing</i> (27)	בְּרָכָה
prp. <i>in, by, on, against, ...</i> (7)	בִּי־	n. <i>covenant, treaty, agreement</i> (6)	בְּרִית
n. <i>garment, clothing</i> (9)	בְּגָד	v. <i>split, cleave</i> (S8)	בָּקַע
prp.+n. <i>on account of, because of</i>	בְּגַלְלָל	v. <i>look for, seek, search</i> (D) (19)	בָּקַשׁ
v. <i>divide, separate</i> (H)	בָּדַל	n. <i>iron</i> (S2)	בְּרִזָּל
n. <i>cistern, well</i> (hole dug for water) (S4)	בּוֹר	n. <i>flesh, meat</i> (6)	בָּשָׂר
st. v. <i>be/become ashamed</i> (28)	בּוֹשׁ	v. <i>proclaim, report, announce</i> (D)	בָּשַׂר
v. <i>choose</i> (often introduces object with בָּ) (12)	בָּחַר	n. <i>daughter, female descendant</i> (pl. בָּנוֹת) (3)	בַּת
v. <i>trust, be confident in /of</i> (21)	בָּטַח	prp.+n. <i>within, inside</i> (בָּ + תָּוֶךְ) (S1)	בְּתוֹךְ
n. <i>security; also as adv., securely</i>	בְּטָחָה	n. <i>virgin, young woman</i> (S8)	בְּתוּלָה
n. <i>cattle; animals</i> (10)	בְּהֵמָה	n. <i>houses</i> (pl. of בַּיִת) (2)	בְּתִים
v. <i>come, go [in], enter</i> (28)	בּוֹא		
n. <i>belly, abdomen; womb</i> (S3)	בֶּטֶן	v. <i>redeem, purchase as a kinsman-</i> <i>redeemer; redeemer</i> (Q Ptc.) (23)	גָּאַל גָּאַל
<i>before, not yet</i> (בָּ + טָרָם) (S7)	בְּטָרָם	st. v. <i>be /become high, exalted</i> (23)	גָּבַהּ
prp. <i>between</i> (7)	בֵּין	n. <i>boundary, territory</i> (8)	גְּבוּל
v. <i>understand, discern</i> (cf. תְּבוּנָה) (28)	בִּין	n. <i>mighty man, warrior</i> (12)	גִּבּוֹר
n. <i>house, home, household</i> (pl. בְּתִים) (2)	בֵּית	n. <i>strength, power</i> (cf. 147) (S6)	גְּבוּרָה
v. <i>weep, mourn, wail</i> (25)	בָּכָה	n. <i>hill; [cultic] high place</i> (S5)	גְּבֻעָה
n. [the] <i>firstborn</i> (20)	בְּכֹר	st. v. <i>be strong, mighty; prevail over</i> (-בָּ, עַל) (24x)	גָּבַר
adv. <i>no, not</i> (poetic) (16)	בֵּל	n. <i>man</i> (male) (S4)	גָּבַר
adv. <i>not</i> (S1)	בְּלִי	n. <i>band, troop(s)</i>	גְּדוּד
prp. <i>apart from, except for,</i> <i>without</i> (16x)	בְּלֵעָדֵי	st. v. <i>be[come] large, great; adj. large,</i> <i>big, great</i> (adj.) (11)	גָּדוֹל
adv. <i>not; cj. except, unless; us. לְבַלְתִּי</i> <i>or מְבַלְתִּי</i> (with inf. const.) (16)	בְּלִיתִי	n. <i>greatness</i>	גְּדֻלָּה
n. <i>cult center</i> (trad., “high place”) (23)	בְּמָה	v. <i>chop /cut off</i>	גָּדַע

n. <i>people</i> [group], <i>nation</i> , <i>folk</i> (3)	גוי	v. <i>come, go, walk, travel</i> (3)	הֵלֵךְ
v. <i>reside as an alien; immigrate</i> (trad., <i>sojourn</i>) (28)	גָּר	v. <i>praise, exult in</i> (D); <i>boast</i> (Dt) (31) [to] <i>here</i>	הֵלַל
n. <i>lot; allotment</i> (what the lot reveals) (S3)	גֹּרֶל	<i>they</i> (3mp pers. pron.); <i>those</i> (dem. pron.) (13)	הֵלֵם
n. <i>heap</i> (wave)	גֵּל	n. <i>tumult, uproar; crowd,</i> <i>multitude</i> (14)	הֵמָּה
v. <i>uncover, reveal</i> [I] (24)	גָּלָה	<i>they</i> (3fp pers. pron.); <i>those</i> (dem. pron.) (13)	הֵמוֹן
v. <i>go into captivity/exile</i> [II] (24)	גָּלָה	<i>there is/was, here is/was</i> (trad., <i>Behold!</i>) (20)	הֵן
adv./cj. <i>also, even, indeed</i> (S1)	גַּם	<i>turn, overturn, destroy; change</i> (22)	הֵנָּה
n. <i>camel</i> (S8)	גַּמְלָה	n. <i>mountain, mountain range, hill</i> <i>country, highlands</i> (i.e., not level land, valleys) (13)	הֵנָּה
v. <i>steal</i>	גָּנַב	v. <i>kill</i> (12)	הָרַג
n. <i>thief</i>	גַּנֵּב	<i>and, but, or, also, even ...</i> (4)	וְ
n. <i>stolen thing</i>	גַּנְבוֹת	<i>this</i> (fs dem.) (13)	זֶה
n. <i>grapevine</i> (S7)	גַּפְּן	n. <i>dwelling</i> (5x)	זֶבֶל
n. <i>alien; stranger; immigrant</i> [a non- native] (trad., <i>sojourner</i>) (28)	גֵּר	n. <i>sacrifice</i> (12)	זָבַח
v. <i>drive away/out</i> (mainly D)	גָּרַשׁ	v. <i>slaughter; sacrifice</i> (14)	זָבַח
		n. <i>gold</i> (8)	זָהָב
v. <i>cling/stick to</i> (S8)	דָּבַק	<i>this</i> (ms dem.) (13)	זֶה
v. <i>speak</i> (D; in Q only as ptc.) (19)	דִּבֶּר	v. <i>remember</i> (8)	זָכַר
n. <i>word, thing; event, affair, matter</i> (2)	דְּבָר	n. <i>man</i> (male); <i>male being</i> (animal) (S2)	זָכָר
n. <i>honey</i> (S8)	דְּבַשׁ	v. <i>fornicate, engage in illicit sex</i> (25)	זָנָה
n. <i>grain</i> (i.e., wheat, spelt, rye, barley)	דָּגָן	v. <i>cry out [for help], shout</i> (cf. צָעַק) (27)	זָעַק
n. <i>love, loved one, beloved</i> (S6)	דָּוָד	st. v. <i>be/become old; adj. old; elder</i> (11)	זָקֵן
n. <i>generation, life-span</i> (12)	דּוֹר	<i>strange, foreign; illicit</i> (27)	זָר
n. <i>door[way]</i> (14)	דֹּרַת	n. <i>arm, forearm; strength</i> (14)	זָרוּעַ
n. <i>blood</i> (8)	דָּם	v. <i>dawn, shine, rise</i> (cf. מִזְרָח) (S7)	זָרַח
v. <i>destroy, cut off</i>	דָּמָה	v. <i>sow, plant</i> (cf. זָרַע) (S7)	זָרַע
n. <i>knowledge, understanding</i> (14)	דַּעַת	n. <i>seed</i> (sg. & coll.) (8)	זָרַע
v. <i>walk, step on, tramp; cause to march,</i> <i>tread down, tread [string] a bow</i> (H) (21)	דָּרַךְ	n. <i>cord; property</i> (area measured by cord)	חֶבֶל
n. <i>road, way, path, journey; custom</i> (f.) (3)	דֶּרֶךְ	n. <i>feast, festival; pilgrimage</i> (cf. <i>hajj</i> — the Muslim's journey to Mecca) (S6)	חַג
v. <i>seek, inquire</i> (cf. מְדַרְשׁ) (12)	דָּרַשׁ	v. <i>cease, stop</i> (with inf. const.); <i>hold</i> <i>back, withhold</i> (S8)	חָנַח
art. <i>the</i> (also -הַ, -הָ) (4)	- הַ	<i>new, renewed; fresh</i> (S8)	חָדַל
pref. interrogative particle (untranslated) (S1)	- הַ	n. <i>month, new moon</i> (6)	חֹדֶשׁ
n. <i>breath, idol; vanity</i> (27)	חֶבֶל	n. [city] <i>wall</i> (20)	חוֹמָה
prn. <i>he</i> (3ms); dem. <i>That</i> (13)	הוּא	<i>outside</i> (noun & prp.); <i>street</i> (12)	חוּצָה
<i>she</i> (3fs pers. pron.); <i>that</i> (dem.) [the first form occurs primarily in the Torah] (13)	הִיא		
<i>be, become</i> (often with ל), <i>happen</i> (10)	הָיָה		
n. <i>large building; palace, temple</i> (usually called בַּיִת) (S2)	הֵיכָל		
<i>Is not ...?</i> (אֵלֶּם + interrogative -הַ) (13)	הֲלֵא		

v. <i>see, observe, gaze</i> [at] (25)	חזה	v. <i>dry up</i>	חרב
v. <i>be[come] strong</i> (st. vb.) (6)	חזק	st. v. <i>be[come] angry, hot</i> (always 3ms with “subject” indicated by –ל) (25)	חָרָה
adj. <i>strong; hard</i> (S7)	חֲזָק	v. <i>destroy utterly</i> [as belonging to YHWH] (trad. <i>devote to the ban</i>) (S9)	חרם
v. <i>sin, miss</i> [a mark] (27)	חטא	n. <i>disgrace, reproach, embarrassment</i> (27)	חַרְפָּה
n. <i>sin, error, fault; sin-offering</i> (27)	חַטָּאת	v. <i>account, regard, value, reckon</i> (19)	חשב
adj. <i>living, alive</i> (19)	חי	n. [the] <i>dark; darkness</i> (S2)	חֹשֶׁךְ
v. <i>live, be/stay alive</i> (24)	חיה	st. v. <i>be shattered, dismayed</i> (S5)	חתת
n. <i>animal(s)</i> [coll.] (22)	חיה	[ceremonially] <i>clean, pure</i> (15)	טהור
n. <i>life, lifetime</i> (always plural) (19)	חַיִּים	st. v. <i>be/become</i> [ceremonially] <i>clean, pure</i> (15)	טָהַר
n. <i>strength; army; wealth</i> (8)	חַיִל	adj. <i>good</i> (11)	טוב
v. <i>writhe, tremble; [be in] labour</i> (28)	חיל	st. v. <i>be[come] good, pleasant</i> (28)	טוב טוב
v. <i>wait [for]</i> (D)	חכה	st. v. <i>be/become</i> [ceremonially] <i>unclean, impure</i> ; adj. <i>unclean, impure</i> (15)	טָמֵא
adj. <i>wise, skilled</i> (18)	חכם	n. <i>uncleanness, impurity</i>	טְמֵמָה
n. <i>wisdom, skill</i> (cf. 243) (12)	חֲכָמָה	<i>before, not yet</i> (often as בְּטָרֵם) (S7)	טָרַם
n. <i>fat</i> (14)	חֵלֶב	v. [II] <i>be determined/pleased; undertake</i> (H; with inf. const.)	יאל
v. <i>be/become weak, sick, ill</i> (25)	חָלָה	n. [large?] <i>river</i> (esp. the Nile) (S5)	יָאֵר
n. <i>dream</i> (cf. חֲלֹם) (S4)	חֲלוּם	st. v. <i>be[come] dry, dry up</i> (30)	יָבֵשׁ
adj. <i>wounded, slain, dead</i> (22)	חָלָל	n. <i>dry land</i> (i.e., not the sea; cf. יָבֵשׁ)	יַבְשָׁה
v. <i>be defiled, polluted</i> (N); <i>defile, pollute, stain</i> (D); <i>begin</i> (H) (S5)	חָלַל	n. <i>ram’s horn; jubilee</i> [marked by blowing the ram’s horn]	יוֹבֵל
v. <i>dream</i> (cf. חֲלוּם) (25x)	חלם	n. <i>hand, power, authority</i> (2)	יָד
n. <i>share, portion, part</i> (cf. חֲלֵק) (S5)	חֵלֶק	v. <i>thank, praise, acclaim</i> (H); cf. יְהוֹדָה (25)	ירה
v. <i>divide, apportion, assign</i> (cf. חֲלַק) (S7)	חלק	v. <i>know, understand; recognize</i> (30)	ירע
n. <i>wrath, anger; heat</i> (19)	חֲמָה	n. YHWH (proper name of Israel’s god); also <i>Yah</i> יָהּ, יְהוָה (4)	יהוה
n. <i>male donkey/ass</i> (22)	חֲמוֹר	n. <i>day; when</i> (e.g., בַּיּוֹם + inf. const. constructions); pl. יָמִים (2)	יום
n. <i>violence, wrong, injury</i> (S6)	חֲמָס	<i>daily, by day, daytime</i> (יוֹם + “adverbial” ending) (S1)	יוֹמָם
<i>five</i> (17)	חֲמִשָּׁה	<i>together; simultaneously</i> (adv.) (20)	יָחַד
n. <i>favor, grace</i> (cf. חֲנּוּן) (S4)	חֲנּוּן	st. v. <i>be[come] good</i> ; cf. טוב (30)	יָחַדוּ
v. <i>camp, encamp</i> (cf. חֲנִיחָה) (25)	חנה	n. <i>wine</i> (16)	יָיִט
n. <i>javelin, spear</i> (40x)	חנית	v. <i>dispute</i> (N); <i>correct, rebuke</i> (H) (30)	יָיִן
v. <i>be gracious to, compassionate toward, favour; ask for favor, compassion</i> (Dt) (cf. חָן) (S5)	חָנַן	st. v. <i>be able</i> [to] (with infinitive construct; Lesson 14) (15)	יכח
n. <i>love, loyalty, kindness</i> (trad. “loving-kindness”) (8)	חֲסֵד	v. <i>bear, give birth</i> [to], <i>become the mother/ancestress of</i> (of women); <i>become the father/ancestor of</i> (of men) (S1)	יָכַל
<i>pious, godly</i> (32x)	חֲסִיד		יָלַד
st. v. <i>be pleased</i> [with], <i>delight</i> [in] (14)	חֲסִידוּ		
n. <i>arrow(s); pl. חֲצִיִּים</i> (S7)	חֲצִיז		
n. <i>half</i> (17)	חֲצִי		
n. <i>court, enclosure, settlement</i> (18)	חֲצָר		
n. <i>ordinance, rule, prescription</i> [sthg. prescribed, required, commanded] (20)	חֲקָה		
n. <i>searching; understanding, comprehending</i>	חָקַר		
n.f. <i>sword, dagger, knife</i> (4)	חֲרָב		

n. (male or female) <i>child</i> (14)	יְלֵדָה	n. <i>strength, power</i> (14)	כֹּחַ
n. <i>sea</i> (Mediterranean, Gulf of Aqaba, Red Sea); <i>west</i> (pl. יַמִּים) (4)	יָם	cj. <i>for, because; that; but; since; when, if</i> (15)	כִּי
n. <i>right</i> (hand, side); <i>south</i> (16)	יָמִין	n. <i>loaf, talent, region</i> (all ≈ “circular”) (S4)	כֶּכֶר
v. <i>repeat, do again</i> (with inf. const.) (H); <i>add</i> (30)	יָסַף	n. <i>all, each, every</i> (n., not an adj.); -כֻּלְּ- with suffixes (2)	כֹּל כָּל
prp. <i>on account of, for the sake of; because [of]</i> (cj.) (22)	עָנַן	v. <i>cease, finish, end, complete</i> (often with inf. const.) (24)	כָּלָה
v. <i>counsel, advise</i> ; cf. עֲצָה (30)	יַעֲנֵן	n. <i>utensil, tool; container</i> (5)	כֵּלִי
n. <i>undergrowth, thicket, woods</i> (S7)	יַעַר	v. <i>humiliate, trouble</i>	כָּלַם
adj. <i>attractive, beautiful</i> (fem. sg. יָפָה)	יָפָה	<i>like, just like; as; when</i> (adv. & cj.) (21)	כְּמוֹ
v. <i>leave, go out, exit</i> (30)	יָצָא	<i>honest, upright, right</i> (adj.); <i>thus, so, in this / that way</i> (adv.) (11)	כֵּן
v. <i>serve / dish out</i> (food); <i>pour</i> (liquid) (30)	יָצַק	n. <i>wing; hem</i> (of garment) (S1)	כְּנָף
v. <i>shape, form, mold</i> (30)	יָצַר	n. <i>seat, throne</i> (16)	כִּסֵּא
st. v. <i>fear, be afraid of</i> (thing or person introduced by אֵת, אֶתְּ, אֶתְּ, אֶתְּ) (15)	יָרָא	v. <i>cover, conceal</i> (D) (24)	כִּסָּה
v. <i>go down, descend</i> (5)	יָרַד	<i>foolish, insolent</i> (often substantive) (S4)	כְּסִיל
n. <i>moon, month</i>	יָרַח	n. <i>silver</i> (8)	כֶּסֶף
n. [tent] <i>fabric / curtain</i> [Ex] (S10)	יָרִיעָה	v. <i>be angry, furious</i> (S8)	כַּעַס
v. <i>possess, subdue; dispossess</i> [someone] (H) (8)	יָרַשׁ	n. <i>palm of hand, sole of foot</i> (10)	כַּף
there is/are (opposite of אִין) (12)	יֵשׁ	<i>according to; as, just as</i> (כִּי + פֶּה); cf. לְפִי (S4)	כַּפִּי
v. <i>sit, live</i> [dwell], <i>settle, stay, remain</i> (3)	יָשַׁב	v. <i>cover</i> (Q); <i>atone</i> [for] (D) (19)	כָּפַר
n. <i>inhabitant, citizen, dweller</i> (Q Ptc) (30)	יָשֵׁב	n. <i>cherub</i> (probably a winged bull with human head; <i>not</i> winged baby!) (14)	כְּרוּב
n. <i>deliverance, salvation; victory</i> ; cf. יִשְׁעַ	יִשְׁעָה	n. <i>vineyard</i> (22)	כַּרְם
v. <i>save, deliver</i> (implied: by winning a victory); cf. יִשְׁעָה (30)	יִשַׁע	v. <i>stumble, fall, sway, rock, waver</i> (S5)	כָּשַׁל
<i>straight, upright; honest</i> (adj.) (23)	יָשַׁר	v. <i>cut, cut off; make a treaty</i> (6)	כָּרַת
v. <i>remain, be left</i> [behind/over] (N) (30)	יָתַר	v. <i>write</i> (8)	כָּתַב
n. <i>remainder, left-over</i> (S4)	יָתֵר	n. <i>shoulder</i> [blade] (S4)	כַּתֵּף
<i>like, as, according to; approximately</i> (with numbers); <i>when</i> (with infinitive construct) (7)	כִּי	prp. <i>to, for</i> (7)	לְ-
<i>as, just as, like; when</i> (כִּי + אֲשֶׁר) (11)	כַּאֲשֶׁר	adv. <i>no, not</i> (5)	לֹא
st. v. <i>be / become heavy, severe; wealthy, honored</i> ; adj. <i>heavy, severe, etc.</i> (15)	כָּבַד	n. <i>heart</i> (the center of the person, often used where English uses “mind”) (2)	לֵבַב לֵב
n. <i>glory, honor, wealth</i> (9)	כְּבוֹד	v. <i>put on, clothe</i> (oneself); <i>wear</i> (23)	לָבַשׁ
v. <i>wash, [make physically] clean</i> (S9)	כָּבַס	v. <i>fight</i> (N) (20)	לָחַם
n. <i>young sheep: young ram</i> (m.; also written כֶּבֶשׂ); <i>ewe-lamb</i> (f.) (19)	כֶּבֶשׂ	n. <i>bread, food</i> (6)	לֶחֶם
<i>in this way / manner, thus, so</i> (19)	כַּבְּשָׁה	n. <i>night</i> (8)	לַיְלָה לַיִל
n. <i>priest</i> (2)	כֹּהֵן	v. <i>lodge, spend the night</i> (28)	לָוַן
v. <i>be established, fixed</i> (in place) (Q); <i>prepare</i> (H) (28)	כִּוַּן	v. <i>capture, seize</i> (19)	לָכַד
	כּוֹן	<i>therefore</i> (כֵּן + לְ; cj); <i>not usually volitional</i> ; <i>for the sake of, on account of</i> (prp.); <i>in order that / to</i> (cj.) (18)	לְכֵן
	כּוֹן	v. <i>learn</i> (Q); <i>teach</i> (D) (19)	לָמַד

<i>why?</i> (also לָמָּה (S1)	לָמָּה	n. <i>tomorrow</i> (S9)	מָחָר
<i>in order that, so that</i> (18)	לְמַעַן	n. <i>thought, intention, plan</i> ; cf. חָשַׁב (S7)	מַחְשָׁבָה
<i>according to; as, just as</i> (לְ + פֶּה); cf. כָּפִי (S4)	לְפִי	m.n. <i>rod, staff</i> (sign of office); <i>tribe</i> (10)	מִטָּה
<i>before</i> (temporal & locative), <i>in the presence of, in front of</i> (לְ + פָּנִים) (11)	לְפָנַי	n. <i>rain</i>	מָטָר
v. <i>take, get, acquire; buy; marry</i> (4)	לָקַח	Who? (13)	מִי
[prp.] <i>toward, against, opposite</i> (Q inf. const. + לְ) (21)	לְקַרְאֵת	n. <i>waters of</i> (const. of מַיִם) (4)	מַיִ
n. <i>tongue, language</i> (23)	לְשׁוֹן	n. <i>water</i> (4)	מַיִם
		v. <i>sell</i> (22)	מָכַר
		st. v. <i>be/become full</i> ; adj. <i>full</i> (15)	מָלֵא
<i>very, exceedingly</i> (adv.); <i>power, might</i> (n.) (18)	מְאֹד	n. <i>messenger</i> (cf. מַלְאָכִי, Malachi, “my messenger”) (9)	מַלְאָךְ
num. <i>hundred</i> (17)	מֵאָה	n. <i>work, occupation</i> (12)	מְלָאכָה
<i>then, at that time; formerly; since</i> (אָז + מִן) (20)	מֵאָז	n. <i>war, battle</i> (5)	מִלְחָמָה
v. <i>refuse</i> (D)	מָאֵן	v. <i>escape</i> (N); <i>rescue, deliver</i> (D) (20)	מָלַט
v. <i>reject, refuse</i> (23)	מָאָס	v. <i>reign, rule</i> (as monarch, king), <i>be king</i> (5)	מָלַךְ
n. <i>anything</i>	מְאוּמָה	n. <i>king, monarch</i> (2)	מְלָךְ
n. <i>light</i> [-source] (pl. מְאֹרֹת & מְאֹרֵי)	מְאֹר	n. <i>kingdom, realm; kingship, dominion, royal power/authority</i> ; cf. מְלֻכָּה (23)	מְלָכוּת
prp. <i>from</i> (אֶת [with] + מִן)	מֵאֵת	n. <i>kingdom, realm; kingship, dominion, royal power/authority</i> ; cf. מְלֻכָּה (23)	מִמְלָכָה
num. <i>two hundred</i> ; cf. מֵאָה (17)	מֵאֲתַיִם	prp. <i>from; than ...</i> (מִן + prn. suffix) (7)	מִמֶּנּוּ
n. <i>entrance; west</i> (of the sun)	מִבּוֹא	prp. <i>from, out of; some of; than</i> (7)	מִן
n. <i>flood</i> (only in Gn 6–11 and Ps 29.10)	מִבּוּל	n. <i>flight</i> (cf. נָוָס)	מִנוֹס
n. <i>shield</i> (S5)	מִגֶּן	n. <i>gift, offering, tribute</i> (7)	מִנְחָה
n. <i>pasture, uncultivated land; produce</i> (S10)	מִגְרָשׁ	n. <i>choir leader, conductor?</i> [Ps] (S10)	מִנְצַח
n. <i>wilderness</i> (uncultivated or “unclaimed” land) (6)	מִדְבָּר	n. <i>number, total</i> ; cf. סָפַר (16)	מִסְפָּר
v. <i>measure</i> ; cf. מָדַד (31)	מָדַד	n. <i>path, track</i>	מַעְגַּל
n. <i>measure</i> ; cf. מָדַד (S9)	מִדָּה	adj. [a] <i>few, little</i> (15)	מְעַט
Why? (27)	מִדּוּעַ	prp. <i>above</i> (usually מִמַּעַל); <i>higher</i> (adv., usually מִמַּעְלָה) (19)	מִמַּעַל
What? How? (also מַה־, מִה־) (13)	מָה	m.n. <i>work, deed, thing done</i> ; cf. עָשָׂה (8)	מַעֲשֵׂה
v. <i>hasten, act quickly</i> (D) [often in adverbial hendiadys] (19)	מָהֵר	n. <i>key?</i> ; sthg. used to open (3x)	מַפְתָּח
v. <i>move, totter, slip</i> [metonymy for death or destruction]	מָוַט	v. <i>find</i> (18)	מָצָא
n. <i>correction, discipline, instruction</i> (S9)	מוֹסֵר	n. <i>standing stone, monolith</i>	מַצֵּבָה
n. <i>something appointed</i> (place, time); <i>season</i> (8)	מוֹעֵד	n. <i>unleavened bread</i> (S9)	מַצָּה
v. <i>die, be[come] dead</i> ; cf. מָוַת (28)	מוֹת	n. <i>command[ment], order</i> ; cf. צִוָּה (10)	מִצְוָה
n. <i>death</i> ; מוֹת ≈ <i>death of</i> (12)	מִוֹת	n. <i>sanctuary, holy place</i> ; cf. קָדֵשׁ (27)	מִקְדָּשׁ
n. <i>altar</i> (4)	מִזְבֵּחַ	n. <i>place</i> (5)	מִקּוֹם
n. <i>psalm</i> (this transliterates LX) [Ps only] (S10)	מִזְמוֹר	n. <i>property, possession(s)</i> ; cf. קָנָה (S3)	מִקְנָה
n. <i>sunrise; east</i> (27)	מִזְרָח	adj. <i>bitter</i> (cf. Marah)	מָר
n. <i>camp, army</i> (9)	מַחֲנֶה	<i>sight, appearance</i> ; cf. רָאָה (22)	מַרְאֵה
		n. <i>spy</i> (D Ptc; see רָגַל)	מַרְגֵּל
		n. <i>height</i> ; cf. רֵוַם (S9)	מָרוֹם

n. *open place* (cf. רחב)
 n. *pasture, shepherding; pasturage*
 n. *oracle; burden* (us. prophetic speech)
 n. *breaker* (i.e., wave)
 v. *anoint* (S4)
 v. *draw, pull* [out]
 n. *dwelling; Tabernacle* (6)
 v. *rule, reign* (does not imply kingship; cf. מלך (5))
 n. *rule, reign, dominion*
 n. *guard; obligation, duty*; cf. שמר (S3)
 n. *clan, extended family* (smaller than a tribe) (6)
 n. *judgment, justice; justly; custom*; cf. שפט (4)
 adj. *dead*; cf. מות (27)

untranslatable particle indicating volition (trad. “please”) (8)
 n. *declaration, utterance* (S1)
 v. *prophecy* (N); cf. נביא (26)
 v. *look at, pay attention to* (H) (26)
 n. *prophet*; cf. נביא (9)
 n. *south, Negev* (22)
 v. *report, declare, announce* (26)
 prp. *in front of, before, opposite* (16)
 v. *shine* (not a III-ה verb)
 n. *leader*
 v. *touch; reach, come to* (26)
 n. *blow, assault; plague* (26)
 v. *come near, approach* (26)
 v. *be scattered* (26)
 v. [to] *vow; swear an oath / a vow* (S6)
 n. *vow, oath* (also נדר (S6))
 n. [permanent] *river*; הַנְּהַר refers to Euphrates (rarely נְהַר פְּרַת (23))
 v. *rest* (Q); *deposit* (H) (23)
 v. *flee* (28)
 n. *wadi* (temporary stream or its valley) (11)
 v. *inherit, obtain* (S6)
 n. *inheritance, property* (9)
 v. *relent, be sorry, rue* (N); *comfort, console* (D) (20)
 n. *snake*
 n. *copper, bronze* (11)

מרחב v. *stretch out; turn* (24)
 מרעית v. *plant* (26)
 משא v. *hit, wound, defeat* (H) (24)
 משבר v. *pretend* (N); *recognize* (H) (26)
 משח n. *foreigner*
 משך v. *depart, break camp, travel* (26)
 משכן n. *young man* (upper class) (9)
 משל n. *young, girl, maid* (S5)
 משל v. *pour* [out] (as a drink offering) (S6)
 משמרת n. *drink offering, libation* (wine poured/offered to a god) (S6)
 משפחה v. *fall* (26)
 משפט n. *life, self* (f.); trad., *soul* (2)
 מות v. *take one's stand/place; be assigned* (N) (26)
 מות v. *lead* (D) (26)
 נא v. *rescue, deliver; snatch* (H) (26)
 נא v. *watch, guard, keep, protect* (26)
 נא v. *lift, carry; forgive* (26)
 נאם v. *reach, overtake* (H) (27)
 נבא n. *leader, member of ruling class* (21)
 נבט n. *piece* [of a cut-up carcass] (11/12x = pl.)
 נביא n. *women, wives* (pl. of אשה (2))
 נבב n. *path, way*
 נגד v. *give; put, set; make* (sthg. into ...) (26)
 נגה v. *surround, go around; encircle; turn around* (31)
 נגיד adv. *surrounding, [all] around* (21)
 נגע v. *close, shut* (Q); *give into someone's power* (H) (21)
 נגע n. *horse, stallion* (m.), *mare* (f.) (11)
 נגד v. *turn* (aside); *remove* (H) (28)
 נגד mng. *unknown* [Pss]; trad., *Selah* (S10)
 נגד n. *rock, crag, cliff* (S7)
 נגד n. *fine wheat flour* [Lv, Nu] (S10)
 נגד v. *lean on; support*
 נגד v. *count, number; tell* [recount]; *record* (12)
 נגד n. *scribe, writer, secretary; recorder* (ms Q Ptc of ספר (12))
 נגד n. *scroll, document* (trad., “book”) (10)
 נחש v. *hide, conceal* [oneself] (N, Dt); *be hidden / concealed* (N); *hide* [someone] (H) (20)

נטה
 נטע
 נכה
 נכר
 נכרי
 נסע
 נער
 נערה
 נסך
 נסך
 נפל
 נפש
 נצב
 נצח
 נצל
 נצר
 נשא
 נשג
 נשיא
 נתח
 נשים
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 סבב
 סביב
 מסביב
 סגר
 סוסה
 סוס
 סור
 סלה
 סלע
 סלת
 סמוך
 ספר
 ספר
 ספר
 סתר

v. <i>serve</i> (cf. עֲבָד; עֲבוֹרָה) (6)	עבד	n. <i>afflicted, poor, humble</i> ; cf. עָנָה (II) (S3)	עָנִי
n. <i>servant, slave</i> ; cf. עֲבָד (2)	עֲבָד	n. <i>cloud(s)</i> (22)	עָנָן
n. <i>service, servitude, labour, work</i> (11)	עֲבוֹרָה	n. <i>dust, dirt, soil</i> (23)	עָפָר
v. <i>cross over, pass through / by</i> (4)	עבר	n. <i>tree</i> (sg. & coll.), <i>wood</i> (5)	עֵץ
n. <i>other side; region beyond</i> [sthg.] (14)	נֶעְבֵּר	n. <i>idol</i> (only pl.)	עֲצָבִים
n. <i>Hebrew</i> (gentilic); <i>Eber</i> (proper name)	עֲבָרִי	n. <i>advice, counsel</i> ; cf. יַעֲזֵן (30)	עֲצָה
n. <i>calf</i>	נֶעֱלָל	n. <i>bone; essence</i> (i.e., the inmost part) (23)	נֶעְצָם
n. <i>cart, wagon, chariot</i>	עֲנָלָה	v. <i>be closed, shut; restrain</i> (N) (2)	עָצַר
n. <i>age</i> (duration of time)	עָד	n. <i>evening</i> (6)	עֶרֶב
prp./adv. <i>to, as far as; until, while</i> (7)	עַד	n. <i>plain, desert</i> (often of Jordan plain/valley & wilderness of Judah) (S6)	עֲרָבָה
n. <i>witness</i> (27)	עֵד	n. <i>nakedness, weakness</i> [Lv, Nu] (S10)	עָרוּה
n. <i>testimony, command, precept</i> (of divine law) (S2)	עֵדוּת	n. <i>cities</i> ; pl. of עִיר (2)	עָרִים
n. <i>assembly</i> (trad. “congregation”) (16)	עֵדָה	v. <i>arrange, set in order</i> (S3)	עָרַף
adv. <i>still, yet, again</i> (18)	עֵדוּת	n. [back of] <i>neck</i>	עֲרָף
n. <i>long / remote time; ages past</i> (trad. “forever”) (4)	עֵדוּת	v. <i>do, make; act</i> (24)	עָשָׂה
n. <i>guilt, trespass, sin</i> (4)	עוֹלָם	<i>ten</i> (17)	עָשָׂר
n. <i>bird, insect</i> [any flying thing]; collective (27)	עוֹן	<i>twenty</i> (17)	עָשָׂרִים
v. <i>awake, arouse</i> (28)	עוֹף	n. <i>time</i> (i.e., a particular moment) (6)	עֵת
n. <i>skin, leather</i> (22)	עוֹר	<i>now</i> ; וְעַתָּה ≈ <i>therefore</i> (us.), followed by a volitional form (18)	עַתָּה
n. <i>goat; goat hair</i> (29)	עוֹר		
n. <i>power, strength</i> (14)	עֹז	n. <i>corner, rim, side</i> (S10)	פֶּאֶה
v. <i>leave, forsake, abandon</i> (7)	עָזַב	v. <i>ransom, buy</i> (back) (25)	פָּדָה
v. <i>help, assist</i> (S2)	עָזַר	<i>here, in this place</i> (S4)	פֹּה פָּה פֹּה פָּה
n. <i>eye; water-source, well</i> (cf. עֵין־גֵּדִי, En-gedi, “the well of the kid”) (3)	עֵין	n. <i>mouth</i> (const. פִּי) (11)	פִּי
n. <i>city</i> (f.); pl. עָרִים (2)	עִיר	v. <i>scatter, disperse</i> (intrans.) (28)	פּוּץ
prp. <i>on, upon, over; against; concerning</i> (7)	עַל	n. <i>mouth of</i> (cf. פֶּה) (11)	פִּי
v. <i>go up, ascend</i> (24)	עָלָה	st. v. <i>be wonderful, amazing, miraculous</i> (29)	פִּלְאָה
n. [whole] <i>burnt offering</i> (18)	עֲלָה	v. <i>pray</i> (Dt); cf. תְּפִלָּה (31)	פָּלַל
v. <i>exult, rejoice</i> (cf. עָלֶז) (2)	עָלָה	<i>so that not</i> (i.e., לֵּאמֹר is a negative telic particle, trad., “lest”) (19)	לֵּאמֹר
adj.? <i>highest</i> (trad. <i>Most High</i>); <i>upper</i> (S7)	עָלָה	v. <i>turn</i> (25)	פָּנָה
prp. <i>with</i> (7)	עִלְיוֹן	n. <i>face, presence</i> (alw. pl.) (3)	פָּנִים
n. <i>people</i> [group], <i>nation</i> (10)	עַם	v. <i>do, make</i> (S9)	פָּעַל
v. <i>stand; stop</i> (4)	עַם	n. <i>foot, step; time</i> (i.e., once, three times); <i>twice</i> (dual) (22)	פָּעַם
n. <i>pillar, column</i> ; cf. עֲמֹד (21)	עַמּוּד	v. <i>do something</i> [good or bad] for/to [someone]; trad. “visit” (6)	פָּעַמִּים
n. <i>distress, trouble; labour</i> (S7)	עָמַל	n. <i>bull; פָּרָה cow</i> (fem.; 22x) (20)	פָּקַד
n. <i>valley, lowland</i> (S3)	עָמַק	v. <i>be fruitful, produce fruit</i> ; cf. פָּרָה	פָּרָה
v. <i>answer</i> (I) (24)	עָנָה	n. <i>fruit; descendants</i> (23)	פָּרִי
st. v. <i>be humbled, afflicted; humble, afflict</i> (D) (II) (24)	עָנָה	v. <i>break through, burst out</i> (cf. Perez) (S9)	פָּרַץ

v. <i>break / tear off</i> (D)	פרק	n. <i>voice, sound</i> (5)	קול
v. <i>break out, burst forth</i> (H) (31)	פרר	v. <i>rise, stand</i> (29)	קום
v. <i>spread out</i> (S4)	פרש	st. v. <i>be[come] small, insignificant</i> ; adj. <i>small, insignificant</i> (30)	קטון
n. <i>horseman</i> (coll.); <i>horse</i> (S8)	פָּרָשׁ	v. <i>cause a sacrifice or incense to smoke</i> (D, H) (21)	קטר
n. <i>rebellion, revolt; transgression</i> (14)	פָּשַׁע	n. <i>incense; smoke</i> (from incense) (S7)	קִטְרֶת
v. <i>open</i> (16)	פתח	v. <i>vomit, spit up / out</i>	קיא
n. <i>opening, entrance</i> (12)	פֶּתַח	n. <i>wall, city</i> (cf. Carthage < קִיר הַדָּשׁ < “new city”) (129)	קיר
n. <i>flock</i> (sheep, goats) (6)	צֹאן	adj. <i>swift, light</i>	קל
n. <i>army, host; military duty</i> (4)	צָבָא	st. v. <i>be[come] light, swift; slight, trifling, accursed</i> (31)	קלל
adj. <i>innocent, just; righteous</i> (7)	צַדִּיק	n. <i>reed</i> (for measuring); cf. <i>canon</i> (S8)	קנה
st. v. <i>be[come] innocent, righteous, just; justify, declare innocent, etc.</i> (H)	צדק	v. <i>acquire, get, buy</i> ; cf. <i>מִקְנָה</i> (25)	קנה
n. <i>that which is right, just, innocent; righteousness</i> (7)	צִדְקָה	n. <i>end; limit, boundary</i> (S5)	קץ
n. <i>innocence, righteousness</i> (16)	צִדְקָה	n. <i>end, edge; border</i> (S2)	קצה
n. <i>noon, mid-day</i>	צָהֳרַיִם	v. <i>break, shatter</i> (D)	קצץ
v. <i>command, order</i> (D); cf. <i>מִצְוָה</i> (24)	צוה	v. <i>call, invite, summon; name; read; proclaim</i> (15)	קרא
n. <i>cliff, crag, outcropping; rock</i> (S2)	צור	v. <i>meet, encounter</i> (cf. <i>לְקָרְאָתָא</i> as <i>qal</i> NC: <i>to meet</i>); <i>happen, occur</i> (21)	קרא
n. <i>shadow, shade</i> (S8)	צל	v. <i>approach, come near; offer</i> (H);	קרב
v. <i>succeed, prosper; be effective / strong</i> (S5)	צלח	<i>inward part</i> (9)	קָרֵב
n. <i>piece</i> (trad. “rib”)	צלע	n. <i>offering, gift</i> ; cf. Mk 7.11; <i>קָרֵב</i> (H) (S2)	קָרְבָן
v. <i>cry out [for help], shout</i> (= <i>צַעַק</i>) (27)	צעק	adj. <i>near, close</i> ; cf. <i>קָרֵב</i> (15)	קָרוֹב
n. <i>north</i> (16)	צפון	n. <i>horn</i> (oft. as symbol of strength) (S3)	קָרֹן
n. <i>enemy, foe</i> (31)	צַר	v. <i>tear</i> (esp. clothing) (S8)	קרע
n. <i>distress, confinement</i> (31)	צָרָה	n. <i>plank, board, beam</i> [Ex] (S10)	קָרֵשׁ
v. <i>confine, constrain, wrap up; be hostile</i> (31)	צָרָה	n. <i>bow</i> (weapon); <i>rainbow</i> (S3)	קִשְׁת
v. <i>gather, assemble</i> (21)	קבץ	v. <i>see</i> (24)	ראה
v. <i>bury; lay in tomb / grave</i> (see <i>קָבַר</i>) (S3)	קבר	n. <i>head; peak, top</i> (of a hill or mountain) (4)	ראש
n. <i>tomb, grave</i> (rock-hewn, rarely dug) (S4)	קָבֵר	<i>first</i> (ord.) (17)	ראשון
<i>holy</i> (11)	קדוש	n. <i>first; beginning</i> (17)	ראשית
n. <i>east</i> (S10)	קָדִים	v. <i>increase, multiply</i> (24)	רבה
v. <i>precede, go in front of</i> (D)	קדם	n. <i>abundance, multitude, great quantity</i> (16)	רב
<i>in front, east; eastward</i> ; also <i>קָדְמָה</i> (14)	קָדָם	<i>much, many</i> (adj.) (11)	רב
st. v. <i>be / become holy; restricted in use</i> (15)	קדש	n. <i>foot, leg; [male] genitals</i> (9)	רִגְל
adj./n. <i>holy</i> (11)	קִדְשׁ	v. <i>spy</i> (D; cf. <i>מְרַגֵּל</i>)	רגל
n. [national] <i>assembly</i> (prob. males over 20 years old); trad. “congregation” (S4)	קָהָל	v. <i>chase, persecute, pursue</i> (16)	רדף
v. <i>I wait for</i> (D)	קוה	n. <i>breath, wind, spirit</i> (5)	רוח
v. <i>II be gathered, collect</i> (N) (3x)	קוה	st. v. <i>be[come] high, exalted</i> (29)	רום

eight (17)	שְׁמוּנָה	n. <i>insight, understanding, realization</i> (cf. בֵּין)	תְּבוּנָה
n. <i>report; rumor</i> (sthg. heard)	שְׁמוּעָה		תְּהִלָּה
n. <i>heaven(s), sky</i> (5)	שְׁמַיִם	n. <i>praise, glory</i> ; cf. הִלָּל (31)	תּוֹרָה
st. v. <i>be[come] astounded, astonished, dumfounded; desolate</i> (31)	שָׁמַם	n. <i>thanks[giving]</i>	תְּוֹךְ
n. <i>desolation, devastation; horror</i> (S9)	שְׁמָמָה	n. <i>area inside something else</i> (cf. בְּחֻוֹךְ) (S1)	תּוֹעֵבָה
n. [olive] <i>oil</i> (12)	שְׁמֶן	n. <i>abomination; something horrific</i> (23)	תּוֹרָה
v. <i>hear, listen, obey</i> (3)	שָׁמַע	n. <i>teaching, instruction; law</i> (trad., “law”) (9)	תַּחַת
v. <i>watch, guard, protect</i> (5)	שָׁמַר	<i>under, beneath; instead of, in</i> [the] <i>place of</i> (7)	תִּירוֹשׁ
n. <i>sun</i> (18)	שֶׁמֶשׁ	n. [new] <i>wine</i>	
n. <i>tooth; crag, outcropping</i> (S9)	שֵׁן	[adv.] <i>regularly, continually, always</i> ; a noun ending a construct chain, referring to sthg. that is repeated, continual, or regular (e.g., תְּמִיד, <i>perpetual offering</i>) (22)	תְּמִיד
n. <i>year</i> (cf. רֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה) (3)	שָׁנָה	<i>whole, blameless, entire</i> (S5)	תָּמִים
<i>second</i> (ord.) (18)	שְׁנֵי	st. v. <i>be complete, have integrity</i> (st. vb.) (S5)	תָּמָה
<i>two</i> ; שְׁנֵי <i>both</i> (const.) (17)	שְׁנַיִם	v. <i>wander, be lost</i> (25)	תְּפֹאֶרֶת
n. <i>gate</i> (of a city) (11)	שַׁעַר	n. <i>ornament, decoration</i> (S1)	תְּפִלָּה
n. <i>female slave/servant</i> (2S4)	שִׁפְחָה	n. <i>prayer</i> ; cf. פָּלַל (31)	תַּפְשׁ
v. <i>judge</i> (10)	שִׁפַּט	v. <i>seize, take hold of</i> (in order to use) (31)	תִּקַּע
n. <i>judge</i> (Q Ptc) (18)	שִׁפְטָה	v. <i>drive, thrust</i> (a weapon); <i>blow</i> (a horn) (S7)	תְּרוּמָה
v. <i>pour [out]; shed [blood]</i> (23)	שָׁפַךְ	n. <i>tribute</i> ; [heave-] <i>offering</i> (S1)	תִּשְׁעָה
v. <i>water, give a drink [to]</i> (H) (25)	שָׁקָה	num. <i>nine</i> (17)	
n. <i>shekel</i> (approx. 11.4g, 0.5 oz.) (17)	שֶׁקֶל		
n. <i>lie, falsehood; deception</i> (23)	שִׁקָּר		
v. <i>serve, minister to</i> (D) (19)	שָׁרַת		
<i>six</i> (17)	שֵׁשׁ		
v. <i>drink</i> (24)	שָׁתָה		
num. <i>two</i> (f.) (17)	שְׁתַּיִם		

The Most Common “Proper” Nouns

This lists all personal, national, gentile, and locational names that occur fifty times or more in Biblical Hebrew, in alphabetical order. The numeral with “x” in parentheses after the name is the number of occurrences.

Abimelech (67x)	אַבִּימֶלֶךְ	Elisha (58x)	אֵלִישָׁע
Abner (63x)	אַבְנֵר	Eleazar (72x)	אֶלְעָזָר
Abram, Abraham (235x)	אַבְרָם	Amorite(sx) (86x)	אַמֹּרִי
Absalom (107x)	אַבְרָהָם	Asa (58x)	אַסָּא
Edom (112x)	אַבְשָׁלוֹם	Esther (55x)	אַסְתֵּר
Aaron (347x)	אַדוֹם	Ephraim (182x)	אַפְרַיִם
Ahab (93x)	אַהֲרֹן	Aram (“Syria”; 155x)	אַרָּם
Job (58x)	אַחָאָב	Assyria (152x)	אַשּׁוּר
Elijah (71x)	אִיּוֹב	Babylon (288x)	בָּבֶל
	אֵלִיָּה	Benjamin (180x)	בְּנִימִן
	אֵלִיהוּ	Balaam (64x)	בַּלְעָם

Bashan (60x)	בָּשָׁן	Chaldea [Mesopotamia] (89x)	כַּשְׁדִּים
Gad (85x)	גָּד	Laban (54x)	לָבָן
Gilead (108x)	גִּלְעָד	Lebanon (71x)	לְבָנוֹן
David (1031x)	דָּוִד	Levi (353x)	לֵוִי
Dan (78x)	דָּן	Midian (67x)	מִדְיָן
Haman (54x)	הָמָן	Moab (199x)	מוֹאָב
Hezekiah (131x)	חִזְקִיָּה	Micah (3 spellings; 63x)	מִיכָה
Heth; Hittite (62x)	חֵת חֵתִי	Manasseh (150x)	מְנַשֶּׁה
Hebron (77x)	חֶבְרוֹן	Egypt (708x)	מִצְרַיִם
Josiah (51x)	יֹאשִׁיָּהּ	Mordecai (60x)	מֶרְדֳּכַי
Jehu (58x)	יְהוּא	Moses (763x)	מֹשֶׁה
Judah (889x)	יְהוּדָה	Nebuchadnezzar (5 spellings; 91x)	נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר
Jehoiada (56x)	יְהוֹיָדָע	Naphtali (50x)	נַפְתָּלִי
Jonathan (124x)	יְהוֹנָתָן	Ammon (122x)	עַמּוֹן
Joshua (247x)	יְהוֹשֻׁעַ	Amalek (51x)	עַמְלֵק
Jehoshaphat (86x)	יְהוֹשָׁפָט	Esau (96x)	עֵשָׂו
Joab (146x)	יֹאָב	Philistine (294x)	פְּלִשְׁתִּי
Joash (64x)	יֹאָשׁ	Pharaoh (273x)	פַּרְעֹה
Joseph (214x)	יוֹסֵף	Zadok (53x)	צָדוֹק
Jacob (348x)	יַעֲקֹב	Zedekiah (2 spellings; 63x)	צִדְקִיָּה
Isaac (112x)	יִצְחָק	Zion (154x)	צִיּוֹן
Jeroboam (104x)	יִרְבֵּעַם	Reuben (87x)	רְאוּבֵן
Jordan (181x)	יַרְדֵּן	Rehoboam (50x)	רְחֹבָעַם
Jerusalem (667x)	יְרוּשָׁלַם	Sarai; Sarah (53x)	שָׂרָה שָׂרִי
Jericho (57x)	יְרִחוֹ	Saul (406x)	שָׂאוּל
Jeremiah (147x)	יִרְמְיָהּ	Shechem (64x)	שֶׁכֶם
Israel (person, nation; 2513x)	יִשְׂרָאֵל	Solomon (293x)	שְׁלֹמֹה
Ishmael (56x)	יִשְׁמָעֵאל	Samuel (139x)	שָׁמוּאֵל
Cush [Ethiopia] (54x)	כּוּשׁ	Samaria (112x)	שָׁמְרוֹן
Canaan (163x)	כְּנָעַן		

APPENDIX C

GLOSSARY OF MORPHOSYNTACTICAL TERMS

The numeral in parentheses (6) indicates the lesson in which the term is introduced.

absolute	a word or phrase that is not “connected” to the rest of a sentence; i.e., not dependent on anything else (9)
accent(s)	mark(s) in the text that indicate the accented [tone] syllable of a word, as well as its logical relationship to the following word (27)
accusative	the supposed original function of the LOCATIVE ך- (7)
acrostic	a poem or text in which each line or group of lines begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet; e.g., Pss 111, 112, 119; La 1-4 (1)
active	another term for FIENTIVE (12)
adjectival/adjective	any word used to modify another (9, 11)
<i>Adonai</i>	“lord/master/Lord”; the vowels of this word were combined with the TETRAGRAMMATON, producing the form יהוה, misinterpreted as “Jehovah” (3)
affix	any morphological unit attached directly to another (e.g., the ARTICLE), so that a WORD can be made up of as many as five ELEMENTS—a base or root, plus four affixes (4)
alphabet	the collection of symbols, usually in a static [traditional] order, that are used to represent a language visually (1)
anaptyctic	a phonetic element (vowel or syllable) added to a word, either to aid in pronouncing it, or to make it more like other forms (31)
anarthrous	lacking the article (4)
antecedent	the word (usually a noun or other SUBSTANTIVE) to which a PRONOUN refers (10)
apposition/apposed	a noun or noun phrase placed next to another noun or noun phrase in order to modify or define it; e.g., <i>David the king</i> (11)
article	a prefixed -ה with DAGES FORTE in the first letter of the word (4)
articular	having the article (4)
ascender	a portion of a letter that projects above the basic shape of other letters; ׀ is the only letter with an ascender in Biblical Hebrew (1)
assimilation	the process of one thing—in phonetics, one sound—becoming like another; assimilation may be partial or complete (7)
attribution	to assign a quality or characteristic to something, to describe it (9)
bilabial	a sound made with both lips: /b/, /m/(4)
cardinal numeral	the numerals used in all numerical descriptions exception descriptions of order or sequence; see ORDINAL (17)
causative	an activity in which the subject causes an object to do something (which may be a second object; see DOUBLY TRANSITIVE) (20)
circumstantial clause	a clause that identifies the temporal (usually) or locative (rarely) circumstances in which an event occurs (16)
clause	a syntagm with at least two main components: a topic (subject) and comment (predicate) (11)
closed syllable	a syllable that ends in a consonant; if unaccented, with a short vowel (3)
coalesce	to merge, or join (31)

cohortative	a first-person VOLITIONAL verbal form; in Biblical Hebrew usually indicating determination or desire; sometimes indicated by suffixed הַ - (8)
command	see IMPERATIVE (8)
comment	a clause's PREDICATE; what the clause says <i>about</i> its TOPIC (11)
complementary	a function of the INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT, in which it “completes” a VAGUE VERB (e.g., יכל, חדרל, כלה)
compound form(s)	a “word” with more than one ELEMENT, such as preposition+lexeme+suffix (4)
conjugation	a pattern of verbal formation that designates or identifies the verb's function; the major conjugations in Biblical Hebrew are the imperfect, preterite, and perfect (5)
conjunction	a word or element that links or joins two or more words, phrases, or clauses (4)
conjunctive accent	a masoretic accent that joins a word to the following; the main conjunctive accent is munahi (27)
consonant	letters that represent the non-vocalic “sounds” of the language (1)
construct (chain)	an uninterrupted series of substantives in which each defines or modifies the preceding word by the “of” relationship (9)
content	the function and semantics of any distinguishable segment of text (word, phrase, etc.) (10)
context	the entire setting of an UTTERANCE, including, e.g., its historical circumstance, culture, language (10)
cotext	the <i>linguistic</i> material surrounding a [portion of an] UTTERANCE (10)
<i>dageš forte</i>	a <i>dot</i> in the “bosom” of a letter, showing that the letter is doubled [i.e., to be read twice]; does not occur in the GUTTURALS or <i>reš</i> (3)
<i>dageš lene</i>	a <i>dot</i> in the “bosom” of ב, ג, ד, כ, פ, ת to indicate a different pronunciation (3)
defective spelling	see <i>HASER</i> SPELLING (2)
definiteness	the quality of specificity, with or without the article (14)
demonstrative	a DEICTIC form or expression that, specifying something by “pointing to” it, depends heavily on the context for its function (13)
denominative	a verb that supposedly derived from a noun; i.e., the root first occurred as a noun, and then as a verb; e.g., דבר (word → say/speak) (19)
descender	a portion of a letter that is lower than the basic shape of other letters; in Biblical Hebrew only ק and four of five final forms (ך, ן, ף, ץ) have descenders (1)
diagnostic(s)	those vowel points (including doubling) and prefixes that distinguish verbal STEMS (6)
directional	LOCATIVE; ACCUSATIVE (7)
disjunctive accent	a MASORETIC ACCENT that separates (“disjoins”) a word from the following; major disjunctive accents call for such a significant separation that they are called “pausal” (27)
disjunctive clause	any CLAUSE that begins with <i>waw</i> prefixed to a non-verbal form (וְאָבְרָהֶם וְקָן); used in narrative for ancillary (background or proleptic), contrastive, or summary information (6)
double-status	an action described by a verb, in which the subject both does the action verb and is affected by that activity; also called “reflexive”, “middle”, “reciprocal” “tolerative” (18)
double verbs	pairs of verbal roots that seem to be semantic synonyms; פּוּר/פּוּר, <i>break</i> (31)
doubly transitive	a verb with two objects one of which causes the other to do something (20)
dual	the ׁ - ending used on some nouns to show that there are two of the referent, especially parts of the body and certain numerals (4, 17)
dynamic	a verb that describes or identifies an event (i.e., <i>not</i> STATIVE or STATIC); also FIENTIVE
dynamic equivalence	a theory of translation that defines the translator's responsibility as making the translation as accessible as possible to the reader, emphasizing ease of understanding; assumes that we ought to translate “thought for thought” rather than “word by word” (5)

element	any morphological unit that can be combined with (AFFIXED to) another to form a larger word; the maximum number of elements in Biblical Hebrew is five (root, plural, pronominal suffix, preposition, conjunction)
factive	a verbal function associated with D & H that describes an activity that brings about a change of state or condition (19)
feminine	see GENDER (4)
fientive	any verb that describes an ACTION, rather than a STATE (15)
final form	a form of a letter that occurs only when that letter is the final letter in the word; this applies only to five forms in Biblical Hebrew: ם, ן, ף, ץ, ן (1)
flashback	information about a former event; i.e., past non-sequential narrative material (6)
full vowel	any vowel except the HATEF-VOWELS (2)
functional equivalence	a newer term for DYNAMIC EQUIVALENCE (5)
furtive patahi	a patahi placed by the Masoretes between a final long [non-a] vowel and a final guttural, e.g., the patahi in [ːAbl.GI, Gilboa (3)
gemination	the doubling of a sound, either a consonant or syllable (22)
gender	part of a language's concord system, used to indicate which words in a syntagm refer to or modify each other; the term "gender" reflects the tendency for one set of endings to be used for nouns that refer to male and female beings (4)
genre	"type" (Fr.); often distinguished because each kind of discourse in Biblical Hebrew (e.g., NARRATIVE, INSTRUCTION) makes its own use of the verbal system (6)
gerundive	a verbal function of the INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT, by which it specifies the manner or means of accomplishing an activity named by a preceding verb (16)
gloss	an English word that "represents" or "stands for" a Hebrew word; N.B.: A gloss is <i>not</i> a definition, nor does it represent the word's reference or function. (2)
guttural	"throat" (Lat.); the radicals ך, ן, ן, or ן; ן is sometimes called a guttural, but is not, sharing only the characteristic of not doubling (1, 22)
guttural verbs	verbal roots with one or more of the above radicals
half vowel	a non-descript vowel (e.g., the sound represented by final 'a' in "umbrella"); represented in Biblical Hebrew by vocal <i>šewa</i> and the HATEF VOWELS (2)
<i>ḥaser</i> spelling	"lacking" (Hb.); an occurrence of a word (usually written PLENE) that lacks the vowel letter (2)
<i>ḥatef</i> -vowel	any one of four vowel signs representing a HALF VOWEL; vocal <i>šewa</i> and three signs that combine <i>šewa</i> with a sign for a full vowel (<i>ḥatef-qames</i> , <i>ḥatef-patah</i> , <i>ḥatef-segol</i>) (2)
I-guttural	verbal roots with ך, ן, ן, or ן as their initial consonant; GUTTURAL VERBS (22)
II-guttural	verbal roots with ך, ן, ן, or ן as their middle consonant; verbs with middle ן occasionally resemble verbs with a middle guttural; GUTTURAL VERBS (22)
III-guttural	verbal roots with ן, ן, or ן as their final consonant; GUTTURAL VERBS (22)
imperative	second-person VOLITIONAL verbal forms directing the hearer to do the will of the speaker; formed like the IMPERFECT without the PGN prefix (8)
imperfect	one of two prefix verbal CONJUGATIONS in Biblical Hebrew, generally representing the present, future, or some MODAL function (5)
independent pronoun	pronouns that function as separate words (i.e., not suffixed); independent pronouns in Biblical Hebrew are primarily clausal SUBJECTS (13)
infinitive absolute	a verbal CONJUGATION that primarily modifies a verbal clausal PREDICATE, apparently by "strengthening" it; it has no single functional GLOSS (16)
infinitive construct	a verbal CONJUGATION that occurs often with prepositions in temporal clauses, or with the preposition -ׁ with TELIC or COMPLEMENTARY force (16)
inseparable	ELEMENTS that do not function as independent WORDS, but only as affixes (4)
inseparable preposition	three prepositions (ׁ, ׁ, ׁ) that only occur as prefixes (7)
instructional material	a genre of biblical prose that explains how a task is to be done; e.g., the laws of sacrifice in Lv 1-7 (10)

interlinear	a word-by-word gloss and [usually] analysis of a text from one language into another, purportedly to enable people who do not know the language of the original to understand it more fully (5)
interrogative	a question, whether indicated in Biblical Hebrew by the prefixed $\text{-}\aleph$, an interrogative verb (e.g., שאל , שירש), or the context (13)
intransitive	any verb that describes a state (STATIVE) or an activity that does not immediately or directly affect an object; e.g., verbs of motion (15)
jussive	a MODAL function of the IMPERFECT by which the speaker directs a third party to do something (8)
<i>lemma</i>	the word(s) in the text that are under discussion; a common term in textual criticism (29)
lexeme	a member of the LEXICON of a language; a “word” as listed in the lexicon [book] (2)
lexicon	all the words [lexemes] of a language; a bilingual reference book (2)
locative	an ending on selected nouns indicating that motion or direction is <i>toward</i> that object [a.k.a. ACCUSATIVE] (7)
long vowel	any vowel that can stand in an open or closed & accented syllable; vowel signs with <i>MATRES LECTIIONIS</i> are always long (<i>hireq-yod</i> , <i>šere-yod</i> , <i>holem-waw</i> , <i>qibbuš</i>); others mark both long and short vowels (<i>qameš</i> , <i>šere</i> , <i>hireq</i> , <i>qibbuš</i>); <i>šere</i> and <i>holem</i> are always long, with or without the <i>MATER</i> (3)
<i>malē</i> ’ spelling	“full” (Hb.); = <i>PLENE</i> (2)
<i>mappiq</i>	a dot in a final \aleph - showing that the \aleph - is a consonant rather than a <i>MATER</i> (3)
<i>maqṣef</i>	a horizontal line, at the level of the top “surface” of the “letter square”, linking two or more words into one accentual unit (5)
masculine	see <i>GENDER</i> (4)
<i>masora marginalis</i>	notes written in the margin by the Masoretes to note unexpected forms, or to offer alternate readings of the text (29)
Masoretes	the scribes who copied the biblical text (c. AD 500-1000), adding vowel points, accent marks, and other notes to the pages; the Hebrew Bible in use today is an example of the Masoretic Text (29)
<i>mater lectionis</i>	a consonantal sign used more or less sporadically to indicate the presence of a preceding long vowel (pl., <i>MATRES LECTIIONIS</i>) (2)
medial form	the forms of consonants used at the beginning of or within a word; contrast <i>FINAL FORM</i> (1)
middle voice	an event in which the activity directly affects or necessarily involves the actor; primarily signalled in Biblical Hebrew by <i>nifal</i> and <i>hitpael</i> (18)
modal	any non-indicative verbal function, such as <i>IMPERATIVE</i> , <i>COHORTATIVE</i> , <i>JUSSIVE</i>
modify/modification	to define something by describing it more closely (4)
narrative	the <i>GENRE</i> used to tell stories (10)
narrative backbone	the primary sequence of events as outlined by the narrator; indicated in Biblical Hebrew by the <i>PRETERITE</i> (6)
negation	a statement that an event did <i>not</i> happen; <i>irrealis</i> (17)
non-verbal clause	a <i>CLAUSE</i> without a finite verbal form as its predicate (17)
number	morphological information indicating how many of the referent are being identified; Biblical Hebrew has three numbers—singular, dual, plural (4)
objective construct	a <i>CONSTRUCT</i> chain in which the second [later] element of the chain might be described as the <i>OBJECT</i> , result, or goal of the preceding element; e.g., in the phrase <i>Saul’s death</i> , Saul is the one who died (9)
open syllable	a syllable that ends in a vowel; its vowel is [usually] long (3)
ordinal numeral	the numerals used in describing something’s position in an order; first, second, etc.; in Biblical Hebrew, the ordinals end in $\text{-}\aleph$, e.g., שש , <i>sixth</i> (17)
parenthetic information	material that stands apart from the flow of the narrative, generally supplying information needed to understand what has just been, or is about to be, described (6)

parse	to analyze a word's morphology by identifying, e.g., a verb's subject [PGN], stem, conjugation, etc. (5)
participle	verbal conjugation with primarily adjectival function (12)
passive	an event in which the subject is the object or recipient of the activity described by the verb; signalled in Biblical Hebrew by <i>nifal</i> , <i>pual</i> , and <i>hofal</i> (18)
<i>penult</i>	the next-to-last syllable of a word (2)
perfect	the suffixed verbal CONJUGATIONS in Biblical Hebrew, generally representing the past, unless <i>waw</i> is prefixed (10)
permissive	a MODAL function in which the SUBJECT allows ("permits") the activity (20)
person	the relationship of the subject to the activity described by the verb; there are three persons in both English and Biblical Hebrew (5)
PGN	a verb's inflection to show the person, gender, and number of its subject (5)
<i>plene</i> spelling	"full" (Lat.); a word spelled with a vowel letter; = MALE' (2)
plural	reference to more than one of an entity; the grammatical forms that indicate such reference (4)
pointing	marks added to the consonantal text that indicate vowels ("vowel points") and accentuation ("accents")
polar question	a question that expects an answer of either "yes" or "no" (17)
possessive	showing that one entity belongs to another (9)
predicate	the COMMENT portion of a clause; what the clause says <i>about</i> its TOPIC (11)
prefix	define as both noun & verb (4)
preposition	a "pre-posed" form that indicates a word's function in the CLAUSE OR SENTENCE (4)
prepositional phrase	a non-clausal string of word(s) governed by the PREPOSITION (7)
prohibition	a negative command (8)
proleptic	"clues"; information anticipating a future development, especially in narrative (10)
pronominal subject	a non-nominal SUBJECT of a CLAUSE; indicated by either an INDEPENDENT PRONOUN, PRONOMINAL SUFFIX (ON INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT), or the PGN affixes of the prefix and suffix CONJUGATIONS (13)
pronominal suffix	a shortened form of an independent pronoun, used to show pronominal possession, objects of verbs or prepositions, and subjects of infinitive constructs (14)
radical	another name for the consonants that make up the ROOT of a word; e.g., "second radical" is shorthand for "the second consonant of the root"
range of reference	a word's relative specificity; e.g., "animal" has a much wider range than "dog" (2)
reciprocal	an activity in which two or more parties simultaneously participate (e.g., fighting) (18)
reflexive	an activity in which the actor more or less directs the action toward him or herself (18)
relative	that which relates information to or about something else (11)
resultative	a verbal function associated with D & H that describes an activity that brings about a change of state or condition; see CAUSATIVE, FACTITIVE (19)
rhetorical question	a question asked, not seeking information, but in order to make an assertion (17)
root	the theoretical reconstructed base—usually of three RADICALS—that is common to a group of forms (5)
separable preposition	the preposition 𐤒 , <i>from</i> , which is often—but not necessarily—prefixed to the word that it governs (7)
<i>šewa</i>	see VOCAL ŠEWA (2)
short vowel	any vowel that can stand in a closed, unaccented syllable (i.e., <i>pataḥ</i> , <i>segol</i> , <i>qameṣ ḥatuf</i>); some vowel signs (<i>ḥireq</i> , <i>qibbuṣ</i>) mark both long and short vowels; their function must be determined from their phonetic environment (3)
silent <i>šewa</i>	a sign (ְ) used to mark the <i>absence</i> of a vowel between consonants, and unvocalized final <i>kaf</i> (ךְ -) (3)

singular	something referred to that consists of one, or a group considered collectively, or the form that identifies the referent as singular (4)
stative	a verb that describes the state or condition of its subject, rather than an ACTION; contrasted with DYNAMIC (10); also called “static”
status, change of	a change in the condition or situation of a clausal subject (15)
stem	a combination of prefixes, infixes (doubling), and vowels that indicate a verb’s function (5)
strong verb	any verbal root in which all three radicals are present in all forms of the verb (24)
subject	the TOPIC of a clause—what the clause <i>describes</i> (5)
subjective construct	a CONSTRUCT chain in which the second [later] element of the chain might be described as the SUBJECT or source of the preceding element; e.g., in the phrase <i>Saul’s death</i> , Saul is the one who died (9)
substantive	any form that can serve as a clausal SUBJECT, OBJECT, or PREDICATE NOMINATIVE, or function within a CONSTRUCT chain (11)
syllable	a cluster of sounds, both consonant and vowel; all syllables in Biblical Hebrew begin with a consonant (except the prefixed conjunction -וּ); syllables are OPEN or CLOSED
syntagm	one of the syntactical patterns of a language; any identifiable <i>syntactical</i> combination of specific grammatical forms which may be specific (e.g., <i>w+perfect</i> ; -וּ + הִיָּה) or general (e.g., “construct chain”, “sequential preterites”; disjunctive clause”)
telic	a clause that identifies the intended or desired outcome—purpose or result—of an event or state
temporal clause/phrase	a clause or phrase that describes the <i>time at which</i> something happened (16)
Tetragrammaton	“four letters” (Greek); the divine name יהוה; see YHWH (3)
tittle	the small horizontal stroke that distinguishes, e.g., כּ from כ, and ך from ך (1)
tolerative	a function of the <i>nifal</i> in which someone <i>allows</i> or <i>permits</i> something to be done (18)
topic	the SUBJECT of a clause—what the clause is <i>about</i> (11)
toponym	place name
transitive	any FIENITIVE verb that can direct its action toward an OBJECT (15)
translate	the process of attempting to present in one language a message originally expressed in another (5)
transliterate	to represent the <i>sounds</i> of one language in the <i>alphabet</i> of another; transliteration can be phonetically technical or exact, or relatively casual (1)
<i>ultima</i>	the final syllable of a word; in Biblical Hebrew, the <i>ultima</i> is usually the accented syllable (2)
utterance	any product of a linguistic act, whether written or oral
vague verb	a verb that is functionally/semantically incomplete, and thus requires another form (usually an infinitive construct in Biblical Hebrew); e.g., “be able”, “finish” (16)
virtual doubling	when a letter that is normally doubled in a given form lacks <i>dages forte</i> , but the preceding vowel is short, as though the letter had been doubled (22)
vocal <i>šewa</i>	the main HALF-VOWEL (3)
volitional	verbal forms that indicate the imposition of someone’s will on another person; a collective term for the JUSSIVE, COHORTATIVE, and IMPERATIVE (8)
vowel letter	letters of the alphabet used to indicate the presence of a long vowel (2)
VSO	verb-subject-object as the usual word order of main narrative [PRETERITE] clauses (6)
weak verb	verbal roots with consonants or vowel letters that are in the lexical form, but do not appear in all verbal forms (24)
word	any form in Biblical Hebrew separated by a blank space or joined to another by MAQQEF
YHWH	the TETRAGRAMMATON (“four letters”) the traditionally unpronounced proper name of the God of the Bible, pointed יהוה in BHS (3)

Appendix D

PARADIGMS

Pronouns

Person Gender Number	Independent (subject)	Basic Form	Suffixes			
			w/MS Noun	w/MP Noun	w/FS Noun	w/FP Noun
1cs	אֲנִי אַנְכִי	י -	סוֹסִי	סוֹסִי	סוֹסְתִי	סוֹסוֹתִי
2ms	אַתָּה	ךָ -	סוֹסְךָ	סוֹסֶיךָ	סוֹסְתֶיךָ	סוֹסוֹתֶיךָ
2fs	אַתְּ	ךְ -	סוֹסְךְ	סוֹסֶיךְ	סוֹסְתֶיךְ	סוֹסוֹתֶיךְ
3ms	הוא	ו -	סוֹסוֹ		סוֹסָתוֹ	
		ה -	סוֹסָה			
		הוּ -	סוֹסָהוּ			
		יוּ -		סוֹסִיו		סוֹסוֹתָיו
3fs	היא	הָ -	סוֹסָהּ		סוֹסְתָהּ	
	הוא	הָ -		סוֹסֶיהָ		סוֹסוֹתֶיהָ
1cp	אֲנַחְנוּ נַחְנוּ	נוּ -	סוֹסָנוּ	סוֹסֵינוּ	סוֹסְתָנוּ	סוֹסוֹתֵינוּ
2mp	אַתֶּם	כֶּם -	סוֹסְכֶם	סוֹסֵיכֶם	סוֹסְתְּכֶם	סוֹסוֹתֵיכֶם
2fp	אַתֶּן	כֶּן -	סוֹסְכֶן	סוֹסֵיכֶן	סוֹסְתְּכֶן	סוֹסוֹתֵיכֶן
	אַתְּנָה					
3mp	הֵם	הֶם -		סוֹסֵיהֶם	סוֹסְתֵיהֶם	סוֹסוֹתֵיהֶם
	הֵמָּה	הֶם -	סוֹסָם			סוֹסוֹתָם
		מוֹ -				
3fp	הֵנָּה	הֶן -		סוֹסֵיהֶן	סוֹסְתֵיהֶן	סוֹסוֹתֵיהֶן
		וּ -	סוֹסָן			

- Throughout the *Pentateuch*, הֵיא (3fs) is written הוּא, with only eleven exceptions (e.g., Gn 14.2).
- These suffixes are used with nouns, prepositions, infinitives construct, and participles. Suffixes on finite verbs and the imperative are similar, but show greater variety in form.
 - if the verb ends in a vowel, the suffix either begins with or consists of a consonant (the 1cs verbal suffix is נִי -):

שְׂאוּנִי וְהִטְלֵנִי אֶל-הַיָּם Pick me up and throw me into the sea (Jon 1.12)

- if the verb ends in a consonant, either silent *šewa* or a vowel links the consonantal suffix to the verb; vocalic suffixes are affixed directly to the verb:

וַיַּהַרְגֵהוּ He killed him (Gn 4.8).
לְכַד יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶת-הַעִי וַיַּחַרְיֶמָהּ Joshua had captured Ai and destroyed it (Jos 10.1)

Strong Verb, I

	Forms	Qal	Nifal	Hifil	Hofal	Piel	Pual	Hitpael
P	1cs	מִשְׁלַחִי	נִמְשַׁלְתִּי	הִמְשַׁלְתִּי	הִמְשַׁלְתִּי	מִשְׁלַחִי	מִשְׁלַחִי	הִתְמַשְׁלַחִי
	2ms	מִשְׁלַחְתָּ	נִמְשַׁלְתָּ	הִמְשַׁלְתָּ	הִמְשַׁלְתָּ	מִשְׁלַחְתָּ	מִשְׁלַחְתָּ	הִתְמַשְׁלַחְתָּ
	2fs	מִשְׁלַחְתְּ	נִמְשַׁלְתְּ	הִמְשַׁלְתְּ	הִמְשַׁלְתְּ	מִשְׁלַחְתְּ	מִשְׁלַחְתְּ	הִתְמַשְׁלַחְתְּ
	3ms	מִשַּׁל	נִמְשַׁל	הִמְשִׁיל	הִמְשִׁיל	מִשַּׁל	מִשַּׁל	הִתְמַשֵּׁל
	3fs	מִשְׁלָה	נִמְשָׁלָה	הִמְשִׁילָה	הִמְשִׁילָה	מִשְׁלָה	מִשְׁלָה	הִתְמַשְׁלָה
	1cp	מִשְׁלַנּוּ	נִמְשַׁלְנוּ	הִמְשַׁלְנוּ	הִמְשַׁלְנוּ	מִשְׁלַנּוּ	מִשְׁלַנּוּ	הִתְמַשְׁלַנּוּ
	2mp	מִשְׁלַתֶּם	נִמְשַׁלְתֶּם	הִמְשַׁלְתֶּם	הִמְשַׁלְתֶּם	מִשְׁלַתֶּם	מִשְׁלַתֶּם	הִתְמַשְׁלַתֶּם
	2fp	מִשְׁלַתְּן	נִמְשַׁלְתְּן	הִמְשַׁלְתְּן	הִמְשַׁלְתְּן	מִשְׁלַתְּן	מִשְׁלַתְּן	הִתְמַשְׁלַתְּן
	3cp	מִשְׁלוּ	נִמְשַׁלוּ	הִמְשִׁילוּ	הִמְשִׁילוּ	מִשְׁלוּ	מִשְׁלוּ	הִתְמַשְׁלוּ
	F	1cs	אֶמְשַׁל	אֶמְשָׁל	אֶמְשִׁיל	אֶמְשָׁל	אֶמְשַׁל	אֶמְשָׁל
2ms/3fs		תְּמַשַּׁל	תְּמַשָּׁל	תְּמַשִּׁיל	תְּמַשָּׁל	תְּמַשַּׁל	תְּמַשָּׁל	תְּתַמַּשֵּׁל
2fs		תְּמַשְׁלִי	תְּמַשְׁלִי	תְּמַשְׁלִי	תְּמַשְׁלִי	תְּמַשְׁלִי	תְּמַשְׁלִי	תְּתַמַּשְׁלִי
3ms		יִמְשַׁל	יִמְשָׁל	יִמְשִׁיל	יִמְשָׁל	יִמְשַׁל	יִמְשָׁל	יִתְמַשֵּׁל
1cp		נִמְשַׁל	נִמְשָׁל	נִמְשִׁיל	נִמְשָׁל	נִמְשַׁל	נִמְשָׁל	נִתְמַשֵּׁל
2mp		תְּמַשְׁלוּ	תְּמַשְׁלוּ	תְּמַשְׁלוּ	תְּמַשְׁלוּ	תְּמַשְׁלוּ	תְּמַשְׁלוּ	תְּתַמַּשְׁלוּ
2/3fp		תְּמַשְׁלֶנָּה	תְּמַשְׁלֶנָּה	תְּמַשְׁלֶנָּה	תְּמַשְׁלֶנָּה	תְּמַשְׁלֶנָּה	תְּמַשְׁלֶנָּה	תְּתַמַּשְׁלֶנָּה
3mp		יִמְשְׁלוּ	יִמְשְׁלוּ	יִמְשְׁלוּ	יִמְשְׁלוּ	יִמְשְׁלוּ	יִמְשְׁלוּ	יִתְמַשְׁלוּ
V	ms	מִשַּׁל	הִמְשַׁל	הִמְשַׁל		מִשַּׁל		הִתְמַשֵּׁל
	fs	מִשְׁלִי	הִמְשְׁלִי	הִמְשְׁלִי		מִשְׁלִי		הִתְמַשְׁלִי
	mp	מִשְׁלוּ	הִמְשְׁלוּ	הִמְשְׁלוּ		מִשְׁלוּ		הִתְמַשְׁלוּ
	fp	מִשְׁלֶנָּה	הִמְשְׁלֶנָּה	הִמְשְׁלֶנָּה		מִשְׁלֶנָּה		הִתְמַשְׁלֶנָּה
NC	מִשַּׁל	הִמְשַׁל	הִמְשִׁיל	הִמְשָׁל	מִשַּׁל		הִתְמַשֵּׁל	
NA	מִשׁוּל	הִמְשׁוּל	הִמְשׁוּל	הִמְשָׁל	מִשׁוּל	מִשׁוּל	הִתְמַשׁוּל	
Participle	ms	מִשַּׁל	נִמְשָׁל	מִמְשִׁיל	מִמְשָׁל	מִמְשַׁל	מִמְשָׁל	מִתְמַשֵּׁל
	fs	מִשְׁלָה	נִמְשָׁלָה	מִמְשִׁילָה	מִמְשָׁלָה	מִמְשַׁלָּה	מִמְשָׁלָה	מִתְמַשְׁלָה
		מִשְׁלַת						
	mp	מִמְשָׁלִים	נִמְשָׁלִים	מִמְשִׁילִים	מִמְשָׁלִים	מִמְשָׁלִים	מִמְשָׁלִים	מִתְמַשְׁלִים
fp	מִמְשָׁלוֹת	נִמְשָׁלוֹת	מִמְשִׁילוֹת	מִמְשָׁלוֹת	מִמְשָׁלוֹת	מִמְשָׁלוֹת	מִתְמַשְׁלוֹת	

1. If the verbal root begins with a sibilant (ס, צ, ש, ז), the ת of the *hitpael* prefix and the sibilant exchange positions (metathesize): הִשְׁתַּמְרַתִּי, “I kept myself”; if the root begins with ז, the ת both metathesizes and becomes ט (partial assimilation): הִצְטַדַּק, “he sanctified himself”.
2. If the verbal root ends with ת, this assimilates to the ת of the perfect endings (e.g., 1cs, 2ms), which is then written with *dageš forte*: כָּרַתְּ, “you (ms) cut”. In some III-נ verbs, final נ occasionally assimilates to the consonant of the ending: נָתַתְּ (< נתן, for which this is especially true); שָׁכַנו (< שכן).

Strong Verb, II

(with medial *b^ogad-k^ofat* letter [occasional *dageš lene*])

Conj/Sbj	Qal	Nifal	Hifil	Hofal	Piel	Pual	Hitpael
P	1cs	כָּתַבְתִּי	נִכְתַּבְתִּי	הִכְתַּבְתִּי	הִכְתַּבְתִּי	כָּתַבְתִּי	הִתְכַּתַּבְתִּי
	2ms	כָּתַבְתָּ	נִכְתַּבְתָּ	הִכְתַּבְתָּ	הִכְתַּבְתָּ	כָּתַבְתָּ	הִתְכַּתַּבְתָּ
	2fs	כָּתַבְתְּ	נִכְתַּבְתְּ	הִכְתַּבְתְּ	הִכְתַּבְתְּ	כָּתַבְתְּ	הִתְכַּתַּבְתְּ
	3ms	כָּתַב	נִכְתַּב	הִכְתִּיב	הִכְתִּב	כָּתַב	הִתְכַּתַּב
	3fs	כָּתְבָה	נִכְתְּבָה	הִכְתִּיבָה	הִכְתִּבָה	כָּתְבָה	הִתְכַּתַּבָה
	1cp	כָּתַבְנוּ	נִכְתַּבְנוּ	הִכְתַּבְנוּ	הִכְתַּבְנוּ	כָּתַבְנוּ	הִתְכַּתַּבְנוּ
	2mp	כָּתַבְתֶּם	נִכְתַּבְתֶּם	הִכְתַּבְתֶּם	הִכְתַּבְתֶּם	כָּתַבְתֶּם	הִתְכַּתַּבְתֶּם
	2fp	כָּתַבְתֶּן	נִכְתַּבְתֶּן	הִכְתַּבְתֶּן	הִכְתַּבְתֶּן	כָּתַבְתֶּן	הִתְכַּתַּבְתֶּן
	3cp	כָּתְבוּ	נִכְתְּבוּ	הִכְתִּיבוּ	הִכְתִּבוּ	כָּתְבוּ	הִתְכַּתְּבוּ
F	1cs	אָכַתְבִּי	אִפְתַּבִּי	אִכְתִּיבִי	אִכְתִּבִּי	אָכַתְבִּי	אִתְכַּתְּבִי
	2m/3fs	תְּכַתֵּב	תִּפְתַּב	תִּכְתִּיב	תִּכְתִּב	תְּכַתֵּב	תִּתְכַּתְּב
	2fs	תִּכְתְּבִי	תִּפְתְּבִי	תִּכְתִּיבִי	תִּכְתִּבִי	תִּכְתְּבִי	תִּתְכַּתְּבִי
	3ms	יִכְתֵּב	יִפְתַּב	יִכְתִּיב	יִכְתִּב	יִכְתֵּב	יִתְכַּתֵּב
	1cp	נִכְתַּבְוּ	נִפְתַּבְוּ	נִכְתִּיבְוּ	נִכְתִּבְוּ	נִכְתַּבְוּ	נִתְכַּתְּבוּ
	2mp	תִּכְתְּבוּ	תִּפְתְּבוּ	תִּכְתִּיבוּ	תִּכְתִּבוּ	תִּכְתְּבוּ	תִּתְכַּתְּבוּ
	2/3fp	תִּכְתְּבֶנָה	תִּפְתְּבֶנָה	תִּכְתִּיבֶנָה	תִּכְתִּבֶנָה	תִּכְתְּבֶנָה	תִּתְכַּתְּבֶנָה
3mp	יִכְתְּבוּ	יִפְתְּבוּ	יִכְתִּיבוּ	יִכְתִּבוּ	יִכְתְּבוּ	יִתְכַּתְּבוּ	
V	ms	כָּתַב	הִפְתַּב	הִכְתַּב	הִכְתַּב	כָּתַב	הִתְכַּתַּב
	fs	כָּתְבִי	הִפְתְּבִי	הִכְתִּיבִי	הִכְתִּיבִי	כָּתְבִי	הִתְכַּתְּבִי
	mp	כָּתְבוּ	הִפְתְּבוּ	הִכְתִּיבוּ	הִכְתִּיבוּ	כָּתְבוּ	הִתְכַּתְּבוּ
	fp	כָּתְבֶנָה	הִפְתְּבֶנָה	הִכְתִּיבֶנָה	הִכְתִּיבֶנָה	כָּתְבֶנָה	הִתְכַּתְּבֶנָה
NC	כָּתַב	הִפְתַּב	הִכְתִּיב	הִכְתִּב	כָּתַב	הִתְכַּתַּב	
NA	כָּתוּב	הִפְתּוּב	הִכְתּוּב	הִכְתּוּב	כָּתוּב	הִתְכַּתּוּב	
Participle	ms	כּוֹתֵב	נִכְתֵּב	מְכַתֵּב	מְכַתֵּב	מְכַתֵּב	מִתְכַּתֵּב
	fs	כּוֹתֵבָה	נִכְתֵּבָה	מְכַתֵּבָה	מְכַתֵּבָה	מְכַתֵּבָה	מִתְכַּתֵּבָה
		כּוֹתֵבֵת					
	mp	כּוֹתְבִים	נִכְתְּבִים	מְכַתִּיבִים	מְכַתִּיבִים	מְכַתְּבִים	מִתְכַּתְּבִים
fp	כּוֹתְבוֹת	נִכְתְּבוֹת	מְכַתִּיבוֹת	מְכַתִּיבוֹת	מְכַתְּבוֹת	מִתְכַּתְּבוֹת	

- When a verbal root begins with a sibilant (כ, ס, צ, ש, שׁ), the ת of the *hitpael* prefix and the sibilant exchange positions (metathesize): הִשְׁתַּמְרֵתִי, “I kept myself”; if the root begins with צ, the ת both metathesizes and becomes ט (partial assimilation): הִצְטַדֵּק, “Sanctify yourself!”.
- When a verbal root ends with ת, this assimilates to the ת of the perfect endings (e.g., 1cs, 2ms), which is then written with *dageš forte*: כָּרַתְּ, “you (ms) cut”. The final ך- of some III-נ verbs occasionally assimilates to the consonant of the ending: נָתַתְּ (< נָתַן, for which this is especially true).

Guttural Verbs

Verbs with gutturals (א, ה, ח, ע) are strong (i.e., all three radicals of the root are present), except for occasional forms of III-א roots (below). They differ from the strong verb for four reasons:

- (1) The gutturals (and ר) do not double
- (2) The gutturals are followed by *hatef*-vowels rather than vocal *šewa*
- (3) The gutturals tend to occur with *a*-vowels.
- (4) When א comes at the end of a syllable, it becomes silent and the preceding vowel is long.

These characteristics mean that they differ from the strong verb in six ways (non-guttural forms in [] for comparison):

1. *long* vowels instead of short; gutturals don't double, so syllables that are closed in non-guttural forms are *open* and short vowels *lengthen*:

יַעֲמֹד 3ms N F [יִשְׁמֹר] בִּרְךָ 3ms D P [כִּבְדֵּךְ]

2. *a*-vowels (especially *patach* and *patach furtivum*):

יִשְׁמַע 3ms Q F [יִכְתֹּב] יִשְׁמַע 3ms D F [יִשְׁמֹר]

3. *hatef*-vowels instead of vocal *shewa* under gutturals:

בְּהָרוּ 3cp Q P [כְּתָבוּ] עֲמֹדֶם 2mp Q P [כְּתַבְתֶּם]

4. *segol* instead of *hireq* before non-final gutturals, especially in prefix:

יַחְדָּל 3ms Q F [יִכְתֹּב]

5. short prefix vowel followed by *hatef*-vowel instead of silent *shewa*:

יַעֲמֹד 3ms Q F [יִכְתֹּב] יַעֲמֹד 3ms H F [יִמְשִׁיל]

6. III-א forms generally have the vowel of the basic verb after the second radical of the verbal root, if that vowel is long. The ת of PGN endings lacks *dageš lene* since it is preceded by a vowel (silent א is not counted as a consonant).

מִצָּאתִי 1cs Q P [שְׁמֹרְתִי] יִמְצָא 3ms Dp F [יִשְׁמֹר]

Some III-א forms lack the א completely (this is usually noted in the *masora marginalis*, as, e.g., in Ru 2.9, where יִצְמַח is noted as a unique occurrence [i.e., lacking final א]):

יִצְמַח 2fs Q P [שְׁמֹרְתִי] מִצָּחִי 1cs Q P [שְׁמֹרְתִי]
 יִבֹּא 3ms Q Pr [Qere: יִבֹּא]

III-ה (ל"ה) Verbs

Conj/Sbj	Qal	Nifal	Hifil	Hofal	Piel	Pual	Hitpael
P	1cs	בְּנִיתִי	נִבְנִיתִי	הִבְנִיתִי	הִבְנִיתִי	בְּנִיתִי	הִתְבְּנִיתִי
	2ms	בְּנִיתָ	נִבְנִיתָ	הִבְנִיתָ	הִבְנִיתָ	בְּנִיתָ	הִתְבְּנִיתָ
	2fs	בְּנִיתְּ	נִבְנִיתְּ	הִבְנִיתְּ	הִבְנִיתְּ	בְּנִיתְּ	הִתְבְּנִיתְּ
	3ms	בָּנָה	נִבְנָה	הִבְנָה	הִבְנָה	בָּנָה	הִתְבְּנָה
	3fs	בָּנְתָה	נִבְנְתָה	הִבְנְתָה	הִבְנְתָה	בָּנְתָה	הִתְבְּנְתָה
	1cp	בְּנִינוּ	נִבְנִינוּ	הִבְנִינוּ	הִבְנִינוּ	בְּנִינוּ	הִתְבְּנִינוּ
	2mp	בְּנִיתֶם	נִבְנִיתֶם	הִבְנִיתֶם	הִבְנִיתֶם	בְּנִיתֶם	הִתְבְּנִיתֶם
	2fp	בְּנִיתֶן	נִבְנִיתֶן	הִבְנִיתֶן	הִבְנִיתֶן	בְּנִיתֶן	הִתְבְּנִיתֶן
	3cp	בָּנוּ	נִבְנוּ	הִבְנוּ	הִבְנוּ	בָּנוּ	הִתְבְּנוּ
F	1cs	אֲבָנָה	אֲבָנָה	אֲבָנָה	אֲבָנָה	אֲבָנָה	אֲתְבָנָה
	2m/3f	תְּבַנֶּה	תְּבַנֶּה	תְּבַנֶּה	תְּבַנֶּה	תְּבַנֶּה	תִּתְבַּנֶּה
	2fs	תְּבַנִּי	תְּבַנִּי	תְּבַנִּי	תְּבַנִּי	תְּבַנִּי	תִּתְבַּנִּי
	3ms	יִבְנֶה	יִבְנֶה	יִבְנֶה	יִבְנֶה	יִבְנֶה	יִתְבַּנֶּה
	1cp	נִבְנֶה	נִבְנֶה	נִבְנֶה	נִבְנֶה	נִבְנֶה	נִתְבַּנֶּה
	2mp	תְּבַנּוּ	תְּבַנּוּ	תְּבַנּוּ	תְּבַנּוּ	תְּבַנּוּ	תִּתְבַּנּוּ
	2/3fp	תְּבַנִּינָה	תְּבַנִּינָה	תְּבַנִּינָה	תְּבַנִּינָה	תְּבַנִּינָה	תִּתְבַּנִּינָה
	3mp	יִבְנוּ	יִבְנוּ	יִבְנוּ	יִבְנוּ	יִבְנוּ	יִתְבַּנוּ
V	ms	בָּנָה	הִבְנָה	הִבְנָה		בָּנָה	הִתְבַּנָּה
	fs	בְּנִי	הִבְנִי	הִבְנִי		בְּנִי	הִתְבַּנִּי
	mp	בָּנוּ	הִבְנוּ	הִבְנוּ		בָּנוּ	הִתְבַּנוּ
	fp	בְּנִינָה	הִבְנִינָה	הִבְנִינָה		בְּנִינָה	הִתְבַּנִּינָה
NC		בְּנוֹת	הִבְנוֹת	הִבְנוֹת	בְּנוֹת	בְּנוֹת	הִתְבְּנוֹת
NA		בָּנָה	הִבְנָה	הִבְנָה	בָּנָה	בָּנָה	הִתְבְּנָה
Participle	ms	בָּנָה	נִבְנָה	מִבְנֶה	מִבְנֶה	מִבְנֶה	מִתְבַּנֶּה
	fs	בָּנְתָה	נִבְנְתָה	מִבְנֶה	מִבְנֶה	מִבְנֶה	מִתְבַּנְתָּה
	mp	בְּנִים	נִבְנִים	מִבְנִים	מִבְנִים	מִבְנִים	מִתְבַּנִּים
	fp	בְּנוֹת	נִבְנוֹת	מִבְנוֹת	מִבְנוֹת	מִבְנוֹת	מִתְבַּנוֹת

III-ה Verbal Roots

- The final ה- (originally י-) “appears” as י between the second radical and consonantal endings, and is replaced by vocalic endings and the וּת- of NC. Because the weakness lies at the end of the verbal root, it affects all stems equally, but only the pointing *after* the *second* radical of the verbal root.
- If there is no PGN ending, the ending is ה -, preceded by the following vowels (all stems):

הַ -	perfect
הֵ -	imperative
הֶ -	imperative, participle (ms)
הִ -	infinitive absolute

- NC of all stems replaces final ה with וּת-.
- Some forms of *qal* and *hifil* imperfect and preterite look exactly alike in roots which are both III-ה and I-guttural (especially I-ע); the stem can be determined only from the context (e.g., if וַיַּעַל has a direct object, it is H, if not, it is Q).

I-נ Verbs (see next page for נתן)

Conj/Sbj	Qal	Nifal	Hifil	Hofal	D-Stems	
P	1cs		נִפְלְתִי	הִפְלְתִי	הִפְלְתִי	
	2ms		נִפְלַתְ	הִפְלַתְ	הִפְלַתְ	
	2fs		נִפְלַתְ	הִפְלַתְ	הִפְלַתְ	
	3ms	These forms are the same as the strong verb in <i>qal</i> perfect.	נִפַּל	הִפִּיל	הִפִּיל	
	3fs		נִפְּלָה	הִפִּילָה	הִפִּילָה	
	1cp		נִפְּלָנוּ	הִפִּילָנוּ	הִפִּילָנוּ	
	2mp		נִפְּלַתְּם	הִפִּילַתְּם	הִפִּילַתְּם	
	2fp		נִפְּלַתְן	הִפִּילַתְן	הִפִּילַתְן	
	3cp		נִפְּלוּ	הִפִּילוּ	הִפִּילוּ	
F	1cs		אֶפֶל	אֶנְשׁ	אֶפִּיל	אֶפֶל
	2m/3f		תִּפֹּל	תִּנְשׂ	תִּפִּיל	תִּפֹּל
	2fs		תִּפְּלִי	תִּנְשִׁי	תִּפִּילִי	תִּפְּלִי
	3ms	יִפֹּל	יִנְשׂ	יִפִּיל	יִפֹּל	
	1cp	נִפַּל	נִנְשׂ	נִפִּיל	נִפַּל	
	2mp	תִּפְּלוּ	תִּנְשׂוּ	תִּפִּילוּ	תִּפְּלוּ	
	2/3fp	תִּפְּלֶנָּה	תִּנְשֶׁנָּה	תִּפִּילֶנָּה	תִּפְּלֶנָּה	
3mp	יִפְּלוּ	יִנְשׂוּ	יִפִּילוּ	יִפְּלוּ		
V	ms		נִשׂ	הִפִּיל		
	fs		נִשִּׁי	הִפִּילִי		
	mp	In <i>qal</i> , the imperative, infinitives, and participles of <i>o</i> -imperfect I-נ verbs are the same as the strong verb in Q.	נִשׂוּ	הִפִּילוּ		
	fp		נִשְׁנֶה	הִפִּילֶנָּה		
NC			נִשְׂת	הִפִּיל	הִפֹּל	
	NA		נִגֹּשׂ	הִפֹּל	הִפֹּל	
Participle	ms		נִפְּל	מִפִּיל	מִפְּל	
	fs		נִפְּלָה	מִפִּילָה	מִפְּלָה	
	mp		נִפְּלִים	מִפִּילִים	מִפְּלִים	
	fp		נִפְּלוֹת	מִפִּילוֹת	מִפְּלוֹת	

Verbs based on I-נ roots are strong in all forms of the D-stems.

1. These roots are weak whenever the first radical of the verbal root is followed by silent *shewa* (*qal* F,V; N P, Ptc; all forms of *hifil* and *hofal*); they are strong throughout the D-stems.
2. When followed by silent *šewa*, initial -נ assimilates to the second radical, doubling it. In *qal* V and NC of *holem*-imperfect roots, -נ drops off; הֹ or הַ is added to NC (just as in some I-י verbs).
3. לקח is formed just like נגש throughout the verbal system; any verbal form with -קח- is from לקח.

נתן (all attested forms)

Conj/Sbj		Qal	Qal Passive	Nifal
P	1cs	נָתַתִּי		
	2ms	נָתַתָּ		
	2fs	נָתַתְּ		
	3ms	נָתַן		נָתַן
	3fs	נָתְנָה		נָתְנָה
	1cp	נָתַנּוּ		נָתַנּוּ
	2mp	נָתַתֶּם		
	3cp	נָתְנוּ		
	F	1cs	אָתַן	
2m/3f		תָּתַן		תָּתַן
2fs		תָּתְנִי		
3ms		יָתַן	יָתַן	יָתַן
1cp		נָתַן		
2mp		תָּתַנּוּ		
3mp		יָתְנוּ		יָתְנוּ
V	ms	תֵּן תֵּנָה		
	fs	תֵּנִי		
	mp	תֵּנוּ		
NC		תַּת תַּת-		הִנָּתַן
		(with suffixes)		
Participle	NA	נָתוֹן		הִנָּתוֹן
	ms	נָתַן	נָתוֹן	נָתַן
	mp	נָתְנִים	נָתוֹנִים	
	fp		נָתוֹנוֹת	

1. Forms listed do not occur; several forms occur only once or twice (e.g., 2fs *qal* P of נתן occurs only twice, in Ezk 16.33, 36).
2. The final ך- assimilates into all consonantal endings, doubling the consonant.
3. The initial ך- assimilates into the medial ך- whenever silent *šewa* follows the first radical.
4. The stem-vowel in *qal* F, V, NC is *šere*.

I-י (י') Verbs

Conj/Sbj	Qal	Nifal	Hifil	Hifil (I-י)	Hofal	D-Stems	
P	1cs		נִרְשָׁתִי	הִרְשָׁתִי	הִיטְבָתִי	הִרְשָׁתִי	
	2ms		נִרְשָׁתָּ	הִרְשָׁתָּ	הִיטְבָתָּ	הִרְשָׁתָּ	
	2fs	These forms are the same as the strong verb in <i>qal</i> perfect.	נִרְשָׁתְּ	הִרְשָׁתְּ	הִיטְבָתְּ	הִרְשָׁתְּ	
	3ms		נִרְשָׁ	הִרְשִׁי	הִיטִיב	הִרְשָׁ	
	3fs		נִרְשָׁה	הִרְשִׁיָּה	הִיטִיבָהּ	הִרְשָׁה	
	1cp		נִרְשָׁנוּ	הִרְשָׁנוּ	הִיטְבָנוּ	הִרְשָׁנוּ	
	2mp		נִרְשָׁתֶם	הִרְשָׁתֶם	הִיטְבָתֶם	הִרְשָׁתֶם	
	2fp		נִרְשָׁתֶן	הִרְשָׁתֶן	הִיטְבָתֶן	הִרְשָׁתֶן	
	3cp		נִרְשָׁו	הִרְשִׁיבוּ	הִיטְבִיבוּ	הִרְשָׁו	
F	1cs		אִירָשׁ	אֶרְשָׁ	אֹרְשִׁי	אֵיטִיב	אִירָשׁ
	2m/3f		תִּירָשׁ	תֶּרְשָׁ	תֹּרְשִׁי	תֵּיטִיב	תִּירָשׁ
	2fs	תִּירְשִׁי	תִּשְׁבִּי	תִּרְשִׁי	תִּיטְבִי	תִּירְשִׁי	
	3ms	יִירָשׁ	יִשָּׁב	יִרְשָׁ	יִיטִיב	יִירָשׁ	
	1cp	נִירָשׁ	נִשָּׁב	נִרְשָׁ	נִיטְבִיב	נִירָשׁ	
	2mp	תִּירְשׁוּ	תִּשְׁבּוּ	תִּרְשׁוּ	תִּיטְבִיבוּ	תִּירְשׁוּ	
	2/3fp	תִּירְשְׁנָה	תִּשְׁבְּנָה	תִּרְשְׁנָה	תִּיטְבְּנָה	תִּירְשְׁנָה	
	3mp	יִירְשׁוּ	יִשְׁבּוּ	יִרְשׁוּ	יִיטְבִיבוּ	יִירְשׁוּ	
V	ms	רָשׁ	שָׁב	הִרְשָׁ	הִיטִב		
	fs	רְשִׁי	שְׁבִי	הִרְשִׁי	הִיטְבִי		
	mp	רְשׁוּ	שְׁבוּ	הִרְשׁוּ	הִיטְבִיבוּ		
	fp	רְשְׁנָה	שְׁבְּנָה	הִרְשְׁנָה	הִיטְבְּנָה		
NC	רָשֶׁת	שְׁבֶת	הִרְשֶׁת	הִרְשֶׁת	הִיטִיב	הִרְשֶׁת	
NA		יְרוֹשׁ	יְשׁוּב	הִרְשָׁ	הִיטִב	הִרְשָׁ	
	ms	יִרָשׁ	יִשָּׁב	נִרְשָׁ	מִיטְבִיב	מִיטְבִיב	
	fs	יִרְשָׁת	יִשְׁבֶּת	נִרְשָׁה	מִיטְבִיבָהּ	מִיטְבִיבָהּ	
		יִרְשָׁה	יִשְׁבָּה				
	mp	יִרְשָׁם	יִשְׁבִּים	נִרְשָׁם	מִיטְבִיבִים	מִיטְבִיבִים	
fp	יִרְשָׁת	יִשְׁבֹּת	נִרְשָׁת	מִיטְבִיבֹת	מִיטְבִיבֹת		

Verbs based on I-י roots are strong in all forms of the D-stems.

1. These roots are weak whenever the first radical of the verbal root is followed by silent *šewa* (Q F, V; N P, Ptc; all forms of H, Hp); strong throughout D, Dp, Dt.
2. When followed by silent *šewa*, initial -י assimilates to the preceding vowel, which becomes long; the initial -י may become a vowel letter or disappear.
3. In Q V and NC of many verbs the initial -י drops off and תְּ - or תֹּ - is added to *qal* NC, so that some forms look exactly like the corresponding forms of I-י roots.
4. הִלֵּךְ is formed like יִשָּׁב (all forms).

Hollow Verbs (II-י or ע-י/ו; “monosyllabic roots”)

Conj/Sbj	Qal	Nifal	Hifil	Hofal	Polel	Polal	Hitpolel
P	1cs	קָמַתִּי	נִקְוַמְתִּי	הִקְמוֹתִי	הוֹקְמוֹתִי	קָמַמְתִּי	הִתְקַמְמוֹתִי
	2ms	קָמַתָּ	נִקְוַמְתָּ	הִקְמוֹתָ	הוֹקְמוֹתָ	קָמַמְתָּ	הִתְקַמְמוֹתָ
	2fs	קָמַתְּ	נִקְוַמְתְּ	הִקְמוֹתְּ	הוֹקְמוֹתְּ	קָמַמְתְּ	הִתְקַמְמוֹתְּ
	3ms	קָם	נִקְוָם	הִקְוָם	הוֹקְוָם	קָמָם	הִתְקָמָם
	3fs	קָמָה	נִקְוָמָה	הִקְוָמָה	הוֹקְוָמָה	קָמָמָה	הִתְקָמָמָה
	1cp	קָמוּנוּ	נִקְוַמוּנוּ	הִקְמוּנוּ	הוֹקְמוּנוּ	קָמַמוּנוּ	הִתְקַמְמוּנוּ
	2mp	קָמַתֶּם	נִקְוַמְתֶּם	הִקְמוֹתֶם	הוֹקְמוֹתֶם	קָמַמְתֶּם	הִתְקַמְמוֹתֶם
	2fp	קָמַתֶּן	נִקְוַמְתֶּן	הִקְמוֹתֶן	הוֹקְמוֹתֶן	קָמַמְתֶּן	הִתְקַמְמוֹתֶן
	3cp	קָמוּ	נִקְוַמוּ	הִקְוַמוּ	הוֹקְוַמוּ	קָמַמוּ	הִתְקַמְמוּ
F	1cs	אָקוּם	אָקוּם	אָקוּם	אוֹקָם	אָקָם	אִתְקָם
	2m/3f	תָּקוּם	תָּקוּם	תָּקוּם	תוֹקָם	תָּקָם	תִּתְקָם
	2fs	תָּקוּמִי	תָּקוּמִי	תָּקוּמִי	תוֹקְמִי	תָּקַמְמִי	תִּתְקַמְמִי
	3ms	יָקוּם	יָקוּם	יָקוּם	יוֹקָם	יָקָם	יִתְקָם
	1cp	נִקְוָם	נִקְוָם	נִקְוָם	נוֹקָם	נִקְוָם	נִתְקָם
	2mp	תָּקוּמוּ	תָּקוּמוּ	תָּקוּמוּ	תוֹקְמוּ	תָּקַמוּ	תִּתְקַמוּ
	2/3fp	תָּקוּמְנָה תָּקוּמֵינָה	תָּקוּמְנָה	תָּקוּמְנָה תָּקוּמֵינָה	תוֹקְמְנָה	תָּקַמְמְנָה	תִּתְקַמְמְנָה
	3mp	יָקוּמוּ	יָקוּמוּ	יָקוּמוּ	יוֹקְמוּ	יָקַמוּ	יִתְקַמוּ
	V	ms	קוּם	הִקוּם	הִקָּם	קָמוּ	קָמוּ
fs		קוּמִי	הִקוּמִי	הִקְוּמִי	קָמוּמִי	קָמוּמִי	הִתְקָמוּמִי
mp		קוּמוּ	הִקוּמוּ	הִקְוּמוּ	קָמוּמוּ	קָמוּמוּ	הִתְקָמוּמוּ
fp		קוּמְנָה	הִקוּמְנָה	הִקְוּמְנָה	קָמוּמְנָה	קָמוּמְנָה	הִתְקָמוּמְנָה
NC	קוּם	הִקוּם	הִקָּם	הוֹקָם	קָמוּ	קָמוּ	הִתְקָמוּ
NA	קוּם	הִקוּם	הִקָּם				
		נִקְוָם					
Participle	ms	קָם	נִקְוָם	מִקְוָם	מוֹקָם	מִקְוָם	מִתְקָמוּ
	fs	קָמָה		מִקְוָמָה	מוֹקְוָמָה		
	mp	קָמִים		מִקְוָמִים	מוֹקְוָמִים		
	fp	קָמוֹת		מִקְוָמוֹת	מוֹקְוָמוֹת		

1. II-י verbs (e.g., שָׁיר, *sing*) look just like the II-ו verbs (קוּם), except that they have *hireq-yod* in the *qal* where קוּם has *šureq* (*qal* F, V, NC).
2. *Polel*, *polal*, & *hitpolel* substitute for D, Dp, and Dt (and thus look like geminates). Most forms of *polel* and *polal* look alike; *hitpolel* = *polel* with prefixed הִת- / יִת- / מִת-.
3. The jussive and preterite of the hollow verbs have shorter vowels than the imperfect:

	Qal	Hifil
3ms Jussive	יָקָם	יָקָם
3ms Preterite	וַיָּקָם	וַיָּקָם

Geminate (ע"ע) Verbs

Conj/Sbj	Qal	Nifal	Hifil	Hofal	D-stems
P	1cs	סְבוּחִי	נְסֻבֹחִי	הוֹסְבוּחִי	
	2ms	סְבוּחַתְּ	נְסֻבֹחַתְּ	הוֹסְבוּחַתְּ	
	2fs	סְבוּחַתְּ	נְסֻבֹחַתְּ	הוֹסְבוּחַתְּ	
	3ms	סְבַב	נְסַב	הוֹסַב	
	3fs	סְבָה	נְסָה	הוֹסָה	
	1cp	סְבוּנוּ	נְסֻבֹנוּ	הוֹסְבוּנוּ	
	2mp	סְבוּחֶם	נְסֻבֹחֶם	הוֹסְבוּחֶם	
	2fp	סְבוּחֶיךָ	נְסֻבֹחֶיךָ	הוֹסְבוּחֶיךָ	
	3cp	סְבוּ	נְסֻבוּ	הוֹסְבוּ	
F	1cs	אָסַב	אָסַב	אָוַסַב	Geminate verbs have either the same forms in the D-stems as the <i>strong</i> verb or occur in <i>po'el</i> , <i>po'al</i> , and <i>hitpo'el</i> (these forms cannot be distinguished from the <i>polel</i> , <i>polal</i> , and <i>hitpolel</i> of the <i>hollow</i> verbal roots).
	2m/3f	תָּסַב	תָּסַב	תָּוַסַב	
	2fs	תָּסַבִּי	תָּסַבִּי	תָּוַסַבִּי	
	3ms	יָסַב	יָסַב	יָוַסַב	
	1cp	נָסַב	נָסַב	נָוַסַב	
	2mp	תָּסַבוּ	תָּסַבוּ	תָּוַסַבוּ	
	2/3fp	תָּסַבְיֶנָּה	תָּסַבְיֶנָּה	תָּוַסַבְיֶנָּה	
3mp	יָסַבוּ	יָסַבוּ	יָוַסַבוּ		
V	ms	סַב	הִסַב		
	fs	סַבִּי	הִסַבִּי		
	mp	סַבוּ	הִסַבוּ		
	fp	סַבְיֶנָּה	הִסַבְיֶנָּה		
NC	סַב	הִסַב			
NA	סָבוּב	הִסַב			
Participle	ms	סַבֵּב	מְסַבֵּב	מוֹסַבֵּב	
	fs	סַבְּבָה	מְסַבְּבָה	מוֹסַבְּבָה	
	mp	סַבְּבִים	מְסַבְּבִים	מוֹסַבְּבִים	
	fp	סַבְּבוֹת	מְסַבְּבוֹת	מוֹסַבְּבוֹת	

1. There are three base forms of the geminates (סב [forms without PGN endings], -סב [forms with PGN endings (except imperative)]; סבב [a few forms]).
2. Geminates are weak throughout Q, N, H, Hp. The D-stems either substitute *polel*, etc. (and thus look like *hollow* verbs), or look like the strong verb.
3. -ו- joins the verbal stem to consonantal endings.
4. An alternate form of *qal* imperfect looks just like verbs I-J.
5. *Hofal* may have either *šureq* or *qibbuš* as its prefix vowel.
6. The *preterite* of geminates has shorter vowels than the imperfect (accent is on the PGN prefix).

וְיָסַב

3ms Q Pr

וְיָסַב

3ms H Pr

Some Easily Confused Forms.¹⁹⁴ Certain pairs of weak verbs which have two radicals in common can be difficult to distinguish. These charts compare יָשַׁב/שָׁב (return/sit, dwell) and יָרָא/רָאָה (see/fear). Only forms that actually occur are listed (but not all forms of each verb are listed).

Although these charts may be memorized (with difficulty!), it is more helpful to remember that these verbs will not occur in the same contexts, since “return” and “sit” describe very different actions, as do “seeing” and “fearing”.

יָשַׁב / שָׁב		Q		H		Hp	
		שָׁב	יָשַׁב	שָׁב	יָשַׁב	שָׁב	יָשַׁב
P	3ms	שָׁב	יָשַׁב	הָשִׁיב	הוֹשִׁיב	הוֹשִׁב	הוֹשִׁב
F	3ms	יָשׁוּב	יָשׁוּב	יָשִׁיב	יּוֹשִׁיב	יּוֹשִׁב	יּוֹשִׁב
Pr	3ms	וַיָּשׁוּב	וַיָּשׁוּב	וַיָּשִׁיב	וַיּוֹשִׁיב	וַיּוֹשִׁב	וַיּוֹשִׁב
V	2ms	שָׁב	שָׁב	הָשִׁב	הוֹשִׁב		
NC		שָׁב	שָׁבַת	הָשִׁיב	הוֹשִׁיב		
NA		שָׁב	יָשׁוּב	הָשִׁב			
Ptc	ms	שָׁב	יָשׁוּב	מֹשִׁיב	מוֹשִׁיב	מוֹשִׁב	מוֹשִׁב

יָרָא / רָאָה		Q		N		H	
		רָאָה	יָרָא	רָאָה	יָרָא	רָאָה	רָאָה
P	3ms	רָאָה	יָרָא	נִרְאָה			הִרְאָה
F	3ms	יָרְאָה	יִירָא	יָרְאָה			יָרְאָה
Pr	3ms	וַיָּרָא	וַיָּרָא	וַיָּרָא	וַיִּירָא		וַיָּרָא
V	2ms	רָאָה	יָרָא	הִרְאָה			
NC		רָאָה	יָרָא	הִרְאָה			הִרְאָה
NA		רָאָה					
Ptc	ms	רָאָה	יָרָא	נִרְאָה	נוֹרָא		מִרְאָה

194. This comparison was suggested by my former colleague Mr. Eric Houseknecht, Th.M.

Appendix E

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A traditional grammar, designed to help second-year students to review first-year grammar, but without exercises or indices. Students who have neglected Hebrew for a year or two may find this helpful.
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- Mitchell Larry A. 1984. *A Student’s Vocabulary for Biblical Hebrew & Aramaic*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
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- Owens, John Joseph. 1990. *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Baker.
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Modern concordance of the entire vocabulary of Biblical Hebrew, arranged alphabetically and analyzed (you can look up, e.g., every occurrence of the 2ms H P + *waw* of a particular verb); glosses, book titles, chapter numerals in [Modern] Hebrew.
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- Klein, Michael L. 1974. *Textual Criticism of the Old Testament: From the Septuagint to Qumran*. Guides to Biblical Scholarship. Old Testament Series. Philadelphia: Fortress.
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- Würthwein, Ernst. 1995. *The Text of the Old Testament*. Trans. Erroll F. Rhodes. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
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History of Hebrew; Modern Hebrew

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A serious workbook of exercises designed to illustrate the relationships between the various Semitic languages and dialects. It seems to assume that you know something about comparative linguistics.
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- Chomsky, William. 1957. *Hebrew: The Eternal Language*. Philadelphia: JPS.
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- Sáenz-Badillos, Angel. 1996. *A History of the Hebrew Language*. Trans. John Elwode. New York: Cambridge University.
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A New Grammar of Biblical Hebrew features a master teacher's skills coming from a lifetime commitment to the Hebrew Bible. Students facing the challenge of learning Biblical Hebrew need to gain an understanding of the way the language works within its discourse structures. Putnam provides those students with a grammar that is both traditional (as in his explanation of Hebrew's two conjugational verb forms) and non-traditional (the grammar's linguistic orientation and careful attention to clausal syntax). This volume represents a pragmatic pedagogy that will produce proficiency in the acquisition of Biblical Hebrew and preparation for an ongoing exegetical examination of the biblical text.

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