

BILL T. ARNOLD

JOHN H. CHOI

A GUIDE TO

Biblical Hebrew Syntax

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A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax

A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax introduces and abridges the syntactical features of the original language of the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament. Scholars have made significant progress in recent decades in understanding Biblical Hebrew syntax. Yet intermediate readers seldom have access to this progress because of the technical jargon and sometimes-obscure locations of the scholarly publications. This guide is an intermediate-level reference grammar for Biblical Hebrew. As such, it assumes an understanding of elementary phonology and morphology, and it defines and illustrates the fundamental syntactical features of Biblical Hebrew that most intermediate-level readers struggle to master. The volume divides Biblical Hebrew syntax, and to a lesser extent morphology, into four parts. The first three cover the individual words (nouns, verbs, and particles) with the goal of helping the reader move from morphological and syntactical observations to meaning and significance. The fourth section moves beyond phrase-level phenomena and considers the larger relationships of clauses and sentences.

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Preface

This book is intended to introduce basic and critical issues of Hebrew syntax to beginning and intermediate students. It grows out of eighteen collective years of experience in teaching Biblical Hebrew to seminarians. Each year, we teach or supervise the instruction for approximately 180 students in preparation for ordained ministry or other religious professions. Our experiences led us to conclude that a significant gap exists between, on the one hand, the current scholarly understanding of Hebrew syntax, based on significant progress in the discipline in recent decades, and on the other hand, the understanding of Hebrew syntax among our students. The problem seemed compounded by the lack of an intermediate-level grammar, holding a position between beginning grammars and advanced reference grammars. In addition, the ever-growing demands on theological education today have resulted in less time to master Biblical Hebrew. Often the first thing omitted in a beginning Hebrew course is an overview of syntactical features. Our purpose, then, has been simply to bridge the gap, as best we can, between our students and the best of current research on Biblical Hebrew syntax.

This book, then, is not intended to replace the standard reference grammars, which we have consulted constantly in the process, but to present to beginning and intermediate students a means of entry into the latest scholarship on Biblical Hebrew. To this end, we have included extensive references in

the footnotes where appropriate. In particular, we have been most influenced by the unity brought to bear on the Hebrew verbal system by Bruce K. Waltke and Michael O'Connor. We have also consulted frequently the grammars by Joüon-Muraoka and Gesenius-Kautzsch-Cowley, and to some degree those by van der Merwe-Naudé-Kroeze and Meyer. Through interaction with these and other sources of scholarship, we feel that we have, at several points, introduced innovations in our explanations of Biblical Hebrew syntax in an attempt to refine the way we read and interpret the Bible today.

We express appreciation to our colleagues Joseph R. Dongell, David L. Thompson, Lawson G. Stone, and Brent A. Strawn for helpful suggestions on several points, and especially Dr. Stone for permission to use his chart in Appendix 2. We also benefited greatly from the comments and suggestions of the anonymous external reviewers hired by Cambridge University Press. The editors of the Press have been exemplary in every way, and we note especially Andrew Beck, who has been a source of encouragement from the beginning. In addition, Phyllis Berk and Janis Bolster made many improvements during the production process.

1 *Introduction*

At the heart of biblical interpretation is the need to read the Bible's *syntax*, that is, to study the way words, phrases, clauses, and sentences relate to one another in order to create meaning. Biblical Hebrew is a language far removed from us in time and culture. Mastering it is a noble but daunting task. Students often learn to discern the elementary phonology and morphology in order to “read” the biblical text. But we believe exegesis (or the extraction of a text's meaning) requires more than phonology and verb parsing. Achieving a deep-level reading requires a grasp of a text's syntactical relationships, a topic that most beginning grammars do not present in detail. Thus, our task has been to help the reader grasp the building blocks of Biblical Hebrew, that is, the syntactical specifics that constitute meaning. These are the linguistic details through which the most profound of all statements can be made, and have been made – those of Israel's monotheism and the nation's covenant relationship with YHWH.

We have defined and illustrated the fundamental morphosyntactical features of Biblical Hebrew. The volume divides Hebrew syntax, and to a lesser extent morphology (“the way words are patterned or inflected”), into four parts. The first three cover individual words (nouns, verbs, and particles) with the goal of helping the reader move from morphological and syntactical observations to meaning and significance. The fourth section moves beyond phrase-level

phenomena and considers the larger relationships of clauses and sentences. Each syntactical category begins with at least one paragraph, giving definition to that grammatical category. This is followed by a list of the most common exegetical possibilities for that particular grammatical phenomenon. We have provided at least one example (and in most cases more than one) for each syntactical function. Each example is followed by a translation, in which the syntactical feature in question is italicized and underlined where possible. The translations are often related to the NRSV, although we have frequently taken the liberty of altering the translations at points in order to illustrate better the particular syntactical feature under discussion. This is followed by the biblical reference. All examples are taken directly from the Hebrew Bible; on occasion, certain prefixed or conjoined particles, which have no bearing on the syntactical principle being illustrated, have been omitted for the sake of clarity in the English translation.

The categories for classification presented here are by no means exhaustive, which would have required a book many times this size. We have made frequent reference to the leading reference grammars for additional information. We have also omitted discussions of elementary phonology and morphology, including difficult forms or spellings that may be unique or exceptional in some way, all of which are covered sufficiently by numerous beginning grammars. In our footnotes we have frequently included references to the elementary grammars so as to encourage the reader to consult a familiar source in order to review an elementary detail of phonology or morphology, which may have been forgotten. For example, our discussion of “determination” (section 2.6) reminds the reader that one of the ways a noun may be marked as definite is with the prefixed definite article. Since all beginning grammars explain the morphological details of the definite article, with examples of the various forms it takes depending on the noun it marks, we have not repeated that information here. Instead, we direct the reader to review the

beginning grammars where needed.¹ We have also omitted entirely, or in some cases briefly summarized, certain theoretical and complex grammatical issues that regularly make the standard reference grammars unintelligible to the intermediate student. We have, however, included many discussion footnotes dealing with these issues in order to provide additional background information that we believe will be of particular interest to advanced students and scholars. In this way, we have attempted to create a user-friendly volume of modest size.

For the most part, the features defined and illustrated here pertain to the language used in the extended narratives of the Pentateuch and the Historical Books, along with prose sections of the Prophets and Writings. This language is sometimes known as Classical Biblical Hebrew, although we refer to it simply as Biblical Hebrew (BH).² At times, we make further observations on Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH), by which we mean the language of most of the biblical books written after the exile (1–2 Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, Daniel, selected Psalms, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, and portions of others).³ Although LBH has features that are often unique, it also shares many features with BH. Thus, in some cases, we have used examples from both BH and LBH to illustrate the continuity of certain grammatical features of the Hebrew language.

¹ For more on morphology, students may now consult the convenient “How Hebrew Words Are Formed” in Landes 2001, 7–39.

² “BH” will be used throughout for “Biblical Hebrew.” All other abbreviations may be found in Patrick H. Alexander et al., eds., *The SBL Handbook of Style for Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999), 121–52.

³ This list is only partial, since it depends to a large degree on interpretive issues about which scholars are not agreed. For more on the distinction between BH and LBH, see Polzin 1976, 1–2; Rooker 1990; and Sáenz-Badillos 1993, 50–75 and 112–29.

2 *Nouns*

By comparing evidence from early Semitic languages, scholars have concluded that pre-biblical Hebrew, and most likely all the Semitic languages of the second millennium B.C.E., had a declension system for the nouns (i.e., inflections), using cases parallel to those of Indo-European languages.¹ Thus, endings were used to mark a subject case (the nominative, ending in singular *-u*, plural *-ū*, and dual *-ā*), an adjectival case, which was used also with all the prepositions (genitive in *-i*, *-ī*, and *-ay*), and an object case that also had many adverbial uses (accusative in *-a*, *-ī*, and *-ay*). However, the case endings were almost completely lost in all first-millennium Northwest Semitic languages, and they were certainly lost throughout all attested Hebrew.²

¹ Akkadian retains the cases in most dialects, as does Classical Arabic. Among the Northwest Semitic languages, Amorite, Ugaritic, and the Canaanite glosses in the Tell Amarna texts – all from the second millennium B.C.E. – retain the case endings. On the preservation of cases in Amarna letters written by Canaanite scribes, see the important discussion of Rainey (1996, 1:161–70), although note his preference for “dependent” case over “genitive.”

² Garr 1985, 61–63; Sáenz-Badillos 1993, 23; Moscati 1980, 94–96; Bergsträsser 1983, 16–17; Harris 1939, 59–60; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 277–78; Bauer and Leander 1991, 522–23. Earlier grammarians believed the unaccented Hebrew ending ןָ , used on certain nouns denoting direction, was a vestige of the old accusative case ending (so $\text{ןָ} \text{אֶרֶץ}$, the

Biblical Hebrew compensates for the lack of case endings through a variety of means, primarily word order (as in modern English) and syntactical relationships, as well as through the use of prepositions. So the nominative case is most frequently discerned by word order and the lack of other markers. The genitive is marked by the construct relationship (section 2.2), and the accusative primarily by the definite direct object marker $\text{לְ} / \text{לָ}$ and other syntactical relationships (section 2.3). Although we are able to trace the history of the three case *functions* in ancient Hebrew by comparing other Semitic languages, some authorities believe we should abandon the traditional case terms (especially “nominative”) when describing BH syntax because the language does not mark the cases morphologically.³ While we admit BH does not mark the cases with specific noun inflections, our objective is to identify and describe the functions of the noun.⁴ Since the nouns in BH function syntactically in the same distinct “cases” as its parent language, it is still helpful to distinguish three case functions in BH using the traditional terminology: nominative, genitive, and accusative.⁵

so-called directive $\text{לְ} / \text{לָ}$, or *he locale*). However, Ugaritic has a separate adverbial suffix *-h* in addition to an accusative case ending *-a*, proving beyond doubt that the *he locale* in Hebrew is not a remnant of the accusative (Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 185; Seow 1995, 152–53; and for the older – now outdated view – cf. Kautzsch 1910, 249). The closest BH comes to having cases is in the declension of the personal pronoun (cf. van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 191).

³ Kroeze 2001, 33–50.

⁴ Regarding the nominative, Kroeze accepts “subject” as a designation for category 2.1.1, but proposes the following alternative designations for the others: “copula-complement” for *predicate nominative*, “addressee” for *vocative*, and “dislocative” for *nominative absolute* (2001, 47). If the reader remembers that we are describing the *syntactical* functions of these nouns rather than their grammatical morphemes, we believe the traditional terminology is more helpful.

⁵ It should be remembered that pronouns may serve in all these functions as well.

2.1 Nominative

Since a noun's case function is not marked morphologically, the nominative can be detected only by the noun's or pronoun's word order, by its agreement in gender and number with a verb (although with many exceptions), or by the sense of the context. Generally, the nominative may be categorized as follows.⁶

2.1.1 Subject

The noun or pronoun serves as the subject of an action: בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים, “God created” (Gen 1:1), וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים, “And God said” (Gen 1:3). In the same way, when used with stative verbs the noun or pronoun may serve as the subject of a state: מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ חָמָס, “the earth is filled with violence” (Gen 6:13).

2.1.2 Predicate Nominative

The noun or pronoun is equated with the subject by a “to be” verb (stated or implied): יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ, “YHWH is king” (Ps 10:16). In this example, the *subject* noun (section 2.1.1) is YHWH, and the *predicate nominative* is “king.” The predicate nominative is often a clause of *identification*, in which case the word order is likely subject-predicate: אֲנִי יְהוָה, “I am YHWH” (Exod 6:2), אַתָּה הָאִישׁ, “You are the man” (2 Sam 12:7).⁷ However, the word order is flexible, as this clause of *description* illustrates, also with subject-predicate order: מִשְׁפָּטֵי יְהוָה אֱמֶת, “the ordinances of YHWH are true” (Ps 19:9 [Eng 19:10]). The predicate nominative is one

⁶ Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 247–49; Kautzsch 1910, 451–55; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 128–30; Lambdin 1971a, 55; Chisholm 1998, 61; Williams 1976, 10.

⁷ Andersen 1970, 31–34.

of several ways nominal clauses are constructed (see section 5.1.1,a).

2.1.3 *Vocative*

The noun designates a specific addressee and normally has the definite article (see section 2.6.2): הַנְּהָה חֲנִית הַמֶּלֶךְ, “here is the spear, *O king*” (1 Sam 26:22 *Qere*). The vocative noun stands separate from the clause’s syntax and is often juxtaposed to a second-person pronoun (or pronominal suffix) reflecting the direct speech: חִי-נַפְשֶׁךָ הַמֶּלֶךְ, “as your soul lives, *O King*” (1 Sam 17:55), דְּבַר-סֵתֶר לִי אֵלֶיךָ הַמֶּלֶךְ, “I have a secret message for you, *O King*” (Judg 3:19). The second person may be expressed by the imperative: הוֹשִׁיעֵנו אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, “Save us, *O God* of our salvation” (1 Chr 16:35), הוֹשִׁיעָה יְהוָה, “Save now, *O YHWH*” (Ps 12:2 [Eng 12:1]).

2.1.4 *Nominative Absolute*

The noun is isolated from the following sentence (sometimes by an intervening subordinate clause or series of appositional terms) and then resumed by a pronoun serving as the subject of the sentence: יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים, “*YHWH, he* is God” (1 Kgs 18:39), הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי הוּא נָתַתָּה לִּי מִן-הָעֵץ וְאָכַל, “The *woman*, whom you gave to be with me, *she* gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate” (Gen 3:12).

The nominative absolute is also known as *casus pendens* (Latin “hanging case”) or as *focus marker*.⁸ These are general designations for a grammatical element isolated outside a clause, usually at the start of the clause.

⁸ Other designations include *dislocated construction* and *pendens construction*. The sentence constituent taking up the noun or pronoun again may be called the *resumptive*. Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 586–88; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 692; and for a distinction from so-called *fronting*, see van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 336–39.

2.2 Genitive

Most relationships that exist between two nouns are expressed in BH by means of the genitive construction. English usually expresses this genitive relationship between two nouns with the word “of.” For example, in the phrase “the daughter of the king,” the noun “king” acts as a genitive modifier of “daughter.” Thus, the genitive relationship often denotes a possessive sense: “the king’s daughter.” However, the genitive relationship is used in BH to denote a wide variety of other uses besides possessive. For example, “the word of truth” does not mean “truth’s word,” but rather “the true word.”⁹

The genitive relationship is marked grammatically in Hebrew by means of the construct state, in which two (or more) nouns are bound together to form a construct phrase or chain. In the structure *construct plus genitive*, the genitive modifies the construct in some way, frequently as some sort of attributive adjective.¹⁰ This list includes the most common ways in which a genitive modifies the preceding noun(s) or adjective(s).¹¹

2.2.1 Possessive

The genitive has ownership of the construct: בְּיַתְיָהוָה, “the temple *of* *YHWH*” or “*YHWH*’s temple” (1 Kgs 6:37), צְבָאוֹת יְהוָה, “the hosts *of* *YHWH*” or “the hosts *possessed*

⁹ English also uses noun-noun compounds (as in “notebook” and “airport”) and apostrophe-*s* (Jeremiah’s confession) in ways similar to the Hebrew construct phrase (Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 141).

¹⁰ Joñon and Muraoka 1993, 463–77; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 136–60; Kautzsch 1910, 410–23, esp. 416–19; Williams 1976, 10–12; Chisholm 1998, 62–64; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 197–200. The *genitive* may also be called the *postconstructus* (van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 192). On the genitive in epigraphic Hebrew, see Gogel 1998, 240–45.

¹¹ The genitive function may also be expressed by the object of a preposition or a pronominal suffix on a noun (Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 138). The genitive categories listed here also apply to these.

by YHWH” (Exod 12:41). That which is possessed may be body parts:¹² שִׁפְתֵי־מֶלֶךְ, “lips of a king” or “a king’s lips” (Prov 16:10), or a characteristic (הַדְרֹת־מֶלֶךְ, “the glory of a king” or “a king’s glory” (Prov 14:28).

The direction of ownership may be reversed resulting in a *possessed* genitive, in which case the genitive is owned by the construct: בַּעַל־הַבַּיִת, “the owner of the house” or “the house’s owner” (Exod 22:7 [Eng 22:8]), יְהוָה זֹבְאֹת, “YHWH of hosts” or “YHWH who possesses hosts” (1 Sam 1:11).

2.2.2 Relationship

The genitive marks someone standing in association with the construct: בְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ, “the king’s sons” (2 Sam 13:23), בֶּן־דָּוִד, “the son of David” or “David’s son” (1 Chr 29:22). This genitive is common with pronominal suffixes: אָחִי, “my brother” (Gen 20:13). The genitive of human relationship normally refers to kinship, although other social structures are possible.¹³

2.2.3 Subjective

The genitive is the subject of a verbal notion expressed by the construct noun: יִשַׁע אֱלֹהִים, “the salvation of God” (Ps 50:23), דְּבַר־יְהוָה, “YHWH’s word,” (Gen 15:1), חֵכְמַת שְׁלֹמֹה, “Solomon’s wisdom” (1 Kgs 5:10).

2.2.4 Objective

The genitive is the object of a verbal notion expressed by the construct noun: יְרֵאת יְהוָה, “the fear of YHWH” (Ps 19:8 [Eng 19:9]), שֹׂד עֲנִיִּים, “the violence of the oppressed” or “the violence done to the oppressed” (Ps 12:6). Sometimes the genitive identifies the recipient of the action implied in the construct: מִטַּר־אַרְצְךָ, “rain for your land” (Deut 28:12).

¹² Waltke and O’Connor’s “genitive of inalienable possession” (145).

¹³ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 145.

The direction is reversed in the *action* genitive, in which the genitive expresses a verbal notion denoting action directed toward the construct: עַם עֲבָרָתִי, “the people of my wrath” or “the people who are the objects of my wrath” (Isa 10:6).

2.2.5 *Attributive*

The genitive denotes a quality or attribute of the construct. In translation, the genitive often becomes an adjective: גִּבּוֹר חַיִּל, “a man of worth” or “a valorous man” (Judg 11:1), אִשְׁתַּ חַיִּל, “a woman of worth” or “a valorous woman” (Ruth 3:11), הַר־קָדְשׁוֹ, “the mountain of his holiness” or “his holy mountain” (Ps 48:2 [Eng 48:1]), מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד, “the king of glory” or “the glorious king” (Ps 24:7), שִׂמְחַת עוֹלָם, “joy of perpetuity” or “everlasting joy” (Isa 61:7).

The nouns אִישׁ־, בַּעַל־, and בֶּן־ often occur with genitives to express the possessor of a quality, which is one way BH compensates for the lack of genuine adjectives:¹⁴ אִישׁ הַדָּמִים, “a man of blood” or “a bloodthirsty man” (2 Sam 16:7), אִישׁ דְּבָרִים, “a man of words” or “an eloquent man” (Exod 4:10), בֶּן־מָוֶת, “the son of death” or “one who deserves death” (1 Sam 20:31), בֶּן־חַמֵּשׁ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה, “a son of five hundred years” or “five hundred years old” (Gen 5:32), בַּעַל כַּנְּף, “master of wings” or “winged creature” (Prov 1:17).

2.2.6 *Specification*

The reverse of the *attributive* genitive, the *specification* genitive is characterized by a quality or attribute of an adjectival construct: קִשְׁה־עֵרֶף, “stiff of neck” or “stiff-necked” (Exod 32:9), יְפֵה־הָאָר, “attractive of shape” or “good-looking” (Gen 39:6), טָמֵא שְׂפָתַיִם, “unclean of lips” or “unclean with regard to the lips” (Isa 6:5), אָרֶךְ אַפַּיִם, “long of nostrils [as source of anger]” or “patient with regard to anger”

¹⁴ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 468–69.

(Exod 34:6). The specification genitive may also be called the *epexegetical genitive*.¹⁵

2.2.7 Cause

The genitive may be caused by the construct: רוּחַ חֵכְמָה, “the spirit of *wisdom*” or “the spirit *that causes wisdom*” (Exod 28:3). The causal relationship may move in the opposite direction, so that the genitive is perceived as causing the construct: חוֹלֵת אֶהֱבָה, “sick *of love*” or “sick *because of love*” (Song 2:5); מְזוּי רָעֵב, “those exhausted *of hunger*” or “exhausted people *because of hunger*” (Deut 32:24).¹⁶

2.2.8 Purpose

The genitive denotes the intended use of the referent of the construct: צֹאן טֹבָחָה, “sheep *of slaughter*,” or “sheep *intended for slaughter*” (Ps 44:23 [Eng 44:22]), אֲבִי־קֶלֶעַ, “slingstones” or “stones *intended for the sling*” (Zech 9:15).

Closely related to the idea of *purpose* is the *genitive of result*, which denotes the result of an action implied in the construct: מוֹסֵר שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ, “the chastisement *of our welfare*” or “the chastisement *that resulted in our peace*” (Isa 53:5), כּוֹס הַתַּרְעֵלָה, “the cup *of staggering*” or “the cup *which results in staggering*” (Isa 51:17).

2.2.9 Means

The genitive is the instrument by means of which the action implied in the construct is performed: חַלְלֵי־חֶרֶב, “wounded *of the sword*” or “those wounded *by the sword*” (Isa 22:2), שָׂרְפוֹת אֵשׁ, “burned *of fire*” or “burned *with fire*”

¹⁵ Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 151.

¹⁶ In which case the *causational genitive* is very close in meaning to 2.2.9, the *genitive of means* (Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 468; Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 146, and cf. note 22).

(Isa 1:7), טְמֵא־נֶפֶשׁ, “impure of a corpse” or “impure by reason of contact with a corpse” (Lev 22:4).

When the genitive is personal, this becomes a *genitive of agency*, which is similar to the *subjective genitive*: מִכָּה אֱלֹהִים, “stricken by God” (Isa 53:4).¹⁷

2.2.10 Material

The genitive denotes the material from which the construct is made: אָרוֹן עֵץ, “an ark of wood” or “a wooden ark” (Deut 10:1), כְּלֵי־כֶסֶף, “vessels of silver” or “silver vessels” (Gen 24:53), שֵׁבֶט בַּרְזֶל, “a rod of iron” or “an iron rod” (Ps 2:9).

2.2.11 Measure

The genitive marks the thing measured by a numeral in the construct: שְׁנֵי בָנִים, “two sons” (Gen 10:25), שִׁבְעַת יָמִים, “seven days” (Gen 8:10). The construct may be a non-numeric quantifier, such as רַב/רֹב, “multitude” or כָּל־/כָּל־/כֹּל, “all”: רַב דָּגָן, “plenty of grain” (Gen 27:28), בְּכָל־לִבְבְּכֶם, “all your heart” (1 Sam 7:3).¹⁸

2.2.12 Explicative

The genitive is a specific member of a general category or class denoted by the construct, and typically specifies the proper noun for the construct: נְהַר־פְּרָת, “the river Euphrates” (Gen 15:18), אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, “the land of Egypt” (Gen 41:19), גֵּן־עֵדֵן, “the garden Eden” (Gen 2:15), בְּתוּלַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, “Virgin Israel” (Amos 5:2), בַּת־צִיּוֹן, “Daughter Zion”

¹⁷ On the *genitive of agency* as a variation of subjective genitives, cf. Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 143.

¹⁸ On the special connotations of כָּל־/כָּל־/כֹּל depending on the determination or indetermination of its genitive, see Kautzsch 1910, 411, and Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 518–19.

(2 Kgs 19:21). Note that “of” is often unnecessary in English translations of the *explicative genitive*.

2.2.13 Superlative

The genitive can be divided into parts, of which the construct is the best, most, or the greatest form or expression of the whole: מִבְּחַר קְבָרֵינוּ, “the choice *of our graves*” or “the choicest *of our graves*” (Gen 23:6). Frequently a plural genitive will occur with the singular construct of the same noun to express the superlative: קֹדֶשׁ קְדוֹשִׁים, “holy *of holies*” or “*most* holy” (Exod 29:37), מֶלֶךְ מְלָכִים, “king *of kings*” or “*the greatest* king of all” (Ezek 26:7), שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים, “the song *of songs*” or “*the choicest* song” (Song 1:1).¹⁹

2.3 Accusative

As we have said, the accusative function of the noun is not indicated morphologically as in Greek or Latin, but similar functions are expressed through other grammatical features. The use of the definite direct object (DDO) marker אֶת־/אֵת is one such grammatical tag, although it hardly exhausts the forms taken by the accusative. In later biblical texts, the preposition לְ is used as the DDO, probably due to Aramaic influence.²⁰ So, for example, in the Hebrew examples that follow, some accusatives are marked as pronominal suffixes on the verb. In others, the accusative will appear as the object of a prepositional phrase, since some Hebrew verbs mark objects with specific prepositions (e.g., לְ plus עָזַר, “to help,” בְּ plus בָּקַע, “to

¹⁹ A similar meaning is possible (although not universally accepted) when a divine name occurs as the genitive: כְּגַן־הֶדְדָּה, “like a *splendid* garden (literally: a garden *of YHWH*)” (Isa 51:3), תַּרְדֵּמַת־יְהוָה, “a *very deep* sleep (literally: a deep sleep *of YHWH*)” (1 Sam 26:12). For more on the use of divine references to express a superlative, see Thomas 1954, 209–24.

²⁰ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 447–48; Kautzsch 1910, 366. Cf. Lam 4:5; Ps 145:14; Ezra 8:24; 2 Chr 25:10.

cling to,” בָּ plus בָּקַע , “to prevail,” בָּ plus לָחַם , “to fight”).²¹ The English translations of the examples may look simplistic, while the Hebrew illustrates the variety of ways for marking the accusative function.

As we have seen, nouns in the genitive modify other nouns by means of the bound construction with those nouns (or by means of prepositions). Nouns in the accusative modify verbs, denoting either the direct object of a verb or serving as adverbial modifiers. Although BH lacks explicit indicators of the accusative beyond the DDO, its functions can be identified by comparison with other Semitic languages where the accusative case is marked by an ending (sg. *-a*, pl. *-ī*, du. *-ay*).²² This list includes the most common ways in which the accusative is used.²³ We have divided the uses into two groups, the first listing examples of verbal objects in which the accusative is the recipient of a verb’s action. The second group lists adverbial accusatives, in which the accusative modifies the circumstances surrounding the action of the verb.

2.3.1 Object

The simplest form of the accusative is the direct object of a transitive verb: $\text{בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ}$, “God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen 1:1), $\text{צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת מֹשֶׁה}$, “YHWH commanded Moses” (Exod 40:32).²⁴ However, the

²¹ See Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 440–43, and Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 166.

²² Since Hebrew no longer marks accusatives morphologically, some grammarians prefer to avoid such designations as “direct object” and “adverbial accusative,” referring instead to a verb’s “nominal complements” and “nominal adjuncts” (van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 241–45, and see the discussion in Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 162–63).

²³ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 440–63; Meyer 1992, 412–20; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 161–86; Kautzsch 1910, 362–76; Williams 1976, 12–14; Chisholm 1998, 64–66; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 241–47.

²⁴ The DDO is primarily a marker of this *accusative of object*, although it occasionally also appears with certain adverbial accusatives (Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 444).

simplicity of the direct *object accusative* changes depending on the nature of the verb itself. The following variations are possible.

(a) *Affected* – The object, which exists before and apart from the action of the verb, is reached by the action: וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאֹר, “and God saw the light” (Gen 1:4), וַיַּעֲזֵר־לוֹ, “and he helped him” (2 Sam 21:17), יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ, “May YHWH bless you and keep you” (Num 6:24).

(b) *Effected* – The object did not exist prior to the verbal action, but is brought about by the action and is therefore the product or result of the action: וְלַבְּנֵה לְבַנֵּים, “let us make bricks” (Gen 11:3), וְזָרַע זָרַע, “yielding seed” (Gen 1:29).²⁵ The *effected accusative* is rare except with a denominative verb of the same root. It is also concrete and external to the verbal action, and therefore distinct from the *internal accusative* (see the following).

(c) *Internal* – The object is an abstract noun of action, and implies an action in most cases identical with that of the verb:²⁶ בָּתְּרוּ בַּחַד, “they were overcome with fear [literally: they feared a fear]” (Ps 14:5). The object itself may precede the verb: חָטְאָה חַטָּאָה יְרוּשָׁלַם, “Jerusalem sinned grievously [literally: sinned a sin]” (Lam 1:8). As these two examples illustrate, the object is a noun formed from the same root as the verb (so technically also *cognate accusative*), is generally indefinite, and as the following examples show, is frequently modified by

²⁵ This same idiom elsewhere (וַתִּזְרַע אֶת־זֶרְעָךָ, Deut 11:10, and compare 22:9) is not an *effected accusative* because as the context makes clear and as all the grammars recognize, the seed existed prior to the sowing and is not brought about by the action. Thus, not every *cognate accusative* is an *effected accusative* (Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 449–50; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 166).

²⁶ For the following, see Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 450–51; Kautzsch 1910, 366–67; and Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 167.

an attributive adjective: וַיִּחַרְדּוּ יִצְחָק חֲרָדָה גְדוֹלָה, “and Isaac trembled *violently* [literally: trembled a great *trembling*]” (Gen 27:33), וַיִּדֹּף יְהוָה בְּעַם מִכָּה רַבָּה מְאֹד, “and YHWH struck the people with a very great plague [literally: struck . . . with a very great *striking*]” (Num 11:33).

The concrete noun קוֹל, “voice,” takes special uses of the *internal accusative*. Although it has no corresponding verb, קוֹל appears to be used in a way similar to the internal accusative with verbs expressing an emission of voice (Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 451; Kautzsch 1910, 367–68). Thus, we find it as an internal accusative noun of action with קָרָא, בָּכָה, זָעַק, and עָנָה, and usually modified as well: וַעֲנוּ הַלְוִיִּם וְאָמְרוּ אֶל-כָּל-אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל קוֹל רָם, “Then the Levites shall declare *in a loud voice* to all the Israelites” (Deut 27:14), וַיְבָרֵךְ אֶת כָּל-קְהַל יִשְׂרָאֵל קוֹל גְּדוֹל, “and he [Solomon] blessed all the assembly of Israel *with a loud voice*” (1 Kgs 8:55).

(d) *Complement* – The object is a noun used with certain intransitive verbs, which take on new transitive meanings through a modification of their original meanings (Kautzsch 1910, 368–70; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 168). Verbs often taking the *complement accusative* include רִיב, יָכַל, חָפֵץ, רָצָה, and שָׁכַב. So, for example: רִיבוּ אֶלְמָנָה, “plead for *the widow*” (Isa 1:17), פֶּן-יֹאמֵר אֹיְבִי יִכְלֹתִיו, “lest my enemy say, ‘I have prevailed *against him*’” (Ps 13:5), חָפֵץ בְּךָ הַמֶּלֶךְ, “the king is delighted *with you*” (1 Sam 18:22).

Most of these occur in the Qal stem, but occasionally even the reflexive stems (Niphal and Hithpael) may take such an accusative:

וַיִּתְפָּקְדוּ כָל-הָעָם אֶת-נְזָמֵי הַזָּהָב אֲשֶׁר בְּאָזְנוֹתֵיהֶם

“and all the people took off *the rings of gold* from their ears” (Exod 32:3). Other verbs sometimes taking the *complement accusative* are verbs of robbing and disrobing (בָּשַׁט, לָבַשׁ, and שָׁבַע, שָׂרַץ, נִזְרַע, מָלֵא), verbs of fullness and emptiness (עָדָה,

גָּבַר, נָזַל, פָּרַץ, נָבַר, and others), as well as verbs of dwelling (יָשַׁב, נָשַׁב, גָּוַר).²⁷

(e) *Double* – The causative derived stems (Piel and Hiphil) and certain other verbs sometimes have more than one object.²⁸ Both of the accusatives are often direct objects, meaning we may speak of a *double object accusative*, although occasionally the second of two objects is a *complement accusative* or an *adverbial accusative*. In the case of the latter, we may speak rather of a *complex accusative*.

(e.1) In causative sentences, the Piel or Hiphil of verbs that are Qal transitives frequently require two accusatives. Typically, the subject of the causation (often a person) is used as a second accusative: לְמַדְתִּי אֶתְכֶם חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים, “I have taught you statutes and ordinances [literally: I have caused you (subject of causation/accusative #2) to learn statutes and ordinances (accusative #1)]” (Deut 4:5), וַיֹּאכְלֵנִי אֶת הַמְּגִלָּה הַזֹּאת, “and he [YHWH] fed me this scroll [literally: and he caused me (subject of causation/accusative #2) to eat this scroll (accusative #1)]” (Ezek 3:2). This *double accusative* is common with verbs of fullness and emptiness, robing and disrobing, and other causative constructions. In some, however, the first object is not a direct *object accusative*, but rather an *adverbial accusative* (see section 2.3.2): מָלֵא אֶתְם חֵכְמַת־לֵב, “He [YHWH] filled them with skill [literally: he caused them (subject of causation/accusative #2) to be full of skill (accusative #1)]” (Exod 35:35).

(e.2) The *double accusative* is also required by the nature of certain verbs that are not necessarily verbs of causation. So verbs of making, forming, naming, or counting often require two accusatives, the second

²⁷ See Kautzsch 1910 (369–70) for details.

²⁸ For details, see Kautzsch 1910, 370–72; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 451–54; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 173–77; and van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 243–44.

of which is frequently *adverbial*:²⁹ וַיִּבְנֶה אֶת־הָאֲבָנִים מִזֶּבֶחַ, “and he built the stones [object #1] into an altar [object #2]” (1 Kgs 18:32), וַיִּצְרַח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם עָפָר, “Then YHWH God formed man [object #1] of dust [object #2]” (Gen 2:7), וַקָּרָאָהּ שְׁמוֹ דָן, “she called his name [object #1] Dan [object #2]” (Gen 30:6). Likewise, verbs of speaking and giving often require two accusatives: וַיִּתֵּן־לָנוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת, “and he [YHWH] gave us [object #1] this land [object #2]” (Deut 26:9), וְאָצִוָּה אֶתְכֶם בְּעֵת הַהוּא אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשׂוּן, “And I commanded you at that time all the things that you should do” (Deut 1:18).

2.3.2 *Adverbial*

In addition to the simple direct object of a verb, some accusative nouns are indirectly subordinated to the verb. Rather than specifying the person or thing directly affected by the verb, such accusatives modify more precisely the circumstances under which an action or situation occurs. In other words, they serve as *adverbial* accusatives.³⁰

(a) *Place* – The accusative signifies location with verbs of motion or dwelling: יֵצֵא הַשָּׂדֶה, “go out (into) the field” (Gen 27:3), יֵצֵא אֲשׁוּר, “he went (into) Assyria” (Gen 10:11), וַיִּרְדּוּ כָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים, “and all Israel went down (to) the Philistines” (1 Sam 13:20), וַתִּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה בֵּית פְּרָעָה, “and the woman [Sarai] was taken

²⁹ See the accusatives of *material* and *product* in 2.3.2.f, and 2.3.2.g.

³⁰ Often such syntactical relationships are designated by prepositional phrases, especially taking the place of accusatives of time or place (Kautzsch 1910, 377–84). Instead of the *accusative of place*, the *he locale* (Lambdin 1971a, 51–52; Seow 1995, 152–53) is often used. On the *adverbial accusatives* in general, see Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 455–59; Kautzsch 1910, 372–76; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 169–73; Williams 1976, 12–14; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 244–45; and Chisholm 1998, 64–65.

(into) *Pharaoh's house*" (Gen 12:15), וַיַּעֲמֵד פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל, "and he [YHWH] stood (at) *the doorway of the tent*" (Num 12:5). The location may specify the spacial extent of the verbal action: וַיִּרְדֹּף אַחֲרָיו דֶּרֶךְ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים, "and he pursued after him *a seven-day journey*" (Gen 31:23), וַנֵּלֶךְ אֶת כָּל הַחַמְדָּבָר הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא הַהוּא, "and we went (through) all that great and terrible wilderness" (Deut 1:19). Sometimes the *accusative of place* is used with verbs that have no specific locational quality: וְאַתָּה תִשְׁמַע הַשָּׁמַיִם, "and you yourself will hear (in) *heaven*" (1 Kgs 8:32).

(b) *Time* – The accusative locates an action in time or states its duration: וְאַבָּא הַיּוֹם אֶל-הָעַיִן, "and I came *today* to the spring" (Gen 24:42), וַיְהִי בֹקֶר תִּשְׁמַע קוֹלִי בִּקְרַר אֶעֱרֹךְ-לְךָ, "O YHWH, *in the morning* you hear my voice; *in the morning* I plead my case to you" (Ps 5:4), אֲנֹכִי מִמָּטִיר עַל-הָאָרֶץ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה, "I will send rain on the earth *forty days and forty nights*" (Gen 7:4), אֲנֹנְרָה בְּאֶהְלֶךְ עוֹלָמִים, "Let me abide in your tent *forever*" (Ps 61:5).

(c) *Manner* – The accusative is an indefinite noun describing the way in which an action or situation is performed: וַיִּשְׁכֵּן יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּטַח, "and Israel will swell *in safety*" (Deut 33:28), וּדְבַרֵי הַנְּבִיאִים פֶּה-אֶחָד טוֹב אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ, "the words of the prophets *with one accord* are favorable to the king" (1 Kgs 22:13), וַיַּעַן כָּל-הָעָם קוֹל אֶחָד, "and all the people answered *with one voice*" (Exod 24:3). Adjectives and participles may also serve as *accusatives of manner*: וַיָּבֹא יַעֲקֹב שָׁלֵם עִיר שֶׁכֶם, "and Jacob came *safely* into the city of Shechem" (Gen 33:18),³¹ וְאַנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ עֲרִירִי, "and I go *childless*" (Gen 15:2), קוֹל דִּוְדֵי הַנְּהַזָּה בָּא מִדָּלַג עַל-הַהָרִים, "the voice of my beloved; behold he comes *leaping* upon the mountains" (Song 2:8).

³¹ Notice that this example also has a second accusative, which is an *accusative of place*: "into the city of Shechem."

(d) *State* – The accusative is an indefinite noun describing a feature, state, or quality of the *subject* at the time of the verbal action:³² וַיֵּצֵא הַמִּשְׁחִית מִמַּחֲנֵה פְּלִשְׁתִּים שְׁלֹשָׁה רֵאשִׁים, “And raiders came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies” (1 Sam 13:17), וַאֲרָם יָצְאוּ גְדוּדִים, “and the Arameans went forth as maurading bands” (2 Kgs 5:2), שְׁבִי אֶלְמָנָה בֵּית־אָבִיךָ, “remain as a widow in your father’s house” (Gen 38:11).³³

The accusative may also describe a feature, state, or quality of the *object* at the time of the verbal action: וְאֲנִי הִנְנִי מְבִיא אֶת־הַמְּבּוּל מִיָּם, “and I myself [YHWH] am bringing a flood of waters” (Gen 6:17), תִּדְרָכֵי נַפְשִׁי עוֹ, “march on, my soul, in strength” (Judg 5:21), הִרְאֵנִי יְהוָה אֶתְךָ מֶלֶךְ עַל־אֲרָם, “YHWH has shown me that you will be king over Aram” (2 Kgs 8:13).

Like the *accusative of manner*, the *accusative of state* may be expressed by adjectives or participles: אָרַד אֶל־בְּנֵי אָבִל שְׂאֵלָה, “I will go down to the grave to my son mourning” (Gen 37:35), אָנִי מְלֵאָה הֶלְכָתִי, “I went away full” (Ruth 1:21), וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הָעָם בֹּכֶה, “and Moses heard the people weeping” (Num 11:10).

(e) *Specification* – The accusative clarifies or explains further the verbal action, which would otherwise be generally or ambiguously stated:³⁴ חָלָה אֶת־רַגְלָיו, “he was diseased in his feet” (1 Kgs 15:23), לֹא נִכְנּוּ נַפֶּשׁ, “we must not strike him to death [literally: with respect to life]” (Gen 37:21), רַק הַכִּסֵּא אֲגִדֵּל מִמֶּךָ, “it is only (with respect to) the throne that I shall be greater than you” (Gen 41:40), וַיִּמְלְתֶם אֶת בְּשַׂר עַרְלֹתְכֶם, “and you shall be circumcised (with respect to) the flesh of your foreskins” (Gen 17:11).

³² This use of the accusative is similar to the *accusative of manner*, and some grammars combine the treatment of the two (cf. Kautzsch 1910, 374–75).

³³ Note that this example contains two accusatives, the first an *accusative of state* (widow) and the second an *accusative of place* (father’s house).

³⁴ May also be called the *epexegetical accusative* or the *accusative of limitation*.

(f) **Material** – The accusative denotes the matter used in the verbal action.³⁵ This use of the accusative is common with verbs for making, forming, or building, which typically take two accusatives; the first an *object accusative*, the second an *accusative of material*: וַיִּרְגְּמוּ אֹתוֹ כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבָן, “and all Israel stoned him with stones” (Josh 7:25), וַיִּצְרַף יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם עָפָר, “and YHWH God formed man from dust” (Gen 2:7), וַעֲשִׂיתָ שְׁנַיִם כְּרֻבִים זָהָב, “and you shall make two cherubim of gold” (Exod 25:18), וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת־הַמְּלָנוֹת עֹשֶׁר נְחֹשֶׁת, “and he made ten stands of bronze” (1 Kgs 7:27).

At times, it is impossible to determine by morphology alone whether the relationship between two nouns is genitive, accusative, or appositional (compare sections 2.2.10, 2.3.2,f and 2.4.3).³⁶

(g) **Product** – The accusative denotes the result of the verbal action. This use of the accusative is common with verbs for making, preparing, or shaping, which typically take two accusatives; the first an *object accusative*, the second an *accusative of product*: וַיַּשֵּׁם אֶת־בְּנָיו שֹׁפְטִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, “and he [Samuel] made his sons judges over Israel” (1 Sam 8:1), וַיִּבְנֶה אֶת־הָאֲבָנִים מִזְבֵּחַ, “and he built the stones into an altar” (1 Kgs 18:32), וּלְקַחְתָּ סֶלֶת וְאַפִּיתָ אֹתָהּ שְׁתַּיִם עֹשֶׂרָה חֲלָוֹת, “and you shall take choice flour, and bake it into twelve cakes” (Lev 24:5).

2.4 Apposition

In addition to the three main case functions (nominative, genitive, and accusative), BH also uses nouns in apposition, that is, in simple juxtaposition in order for the second noun (the *apposition*) to modify or elucidate the first

³⁵ For more on this and the next (*accusative of product*), see Kautzsch 1910, 371–72 and Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 174–75.

³⁶ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 460–61; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 173.

(the *leadword*).³⁷ Such nouns generally agree in gender, number, and definiteness, have the same function in the syntax, and refer to the same person, place, or thing in the external world. The apposition may often be translated by an adjective or prepositional phrase.³⁸ This list includes the most common ways in which apposition is used.³⁹

2.4.1 *Species*

The apposition denotes the species or subclass to which the leadword belongs: זְבָחִים שְׁלָמִים, “peace-offerings [literally: sacrifices, *peace-offerings*]” (Exod 24:5). This usage is common when the leadword is a common noun for a person: אִישׁ כֹּהֵן, “a priest [literally: a man, *a priest*]” (Lev 21:9), אִישׁ מִצְרַיִם, “an Egyptian [literally: a man, *an Egyptian*]” (Exod 2:11), הַנֶּעֱרַר הַנְּבִיאַ, “the young prophet [literally: the young man, *the prophet*]” (2 Kgs 9:4), אֲנָשִׁים אָחִים, “brothers [literally: men, *brothers*]” (Gen 13:8).

2.4.2 *Attributive*

The apposition denotes a quality or attribute of the leadword. In translation, the apposition often becomes an adjective: אֱמָרִים אֱמֶת, “*true* words [literally: words, *truth*]” (Prov 22:21), אֱלֹהִים אֱמֶת, “the *true* God” (Jer 10:10), דְּבָרִים נְחֻמִּים, “*comforting* words” (Zech 1:13), מִלְּשׁוֹן רְמִיָּה, “from a *deceitful* tongue” (Ps 120:2).

³⁷ Pronouns may also occur as the leadword (Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 232–33; Williams 1976, 15–16; and van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 230).

³⁸ Kautzsch 1910, 423–27; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 226–34; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 477–81; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 228–30; Williams 1976, 15–16.

³⁹ On the emphatic and distributive uses of *repetitive apposition*, see Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 233–34, and van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 230. On apposition in epigraphic Hebrew, see Gogel 1998, 237–40.

2.4.3 Material

The apposition denotes the material from which the leadword is made. Similar to the *attributive apposition*, this often becomes an adjective in translation: הַעֲבֹתֹת הַזָּהָב, “gold cords [literally: the cords, the gold]” (Exod 39:17), הַבִּקָּר הַנְּחֹשֶׁת, “the bronze oxen” (2 Kgs 16:17), הָאֶבֶן הַבְּדִיל, “the alloystone (i.e., plummet)” (Zech 4:10), מִצְלִימוֹת נְחֹשֶׁת, “brass cymbals” (1 Chr 15:19). Occasionally the apposition may omit the definite article: הַמַּבּוּל מֵיִם, “the flood (of) waters” (Gen 6:17), אֲשֶׁרָה כָּל-עֵץ, “Asherah made of every kind of wood” (Deut 16:21).

2.4.4 Measure

The apposition specifies the thing measured or weighed, in which case the leadword is a measuring unit: סָאֵה-סֵלֶת, “a seah [unit of dry measurement] of flour” (2 Kgs 7:1), כְּכֶרֶם כֶּסֶף, “two silver talents” (1 Kgs 16:24).

Although the *apposition of measure* is not particularly common, a variation of it using numerals is. The apposition thus specifies the thing numbered, while the leadword is a numeral: שִׁבְעָה בָּנִים וְשְׁלוֹשׁ בָּנוֹת, “seven sons and three daughters” (Job 1:2), חַמֵּשָׁה אַנְשִׁים, “five men” (2 Kgs 25:19), שִׁבְעִים בָּנִים, “seventy sons” (Judg 8:30), שְׁנַיִם הָעֶשְׂרִי אִישׁ, “the twelve men” (Josh 4:4).⁴⁰ Sometimes, however, the order is reversed, in which case the apposition is the numeral and the leadword specifies the thing numbered. This is often the case in inventories or enumerated lists: עֲזִים מְאֹתִים וַחֲזִשִׁים עֶשְׂרִים רְחִלִים מְאֹתִים וְאֵלִים עֶשְׂרִים, “two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams” (Gen 32:15), בִּקָּר שְׁנַיִם אֵלִים חַמֵּשָׁה עֶתּוּדִים חַמֵּשָׁה כְּבָשִׁים בְּגִיר־שָׁנָה חַמֵּשָׁה, “two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old” (Num 7:17, and compare Num 28:19).

⁴⁰ Compare the *genitive of measure* in 2.2.11.

2.4.5 *Explicative*⁴¹

The apposition is a particular member of a general category denoted by the leadword, and typically gives the proper noun for the leadword: הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה, “King *Solomon*” (1 Kgs 1:34), הַנְּהַר פְּרָת, “the River *Euphrates*” (1 Chr 5:9), הָאָרֶץ כְּנָעַן, “Canaan [literally: the land, i.e., *Canaan*]” (Num 34:2). Occasionally the order is reversed, in which case the apposition specifies the category and the proper noun is the leadword: שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ, “*King Solomon*” (1 Chr 29:24).⁴²

This becomes an *apposition of relationship* when the leadword is a noun of kinship: אֶת־אָחִיו אֶת־הָבֵל, “his brother *Abel*” (Gen 4:2). The order here may likewise be reversed: הָבֵל אָחִיו, “Abel *his brother*” (Gen 4:8).⁴³

2.5 Adjectives

As might be expected, nouns may also be modified by adjectives. BH makes no morphological distinction between nouns and adjectives (although the adjective has no dual form).⁴⁴ The distinction between a noun and an adjective is left to the inherent lexical meanings of the terms and to their syntactical functions. Since most beginning grammars detail the uses of the adjective quite clearly, their syntactical features will only be summarized here.⁴⁵

⁴¹ The *explicative genitive* is more common than this *explicative apposition* (see 2.2.12 and Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 479).

⁴² When the apposition is a proper noun requiring a preposition or DDO (אֶת/לְ), the particle is generally repeated on both words. If the leadword has the proper noun, the particle is not repeated. See Waltke and O'Connor 1990 (232), Joüon and Muraoka 1993 (479–80), Kautzsch 1910 (425), and Williams 1976 (15).

⁴³ Compare the *genitive of relationship* (2.2.3).

⁴⁴ Plural adjectives are thus used when modifying dual nouns (van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 231). Occasionally, adjectives can carry a vowel pattern distinct from the nouns.

⁴⁵ Lambdin 1971a, 13–15; Seow 1995, 72; Pratico and Van Pelt 2001, 61–64; Kittel, Hoffer, and Wright 1989, 251; Kelly 1992, 45–47; Weingreen 1959, 32–33.

Adjectives modify nouns by describing their state or condition. This list includes the most common ways in which the adjective is used. For more of what follows, the reference grammars may be consulted.⁴⁶

2.5.1 Attributive

The adjective ascribes a quality to a noun. The *attributive adjective* forms a phrase with the noun it modifies, having a single function in the sentence. The adjective stands in apposition to the noun it modifies, normally following it and agreeing in gender, number, and definiteness: אִישׁ גָּדוֹל, “a great man” (2 Kgs 5:1), אִשָּׁה חֲכָמָה, “a wise woman” (2 Sam 14:2), הָעִיר הַגְּדוֹלָה, “the great city” (Gen 10:12).

If the noun occurs in construct state with another noun, the attributive adjective follows the entire genitive construction: אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים קָדוֹשׁ, “a holy man of God” (2 Kgs 4:9). Wherever both nouns and the adjective are of the same gender, ambiguity may occur, and it can only be made clear by broader context. A series of attributive adjectives may occur after the noun modified, usually with a demonstrative adjective occurring in the final position: הָהָר הַטּוֹב הַזֶּה, “this good hill country” (Deut 3:25), הַגּוֹי הַגְּדוֹל הַזֶּה, “this great nation” (Deut 4:6).⁴⁷

Rarely, the adjective precedes the noun it modifies, most often with numerals and רַבּוֹת/רַבִּים, probably because “many” was thought to be similar to numerals in function: רַבִּים צַיְדִים, “many hunters” (Jer 16:16).

The definite article of the attributive adjective is sometimes omitted, perhaps because certain adjectives were thought inherently definite (such as רַבִּים and אַחַר, as

⁴⁶ Kautzsch 1910, 427–32; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 255–71; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 521–25; Meyer 1992, 371–76; Horsnell 1999, 193–201; Chisholm 1998, 66–67; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 230–37; Williams 1976, 16–18. On the adjectives in epigraphic Hebrew, see Gogel 1998 (202).

⁴⁷ For more details of the syntactical peculiarities of two or three adjectives following a noun, see Kautzsch 1910 (428).

well as the numeral אֶחָד, “one”): אֶחֶיכֶם אַחֵר, “your *other* brother” (Gen 43:14), הָרֵאשִׁית אַחֵד, “*one* company” (1 Sam 13:17), הַגּוֹיִם רַבִּים, “*many* nations” (Ezek 39:27). At other times, the noun being modified is inherently definite and therefore anarthrous, even while the adjective retains the article: יוֹם הַשֵּׁשִׁי, “the *sixth* day” (Gen 1:31).

2.5.2 Predicate

The adjective expresses an assertion about a noun requiring a form of the verb “to be” in translation. The *predicate adjective* often precedes the noun it modifies and agrees in gender and number, but is always indefinite:⁴⁸ נִדּוּל עוֹנִי, “my punishment *is great*” (Gen 4:13), טוֹב הָעֵץ, “the tree *was good*” (Gen 3:6), צַדִּיק יְהוָה, “righteous *is YHWH*” (Ps 145:17), יֵשֶׁר דְּבַר־יְהוָה, “the word of YHWH *is upright*” (Ps 33:4). The predicate adjective is often used in nominal clauses of description (see section 5.1.1,b).

2.5.3 Substantive

The adjective functions as a noun, most often occurring with the definite article: הַחֲכָמִים, “the *skillful men* [literally: *the wise men*]” (Exod 36:4), though also without the definite article, as in חֲכָמִים, “*wise men*” (Job 5:13).

The *substantive adjective* may serve in any of the normal functions of a regular noun: as nominative (הַקָּטָן, “the *young one*” [Gen 42:13]), as either noun of the genitive relationship (בֵּית נְדוּל, “*great* house [literally: house of a *great one*]” [2 Kgs 25:9]),⁴⁹ as accusative (אֶת־הַצַּדִּיק, “*the righteous*” [Eccl 3:17]), as apposition (צַדִּיק עַבְדִּי, “the *righteous one*, my servant” [Isa 53:11]), or as object of a preposition (וְעַל־קַל נִרְכָּב, “we will ride upon *swift horses* [literally: upon a *quick one*]” [Isa 30:16]).

⁴⁸ The tense of the translation must be determined from the Hebrew context.

⁴⁹ And see the *genitive of specification* in 2.2.13.

2.5.4 Comparative and Superlative

Hebrew has no inflected forms of the adjectives to express degrees of the adjectival quality, such as in English: big–bigger–biggest, great–greater–greatest, and so on. Instead, BH uses the adjectives in a number of syntactical variations to express the comparative and superlative degrees.

(a) *Comparative* – A higher degree of the adjectival quality is expressed when the preposition מִן is used with the noun being surpassed (see section 4.1.13,h). The preposition identifies the standard against which the noun is being compared, and typically the adjective has no definite article: חָכָם אֶתָּה מִדָּנִי אֵל, “you are wiser than Daniel” (Ezek 28:3 *Qere*), גְּבוּהָ מִכָּל־הָעָם, “taller than all the people” (1 Sam 9:2), עָזוּ מֵאַרְי, “stronger than a lion” (Judg 14:18), גְּדוּלַּת יְהוָה מִכָּל־הָאֱלֹהִים, “YHWH is greater than all gods” (Exod 18:11).⁵⁰

Sometimes the *comparative* denotes a condition that is too little or too much in force for attainment:⁵¹ כִּי־כִבֵּד מִמֶּךָ הַדָּבָר, “for the task is too heavy for you” (Exod 18:18), הַמְזַעַט מִכֶּם, “too slight a thing for you” (Isa 7:13). In such uses, the preposition מִן may be attached to an infinitive construct rather than a noun: גְּדוּלַּת עֲוֹנֵי מִנְשֵׂא, “my punishment is too great to bear” (Gen 4:13), הָיָה רְכוּשָׁם רַב מִשָּׁבֶת יַחְדָּו, “Their property had become too great for them to live together” (Gen 36:7), כִּי־מִזְבַּח הַנְּחֹשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה קָטָן מִהַכִּיל אֶת־הָעֹלָה, “For the bronze altar which was before YHWH was too small to hold the burnt offering” (1 Kgs 8:64).

⁵⁰ At times the comparative is required even without the preposition מִן, and at other times the adjective is replaced by stative verbs. In some cases, the context must determine when the comparative is intended (see Kautzsch 1910, 430–31).

⁵¹ See Waltke and O’Connor’s *comparison of capability* (1990, 266) and Joūon’s *elliptical comparison* (1991, 523–24); also see Kautzsch (1910, 430).

(b) *Superlative*—The highest degree of the adjectival quality is expressed when the adjective is made definite, whether by a definite article, a genitive construction,⁵² or a pronominal suffix: הַקָּטָן, “the youngest [of eight sons]” (1 Sam 16:11), קָטָן בְּנָיו, “the youngest of his sons” (2 Chr 21:17), מִזְּגֵדוֹלָם וְעַד־קָטָנָם, “from the greatest of them to the least of them” (Jonah 3:5).

The *superlative adjective* may rarely take the preposition בְּ with a noun: הַיְפֹתָה בְּנָשִׁים, “the most beautiful among women” (Song 1:8), הָאִישׁ הַרְףֵּ בֶּהָ, “The most refined person among you” (Deut 28:54).⁵³

2.6 Determination

Nouns in BH are indeterminate (i.e., indefinite) unless marked otherwise. They may be marked as determinate/definite in three ways: a) by a prefixed definite article, b) by a pronominal suffix, or c) by occurring in the construct state bound to a definite noun.⁵⁴ Proper nouns and other appellatives are also definite by nature and do not require other determination, since they name a specific person or thing.

In general, indefinite nouns tend to focus on the class or quality of the person, place, or thing, while definite nouns focus on a unique or particular identity. Although BH has no *indefinite* article, the numeral “one” (אֶחָד/אֶחָדָה) is used to

⁵² That is, a *substantive* adjective serving as a construct in bound relationship with a noun, as in גְּדֹלֵי הָעִיר, “the greatest men of the city” (2 Kgs 10:6).

⁵³ The superlative may be expressed in a number of other ways, including the *superlative* genitive (2.2.13), repetition, the use of מֵאֵד or מֵאֵד־מֵאֵד after an adjective, or מְכַל־/מְכַל after an adjective. See Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 524–25; Horsnell 1999, 198–201; Kautzsch 1910, 431–32; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 267–71; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 236–37; and Williams 1976, 17–18. On the distinction between the *absolute superlative* (excels all others in its class) and the *comparative superlative* (excels in some particular quality or condition), see Ben Zvi, Hancock, and Beinert 1993, 192, and Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 267–71.

⁵⁴ In all three cases, the mark of determination causes morphological changes, for which, see the beginning grammars.

denote indetermination, especially in the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings (see section 2.7.1,b).⁵⁵ This often requires the translation “certain”: וַיְהִי אִישׁ אֶחָד מִן־הַרְמָתִים, “There was a *certain* man from Ramathaim” (1 Sam 1:1).

The use of the definite article in BH is similar to the use of the article in English. However, there are also several uses of the article in BH that are dissimilar to use in English. In these cases, definiteness in the English translation will often not correspond to the definiteness of Hebrew. It is important, therefore, not to expect a literal, word-for-word translation of the definiteness of nouns, which may lead to awkward, or even incorrect English phrasings. Additionally, since the definite article developed late in the history of Classical Hebrew,⁵⁶ its sparse use in poetry is a key distinction between prose and poetry in general. Compare, for instance: וְזָכַר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ דְבָר צְנֻחַ לְאַלְפֵי דוֹר, “He has remembered his covenant to eternity, *the word* which he commanded to a thousand generations” (Ps 105:8), הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ עַל־עַבְדְּךָ וְעַל־בֵּיתוֹ הִקַּם עַד־עוֹלָם, “*The word* which you spoke concerning your servant and his house, confirm it forever” (2 Sam 7:25).

The following categories are useful when considering the uses of the definite article in BH.⁵⁷

2.6.1 Referential

A noun with the definite article can refer to a person or thing already introduced into the context: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אֹר וַיְהִי־אֹר וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאֹר כִּי־טוֹב,

⁵⁵ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 513; see also Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 251–52; Pratico and Van Pelt 2001, 49; and van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 187.

⁵⁶ Garr 1985, 89; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 507; Seow 1995, 157; Andersen and Forbes 1983, 165–69.

⁵⁷ Meyer 1992, 367–70; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 505–21; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 235–52; Kautzsch 1910, 401–13; Chisholm 1998, 72–75; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 187–91; and for comparison with epigraphic Hebrew, see Gogel 1998, 235–37.

“God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light. And God saw that *the light* was good” (Gen 1:3–4); וַיִּקַּח בֶּן־בְּקָרָה... וַיִּקַּח חֲמָצָה וְחֶלֶב וּבֵן־הַבָּקָר, “And he (Abraham) took a calf ... then he took curds and milk, and *the calf*” (Gen 18:7–8). If the person or thing is particularly well known, it need not have been mentioned previously: וַיִּטְמֵן אֹתָם יַעֲקֹב תַּחַת הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר עִם־שָׁכֶם, “and Jacob hid them [the foreign gods] under *the oak* that was near Shechem” (Gen 35:4).

2.6.2 *Vocative*

A noun with the definite article can denote a specific addressee (see section 2.1.3): בֶּן־כְּמִי אַתָּה הַנָּעִר, “Whose son are you, *young man?*” (1 Sam 17:58), הוֹשִׁעָה הַמֶּלֶךְ, “Help, *O King!*” (2 Sam 14:4).⁵⁸

2.6.3 *Naming*

The definite article can mark a common noun as a proper noun. Since proper nouns themselves denote particular persons, places, or things, they do not normally take the definite article: מֹשֶׁה, “Moses” (Exod 2:10), דָּוִד, “David” (Ruth 4:22), יְהוָה, “YHWH” (Gen 2:4). However, some nouns (or primitive appellatives) are still in the process of becoming proper names:⁵⁹ הַגִּבְעָה, “Gibeah [literally: *the hill*]” (Judg 19:14), הַיַּאֲר, “*the Nile* [literally: *the stream*]” (Gen 41:1), הַיַּרְדֵּן, “*the Jordan* [literally: *the river*]” (Gen 13:10), הַלְּבָנוֹן, “Lebanon [literally: “*the white* (mountains?)]” (Josh 9:1).

Related to this category is the *solitary* use of the definite article (see next section), in which appellatives referring

⁵⁸ However, the vocative frequently omits the definite article. See Meyer 1992, 27; Kautzsch 1910, 405; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 508.

⁵⁹ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 505; Meyer 1992, 370.

to unique persons, places, or things are on their way to becoming a name: הָאֱלֹהִים, “God [literally: *the* God]” (Gen 5:22).

Also related to this category is the *gentilic* use of the definite article, often used collectively (i.e., in the singular): הַכְּנַעֲנִים, “*the* Canaanites” (Gen 10:18), but occasionally in the plural: הָעִבְרִים, “*the* Hebrews” (Gen 40:15).

2.6.4 Solitary

The definite article marks a unique person, place, or thing: הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל, “*the* high priest” (Josh 20:6), הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ, “*the* sun” (Gen 15:12), הַיָּרֵחַ, “*the* moon” (Deut 4:19), אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ, “*the* heavens and *the* earth” (Gen 1:1).

Certain titles may take the definite article because they are understood by everyone to designate someone unique: הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד, “King David [literally: *the* King David]” (2 Sam 5:3), יְחִי הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה, “Long live King Solomon [literally: *the* King Solomon]” (1 Kgs 1:34), הַשָּׂר, “*the* chief” (1 Chr 15:5).⁶⁰

2.6.5 Generic

A noun with the definite article denotes a class of persons or things: הַגְּמַל, “*the* camel” (Lev 11:4), בְּאֵשׁ, “with *the* fire” (Josh 11:9), הָרָעֵב, “a hungry person [literally: *the* hungry]” (Isa 29:8), כְּאֵרִי, “like *the* lion” (Num 24:9).

When used with a plural noun, the *generic* use may indicate that all the individuals of the class are included: הָרָשָׁעִים, “*the* wicked” (Ps 1:4), הַכּוֹכָבִים, “*the* stars” (Gen 1:16), הַגּוֹיִם, “*the* nations” (Gen 10:32).

⁶⁰ The noun הַשָּׂר could be used in various constructions for titles, military and royal, although in LBH, it appears to have become a title standing alone with the article (HALOT 3:1351–52).

Use of the definite article to mark *abstract* nouns is related to this category: הַמְּלֻכָּה, “*the* kingship” (1 Sam 11:14),

וַיִּמְלֵא אֶת־הַחֲכֵמָה וְאֶת־הַתְּבוּנָה וְאֶת־הַדַּעַת לַעֲשׂוֹת
כָּל־מְלָאכָה בַּנְּחֹשֶׁת

“he [Hiram] was full of *skill, intelligence,* and *knowledge* in working bronze” (1 Kgs 7:14).

2.6.6 Demonstrative

The definite article has a “pointing out” (i.e., deictic) force when used with nouns referring to present time.⁶¹ Such *demonstrative* uses of the article typically take on adverbial force: פַּה עִמָּנוּ עַד־מָד הַיּוֹם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, “standing here with us *today* before YHWH our God” (Deut 29:14 [Eng 29:15]), לִינּוּ פַּה הַלַּיְלָה, “stay here *tonight*” (Num 22:8), הַשָּׁנָה אָתָּה מוֹת, “*this year* you will die” (Jer 28:16), חָטָאתִי הַפֶּעַם, “*this time* I have sinned” (Exod 9:27).

2.6.7 Possessive

The definite article occasionally denotes ownership of the noun, and requires a possessive pronoun in translation: וְהַחֲנִית בְּיַד־שָׁאִיל, “Saul had *his spear* in his hand” (1 Sam 18:10), וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־רֹאשׁ הַמָּטָה, “Israel bowed himself on the head of *his bed*” (Gen 47:31), וַיִּקָּם מֵעַל הַכֶּסֶּא, “He [King Eglon] rose from *his seat*” (Judg 3:20).

2.7 Numerals

Numbers in BH are written as words, rather than represented graphically as with the Arabic digits used in English

⁶¹ It is often assumed that Hebrew’s definite article originated from a prefixed pronominal with demonstrative force, explaining its occasional demonstrative use in BH as a vestige of its history. See Blau 1976, 43; Kautzsch 1910, 404; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 506; Bergsträsser 1983, 23–24; Garr 1985, 87–89; but see the challenging discussion in Lambdin 1971b, 315–33.

(so “thirty-two” rather than “32”).⁶² Most are derived from substantives, but unfortunately their syntax is varied. Thus, the numeral “one” most frequently functions as an adjective, following the noun it modifies and agreeing in gender. But the numerals from “two” to “ten” function as nouns that may stand either before or after the noun they modify when appositional (for which, see section 2.4.4), or may stand before the noun in the construct state (see section 2.2.11). While the numeral “two” exhibits gender agreement with the noun it modifies, those from “three” to “ten” take feminine forms with masculine nouns, but masculine forms when modifying feminine nouns.⁶³ All beginning grammars of BH explain and illustrate these syntactical peculiarities of the numerals, and as a result we include here only a few additional categories useful when considering the uses of the numerals.⁶⁴

Numerals are morphologically divided into the cardinal and ordinal variations.

2.7.1 Cardinal Numbers

(a) *Measure* – Indicating the amount or quantity of something denoted by the noun being modified: שְׁלֹשָׁה בָּנִים, “*three* sons” (Gen 6:10), שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנָּשִׁים, “*three* men” (Gen 18:2), עָרִים שְׁתַּיִם, “*two* cities” (Josh 15:60).

(b) *Indetermination* – The numeral “one” (אֶחָד or אַחַת) may follow an indefinite noun to mark an unnamed individual: וַיְהִי אִישׁ אֶחָד בֶּן־הָרִבְּבֹתִים, “There was *a certain*

⁶² Most languages of biblical times used number signs, although Ugaritic preferred to spell numbers out completely as in BH (Segert 1984, 52–54).

⁶³ This inexplicable feature of Hebrew numerals is limited to the cardinals. With double-figure numerals (11 to 19), the lowest number includes this reverse gender, while the tens take the gender of the noun being modified.

⁶⁴ Kautzsch 1910, 286–92 and 432–37; Meyer 1992, 204–11; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 525–30; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 272–89; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 263–70.

man of Ramathaim” (1 Sam 1:1), אִשָּׁה אַחַת, “a certain woman” (Judg 9:53), נְבִיא אֶחָד, “a certain prophet” (1 Kgs 20:13). Occasionally this use takes on an emphatic nuance, often reflected in English by “single” or “same”: שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר עֶבְדֵיךָ אַחִים אֲנַחְנוּ בְּנֵי אִישׁ-אֶחָד, “We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of the same man” (Gen 42:13), בְּיוֹם אֶחָד, “on the same day” (1 Sam 2:34), בְּבַיִת אֶחָד, “in the same house” (1 Kgs 3:17).

(c) **Multiplication** – The cardinals may express multiples of the noun being modified. Multiplicatives of “four” and “seven” are attested in the feminine duals of the cardinals:⁶⁵ וְאֵת־הַכֶּבֶשׂה יְשַׁלֵּם אַרְבַּעַתַּיִם, “and he shall restore the lamb four times over” (2 Sam 12:6), שִׁבְעָתַיִם, “sevenfold” (Gen 4:15).⁶⁶ Occasionally the feminine dual of “two” may be used for “twice”: אַחַת דִּבַּרְתִּי וְלֹא אֶעֱנֶה וּשְׁתַּיִם וְלֹא אוֹסִיף, “I have spoken once, and I will not answer; twice, but I will not again” (Job 40:5), פַּעַם וּשְׁתַּיִם, “once or twice” (Neh 13:20).

The singular also may be used for *multiplication*, often with פַּעַם or פְּעָמִים for “occurrence, times”:⁶⁷ שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה, “three times a year” (Exod 23:17), פְּעָמִים שִׁבְעָ, “seven times” (Gen 33:3),

וְיִסְפְּתִי לְיִסְרָה אֶתְכֶם שִׁבְעַ עַל־חַטָּאתֵיכֶם

“and I will continue to punish you sevenfold for your sins” (Lev 26:18), מֵאַה פְּעָמִים, “one hundredfold” (2 Sam 24:3).

(d) **Distribution** – Repetition of a cardinal number will often express a distributive sense: שְׁנַיִם שְׁנַיִם בָּאוּ אֶל־נָח אֶל־הַתְּבָה, “two by two, two by two, they came to Noah into the ark” (Gen 7:2).

⁶⁵ The ending may in fact be an adverbial ending rather than a dual proper (Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 327).

⁶⁶ The forms are feminine possibly because of the omission of פַּעַם or פְּעָמִים, “times” (Kautzsch 1910, 436).

⁶⁷ HALOT 3:952; see also רָגַל (HALOT 3:1185) and יָד (HALOT 2:388, DCH 4:82). A variation occurs when פַּעַם occurs in the dual (פְּעָמִים) without the numeral (Num 20:11).

“*Two by two*, they came to Noah into the ark” (Gen 7:9). The repeated numerals may be joined with the conjunction *waw*: שש וְשָׁשׁ : וְאַצְבָּעַת יָדָיו וְאַצְבָּעַת רַגְלָיו שֵׁשׁ וְשֵׁשׁ, “*Six* fingers on his hands, and *six* fingers on his feet (2 Sam 21:20). The distributive concept may also be expressed by the repetition of the numeral with its object: שָׂרָפִים עֹמְדִים מִמֶּעַל לוֹ שֵׁשׁ כְּנָפִים שֵׁשׁ כְּנָפִים לְאַחַד, “Seraphim stood above him, each one having *six wings*” (Isa 6:2). A numeral prefixed with the preposition *lamed* may also mark the distributive: וְסַרְנֵי פְלִשְׁתִּים עֹבְרִים לְמֵאוֹת וְלְאַלְפִים, “And the lords of the Philistines were marching *by the hundreds* and *by the thousands*” (1 Sam 29:2).

(e) **Succession** – The cardinal “one” (אֶחָד or אַחַת) may function as an ordinal when denoting the first of a small list of items: וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד, “And there was evening, and there was morning; the *first* day” (Gen 1:5), הַפְּטוֹר הָאֶחָד, “the *first* row” (Exod 39:10).

2.7.2 Ordinal Numbers⁶⁸

Succession indicates consecution or sequence, especially in formulae expressing dates:⁶⁹ בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן, “on the *first* day” (Exod 12:15), בַּשָּׁנָה הַתְּשִׁיעִית לְהוֹשֵׁעַ, “in the *ninth* year of Hoshea” (2 Kgs 17:6), וּבַשָּׁנָה אַחַת עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה לְיוֹרָם, “In the *eleventh* year of Joram” (2 Kgs 9:29), בֶּן שֵׁנִי, “a *second* son” (Gen 30:7).

⁶⁸ The ordinals function as attributive adjectives, following the noun and agreeing in gender and definiteness (see 2.5.1). There are no separate forms for ordinals above the number 10 (review the beginning grammars for more on the forms).

⁶⁹ However, the cardinals are frequently used instead of the ordinals in the expressions of date (Kautzsch 1910, 435; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 284–86).

3 *Verbs*

Biblical Hebrew has no *tenses* in the strict sense of the term. By this statement, we mean that Hebrew does not locate an action or state in time by means of specific morphology. Of course, this does not mean that Hebrew fails to express time relations entirely, only that it does so through a variety of syntactical and contextual features, rather than through verbal inflections or grammatically realized tenses.¹

Rather than a morphologically precise tense system, Hebrew uses an *aspect* system to indicate first, the contour of a situation in time, and second, the type of action. The

¹ Caution is in order in such statements as “BH has no tenses.” We have expressed the majority opinion in this paragraph on the general nature of the Hebrew verbal system, but scholars are not unanimous. Older grammarians believed that the *perfect* denoted past time and the *imperfect* the present-future, and that therefore Hebrew did, in fact, employ a tense system. But during the past century, this view gave way to the current understanding of *aspect* rather than *tense*. See Kautzsch 1910, 117; Bauer and Leander 1991, 268–78; Bergsträsser 1962, 2.9–10; Endo 1996; Sáenz-Badillos 1993, 73; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 346–47; Chisholm 1998, 85–86; Emerton 2000b, 191–93; and van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 141–43. Some prefer to say that Hebrew does, in fact, express tense, though in a less complete way (Bauer 1910; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 354–58; and more emphatically, Rainey 1986, 7, and 1988; and Zevit 1988 and 1998, 39–48). It is likely that such arguments have overstated the case against aspect and in favor of tense in the prefixed form (Huehnergard 1988, 20–21).

first grammatical category (*Aspekt*) identifies the action as either undefined or progressive (“perfect” or “imperfect”). The second category (*Aktionsart*) refers to the type of action with regard to voice, fientivity, transitivity, causation, and various reflexive actions.² The latter (*Aktionsart*) is marked by verbal stems, the former (*Aspekt*) by verbal conjugations.

3.1 Stem

In general, the Qal and Niphal have no element of causation in their predication, in distinction to the other stems.³ The Piel, Pual, and Hithpael have “causation with a patiency nuance,” and the Hiphil and Hophal represent “causation notion with an agency nuance.”⁴

3.1.1 Qal (the G stem)

The Qal⁵ is the “simple active” stem. The voice of the primary subject is active (see vertical axis of the appendixes). Since there is no element of causation, the Qal has no secondary subject (first column of the horizontal axis of Appendix II). Hence, the stem is “simple.”

² This aspectual explanation (i.e., speaking of *Aspekt*, “contour of action,” and *Aktionsart*, “type of action”) follows modern linguistic theory (e.g., Comrie 1976), and has become the consensus of scholars working on BH (Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 346–50; and for a different view, Zevit 1998, 41–48).

³ Various known as *derived stems*, *patterns*, *themes*, or better, the Hebrew designation, *binyanim*, “structures.”

⁴ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 355.

⁵ The Qal is also known as the “G stem” (for German *Grundstamm*, “basic stem”). The verbal stems in other Semitic languages have different names, making it difficult to study them together. Scholars use a standardized list of sigla for the verbal stems, thus facilitating comparisons across the various languages. We will include the siglum for each stem in parenthesis after its name. The advanced student would do well to learn the designations in addition to the traditional stem name.

(a) *Fientive* – describes action, motion, or change of state.⁶ Fientive verbs may be transitive (לָקַח אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים, “God took him” [Gen 5:24], וַיִּצְרֶה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם, “YHWH God formed humanity” [Gen 2:7]), or intransitive (וַיָּמָתוּ וַיָּפְלוּ מִן־הָעָם וַיָּמָתוּ, “but also many of the people fell and died” [2 Sam 1:4], וְאָבֵד כָּל־בֵּית אַחָאָב, “the whole house of Ahab shall perish” [2 Kgs 9:8]). Several fientive verbs may be both, as these examples of מלא demonstrate: וַהֲעֵנָן מָלֵא אֶת־בַּיִת יְהוָה, “the cloud filled the house of YHWH” (1 Kgs 8:10), כִּי יִמְלְאוּ יָמֶיךָ, “when your days are complete” (2 Sam 7:12).⁷

(b) *Stative* – describes a state or quality of the subject. English translations often make no distinction between stative verbs and predicate adjectives: וַיִּכְבֵּד לֵב פַּרְעֹה, “and Pharaoh’s heart was heavy” (Exod 9:7), וְהַקְטַן עוֹד זֹאת בְּעֵינֶיךָ, “And yet, this was insignificant in your eyes” (2 Sam 7:19), אֲנִי זָקֵנָה, “I am old” (Josh 23:2).

3.1.2 Niphal (the N stem)

The “simple middle-passive” and “simple reflexive” stem. The voice of the primary subject is middle-passive or reflexive (see vertical axis of the appendixes). Since there is no element of causation, the Niphal has no secondary subject (first column of the horizontal axis of Appendix II). Hence, the stem is “simple.”

Niphal was originally the simple reflexive, that is, the reflexive of the Qal. It gradually acquired the passive meaning of the Qal as well when the Qal passive fell from

⁶ Since the term “active” is regularly used to denote voice, the term “fientive” is used to describe this type of action (Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 363).

⁷ The question of transitivity or intransitivity is a less important distinction for the verb than that of fientive versus stative, because stative verbs may be transitive as well as the expected intransitive. Thus, stative verbs such as “to dress,” “to don” (לָבַשׁ) and “be full,” “to fill” (מָלֵא) may be transitive (Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 357).

use.⁸ Grammarians sometimes use the expression “medio-passive” for the Niphal, although Waltke and O’Connor refer to a “medio-reflexive notion,” from which they derive four specific meanings (1990, 380): a) middle, b) passive, c) adjectival (simple adjectival, ingressive, gerundive), and d) double-status (reflexive, benefactive, reciprocal, tolerative, causative-reflexive). They state further, “In all the specific uses of the Niphal, we find the common notion(s) that the action or state expressed by the verb affects the subject (as in the middle voice) or its interests (as in the reflexive). Species 1, 2, and 3 can plausibly be associated with the middle notion, and the others with the reflexive. Even in the double-status uses, where the subject is both actor and patient of the action, the primary option is that the subject is affected by the action.”⁹ The following semantic categories are helpful in classifying verbs in the Niphal.

(a) *Passive* – frequently the passive of the Qal. This is its simplest meaning, though not necessarily its primary one. So קָבַר (“bury”) and אָכַל (“eat”) may become “be buried” and “be eaten” in the Niphal: שָׁם אֶקָבֵר, “there I will be buried” (Ruth 1:17), and בְּבֵית אֶחָד יֵאָכַל, “in one house it shall be eaten” (Exod 12:46).

Hebrew’s use of the Niphal is an “incomplete passive” (Lambdin 1971a, 176). The passive in English is a construction, not a category of verbal meaning. Thus, “the students read the lesson” has a passive construction, “the lesson was read by the students.” By the incomplete passive we mean this same transformation minus the agent: “the lesson was read.” The speaker is not concerned with specifying the agent of the action. All Hebrew passives belong to this category; constructions with a specified agent are virtually nonexistent.¹⁰

⁸ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 149.

⁹ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 380.

¹⁰ Examples of the infrequent complete passive include Deut 33:29; Gen 9:6, 11; Exod 12:16; 1 Sam 25:7.

(b) *Middle* – Verbs that are normally used in passive constructions may be used in a quasi-active sense, but with the object as the subject of the verb. Unlike the incomplete passives, middle verbs are active in form, but the meaning (i.e., voice) is, in a sense, reversed. The object of the active verb has become the subject of the middle verb: נִפְתְּחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם, “the heavens *opened*” (Ezek 1:1), וַתִּבְקַע הָאָרֶץ בְּקוֹלָם, “the earth *split* with their sound” (1 Kgs 1:40).

(c) *Reflexive* – action for, or concerning, oneself. The subject is at the same time object (recipient) of the action, so that this use of the Niphal may be called the double-status use.¹¹ In many languages a reflexive pronoun is added to clarify the object, but in the Hebrew Niphal verb, no reflexive pronoun is needed.¹²

In most reflexive uses, the subject and object refer to the same person or thing: וְאַנְקָמָה מֵאוֹיְבָי, “and *I will avenge myself* on my enemies” (Isa 1:24), וְנִמְכְּרוּ-לָךְ לֹא-תַעֲבֹד בּוֹ עַבְדֵּת עֹבֵד, “[If] they *sell themselves* to you, you shall not make them serve as slaves” (Lev 25:39). The reflexive may also occur in conjunction with a prepositional phrase, as in the frequent Niphal imperative לִךְ הִשָּׁמֵר, “guard yourself for yourself,” or “*take great care*” (Exod 34:12), בִּי נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי נְאֻם-יְהוָה, “*I have sworn by myself*,’ declares YHWH” (Gen 22:16).

Additionally, the reflexive may denote permission (*tolerative*): אֶדְרֹשׁ, “I will *allow myself to be enquired*” (Ezek 36:37), וְנִעָנַר לָהֶם וּרְפָאָם, “He will respond to them (literally: he will *allow himself to be entreated*) and heal them” (Isa 19:22), נִדְרַשְׁתִּי לְלוֹא שְׂאֵלוּ נִמְצְאוּתִי לְלֹא בְקִשְׁנִי, “*I permitted myself to be sought* by those who did not inquire,

¹¹ The subject is both agent and patient (or undergoer) of the action in Waltke and O’Connor’s terminology (1990, 387–91).

¹² Cf. the “tolerative,” Williams 1976, 138; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 389–90.

I permitted myself to be found by those who did not seek” (Isa 65:1). The *reciprocal* construction may be seen as a plural variation of the reflexive: וַיֵּאָסְפוּ אֵלָיו כָּל־בְּנֵי לֵוִי, “and all the children of Levi gathered (themselves) around him” (Exod 32:26). In one root particularly (יָדַע), the Niphal denotes a *causative-reflexive* meaning, similar to the Hithpael: וַיְנַדְדֵּם יְהוָה לְמִצְרַיִם, “and YHWH will make himself known to the Egyptians” (Isa 19:21), וְשָׁמִי יְהוָה לֹא נִדְדַעְתִּי לָהֶם, “but by my name YHWH, I did not make myself known to them” (Exod 6:3).

(d) *Stative* – describes the state of the subject produced by the verbal action:¹³ וּבַיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת יִפְתָּח “on the sabbath day [the gate] shall be opened” (Ezek 46:1), וְאַל־תֵּעָצְבוּ, “do not be grieved” (Neh 8:11). The stative Niphal is often equivalent to a simple adjectival state, and is also often the same as the passive in translation. So for example, the verb נִשְׁבַּר may be “to be broken,” or “to be in pieces”: כִּי־נִשְׁבְּרוּ לְפָנֵי־יְהוָה, “for they were broken before YHWH” (2 Chr 14:12 [Eng 2 Chr 14:13]).¹⁴

3.1.3 Piel (the D stem)

The Piel is the “causative (with patency nuance) active” stem and is the most elusive of the Hebrew stems.¹⁵ One leading scholar recently signaled a warning about the futility of searching for a unifying central understanding of the stem’s use: “[I]t is pointless to try to find a single . . . explanation to account for all of the

¹³ Lambdin’s *resultative* (1971, 177).

¹⁴ Some verbs in the Niphal have little or no Qal counterpart (ex., נִלָּחַם and נִסְתַּחַר). Others may have an “ingressive-stative” connotation, describing “coming” into a certain state, rather than “being” in such a state (ex., certain occurrences of נִבְּאָ; see Ben Zvi, Hancock, and Beinert 1993, 120).

¹⁵ Joñon and Muraoka 1993, 151.

transformative power of the D stem. It is simply a form.”¹⁶

Traditionally the Piel had been considered *intensive* in meaning. Older grammars defined the idea as “to busy oneself eagerly with the action indicated,” and even associated the doubling of the second radical of verbs in Piel as an outward expression of this intensification.¹⁷ However, in light of today’s deeper understanding of the Semitic languages generally, we can no longer refer to the Piel as basically and primarily intensive.¹⁸ Furthermore, it has long been assumed that as the *derived* stems are built morphologically upon the base form of the Qal, so the semantic use and function of those stems may be defined primarily by means of association with the Qal (as *intensive* of the Qal, *causative* of the Qal, *passive* of the Qal, etc.). We now recognize that although such semantic associations may be present in many verbs in the Qal and Piel, this is not always the case, and each stem should be regarded as independent.¹⁹ Many Piel verbs simply cannot be placed in one of the categories that follow. In some cases, the verb may occur in both Qal and Piel with no discernible difference in meaning.

The Piel frequently expresses the bringing about of a state. Thus, the Piel focuses on causation and the outcome

¹⁶ Kaufman 1996, 282. See also Joosten’s conclusion that the various functions of the Piel cannot be reduced to one underlying basic function (Joosten 1998, 227).

¹⁷ Kautzsch 1910, 141; and see Blau 1976, 52; Bauer and Leander 1991, 323–29; Martin-Davidson 1993, 136–37. The view that the doubling of the middle consonant is unassociated with intensification may need to be reconsidered in light of recent linguistic work on iconicity, that is, the iconic nature of language (cf. Kouwenberg 1997).

¹⁸ The Piel in recent decades has been recognized as the key to the Hebrew verbal system. Albrecht Goetze opened the discussion to new approaches with his famous survey of the Akkadian D-stem (1942, 1–8), and subsequently the significance of his work for the West Semitic languages was investigated by Ernst Jenni (1968). For useful surveys of these developments, see Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 354–59; Fassberg 2001, 243–44. For caveats on Goetze’s arguments, see Kaufman 1996, 281–82.

¹⁹ Richter 1978, 73.

of the action, though with a patency nuance rather than an agency nuance (as in Hiphil). The foregrounded interest is not the event that happens to the subject, but rather the condition attained by it. It is for all practical purposes an adjectival causation predicate. Jenni's important study proposed a basic distinction between the Piel and Hiphil as the difference between the imposition of a state (adjectival) and the imposition of process (verbal).²⁰ So using as an example the verb חָיָה ("live" in the Qal), the Piel is "to cause to be alive," whereas the Hiphil is "to cause to live." The distinction is between causing to *be* something or to *do* something. Specifically with Qal intransitive verbs, we use the term *factitive* to denote a cause producing a state (as distinct from a cause producing an event, or *causative*).²¹ This factitive use of the Piel designates, without regard to the process, the bringing about of the state depicted by an adjective. The object experiences this action as an "accident" (signifying that a quality or situation is not essential to the person or thing in question). With some Qal transitive verbs the Piel is *resultative*, meaning that it denotes the bringing about of the outcome of the action designated by the base root, which action can be expressed in terms of an adjective, and without regard to the actual process of the event.²² In our analysis, we follow Waltke and O'Connor's practice of reserving causative for the Hiphil, which causes an action rather than a state. In the Piel, the object of causation is in a state of suffering the effects of an action and is inherently passive in part (see the second column of the horizontal axis of Appendix II).

The following semantic categories are helpful in classifying verbs in the Piel.

²⁰ Jenni (1968), and see also Lambdin 1969, 388–89. For dissenting voices, see Joosten 1998 and Fassberg 2001, 243–44.

²¹ "Factitive," from Latin *factitare*, "to do often," "to practice," "to declare (someone) to be."

²² Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 400.

(a) **Factitive** – makes transitive many verbs that are intransitive in the Qal (mostly stative, although a few fientive verbs are intransitive). By transitivizing verbs that are Qal intransitives, the Piel factitive denotes a cause producing a state (rather than a cause producing an action; see Hiphil *causative* in section 3.1.6,a). So typically, Qal intransitives become factitive Piel:²³ וּבְיַדְךָ לְגַדֵּל, “and it is in your hand to make great” (1 Chr 29:12), וְאֶגְדֹּלָהּ שִׁמְךָ, “and I will make your name great” (Gen 12:2), אֲנִי יְהוָה מְקַדְּשְׁכֶם, “I YHWH sanctify you” (Exod 31:13), יְהוָה מְמִית וּמַחְיֶה, “YHWH kills and brings to life” (1 Sam 2:6), וַיִּאַבְדֵם יְהוָה, “YHWH destroyed them” (Deut 11:4).

Such a use is frequently *resultative*, meaning that the Piel can bring about a state (or “result”) corresponding to the verbal notion of a Qal transitive:²⁴ שָׁבַר אֶת־הַמַּצֵּבֹת, “he broke down the pillars” (2 Kgs 18:4), לִמְדַתִּי אֶתְכֶם חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים, “I have taught you statutes and ordinances” (Deut 4:5).

(b) **Denominative** – indicates a derived verbal idea related to a noun or substantive. The nominal form is primary and the verb secondarily derived from it. Piel is the stem most commonly used to form denominatives (though see also the Hithpael and Hiphil denominatives): לֹא־נִפְלָ דְבַר אֶחָד מִכֹּל דְּבָרָיו הַטּוֹב אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ, “not one *word* has failed of all his good promise [literally: word], which he spoke through his servant

²³ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 400–04; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 154–56; Seow 1995, 173–75; Lambdin 1972, 193–95. These roots typically become causative Hiphils, a relationship that may be illustrated as follows: Qal intransitive::Piel factitive::Hiphil causative (cf. Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 400).

²⁴ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 404–10; Lambdin 1972, 193; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 80–81. Thus, the profile would be as follows: Qal transitive::Piel resultative::Hiphil causative (cf. Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 404). For similar uses of the Piel in the Canaanite dialect of the Amarna letters, Rainey 1996, 2:138–68.

Moses” (1 Kgs 8:56); זָמְרוּ לַיהוָה בְּכִנּוֹר בְּכִנּוֹר וְקוֹל זָמְרָה, “Sing praises to YHWH with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody [literally: praise song]” (Ps 98:5).

(c) *Frequentative* – pluralizes the action denoted by the Qal. Many verbs in the Piel reflect multiple, repeated, or busy action. This use of the Piel may be *iterative* over time, or *pluralic* through space, and often takes on the nuance of an *intensive*, although the intensive force is difficult to identify in most occurrences:²⁵ כָּל-הַיּוֹם קָדַר הַלְכָתִי, “all day long I go around mourning” (Ps 38:7), בְּחֻקוֹתַי יִהְלֵךְ, “(the righteous individual) follows my statutes [literally: he walks about in my statutes]” (Ezek 18:9), וְנוֹעַ יְנוּעוּ בְנָיו וְשָׂאֵלוּ, “May his children wander about and beg [literally: ask repeatedly]” (Ps 109:10), הָרַס וְהָרַסָם וְשִׁבַר וְשִׁבַר מִצְבְּתֵיהֶם, “you shall utterly demolish them and break in pieces their pillars” (Exod 23:24).

(d) *Declarative* – involves some kind of proclamation, de-locution, or estimative assessment, although the precise nature of these verbs and their relationship to the factitive is debated: הִפְצֵיתִי צְדָקָךָ, “I desire to justify you [literally: to declare you righteous]” (Job 33:32), מִנְסֹתֵרוֹת נִקְנִי, “clear me [literally: declare me innocent] of hidden faults” (Ps 19:13), טִמֵּא יְטַמְּאוּ הַכֹּהֵן, “the priest shall pronounce him unclean” (Lev 13:44).

As noted, there are simply some uses of the Piel that cannot be categorized and are, in fact, identical in meaning to the Qal stem, or have an equivalent simple-active meaning: בִּקֵּשׁ יְהוָה לֹא אִישׁ כְּלִבּוֹ, “YHWH has sought for himself a man after his own heart” (1 Sam 13:14), וַיַּעַשׂ נֹחַ כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים כִּן עָשָׂה, “Noah did according to all that God had commanded him, so he did” (Gen 6:22).

²⁵ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 414–16; Seow 1995, 174; Lambdin 1971a, 194.

3.1.4 Pual (the Dp stem)

The Pual is the “causative (with patency nuance) passive” stem and is the passive counterpart to the Piel. As such, it contains the same four functions of the Piel, though in passive voice (factive/resultative, denominative, frequentative, and declarative).

(a) *Factive/resultative*

כְּתַפַּת עָשׂוּ לָהּ חִבְרֹת עַל-שְׁנֵי קְצוּוֹתָיו חֲבָר

“They made attaching shoulder pieces for it [i.e., the ephod]; it was attached at its two ends” (Exod 39:4), וְהַפְּשֵׁתָהּ וְהַשְׁעָרָה נִכְתְּתָה, “The flax and the barley were ruined” (Exod 9:31).

(b) *Denominative* – וְאָכְלוּ אֹתָם אֲשֶׁר כָּפַר בָּהֶם – “and they shall eat them [i.e., the food] by which atonement is made” (Exod 29:33).

(c) *Frequentative* – וְאֵת שְׁעִיר הַחַטָּאת דָּרַשׁ דָּרַשׁ מִזְשֶׁה וְהִנֵּה שָׂרָף – “Then Moses diligently inquired about the goat of the sin offering, and it was burned up” (Lev 10:16).

(d) *Declarative*

אֵלֶּה בִּקְשׂוּ כְּתָבָם הַמְתִּיחִים וְלֹא נִמְצְאוּ וַיִּגְדְּלוּ מִן-הַכֹּהֲנָה

“These searched their genealogical records, but they could not be found; so they were considered unclean for the priesthood” (Ezra 2:62)

One striking feature of the Pual is the high percentage of times it occurs in the participle.²⁶ The participle comprises no less than 40% of all Pual forms, most of which denote a thing or person for or in which a new condition has been attained: וְהִנֵּה יָדוֹ מִצְרַעַת כַּשָּׁלֵג, “and behold, his hand was leprous, as white as snow” (Exod 4:6), רָשַׁע מִכְתִּיר אֶת-הַצְּדִיק עַל-כֵּן יֵצֵא מִשֹּׁפֵט מֵעֶקֶל,

²⁶ Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 418–19.

“Wickedness surrounds the righteous; therefore, judgment comes forth *perverted*” (Hab 1:4),

וּמַהֵם מְמַנִּים עַל־הַבְּלִים וְעַל כָּל־כְּלֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ

“And some of them *were appointed* over the vessels and all the vessels of the sanctuary” (1 Chr 9:29).

3.1.5 Hithpael (the HtD stem)

The Hithpael is the “causative (with patency nuance) reflexive” and “causative (with active secondary subject) reflexive” stem.

The rudimentary meaning of the Hithpael is the double-status (*reflexive-reciprocal*) counterpart of the Piel and secondarily as a passive form.²⁷ However, Hithpael verbs are intransitive and often have a reflexive or reciprocal meaning in relation to their active counterparts of the Qal, Piel, or Hiphil type from the same root.²⁸ The following semantic categories are helpful in classifying verbs in the Hithpael.

(a) *Reflexive* – indicates that the subject of a verb is also its implied object. Stated another way, the direct object, though unspecified, is also the subject of the verb: הִתְחַבְּאוּ, “they *hid themselves*” (1 Sam 14:11), וַיִּתְחַבְּאוּ הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה, “the man and his wife *hid themselves* from the presence of YHWH” (Gen 3:8), הַכֹּהֲנִים לֹא־הִתְקַדְּשׁוּ, “the priests had not *sanctified themselves*” (2 Chr 30:3).

In some verbal roots, the subject of the *reflexive* Hithpael is not the same as the direct object (which may be expressed), but is rather the same as the indirect object:²⁹

²⁷ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 159–60; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 424–32; Kautzsch 1910, 149–51; Chisholm 1998, 82; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 82–84; Lambdin 1971a, 248–50.

²⁸ Lambdin 1971a, 249.

²⁹ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 430; Seow 1995, 298.

וַיִּתְפַּשֵּׁט יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־הַמְּעִיל, “Jonathan *stripped himself* of the robe” (1 Sam 18:4).

(b) *Reciprocal* – indicates that two or more subjects act in relationship to each other: לָכֵה נִתְרָאָה פָּנִים, “Come, let us *look one another* in the face” (2 Kgs 14:8), הִתְקַשְּׂרוּ עִלָּיו עֲבָדָיו, “his servants *conspired with one another* against him” (2 Chr 24:25), וַאֲשָׁמַע מִדְּבַר אֱלֹהִים, “I heard *someone speaking* with me” (Ezek 43:6).

(c) *Iterative* – indicates repeated action:

לֹהֵט הַחֶרֶב הַמִּתְהַפֶּכֶת

“the flame of a *revolving* sword [literally: *turning repeatedly*]” (Gen 3:24), וַיִּתְאַבֵּל עַל־בָּנָיו יָמִים רַבִּים, “and he [Jacob] *mourned* for his sons many days” (Gen 37:34), אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים הִתְהַלֵּךְ־נֹחַ, “Noah *walked* with God” (Gen 6:9).³⁰

(d) *Denominative* – indicates a derived verbal idea related to a noun or substantive:

וּבְנֵי־אִי שָׁמְרוֹן רָאִיתִי תְּפִלָּה הַנִּבְּאוּ בְּבַעַל וַיִּתְעוּ אֶת־עַמִּי
אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל

“Among the *prophets* of Samaria I saw a disgusting thing: *they prophesied* by Baal and led my people astray” (Jer 23:13), וַיִּתְאַנֶּף יְהוָה מְאֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, “YHWH was very *angry* with Israel” (2 Kgs 17:18).

3.1.6 Hiphil (the H stem)

The Hiphil is the “causative (with agency nuance) active” stem. Unlike the Piel causative, where the focus is on the

³⁰ On the special nuances of הִלֵּךְ in the Hithpael and the possibility that it is an “Akkadianism” borrowed into Hebrew, see Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 427–29.

bringing about of a state or condition, the Hiphil causative expresses the cause of an action. The Piel causative tends to focus on the outcome of the action, though with a patency nuance (i.e., the object is transposed passively into a new state or condition). The subject of a Piel causative changes the object into the state or condition (see Piel *factive* and *resultative* in section 3.1.3,a). By contrast, the Hiphil causative generally has to do with the causing of an event, this time with an agency nuance. In the Hiphil causation, the object participates in the event denoted by the verbal root.³¹

Generally, the fundamental causative nuance of a Hiphil will be determined by the specific type of verbal root used, and often by the meaning of that root in the Qal and whether it is transitive or intransitive in the Qal. The following semantic categories are helpful in classifying verbs in the Hiphil.

(a) *Causative* – indicates the bringing about of the sense of a verb occurring in the Qal or Niphal. But this causation takes a variety of distinctive connotations, depending on the nature of the root involved.

(a.1) Qal transitives usually become doubly transitive in the Hiphil; that is, they take two objects, a “causing” object and an object of the verbal idea expressed in the root.³² In this example from Deuteronomy 3:28, the object of causation is represented in the translation by “them,” and the object of the verbal idea is “the land”: $\text{וְהוּא יְנַחֵל אוֹתָם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ}$, “for he [Joshua] will cause them to inherit the land.”

However, sometimes the second object is omitted, leaving the predicate singly transitive. This is frequently

³¹ Jenni 1968, 20–52; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 433–36; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 162–64.

³² The terminology “doubly transitive” is that of Lambdin (1972, 211). Waltke and O’Connor refer to “three-place predicates,” by which they mean one subject and two objects (Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 441).

the case when the objects of causation are personal, or where they are abstract nouns or speech acts:³³ לֹא תִרְעוּ וְלֹא תִשְׁמִיעוּ אֶת־קוֹלְכֶם, “Do not shout or cause your voice to be heard” (Josh 6:10). Thus, verbs that are transitive in the Qal, but which may appear without an object, may be either singly or doubly transitive in the Hiphil: וְאֵלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם אֶת־מִחְנֵה אָרָם קוֹל רֶכֶב קוֹל סוּס קוֹל חֵיל גָּדוֹל, “And the Lord had caused the Aramean army to hear the sound of chariots, and of horses, the sound of a great army” (2 Kgs 7:6). In this case, שָׁמַע takes two objects: the Aramean army and the sound. But the same root may have only one object in the Hiphil causative: מִשָּׁמַיִם הִשְׁמַעְתָּ דִּין, “From the heavens you uttered judgment” (Ps 76:9).

(a.2) Qal and Niphal intransitives become singly transitive in the Hiphil; that is, they take one object.³⁴ Most common in this category is a large group of Qal intransitive fientive verbs designating motion: אֲנִי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים, “I am YHWH who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans” (Gen 15:7), וַיָּשָׁב יְהוָה עֲלֵהֶם אֶת־מֵי הַיָּם, “and YHWH brought back the waters of the sea upon them” (Exod 15:19).

Verbal roots that are specifically stative in Qal tend also to become singly transitive in the Hiphil. Here the term “factitive” may be used to indicate the transitivizing nature of the Hiphil, as in the Piel usage:³⁵ אַל־תִּקְשׁוּ לְבַבְכֶם, “Do not harden your hearts” (Ps 95:8), אֲנִי אֶקְשֶׁה אֶת־לֵב פַּרְעֹה, “I will harden Pharaoh’s heart” (Exod 7:3), הוֹבִישׁ יְהוָה אֶת־מֵי יַם־סוּף, “YHWH dried up the waters of the Sea of Reeds” (Josh 2:10), וַתִּגְדַּל חַסְדְּךָ, “you have made great [or magnified] your loyal kindness” (Gen 19:19).

³³ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 442–43.

³⁴ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 436–41; Lambdin 1971a, 212.

³⁵ Seow 1995, 182. On the difficulty of maintaining a distinction between the Piel factitive and the Hiphil transitivizing causative with Qal stative roots, see Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 437–38. In general, they conclude that verbs in the Piel factitive “direct attention to the results of the situation apart from the event,” while the Hiphil “refers to the process.”

(b) *Stative* – designates an intransitive causation of verbal roots that are also stative in the Qal, in which the action remains with the subject itself:³⁶ וּפָרַעַה הַקָּרִיב, “and Pharaoh drew near” (Exod 14:10), וַתְּזַדְּרִי, “and you became presumptuous” (Deut 1:43).

At times this Hiphil stative is more specifically *ingressive*; that is, it designates the entry into a state or condition and the continuation in the state or condition: חָנַךְ לְנַעַר עַל-פִּי דַרְכּוֹ גַם כִּי-יִזְקִין לֹא-יִסּוּר מִמּוֹנֶה, “Train a youth in the right way to live, and when he grows old, he will not depart from it” (Prov 22:6).

At other times, an object simply ellides, leaving an intransitive sense of certain roots in Hiphil:³⁷ הַקָּשִׁיב בְּקוֹל תְּפִלָּתי, “He [God] has given heed [literally: inclined (the ear)] to the sound of my prayer” (Ps 66:19). Finally, the absence of an object may also explain certain adverbial Hiphils:³⁸ הֲטִיבַתְּ, “you did well” (1 Kgs 8:18), הִשְׁחִיתוּ, “they are corrupt” (Ps 14:1).

(c) *Declarative* – involves proclamation or delocution, or an *estimative* assessment:³⁹

וַתְּצַדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצַּדִּיק וְהִרְשִׁיעוּ אֶת-הָרָשָׁע

“and they [judges] will pardon [or declare righteous] the righteous and condemn [or declare wicked] the wicked” (Deut 25:1).

(d) *Denominative* – indicates a derived verbal idea related to a noun or substantive. The nominal form is primary

³⁶ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 439; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 163; Seow 1995, 183; Lambdin 1971a, 212. Waltke and O’Connor refer to “one-place or inwardly transitive” Hiphils (Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 439).

³⁷ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 164.

³⁸ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 164.

³⁹ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 438–39; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 163; Seow 1995, 163.

and the verb secondarily derived from it:⁴⁰ וְלֹא הֶאָזִין אֵלַיְכֶם “and he (YHWH) did not give ear to you” (Deut 1:45), וַיִּגַּשׁ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי הַשָּׂכֶם וְהָעָרֶב “and the Philistine (Goliath) came forward morning and evening” (1 Sam 17:16).

(e) *Permissive* – Used rarely, the Hiphil designates an action that is agreeable to the object and allowed by the subject (Lambdin 1972, 212; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 445): הִרְאָה אֶתִּי אֶל־בָּנָיִם אֶת־יְרֵעֵךְ “God allowed me to see your children also” (Gen 48:11). Waltke and O’Connor observe a number of other uses of the Hiphil similar to the permissive, in which the relationship between the principal subject and the secondary subject requires a variety of modals in translation: *compulsion, solicitude, toleration, bestowal* (1990, 445–46).

In addition to the difficulty of the overlap between the semantic meaning of certain Piel and Hiphil forms, there are many Hiphil verbs that simply defy classification in any of these categories. Some roots are both transitive and intransitive in different contexts, and we would do well to analyze each derived stem as an independent form without insisting on a discernable connection to the other derived stems.

3.1.7 *Hophal (the Hp stem)*

The Hophal is the “causative (with agency nuance) passive” stem and is the passive counterpart to the Hiphil. As such, it contains the same five functions of the Hiphil, though in passive voice (causative, stative, declarative, denominative, permissive). Most frequently in the Hophal, the subject is caused to be in the event signified by the verbal root, whereas the subject of the Pual, by contrast, is made into a state or condition.

⁴⁰ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 443–45; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 163–64; Lambdin 1971a, 213; Seow 1995, 182.

(a) *Causative* – הַנִּגַּע בְּאִישׁ הַזֶּה וּבְאִשְׁתּוֹ מוֹת יוּמָת “anyone, who molests this man or his wife shall certainly be put to death” (Gen 26:11), קַח־נָא אֶת־בְּרִכְתִּי אֲשֶׁר הֵבֵאת לָךְ, “please take my gift which has been brought to you (Gen 33:11).

(b) *Stative* – הִפְךָ יָדְךָ וְהוֹצֵיאֵנִי מִן־הַמִּחָנֶה כִּי הִחַלִּיתִי “turn around (literally: turn your hand), and take me out of the battle, for I am wounded” (1 Kgs 22:34).

(c) *Denominative* – וְהִמְלַח לֹא הִמְלַחַתְּ, “you were not rubbed with salt” (Ezek 16:4), חַיֵּית הַשָּׂדֶה הַשְּׁלָמָה־לָּךְ, “the beasts of the field will be at peace with you” (Job 5:23).

The change of voice from Hiphil to Hophal means further that in the case of Qal transitives, the primary subject of the Hiphil is no longer designated, and so the double transitivity is dropped. Such roots will designate one object or none at all: וַיִּגַּד לְרֵבֶקָה אֶת־דְּבָרֵי עֵשָׂו, “and the words of Esau were told to Rebekah” (Gen 27:42). Similarly with Qal and Niphal intransitives, the Hophal is most often also intransitive so that no object is represented: כְּמַיִם מְגֻרִים בְּמוֹרָד, “like waters poured down a steep place” (Mic 1:4).⁴¹

3.2 Aspect

As we have seen, the grammatical category *Aspekt* identifies the action as either undefined or progressive (“perfect” or “imperfect”).⁴² Conjugations indicate aspect in that they denote the relation of an action to the passage of time, especially in reference to its completion, duration, or repetition.⁴³

⁴¹ For more on the subtle changes from Hiphil to Hophal, see Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 449–51, and Lambdin 1971a, 243–44.

⁴² See Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 479–95; Joūon and Muraoka 1993, 359–65; Chisholm 1998, 86.

⁴³ As regards terminology, we have retained the traditional grammatical designations “perfect” and “imperfect.” We recognize that these

3.2.1 *Perfect*

The perfect views a situation from the outside, looking upon it as a complete whole.⁴⁴ It may refer to an action or state in the past, present, or future, although it tends to view it as a complete situation or action that is temporally undefined (making it similar to the Greek “aorist” tense).⁴⁵ Although not required by the morphology, the perfect is frequently used for actions or states reported in the past, often requiring past tense translations. It may also refer to the perfect state, that is, to an event and a state resulting from that event (making the perfect similar to the Greek perfect). The following semantic categories are helpful in further classifying verbs in the perfect.⁴⁶

terms are wholly inadequate, especially for the perfect, as we hope will be clear from our discussion. But a survey of the most widely used beginning grammars reveals a tendency to retain the traditional nomenclature (Hostetter 2000, Seow 1995, Kelley 1992, Lambdin 1971a, Pratico and Van Pelt 2001, etc.). Most of the reference grammars use a combination of terms: hence Joüon’s “perfect” and “future,” Meyer’s interchanging “afformative conjugation”/“perfect” and “preformative conjugation”/“imperfect,” and Waltke and O’Connor’s “suffix (perfective)” and “prefix (non-perfective).” The reader needs to be aware of the inadequacy of the traditional terms and of the variety of designations for them in the reference grammars (see Rainey 1996, 2:365–66).

⁴⁴ Note the careful distinction between viewing a situation “as a complete whole” and viewing a completed action or situation. The perfect does not denote completed action, only that the whole action is in view, which may be placed in the present or future as well as the past. This distinction is clearer when one considers the origins of the BH perfect among second-millennium West Semitic languages as a development from a form related to the Akkadian “stative” or permansive plus personal suffixes, so that it was probably perceived originally as a timeless nominal clause (Moscati 1980, 133; Bergsträsser 1983, 20–23; Rainey 1996, 2:347–66). On the need to abandon “stative” for the Akkadian permansive, see Huehnergard 1987, 229–32.

⁴⁵ However, in LBH, the perfect is used only for the past (Sáenz-Badillos 1993, 129).

⁴⁶ Kautzsch 1910, 309–13; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 479–95; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 359–65; Bergsträsser 1962, 2:25–29; Chisholm 1998,

(a) *Complete* – The action or state is viewed as a complete whole, with the beginning and end in view. Usually required is either simple past, present perfect, or pluperfect in translation: וְלַחֲשֹׁךְ קָרָא לַיְלָה, “and the darkness he *called* night” (Gen 1:5), שָׁכַח אֵל, “God *has forgotten*” (Ps 10:11), וְלֹא יָדַע יַעֲקֹב כִּי דָחַל גְּנֹבָתָם, “Jacob did not know that Rachel *had stolen* them” (Gen 31:32).

(b) *Stative* – a state of affairs or a condition usually expressed through a stative verb. Since a stative verb does not denote a “once-and-for-all” completed action, it regularly requires duration, usually present tense in translation: יָדֵיכֶם מְלֵאֵי דָמִים מְלֵאֵי, “your hands *are full of* blood” (Isa 1:15), דְּבַר־הַתְּעֵבָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר שָׂנֵאתִי *hate*” (Jer 44:4).

(c) *Experience* – with a fientive verb denoting a state of mind, usually requiring the present in translation: לֹא יָדַעְתִּי, “I do not *know*” (Gen 4:9). This is common with verbs of perception (רָע) or attitude (אָהַב): שָׂנֵאתִי מְאֹדְתִי חַגֵּיכֶם: (אהב), “I *hate*, I *despise* your festivals” (Amos 5:21), אֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי אֶת־זִדְוֹנְךָ וְאֵת רָע לְבָבְךָ, “*I know* your impudence and the evil of your heart” (1 Sam 17:28), וְזֵה אֲהַבְתִּי נְהַפְכוּבִי, “the ones *I love* have turned against me” (Job 19:19).

(d) *Rhetorical future* – expresses a vivid future action or situation, which is not yet a reality but considered a certainty from the speaker’s rhetorical point of view.⁴⁷ As

86–89; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 144–46; Williams 1976, 29–30.

⁴⁷ Often called the *prophetic perfect*, although this designation may be misleading if we make too much of the distinction between the *rhetorical perfect* and the *future imperfect*. For summaries of the problem, see Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 465 (but see their 490 also), and Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 363; Chisholm 1998, 88; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 146, and especially 364; Williams 1976, 30.

a rhetorical device, the perfect presents future events as if they have already occurred, which often requires the present or future in translation: לָכֵן גָּלָה עַמִּי מִבְּלִי־דַעַת, “therefore my people will go into exile for want of knowledge” (Isa 5:13), דָּרַךְ כּוֹכֵב מִיַּעֲקֹב, “A star will come out of Jacob” (Num 24:17), כִּי עַתָּה תִּתֵּן וְאִם־לֹא לְקַחְתִּי בְּחֹזֶקָה, “But you shall give it now, and if not, I will take it by force” (1 Sam 2:16), עֲשִׂיתִי אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה, “I will do this thing” (2 Sam 14:21).

(e) **Proverbial** – denotes actions, events, or facts that are not time conditioned, and considered to be general truths. Also known as the *gnomic perfect*, this usually requires the present tense: וְתֵר וְסִיס וְעִגּוּר שְׁמְרוּ אֶת־עֵת בְּאִנְהָ, “and the turtledove, swallow, and crane observe the time of their coming” (Jer 8:7), יַבֵּשׁ הָצִיר נִבֵּל צִיץ, “The grass wITHERS and the flower fades” (Isa 40:7).

(f) **Performative** – describes an action that occurs by means of speaking, usually requiring the present: וְנָתַתִּי אֶתְךָ עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, “I appoint you over all the land of Egypt” (Gen 41:41),

בְּיוֹם הַהוּא כָּרַת יְהוָה אֶת־אֲבָרָם בְּרִית לֵאמֹר לְיִרְעֵךְ נָתַתִּי
אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת

“on that day, YHWH made a covenant with Abraham saying, ‘To your descedants, I give this land’” (Gen 15:18).

3.2.2 Imperfect

The imperfect has an even less precise time value than the perfect.⁴⁸ In general, the imperfect views actions, events, or states from the inside, meaning that the situation is underway or in process. The speaker or writer views the situation

⁴⁸ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 372. Although the term “imperfect” is less than completely satisfying for this aspect of the BH verb, we retain it for the sake of convenience (see Rainey 1986, 7, and 1996, 2:227–28).

as still continuing, in the process of accomplishment, just taking place, or imminent. The imperfect may assume an indicative mood so that the speaker or writer makes an objective statement, which, however, makes no reference to the beginning or end of the situation. As with the perfect aspect, context must determine whether the situation is past, present, or future.⁴⁹ At other times, the imperfect may assume a subjunctive or hypothetical mood, describing a dependent situation that is only contingent or possible. Thus, the speaker or writer uses the imperfect when viewing an action as nonspecific, habitual, or probable.

This great variety of uses for the imperfect, together with its close association to the modals (see section 3.3), can be explained partially by developments in the history of the Hebrew language near the end of the second millennium B.C.E. On the basis of comparative Semitic evidence, it appears that the prefixed forms in BH were preceded by four distinct forms: an indicative imperfect (present-future) *yaqtulu*, a subjunctive *yaqtula*, a jussive *yaqtul*, and a preterite *yaqtul*.⁵⁰ When Hebrew words lost their final vowels (approximately 1100 B.C.E.), these forms became largely indistinguishable. This may explain why the Bible's uses of the imperfect conjugation include a preterite use and several "contingent" uses (vestiges of the subjunctive in Proto-Hebrew). In addition, the volitive modals (see section 3.3) suggest that *yaqtulu* and the jussive *yaqtul* had merged completely by the time BH was written.⁵¹

⁴⁹ However, in LBH, the imperfect is used primarily for the future (Sáenz-Badillos 1993, 129).

⁵⁰ The evidence further suggests the presence of an energetic form (see Rainey 1986, 10–12, and 1996, 2:221–64; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 388; Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 496–97). Some scholars also speak of an accent distinguishing Proto-Hebrew jussive and preterite, although this is a moot point (see especially Zevit 1998, 49–65, and compare Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 388).

⁵¹ For more, see Meyer 1992, 18–20, 26–27, 381–84; Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 455–78, 496–502 (esp. 497), 543–47, 566–68; Joüon and Muraoka

The following semantic categories are helpful in further classifying verbs in the imperfect.⁵²

(a) **Future** – describes an action anticipated or announced: כִּי־מֶלֶךְ יִמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ, “for a king will reign over us” (1 Sam 12:12), אָתָּה תָּבוֹא אֶל־אֲבוֹתֶיךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם, “you shall go to your ancestors in peace” (Gen 15:15). The future imperfect may be used to denote action that is in fact past as far as the speaker or writer is concerned, but prior to some other action: וַיָּבֵא אֶל־הָאָדָם לְרֵאוֹת מֶה־יִקְרָא־לוֹ, “and he [YHWH] brought [them] to the man to see what he would call them” (Gen 2:19). Likewise, it may denote action in the future that is prior to another anticipated action: וְהָעֵלִיתָ עוֹלָה בְּעֵצֵי הָאֲשֵׁרָה אֲשֶׁר תִּכְרֹת, “and offer it as a burnt offering with the wood of the sacred pole that you shall cut down” (Judg 6:26).

(b) **Customary** – denotes an action occurring regularly or customarily. The action may be in the past, in which case the customary imperfect is *iterative*, emphasizing the repeated nature of the action: כִּכָּהֵן יַעֲשֶׂה אִיּוֹב כְּל־הַיָּמִים, “This is what Job would always do” (Job 1:5). Customary action may also designate the present, in which case it frequently takes on a *proverbial* connotation: בֶּן חָכָם יִשְׂמַח־אָב, “a wise child makes a father glad” (Prov 10:1).⁵³

(c) **Progressive** – indicates action that is underway or continuing as the writer or speaker describes it. Such

1993, 387–89; Sáenz-Badillos 1993, 48–49; Rainey 1986, 4–19; Smith 1991, 12.

⁵² Kautzsch 1910, 313–19; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 496–518; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 365–73; Lambdin 1971a, 100; Bergsträsser 1962, 2:29–36; Chisholm 1998, 89–94; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 146–49; Williams 1976, 30–32.

⁵³ For the iterative and proverbial, Waltke and O’Connor speak of “past customary non-perfective,” which implies that the situation no longer holds true at the time of the utterance, and “habitual non-perfective” (1990, 502–03 and 506).

actions or events of the present are usually expressed with participles, but the progressive imperfect emphasizes the present continuous nature of the action, particularly in questions: אָנָה תֵּלְכִי, “where are you going?” (Gen 16:8), לָמָּה תֵּעַמַּד בַּחוּץ, “why are you standing outside?” (Gen 24:31).

(d) *Contingent* – expresses action that is dependent upon other factors in the context. A wide variety of such uses is possible, often requiring the use of modal helping verbs: may, can, shall, might, could, should, and so on.

(d.1) *Conditional* – expresses the action of the protasis or introductory clause of a conditional sentence: כִּי־אֵלֶךְ בְּנֵיאַלְדַּי, “If I walk through the darkest valley” (Ps 23:4), אִם־אֶמְצָא בְּסוֹדֵם חַמְשִׁים צְדִיקִים, “If I find in Sodom fifty righteous people” (Gen 18:26).

(d.2) *Permission* – indicates that the subject is permitted to take action, usually requiring “may”:

מִכָּל עֵץ־הַגֶּן אֲכַל תֹּאכַל

“You may freely eat of every tree in the garden” (Gen 2:16), יְהוָה מִי־יִגוֹר בְּאֶהְלֶךְ מִי־יִשְׁכֵּן בְּהַר קְדוֹשְׁךָ, “O YHWH, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill?” (Ps 15:1).

(d.3) *Obligation* – denotes that some action should (or should not) be done: מַעֲשִׂים אֲשֶׁר לֹא יַעֲשׂוּ עֲשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי, “You have done things to me that ought not to be done” (Gen 20:9), לֹא־יַעֲשֶׂה כֵן בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, “such a thing is not done in Israel” (2 Sam 13:12).

(d.4) *Command* – expresses a strong injunction or prohibition: קָנִים תַּעֲשֶׂה אֶת־הַתְּבָה, “you shall make rooms for the ark” (Gen 6:14),

כָּל אֲשֶׁר־יִלֵּךְ בִּלְשׁוֹנוֹ מִן־הַמַּיִם כַּאֲשֶׁר יֵלֵךְ הַכֶּלֶב תִּצְיַג אוֹתוֹ לְבָר

“all who lap the water with their tongue, just as a dog laps water, set them apart” (Judg 7:5).

The use of the imperfect (or the *waw*-consecutive perfect) may connote a command perceived by the speaker as continually valid, or one that need not be performed immediately. Such use of the imperfect may also occur when a superior speaker presents laws or instructions.⁵⁴ With the negative particle, such imperfects become prohibitions, which is common in legal literature: לֹא תִגְנוֹב, “*you shall not steal*” (Exod 20:15), לֹא תִשְׁמַע אֶל-דְּבַר יְהוָה הַהוּא, “*you shall not listen* to the words of that prophet” (Deut 13:4 [Eng. 13:3]).

(e) *Preterite* – designates specifically past time situations when occurring after אָז, טָרַם, and בְּטָרַם: אָז יָשִׁיר-מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לַיהוָה, “Then Moses and the Israelites *sang* this song to YHWH” (Exod 15:1), וְכֹל שִׁיחַ הַשָּׂדֶה טָרַם יִהְיֶה בְּאֶרֶץ, “and no plant of the field *was* yet in the earth” (Gen 2:5).

Technically, the preterite was a third conjugation that was dying out in BH. Comparison with other Semitic languages reveals that the shortened form of several weak roots – and consistently the Hiphil prefixed forms – could serve in prose as a genuine preterite with אָז, טָרַם, and בְּטָרַם and in archaic poetry without them.

3.3 Modals

In addition to the conjugations expressing statement of fact (perfect and imperfect), Hebrew also has three modals expressing volition: jussive, cohortative, and imperative. These forms evolved independently in the early history of Hebrew, and they therefore constitute a class by function rather than by morphology; that is, they are treated together only because of similar uses, not because they constitute a distinct

⁵⁴ Shulman 2001.

conjugation.⁵⁵ Together they comprise the variety of ways BH expresses will or volition.⁵⁶

3.3.1 Jussive

The reader should recall that most roots show no distinction between the jussive and the corresponding imperfect forms. The only exceptions are Hiphil forms, Qal forms of middle weak roots, and all stems of final-*hē* roots.⁵⁷

The jussive expresses the speaker's desire, wish, or command where a second or third person is the subject of the action, although the third person is more common.⁵⁸ The following semantic categories are helpful in classifying the jussive.

(a) *Command* – A superior uses the jussive with an inferior as subject: יְהִי אֹר, “*let there be light*” (Gen 1:3), וְהָעוֹף יִרְבַּ בָּאָרֶץ, “and *let* birds *multiply* on the earth” (Gen 1:22), שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תּוֹחַל עַד-בּוֹאִי אֵלֶיךָ, “seven days *you shall wait* until I come to you” (1 Sam 10:8).

At times, this connotes *permission*:

וַיַּעַל לִירוּשָׁלַם אֲשֶׁר בִּיהוּדָה וַיִּבֶן אֶת-בַּיִת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

⁵⁵ For the hypothesis that the jussive had an independent origin from the imperfect and that they subsequently merged, see discussion under 3.2.2.

⁵⁶ Kautzsch 1910, 319–26; Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 564–79; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 373–79; Bergsträsser 1962, 2:45–53; Chisholm 1998, 103–07; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 150–53; Williams 1976, 34–35.

⁵⁷ Kautzsch 1910, 130–31; Hostetter 2000, 70, 97, and 140; Seow 1995, 209, 235–36, and 279–81; Ross 2001, 150, 211, 261, and 277.

⁵⁸ In the early stages of Hebrew, the shortened prefix conjugation for expressions of volition could be used in all three persons. But in BH, the jussive occurs only in the third and second persons, although the third is by far the most common (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 567; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 138–39 and 376; and Chisholm 1998, 103). Most of the examples included here are third person.

“let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and let him rebuild the house of YHWH, the God of Israel” (Ezra 1:3), וַתְּהִי אִשָּׁה לְבֶן־אֲדֹנָיִךְ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה, “and let her become the wife of your master’s son, as YHWH has spoken” (Gen 24:51). At other times, the concept of *invitation* is more appropriate: וַתְּהִי נָא אֶלֶּהָ בֵּינֵנוּתֵינוּ, “let there be an oath between us” (Gen 26:28).

(b) *Wish* – An inferior uses the jussive with a superior as subject: יַחֲיֵה הַמֶּלֶךְ, “long live the king” (1 Sam 10:24), וְעַתָּה יִרְאֵה פִרְעֹה אִישׁ נָבוֹן וְחָכָם, “and now let Pharaoh select [literally: see] a man who is discerning and wise” (Gen 41:33).

The speaker may use the *jussive of request* by referring to himself or herself indirectly when addressing a superior: וַתְּחִי נַפְשִׁי, “and may my life be saved” (Gen 19:20). The use of “servant” is a common honorific substitute for a first-person pronoun in such requests: וְעַתָּה יִשְׁבֶּנָּא עַבְדְּךָ, “and now please let your servant remain” (Gen 44:33). Such a request is often followed by the particle נָּא: יִשְׁבֶּנָּא עַבְדְּךָ, “let your servant return” (2 Sam 19:38 [Eng 19:37]). At times, this connotes *advice*: וַיִּפְקֹד הַמֶּלֶךְ פְּקִידִים, “and let the king appoint overseers” (Esth 2:3).

Where the jussive expresses a wish for God to take action, the jussive denotes *prayer*: יִסַּף יְהוָה לִי בֶן אַחֵר, “may YHWH add to me another son” (Gen 30:24), יִקַּם יְהוָה אֶת־דְּבָרֹו, “may YHWH establish his word” (1 Sam 1:23).

(c) *Benediction* – A superior speaks of God as the subject of the jussive in order to pronounce a blessing for a third party: וַיְהִי אֱלֹהִים עִמָּךְ, “and may God be with you” (Exod 18:19), יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ, “YHWH bless you and keep you” (Num 6:24),⁵⁹ וְעַתָּה יַעֲשֵׂה יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת, “and

⁵⁹ For more on the six jussive verbs (only two in form) in the Aaronic blessing, see Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 566.

now may YHWH show steadfast love and faithfulness to you” (2 Sam 2:6).

(d) **Prohibition** – with אַל, the command and wish nuances are expressed negatively:⁶⁰ וְאַל-תַּעַשׂ לוֹ מְאוֹמָה “do not do anything to him” (Gen 22:12), אַל-נָא תְהִי מְרִיבָה בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶיךָ “let there be no strife between you and me” (Gen 13:8), אַל-נָא יִחַר לְאָדֹנָי “O may the Lord not be angry” (Gen 18:30).

3.3.2 Imperative

The imperative expresses the speaker’s command or instruction directly in the second person. It is interesting to note that the imperative is used only in positive expressions of volition, never in negative commands. Rather, negative commands are expressed with the imperfect preceded by אַל or לֹא, אַל with the imperfect for *immediate prohibition* (section 4.2.3) and לֹא with the imperfect for *permanent prohibition* (section 4.2.11).

The following semantic categories are helpful in classifying the imperative.

(a) **Command** – The speaker urges immediate action: לֵךְ-לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ, “go forth from your country” (Gen 12:1),⁶¹ שׁוּב אֶל-אֲרָץ אֲבוֹתֶיךָ, “return to the land of your ancestors” (Gen 31:3), בֹּא-אִתָּהּ וְכָל-בֵּיתְךָ אֶל-הַתֵּבָה, “go into the ark, you and all your household” (Gen 7:1), בֹּא דַבֵּר אֶל-פַּרְעֹה מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם, “go, speak to Pharaoh king of Egypt” (Exod 6:11). Less immediate action may

⁶⁰ It is difficult to assign any particular meaning to the few uses of אַל with the jussive. See Kautzsch 1910, 322.

⁶¹ Note that the use of reflexive לָ with imperatives is common (see 4.1.10). Some have called this the centripetal use of the preposition (Muraoka 1978, 495–98; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 207–08).

also be commanded by the imperative, although the imperfect is more common: וּכְאֲשֶׁר תִּרְאֶה עֲשֵׂה עִם־עַבְדֶּיךָ, “and deal (at that time) with your servants according to what you observe” (Dan 1:13). To this category belong also those imperatives connoting *request* or *wish*: שִׁפְטוּ־נָא בֵּינִי וּבֵין כַּרְמִי, “judge between me and my vineyard” (Isa 5:3). In contradistinction to commands expressed by indicative forms (such as imperfects or converted perfects, see sections 3.2.2,d and 3.5.3, respectively), such imperatives are usually perceived by the speaker as urgent and usually valid for one occasion.⁶²

(b) *Permission* – The speaker grants permission for the action, which the recipient of the imperative desires to take. This use of the imperative is frequently preceded in the context by an actual request (often a jussive or cohortative of wish): אָעֲלֶה־נָא וְאֶקְבְּרָה אֶת־אָבִי... עֲלֶה וְקַבֵּר אֶת־אָבִיךָ, “let me go up and bury my father... go up and bury your father” (Gen 50:5–6), אֵלְכָה נָא... לְדָ לְשָׁלוֹם, “please let me go back... go in peace” (Exod 4:18).

(c) *Promise* – The speaker assures that the recipient of the imperative will take the action in the future, although the action itself is normally outside the power of the person receiving the order:⁶³ עֲלֶה רָמֹת גִּלְעָד וְהִצַּלְחָה, “go up to Ramoth-Gilead and triumph” (1 Kgs 22:12), וּבִשְׁנֵה הַשְּׁלִישִׁית זָרְעוּ וְקָצְרוּ וְנִטְעוּ כַרְמִים וְאָכְלוּ פְרִיָם, “and in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards, and eat their fruit” (Isa 37:30).

A long form is possible in all derived stems consisting of a suffix ׀ָ, which results in certain other vowel changes

⁶² For other subtle distinctions between imperatives and commands expressed by indicative forms, see Shulman 2001.

⁶³ See Waltke and O’Connor’s discussion of “heterosis” in which one grammatical form is exchanged for another. So a promise is made more emphatic by the use of an imperative where a present-future imperfect would be expected (1990, 572).

(קְטַלְהָ or קְטַלְהָ in the Qal strong verb). This has sometimes been taken as stylistic, emphatic, or polite, but appears to have no discernible difference in nuance from the regular form.⁶⁴ Recent studies have suggested it may have been used when the verbal action was directed toward the speaker.⁶⁵

Likewise the particle אֵן, which is frequently added to all three volitive modals (imperatives, jussives, and cohortatives), evinces no discernible difference in meaning. Some authorities continue to suspect that it originally added a nuance of “energy” (so translated “please” or “I pray”),⁶⁶ while others have noted its “logical” connotations, implying that the wish of the volitive is a logical consequence of a preceding statement or situation.⁶⁷ In any case, the particle could easily be left untranslated.

3.3.3 Cohortative

The cohortative expresses the speaker’s desire, wish, or command, with the first person used as the subject of the action. In general, the cohortative emphasizes the determination behind the action, or one’s personal interest in it. The following semantic categories are helpful in classifying the cohortative.

(a) *Resolve* – The speaker expresses self-determination to take an action that is within the speaker’s ability: אֲרִדְהָ נָא וְאֶרְאֶה, “I must go down and see” (Gen 18:21), אֲגִילָהּ וְאֶשְׂמְחָהּ בְּחֶסֶדְךָ, “I will exult and rejoice in your steadfast love” (Ps 31:8), אֲשִׁירָהּ נָא לִידִידִי, “let me sing now for my beloved” (Isa 5:1), אֲדַבֶּרָהּ בְּמַר נַפְשִׁי, “I will speak in the

⁶⁴ Joüon suggests it is purely euphonic (1910, 143 and 378).

⁶⁵ Fassberg 1999, 7–13.

⁶⁶ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 350–51.

⁶⁷ Lambdin 1971a, 170–71.

bitterness of my soul” (Job 10:1), אֲשִׁירָה וְאֶזְמְרָה לַיהוָה, “I will sing and I will make melody to YHWH” (Ps 27:6).⁶⁸

(b) *Wish* – The speaker expresses the desire to take an action that requires the consent of another: אֶעְבְּרָה בְּאַרְצְךָ, “let me pass through your land” (Deut 2:27), אֶלְכֶּה נָא וְאָשׁוּבָה אֶל־אֲחֵי אֲשֶׁר־בְּמִצְרַיִם, “let me go back, let me return to my kindred in Egypt” (Exod 4:18), אֶעְבְּרָה־נָא וְאֶסִּירָה אֶת־רֹאשׁוֹ, “let me go over and take off his head” (2 Sam 16:9), אֶלְכֶּה־נָא הַשָּׂדֶה וְאֶלְקַטְתָּהּ בְּשִׁבְלִים, “let me go to the field and let me glean among the ears of grain” (Ruth 2:2).

At times, the consent seems doubtful, or the speaker incapable: אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֶל־נָא נֹאבְדָהּ בְּנַפְשׁ הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה, “please, O YHWH, do not let us perish on account of this man’s life” (Jonah 1:14), עַל־מִי אֶדְבָּרָה וְאֶעִידָהּ, “to whom shall I speak and give warning” (Jer 6:10).

(c) *Exhortation* – Plural speakers encourage one another to take action, or to help in the action: הָבֵה נִלְבְּנָה לִבְנִים, “come, let us make bricks” (Gen 11:3), נִנְתְּקָה אֶת־מוֹסְרוֹתֵינוּ, “let us burst their bonds asunder” (Ps 2:3), וְנַחֲשָׁבָה עַל־יְרֵמְיָהוּ מַחֲשָׁבוֹת, “and let us devise plans against Jeremiah” (Jer 18:18).

3.4 Nonfinites

The Hebrew nonfinites are not inflected for *Aspekt*; that is, they make no reference to the action as undefined or progressive (as do the perfect and imperfect conjugations, see section 3.2). Furthermore, the two Hebrew infinitives are not

⁶⁸ Here belong third-*hê* verbs that make no distinction between imperfect and cohortative in form: נַעֲשֵׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ, “let us make humankind in our image” (Gen 1:26, and compare Gen 2:18 and others). See Kautzsch 1910, 210.

marked by person, gender, or number.⁶⁹ The participle is not marked by person, but is so marked for gender and number. The lack of specific inflection leaves these “nonfinites” less restricted in their uses than the conjugations or modals.

The nonfinites are based on verbal roots, but hold a middle position between verbs and nouns. The infinitives are “verbal nouns,” displaying some uses similar to those of nouns and others similar to those of verbs. The participle is a “verbal adjective,” being formed as a noun with gender and number, and often having functions like an adjective.

3.4.1 *Infinitive Construct*

The infinitive construct comes closest to the uses of infinitives in other languages.⁷⁰ It is both “atemporal” and “apersonal,” meaning that only the context determines the time/aspect features of the action as well as the subject of the action itself.⁷¹ It has a wide and flexible range of uses, most of which occur in relation to another verb. It often functions as a noun in that it may be governed by prepositions and may take pronominal suffixes. Rather than being negated by לֹא or אֵינִי, the infinitive construct takes בְּלֹאֵי (לְ).⁷²

Technically, the infinitive construct has no semantic function in itself: “The functions of an infinitive refer either to the syntactic function that it fulfills in a clause, or to the semantic relationship between itself and the finite verb.”⁷² The following semantic categories are helpful in classifying the infinitive construct.⁷³

⁶⁹ Hebrew is not alone among the Northwest Semitic languages in having two infinitives (Harris 1939, 41; Garr 1985, 183–84).

⁷⁰ Blau 1976, 47; Bergsträsser 1983, 56; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 432.

⁷¹ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 439.

⁷² Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 154.

⁷³ Kautzsch 1910, 347–52; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 598–611; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 432–39; Meyer 1992, 399–403; Lambdin 1971a, 128–29; Bergsträsser 1962, 2:53–60; Chisholm 1998, 77–78; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 153–57; Williams 1976, 35–37. On the infinitive construct in epigraphic Hebrew, see Gogel 1998, 270–71.

(a) *Nominal* – when used as a noun or in place of a noun. Thus, the infinitive construct may function in nominative, genitive, or accusative functions.⁷⁴

(a.1) Examples of the infinitive construct as *nominatives*:

עָנוּשׁ לְצַדִּיק לֹא-טוֹב

“*to impose a fine* on the innocent is not good” (Prov 17:26), טוֹב שֶׁבֶת בְּאַרְץ־מִדְבָּר מֵאַשְׁתּוֹ מְדִינִים וְכָעֵס in a desert land than with a contentious and fretful wife” (Prov 21:19), טוֹב תָּתִי אֶתְּהָ לָּךְ, “it is good that *I give* her to you” (Gen 29:19).

(a.2) Examples of the infinitive construct as *genitives*: עֵת סִפּוּד וְעֵת רִקּוּד, “a time *of mourning* and a time *of dancing*” (Eccl 3:4), בַּיּוֹם אֲכַלְךָ מִמְנוּ מוֹת תָּמוּת, “in the day *when you eat* (literally: *of your eating*) from it, you shall surely die” (Gen 2:17), לֹא-עֵת הָאֵסֶף הַמְקַנֵּה, “it is not time for the cattle *to be gathered together* [literally: time *of being gathered together*]” (Gen 29:7). This category also includes the numerous times the infinitive construct occurs after a preposition (see sections 3.4.1.b–d, f, g).

(a.3) Examples of the infinitive construct as *accusatives*: לֹא אֲדַע צֵאת וְבֹא, “I do not know how *to go out or to come in*” (1 Kgs 3:7), זָכֵר עֲמָדִי לְפָנֶיךָ, “remember how *I stood* before you [literally: *my standing* before you]” (Jer 18:20). Just as nouns may be *adverbial accusatives* (see section 2.3), so the infinitive construct may take on *adverbial* force when following a finite verb (often a Hiphil or Piel denominative). In such cases, the infinitive construct takes on the function of the main verb in the English translation: וַתַּרַע לַעֲשׂוֹת, “*you have done* evil” (1 Kgs 14:9), מִדַּוְעָ מֵהֵרָתָן בָּא הַיּוֹם, “*why have you come back* so soon today” (Exod 2:18).

To this category of the infinitive construct as accusatives belong many verbs that require an infinitive to complete their meanings. Thus, the infinitive construct may serve

⁷⁴ The *nominal* infinitive construct may occur in any of these functions with the preposition לְ.

as a *verbal complement*: לֹא יוּכַל לְרֹאֵת, “he is not able *to see*” (Gen 48:10), לֹא-יֵאבֶה יְהוָה סְלַח לוֹ, “YHWH will not be willing *to pardon* him” (Deut 29:19). The most common verbs requiring such a complement include יָדַע (and other verbs of observation or cognition), חָלַל (Hiphil, to begin), יָסַף (Hiphil, to continue), בִּקֵּשׁ (Piel, to seek), חָדַל (to stop), יָכַל (to be capable of), מָאֵן (to refuse), נָתַן (to allow), and אָבֵה (to be willing).⁷⁵

(b) *Temporal* – locates the action of the finite verb by relating it to the action of the infinitive construct. The uses of various prepositions on the *temporal* infinitive construct denote the specific moment in time.⁷⁶

(b.1) The preposition בְּ plus the infinitive (section 4.1.5,b) connotes action that is *simultaneous* with that of the finite verb, and may be translated “as,” “when,” or “while”:

בְּשׁוּב דָּוִד מִהַכּוֹת אֶת-הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַתֵּצְאָנָה הַנָּשִׁים מִכָּל-עָרֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל

“*when* David *returned* from killing the Philistine, the women came out of all the towns of Israel” (1 Sam 18:6), בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא בְּשָׁבֶת עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבִטָּחָה, “on that day *when* my people Israel *are dwelling* securely” (Ezek 38:14).

(b.2) The preposition כִּי plus the infinitive (section 4.1.9,c) connotes action that occurs *immediately preceding* that of the finite verb, and may be translated “the moment when,” or “as soon as”:

וַיְהִי כְּבּוֹא אַבְרָם מִצְרָיִמָה וַיֵּרְאוּ הַמִּצְרָיִם אֶת-הָאִשָּׁה כִּי-יָפָה
הוּא מְאֹד

⁷⁵ Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 154, and Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 602.

⁷⁶ Such constructions using the infinitive construct are especially frequent after וַיְהִי (Kautzsch 1910, 347–48). For several other prepositions in addition to the ones discussed here, see Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 604–05.

“As soon as Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful” (Gen 12:14), כְּשָׁמַעַ עֲשׂוֹ אֶת־דְּבָרֵי אָבִיו וַיִּצְעַק צָעָקָה גְדֹלָה וּמְרָה עַד־מְאֹד, “When Esau heard his father’s words, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry” (Gen 27:34). Similar to בָּ above, כִּי may also point to simultaneous action:

וַיְהִי כִּי־רָאוּת הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־אֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה עֹמֶדֶת בַּחֲצַר נִשְׂאָה
חַן בְּעֵינָיו

“The moment the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she obtained favor in his sight” (Esth 5:2), וַהֲיָא כְּעֶרְחַת עֲלֵתָה נִצְּחָה, “As it was budding, its blossoms came out” (Gen 40:10).

(b.3) The preposition עַד plus the infinitive (section 4.1.15,b) connotes that the action of the finite verb occurs *during the period extending to* the action of the infinitive, and may be translated “until”: לֹא אוּכַל לַעֲשׂוֹת דְּבָר עַד־בִּיאַד שָׁמָּה, “I can do nothing until you arrive there” (Gen 19:22),

בְּזַעַת אַפַּיִךְ תֹּאכַל לֶחֶם עַד שׁוּבְךָ אֶל־הָאָדָמָה

“By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground” (Gen 3:19), וַיִּאָבֵק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ עַד עֲלוֹת הַשָּׁהַר, “and a man wrestled with him until daybreak [literally: until the coming up of the dawn]” (Gen 32:25).

(b.4) The preposition אַחֲרֵי plus the infinitive (section 4.1.1,b) connotes that the action of the finite verb occurs *subsequent* to the action of the infinitive, and may be translated “after”:

וַיִּמָּלֵא שִׁבְעַת יָמִים אַחֲרֵי הַכּוֹת־יְהוָה אֶת־הַיָּאֵר

“seven days passed after YHWH had struck the Nile” (Exod 7:25), וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַסִּבּוֹ אֹתוֹ וַתְּהִי יַד־יְהוָה בְּעִיר, “After they brought it around [that is, the ark of the covenant to Gath], the hand of YHWH was against the city” (1 Sam 5:9).

(c) **Purpose** – expresses the reason the action of the finite verb took place (most commonly used with לְ, see section 4.1.10,d): וַיָּבֵא אֶל־הָאָדָם לְרֹאוֹת מִה־יִּקְרָא־לוֹ, “and he [YHWH] brought [them] to the man in order to see what he would call them” (Gen 2:19), אֲנִי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים לָתֵת לְךָ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת, “I am YHWH who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans in order to give to you this land” (Gen 15:7), הוֹאֵי יֵצֵא לִקְרֹאתְךָ, “he is coming out in order to meet you” (Exod 4:14). Besides לְ, the infinitive construct of *purpose* also occurs with לְמַעַן (section 4.1.11,a) and בְּעִבּוּר (Williams 1976, 36).

(d) **Result** – expresses the outcome or consequence of the action of the finite verb. This form of the infinitive normally occurs with לְ, and may be translated “and so,” “so as,” or “so that”: וַיִּתְמַכְרוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה לְהַכְעִיסוֹ, “and they sold themselves to do evil in the sight of YHWH, so provoking him to anger” (2 Kgs 17:17), מַדּוּעַ מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְהַפְרִינִי, “why have I found favor in your sight so that you took notice of me” (Ruth 2:10), וַיִּגְרֹשׁ שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־אַבְיָתָר מִהָיִוֹת כֹּהֵן לַיהוָה לְמַלְא אֶת־דָּבַר יְהוָה, “and Solomon banished Abiathar from being priest to YHWH, so fulfilling the word of YHWH” (1 Kgs 2:27), בָּךְ בָּחַר יְהוָה אֶל־קִיךָ לְהִיּוֹת לּוֹ לְעַם סִגְלָה, “YHWH your God chose you and so you became his special people” (Deut 7:6). The distinction between *purpose* and *result* is not always clear, but result generally emphasizes the idea of sequence or progression (Joüon’s “consecution” [1991, 436]). Besides לְ, the infinitive construct of result also occurs with לְמַעַן.⁷⁷

(e) **Obligation** – expresses the burden of responsibility or necessity when used in verbless clauses:⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Williams 1976, 36.

⁷⁸ Other “modal” uses of the infinitive construct are also possible in verbless clauses. See Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 609–10.

וְעָלִי לָתֵת לָךְ עֶשְׂרֵה כֶּסֶף וְחִגְרָה אֶחָת
 “and I would have had to give you ten shekels of silver and a belt” (2 Sam 18:11).
 This use of the infinitive construct often takes a negative
 particle, and at times the negative obligation becomes *pro-*
hibition: הֲלוֹא לָכֶם לִדְעַת אֶת-הַמִּשְׁפָּט
 “is it not for you to know
 justice” (Mic 3:1), אִין לְבוֹא אֶל-שַׁעַר הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּלְבוּשׁ שָׂק,
 “no one was permitted to enter
 the king’s gate clothed with sack-
 cloth” (Esth 4:2).

(f) *Imminence* – expresses action expected soon or about
 to take place in constructions with לְ plus infini-
 tive construct in verbless clauses: יְהוָה לְהוֹשִׁיעַנִי,
 “YHWH will soon save me” (Isa 38:20), וּבְרִיתוֹ לְהוֹדִיעֵם,
 “and he [YHWH] is about to make known
 his covenant to them” (Ps 25:14), וּכְלֵתוֹ אִשְׁת-פִּינְחָס הָרָה לָלֵת,
 “and his [Eli’s] daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant,
about to give birth” (1 Sam 4:19). For imminent action in
 past-tense narration, the construction adds a form of הָיָה:
 וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב לְבוֹא מִצְרָיִמָה
 “when he was about to enter
 Egypt” (Gen 12:11), וַיְהִי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְבוֹא,
 “and as the sun was at the point of setting”
 (Gen 15:12), וַיְהִי הַשַּׁעַר לְסִגּוֹר בַּחֹשֶׁךְ,
 “and the gate was about to be shut
 at dark” (Josh 2:5).

(g) *Specification* – used with לְ after a verb to clarify or ex-
 plain further the preceding verbal action, which would
 otherwise be generally or ambiguously stated. In transla-
 tion, the *specification* infinitive construct often requires “by
 ...-ing”:⁷⁹ וְאַתֶּם מוֹסִיפִים חֲרוֹן עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל לְחַלֵּל אֶת-הַשַּׁבָּת
 “and you are adding to the wrath on Israel by profaning
 the sabbath” (Neh 13:18),

הָלַךְ אַחֲרַי בְּכָל-לִבָּבוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת רַק הַיֵּשֶׁר בְּעֵינַי

⁷⁹ Also known as *epexegetical*, *gerundive*, or *explanatory* infinitive construct (Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 608–09; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 437–48; Kautzsch 1910, 351; Williams 1976, 36).

“he followed me with all his heart, *by doing* only that which was right in my sight” (1 Kgs 14:8). The specification infinitive construct often has *לַעֲשׂוֹת* or *לְלַכֵּת* after *שָׁמַר*:

וְשָׁמְרוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת לְדֹרֹתָם
בְּרִית עוֹלָם

“and the Israelites shall keep the sabbath, *by observing* the sabbath throughout their generations, as a perpetual covenant” (Exod 31:16),

וְשָׁמְרָה אֶת־מִשְׁמֶרֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְלַכֵּת בְּדַרְכָּיו

“and you must keep the charge of YHWH your God, *by walking* in his ways” (1 Kgs 2:3).

To this category belongs the nearly ubiquitous *לֵאמֹר* (Qal infinitive construct of *אָמַר*), which is used to frame reported speech, frequently following verbs of speaking or thinking.⁸⁰ *וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־נֹחַ לֵאמֹר*, “and God spoke to Noah, *by saying*” (Gen 8:15), *וַיְבָרֵךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר*, “and God blessed them, *by saying*” (Gen 1:22). Such usage has taken on a stereotypical formula to mark reported speech.

3.4.2 Infinitive Absolute

The infinitive absolute is also both “atemporal” and “apersonal,” meaning that only the context determines the time/aspect features of the action, as well as the subject of the action itself. This results from the fact that the infinitive absolute, like the infinitive construct, is also uninflected. On the other hand, unlike the infinitive construct, the infinitive absolute does not take prepositions or pronominal suffixes. Even though the two Hebrew infinitives appear similar in form, they apparently had completely different origins and histories.⁸¹

⁸⁰ A wide variety of verbs are used with *לֵאמֹר*. For this term as a “complementizer introducing a highly marked form of direct speech,” see Miller 1996, 163–212.

⁸¹ Bergsträsser 1962, 2:61; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 581–82.

The following semantic categories are helpful in classifying the infinitive absolute.⁸²

(a) **Nominal** – when used as a noun or in place of a noun. Thus, the infinitive absolute may serve in nominative, genitive, and accusative functions.

(a.1) Examples of the infinitive absolute functioning as *nominatives*: וְקָרֹב לְשָׁמֹעַ מִתַּת הַכְּסִילִים זָבַח, “and to draw near to listen is better than the sacrifice offered by fools,” (Eccl 4:17 [Eng. 5:1]), וְגַם הַיָּטִיב אֵין אוֹתָם, “and also well-doing is not in them” (Jer 10:5), הַכָּרֶפְנִים לֹא־טוֹב, “to show partiality is not good” (Prov 28:21).

(a.2) Examples of the infinitive absolute functioning as *genitives*:⁸³ וּבְרוּחַ בָּעֵר, “and by the spirit of burning” (Isa 4:4), מִדֶּרֶךְ הַשְּׂכֵל, “from the way of understanding” (Prov 21:16). On rare occasions, the infinitive absolute may occur after a preposition.⁸⁴

(a.3) Examples of the infinitive absolute functioning as *accusatives*: חֲמָאָה וְדָבַשׁ יֹאכַל לְדַעְתּוֹ מֵאוֹס בָּרַע וּבַחֹר בָּטוֹב, “he shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows to refuse the evil and to choose the good” (Isa 7:15), לִמְדוֹ הַיָּטִב, “learn to do good” (Isa 1:17), לֹא יֵאָהֵב־לִי הוֹכַח לִי, “a scoffer does not love to be rebuked [literally: to reprove himself]” (Prov 15:12).

(b) **Emphatic** – affirms and intensifies the authenticity or conviction of the verbal action when used with a finite verb of the same verbal root.⁸⁵ In one of the most common uses

⁸² Kautzsch 1910, 339–47; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 580–97; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 420–31; Meyer 1992, 403–07; Lambdin 1971a, 158–59; Bergsträsser 1962, 2:61–67; Chisholm 1998, 76–77; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 157–62; Williams 1976, 37–39. On the infinitive absolute in epigraphic Hebrew, see Gogel 1998, 271.

⁸³ Examples of genitives are rare, and may have different explanations. See Meyer 1992, 404, and Williams 1976, 38.

⁸⁴ Williams 1976, 38; Kautzsch 1910, 340.

⁸⁵ By using the same root, the *emphatic* infinitive absolute becomes paronomastic; that is, it uses word play to create the emphasis. Earlier grammarians thought of this use as an *internal accusative* or an *accusative*

of the infinitive absolute, the infinitive normally precedes a finite verb of the same root, and is best translated by adverbs such as “certainly,” “surely,” “indeed,” “definitely,” and so on:

וְאַבְרָהָם הָיוּ יְהוּיָהּ לְגוֹי גָדוֹל

“and Abraham will surely become a great nation” (Gen 18:18), הָעֵד הָעֵד בְּנֵי הָאִישׁ, “the man solemnly warned us” (Gen 43:3), הַגִּלְגָּל יִגְלֶה יִגְלֶה, “Gilgal will certainly go into exile” (Amos 5:5), הַשְׁמֹד הַשְׁמֹדִין, “you will be utterly destroyed” (Deut 4:26), וְנִקְהָ לֹא יִנְקֶה יְהוָה, “YHWH will by no means leave the guilty unpunished” (Nah 1:3). Sometimes the particle אֶף (section 4.2.2) is used for additional emphasis: אֶף טָרַף טָרַף, “he has surely been torn to pieces” (Gen 44:28).⁸⁶

At times the *emphatic* infinitive absolute follows the finite verb of the same root: יֵצֵא יָצָא, “he will surely come out” (2 Kgs 5:11). Sometimes this postpositive position seems to connote continuous action or repetition: לְשׂוֹא צָרַף צָרַף, “in vain the refining goes on” (Jer 6:29), אֲמָרִים אָמַר, “they keep on saying” (Jer 23:17), וַיִּשְׁפֹּט שָׁפֹט, “and he constantly acted as a judge” (Gen 19:9). However, while some grammarians continue to accept this durative connotation of the postpositive infinitive absolute, others doubt its validity.⁸⁷

of internal object (Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 421–22). But comparative evidence from Ugaritic has shown that this use of the infinitive absolute is an extension of its use in the nominative case, and as such is an “appositional” nominative (Meyer 1992, 405) or an absolute complement resulting in what may be called an “intensifying infinitive” (Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 584–88).

⁸⁶ The *emphatic* infinitive absolute is also used to strengthen contrasts, indignant questions expecting a negative answer, and conditional clauses. On these, see Kautzsch 1910, 343; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 422–23; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 587; or van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 159).

⁸⁷ Of those who take the first position, see Meyer 1992, 63; Williams 1976, 38; Horsnell 1999, 73; Chisholm 1998, 77; of those who doubt this, see Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 585; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 425; Seow 1995, 250–51.

Lambdin implies that the postpositive position is more common with intransitive roots.⁸⁸

When the emphatic infinitive absolute follows a finite verb of the same root, it may be coordinated with a second infinitive absolute for simultaneous or durative action: וַיֵּצֵא וַיָּצֵא וְשׁוֹב, “and it [the raven] kept flying back and forth” (Gen 8:7),

וְהַמְאַסֵּף הַלֵּךְ אַחֲרֵי אָרוֹן יְהוָה הֵלֹךְ וְתִקְוֶעַ בְּשׁוֹפְרוֹת

“the rear guard came after the ark of YHWH, while they were blowing the trumpets continually” (Josh 6:13 *Qere*).⁸⁹ The use of the infinitive absolute for הֵלֵךְ in this function appears to have resulted in a formulaic use of the word, which is quite common: וַיֵּלֶךְ אַתָּה אִשָּׁה הֵלֹךְ וּבְכָה אַחֲרֶיהָ, “and her husband went with her, weeping as he walked behind her” (2 Sam 3:16).

(c) *Manner* – describes the way in which an action or situation is performed or the attendant circumstances of the action.⁹⁰ This is an infinitive absolute of a different root than the finite verb (and hence not the *emphatic* infinitive absolute). It typically follows the finite verb and modifies it adverbially: רָדְפוּ מִהֵרָ, “pursue quickly” (Josh 2:5), וַנִּטְּהֵלוּ מִחוּץ לַמִּטְנֵה הַרְחֵק מִן־הַמַּחֲנֶה, “and he [Moses] pitched it [the tent of meeting] outside the camp, a good distance [literally: far off] from the camp” (Exod 33:7), וְשָׂחַקְתָּ מִמֶּנָּה הֵרֵק, “and you shall beat some of it [incense] very fine” (Exod 30:36), וַיַּעֲמֵדוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים נֹשְׂאֵי הָאָרוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה בְּחֶרֶבָה בְּתוֹךְ הַיַּרְדֵּן הַכֵּן, “and the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of YHWH stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan” (Josh 3:17).

⁸⁸ Lambdin 1971a, 158.

⁸⁹ Note that the infinitive absolute has been restored in this verse in the *Qere* (הֵלֹךְ), while the *Ketib* has an active participle (הוֹלֵךְ).

⁹⁰ May be called an *adverbial complement* or an *adverbial infinitive* (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 588–89).

Certain Hiphil and Piel infinitive absolutes were used for *manner* so naturally and frequently that they came to be treated as adverbs:

אֲחָאָב עָבַד אֶת־הַבַּעַל מְעַט יְהוּא יַעֲבֹדְנוּ הַרְבֵּה

“Ahab served Baal a little; Jehu will serve him *much*” (2 Kgs 10:18), סָרוּ מַהֲר מִן־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָם, “they have *quickly* turned aside from the way I commanded them” (Exod 32:8). The infinitives most often used in this way are הַרְבֵּה (much, many), הַיָּטִב (well, thoroughly), הַשָּׂכֵם (early), הַרְחֵק (far), and מַהֲר (quickly).

(d) *Verbal substitute* – serves the function of a main verb, whether finite verb, modal, or even an infinitive construct:⁹¹ רָגוּם אֹתוֹ בְּאֲבָנִים כָּל־הָעֵדָה, “all the congregation *shall stone* him” (Num 15:35), הַמּוֹל לְכֶם כָּל־זָכָר, “every male among you *shall be circumcised*” (Gen 17:10), וְנָתַן אֹתוֹ עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, “and *he set* him over all the land of Egypt” (Gen 41:43), וְזָכוֹר אֶת־יְוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ, “*remember* the sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Exod 20:8).

3.4.3 Participle

The participle is formed like a noun (taking gender and number), but has functions like the adjectives (section 2.5), and is thus a “verbal adjective.” Like the other nonfinites, the participle is “atemporal,” meaning that only the context determines the time/aspect features of the action.⁹² Typically, the active participles (Qal active, Piel, and Hiphil)

⁹¹ It has been suggested that this use of the infinitive absolute only occurs where one would expect a *waw*-consecutive form, and that this usage is related to the disappearance of the *waw* consecutive in LBH. See Rubenstein 1952, 262–67, and compare the use of the participle as a main verb in pre-exilic narrative, as discussed in Smith 1991, 27–33. For evidence of the same function surviving also in first-millennium Phoenician texts, see Garr 1985, 183–84.

⁹² Joūon and Muraoka 1993, 409.

imply continuing or progressing action, whether past, present, or future. This durative idea is in fact more strongly expressed by the participle than by the imperfect (Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 412).⁹³ The passive participles connote completed action, often resulting in translation in a relative clause with a perfect or preterite verb (Lambdin 1971a, 18–19 and 158). In certain uses as an adjectival predicate, the participle has secondarily become a temporal form; that is, it may become a substitute for the imperfect.⁹⁴ When negated, the participle takes ׀א.

The following semantic categories are helpful in classifying the participle.⁹⁵

(a) *Attributive* – ascribes a quality to a noun. Like the *attributive adjective*, the *attributive participle* forms a phrase with the noun it modifies, having a single function in the sentence. It stands in apposition to the noun, normally coming after it and agreeing in gender, number, and definiteness: לֵב שֹׁמֵעַ, “a *listening* heart” (1 Kgs 3:9), וּבְרֹוַע נְטוּיָהּ, “and by *an outstretched* arm” (Deut 4:34), אָזְן שֹׁמֵעַת, “a *hearing* ear” (Prov 15:31).

Frequently, the participle requires a relative clause in translation (introduced by “who,” “which,” or “that”), in which case the attributive participle is usually definite:

מִבְּכוֹר פְּרֵעָה הַיֵּשֵׁב עַל-כֶּסֶּאָו

⁹³ The durative or progressive action of the active participles may be represented by a continuous line (i.e., _____) while the durative quality of the imperfect expresses repetition or multiplicity, and may be represented by a row of dots (i.e.,). See Horsnell 1999, 78.

⁹⁴ Specifically in LBH, the participle alone functions as a present tense, and in periphrastic clauses it indicates frequentative action (Sáenz-Badillos 1993, 129).

⁹⁵ Kautzsch 1910, 355–62; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 612–31; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 409–18; Meyer 1992, 407–12; Lambdin 1971a, 18–19 and 157–58; Bergsträsser 1962, 2:68–74; Horsnell 1999, 78–84; Chisholm 1998, 67–70; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 162–63; Williams 1976, 39–40. On the participles in epigraphic Hebrew, see Gogel 1998, 272–73.

“from the firstborn of Pharaoh *who sits* on his throne” (Exod 11:5), הַיּוֹם הַבֶּאֱ, “the day *that is coming*” (Jer 47:4), הַכֶּסֶף הַמוּשָׁב, “the money *that was returned*” (Gen 43:12), לַחַת אֲבָן כְּתוּבִים בְּאֶצְבַּע אֱלֹהִים, “tablets of stone, *which were written* by the finger of God” (Exod 31:18).⁹⁶

The attributive participle marks neither time nor aspect, both of which must be determined from the context. Thus, הַצָּבָא הַבֹּא may mean “the army that came,” “the army that is coming,” or “the army that will come.” In the context of 2 Chronicles 28:9, it can only mean “the army that came,” since it is in a narrative context recounting past events.

(b) *Predicate* – expresses an assertion about a noun or pronoun in a nominal clause (i.e., in a clause without a finite verb). Like the *predicate adjective*, the *predicate participle* agrees in gender and number with the noun it modifies, and is always indefinite. The participle may stand before or after the noun or pronoun it modifies: הַשָּׁמַיִם מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד־אֱלֹהִים, “the heavens *are telling* the glory of God” (Ps 19:2 [Eng Ps 19:1]), בְּרוּךְ אַבְרָם לְאֵל עֶלְיוֹן, “*blessed is* Abram by God Most High” (Gen 14:19).

Because of its verbal character, the predicate participle may have a subject or a direct object, or it may be modified by an adverb or prepositional phrase.⁹⁷ As always, the participle does not express tense, but rather the durative or progressive action or condition that may occur in past, present, or future time, depending on the context.

(b.1) *Present* – expresses duration in present time, which is the participle’s most natural verbal function due to its durative nature. The *predicate participle* indicating *present* action becomes a substitute for

⁹⁶ See Waltke and O’Connor’s *attributive relative* as a subcategory under *relative participles* (1990, 621–22).

⁹⁷ The uses of the *predicate participle* are so similar to finite verbs that some grammars have a separate category of the participle as *verbal substitute*, or “participles as verbs” (see Kelley 1992, 200–01; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 162).

the imperfect: אָנֹכִי בֹרַחַת, “I am fleeing” (Gen 16:8), לֹא־כֵן אַנְחֵנו עֲשִׂים, “we are not doing what is right” (2 Kgs 7:9).⁹⁸ This may denote general truths just revealed, or truths valuable for all time: כִּי יָדַע אֱלֹהִים, “for God knows” (Gen 3:5), דֹּוֹר הַלֵּךְ וְדֹוֹר בָּא וְהָאָרֶץ לְעוֹלָם עֹמְדָת, “a generation goes and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever” (Eccl 1:4). Occasionally the present predicate participle occurs after הִנֵּה to express immediate action or conditions requiring observation (hence, the English, “behold”):⁹⁹ הִנֵּה פְּלִשְׁתִּים נֹלְחָמִים בְּקַעֲלָה, “behold the Philistines are fighting against Keilah” (1 Sam 23:1).

(b.2) *Past* – expresses duration in past time: וְנָהָר יֵצֵא מֵעֵדֶן, “and a river was flowing out of Eden” (Gen 2:10), אֲשֶׁר־הוּא עֹשֶׂה יְהוָה מִצְלִיחַ, “whatever he [Joseph] was doing, YHWH was prospering [or whatever he did, YHWH prospered” (Gen 39:23), וְאֲדֹנִיָּה בֶן־חַגִּית מִתְנַשֵּׂא, “Now Adonijah son of Haggith was exalting himself [or, exalted himself” (1 Kgs 1:5), לוֹט יֹשֵׁב בְּשַׁעַר־סֹדֶם, “Lot was sitting in the gateway of Sodom” (Gen 19:1), סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁב בְּחֶשְׁבֹּן, “Sihon king of the Amorites, who was living at Heshbon” (Deut 3:2).

The *past predicate participle* frequently occurs after הִנֵּה to express immediate action which occurred in the past (see b.1): וְהִנֵּה אַרְחַת יִשְׁמַעֲאֵלִים בָּאָה, “behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming” (Gen 37:25), וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אָנָשִׁים נֹצְבִים עָלָיו, “behold, three men were standing near him” (Gen 18:2), וְהִנֵּה אַנְחֵנו מְאֲלָמִים אֱלָמִים בְּתוֹךְ הַשָּׂדֶה, “behold, we were

⁹⁸ Though specific time reference is still determined by context only. In Mishnaic Hebrew, the participle actually becomes a finite verb for the present tense, while it continues to be used for frequentative or iterative action in both the past and future (Segal 1927, 155–57).

⁹⁹ The use of הִנֵּה plus the participle has been identified in recent rhetorical studies as one of the ways Hebrew narrators change points of view. This appears to be especially common in circumstantial clauses in which a narrator shifts the point of view to that of a character in order to narrate what the character sees as the action unfolds (Berlin 1983, 63). On הִנֵּה as a focus particle drawing attention to the content of the clause that follows, see van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 328–30.

binding sheaves in the field” (Gen 37:7),

וַיְהִי הֵם מְרִיקִים שְׂקֵיהֶם

“and they were emptying their sacks” (Gen 42:35).

The normally atemporal nature of the verbal participle is clarified with the addition of the verb *היה* to express past time clearly: וּמֹשֶׁה הָיָה רֹעֵה אֶת־צֹאן יִתְרוֹ חָתָנוּ, “and Moses was pasturing the flock of Jethro his father-in-law” (Exod 3:1), הַבָּקָר הָיוּ חֹרְשׁוֹת, “the oxen were plowing” (Job 1:14), מִמְּרִים הָיִיתֶם עִם־יְהוָה, “you have been rebellious against YHWH” (Deut 9:24),

וְאֵהִי צָם וּמִתְפַּלֵּל לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם

“and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven” (Neh 1:4).

(b.3) *Future* – expresses duration in future time: אֲנֹכִי מִמְטִיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה, “I will send rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights” (Gen 7:4), לְמוֹעֵד הַזֶּה כָּעֵת חַיָּה אֶת־חֶבְקָת בֶּן, “At this season, in due time, you shall embrace a son” (2 Kgs 4:16 *Qere*).

Most frequently, the *future predicate participle* is used to announce approaching action, or action that is already in progress:¹⁰⁰ אֲשֶׁר הָאֱלֹהִים עֹשֶׂה הִרְאָה אֶת־פְּרֵעָה, “that which God is about to do, he has shown to Pharaoh” (Gen 41:28), כִּי־מִשְׁחָתִים אֲנַחֲנוּ אֶת־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה, “for we are about to destroy this place” (Gen 19:13). As with the present and past predicate participles, the future predicate participle may indicate especially impending action when introduced with וָאֲנִי הֲנִי מְבִיא אֶת־הַמַּבּוּל מִיָּם עַל־הָאָרֶץ: הִנֵּה, “and I, even I, am bringing a flood of waters upon the earth” (Gen 6:17), הִנֵּךְ שֹׁכֵב עִם־אֲבֹתֶיךָ, “you are about to sleep with your fathers” (Deut 31:16), הֲנִי נֹתֵן בְּיָדְךָ הַיּוֹם, “look, I will deliver it into your hand today” (1 Kgs 20:13). As with the past predicate

¹⁰⁰ This announcement of imminent action, which has already in fact begun to take place, is a powerful literary tool in the hands of the Old Testament prophets. Announcements of judgment frequently use this future *predicate participle* for rhetorical effect.

participle, the future may occur with הִיָּה to express future time more clearly: וְכִסֵּא דָוִד יִהְיֶה נֶכֶח לְפָנֵי יְהוָה עַד-עוֹלָם, “and the throne of David *shall be established* before YHWH forever” (1 Kgs 2:45).

(c) *Substantive* – functions as a noun, most often occurring with the definite article: בְּיָמֵי שֹׁפֵט הַשְּׁפָטִים, “In the days when *the judges* ruled” (Ruth 1:1), קִנְיַת שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ, “*the maker* of heaven and earth (Gen 14:19), הוּא בָּנָה בֵּיתוֹ בְּלֹא-צְדָק, “woe to *the one who builds* his house without righteousness” (Jer 22:13). The definite article may be omitted in poetry: וְהִלְכוּ נְאֻלִּים, “but *redeemed people* shall walk [there]” (Isa 35:9). As a noun, the *substantive participle* functions in all the ways nouns are used. Thus, it may take pronominal suffixes: יְהוָה שְׁמֹרְךָ, “YHWH is your *keeper*” (Ps 121:5), may stand in the construct state: שְׁמֹרֵי מִשְׁפָּט, “*keepers* of justice” (Ps 106:3), or may serve as the object of a preposition: לְשֹׁמְרֵי בְרִיתוֹ, “to *those who keep* his covenant” (Ps 103:18). They may also serve in any of the nominative, genitive, or accusative functions.

The substantive participle serving in the genitive construction may fulfill any of the possible genitive constructions (section 2.2). However, one unique use of the participle occurs when certain verbs (especially בּוֹא and יָצָא) serve as constructs bound to another noun, rather than having an accusative or a prepositional phrase as one might expect:¹⁰¹ בָּאֵי שַׁעַר-עִירוֹ, “*those entering* at the gate of his city” (Gen 23:10), יֹצְאֵי הַתְּבָה, “*those coming out* of the ark” (Gen 9:10), יוֹרְדֵי-בוֹר, “*those going down* to the pit” (Isa 38:18), אֹכְלֵי שֻׁלְחַן אִיזָבֵל, “*those eating* at Jezebel’s table” (1 Kgs 18:19).

Certain verbal roots were used so widely as substantive participles that they in essence became nouns, most denoting vocations or other identifying roles: שׁוֹפֵט, “judge (one who judges),” סוֹפֵר, “scribe (one who recounts),”

¹⁰¹ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 416.

יוֹצֵר, “potter (one who forms),” אֹיֵב, “enemy (one showing enmity),” and so on.

3.5 Verbal Sequences

A specialized form of the conjunction *waw* may be prefixed to finite verbal forms in Hebrew narrative for functions not normally associated with the simple *waw* conjunctive.¹⁰² Grammarians have used a variety of names for this feature of grammar: *waw* consecutive, *waw* inversive, relative *waw*, or *waw* conversive.¹⁰³ Each of these labels identifies the same phenomenon with a slightly different emphasis on the function of the *waw* in forming relationships between clauses. Whereas grammarians previously held that the *waw* simply converted the meaning of one verbal aspect to another (e.g., an imperfect form converted to a perfect meaning), more recent work demonstrates that the function of the *waw* with a finite verbal form affects not only the aspect of the verb but also the verbal ideas themselves. While the two main forms presented here (imperfects and perfects with *waw* consecutive) have different origins and connotations, in general we may consider *succession in time* or *progression* as the main idea.¹⁰⁴

The following patterns are important to remember when noting verbal sequences in Hebrew narrative.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² The function of *waw* described here is rare in poetry. For the distinctions between narrative (discursive speech) and dialogue (direct speech), see van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 164–65; Miller 1996, 1–4 and 14–38. In general, discursive speech (narration) has a relatively limited variety of such functions, whereas dialogue (direct speech) has much more syntactical diversity.

¹⁰³ See the beginning grammars for morphological features of the *waw* consecutive. On the terminology “*waw* consecutive,” see Rainey (1986, 6).

¹⁰⁴ For our best current understanding of the history and function of the *waw* consecutive, see Smith 1991, esp. 12–15.

¹⁰⁵ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 379–408; Meyer 1992, 386–89 and 393–94; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 519–63; Kautzsch 1910, 326–39; Williams 1976, 33–34; Chisholm 1998, 94–112 and 119–33; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 163–72; and for epigraphic Hebrew, see Gogel 1998, 260–68.

3.5.1 Imperfect plus *waw* Consecutive

In general, the imperfect with *waw* consecutive will connote the same aspect of the perfect, which will often precede it in the previous clause.¹⁰⁶ However, the imperfect plus *waw* consecutive pattern may also succeed a clause with an imperfect or a participle, or even a nominal clause.¹⁰⁷ In any case, it generally serves as a substitute for the perfect aspect, adding only the idea of succession. The following nuances will be helpful in interpreting the *waw* consecutive plus imperfect.

(a) **Sequential** – expresses temporal sequence, describing an action or situation subsequent to a previous action or situation: וַיֵּאָדָם יָדַע אֶת־חַוָּהָ אֲשֶׁתוֹ וַתַּהַר וַתֵּלֶד אֶת־קַיִן, “Now the man knew his wife Eve, and she conceived and and then bore Cain (Gen 4:1),

וַיַּעֲבֹר יוֹדֵד הָעֶבֶר וַיַּעֲמֹד עַל־רֵאשֵׁי־הָהָר

¹⁰⁶ So it seems likely that this is really the original preterite tense of pre-biblical Hebrew (see 3.2.2.e).

¹⁰⁷ Several beginning grammars refer to a “governing verb” that influences the aspect and meaning of the prefixed *waw* consecutive in fixed relationships, such as perfect plus imperfect, or nonfinite plus imperfect (see Kelly 1992, 210–16; Seow 1995, 226–27). While these definitions are not inaccurate, and we recognize that a verb functions in sequence, we have chosen, for several reasons, not to define verbal sequences solely by the identification of the governing verb. Firstly, the identification of a governing verb in even simple narrative sequences can be quite complex and confusing. Secondly, as our examples show, the imperfect *waw* consecutive is often employed without a governing verb. Thirdly, the function of these verbal sequences is not as clear-cut as the beginning grammars tend to portray them. For instance, even though many stress the importance of the perfect plus imperfect sequence in narrative, the reader needs to be aware that a narrative rarely begins with a perfect verb but, in fact, more often begins with a *waw* consecutive plus imperfect (Niccacci 1990, 37; for an important exception see his 47). Furthermore, the function of these verbal sequences seems to differ on the basis of the narrational or discursive nature of the text at hand (Niccacci 1990, 35–45), a difference that is not given enough coverage by the beginning grammars, and often not appreciated by beginning and intermediate students.

“Then David crossed over to the other side, and then he stood on the top of the mountain” (1 Sam 26:13), וַיָּבֹא מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן אֶל־פַּרְעֹה וַיַּעֲשׂוּ כֵן כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה, “So Moses and Aaron came to Pharaoh, and then they did just as YHWH commanded” (Exod 7:10).

Within narrative, an action or situation that is not sequential to the main verb, but prior to it (equivalent to the English pluperfect or past perfect), is often presented by avoiding the וַיִּקְטֹּל pattern and replacing it with the conjunctive *waw* on a finite form (see section 3.5.4.a). But, occasionally, *waw* consecutive plus imperfect may be used to mark such anterior constructions, which must be discerned from the context (Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 390–91; Zevit 1998):

וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֲבִיהֶם אִיזֶה הַדֶּרֶךְ הַלֵּךְ וַיֵּרְאוּ בָנָיו אֶת־הַדֶּרֶךְ
אֲשֶׁר הֵלֵךְ אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר־בָּא מִיְהוּדָה

“Their father spoke to them, ‘Which way did he go?’ Now his sons had seen the way that the man of God who came from Judah had gone” (1 Kgs 13:12).

(b) *Consequential* – expresses logical result, describing an action or situation resulting from a previous action or situation: וַיְהִי יְהוָה אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיְהִי אִישׁ מַצְלִיחַ, “YHWH was with Joseph, and so he became a successful man” (Gen 39:2), וַיִּכְלְוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ, “Thus the heavens and the earth were completed” (Gen 2:1), וַיַּחֲזֹק דָּוִד מִן־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי בַקֶּלֶע וּבָאֶבֶן, “So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone” (1 Sam 17:50). This consequential use of the וַיִּקְטֹּל pattern may be used to conclude a narrative:

וַתִּשְׁבְּתוּ הָרַמְתָּה כִּי־שָׁם בֵּיתוֹ וְשָׁם שָׁפַט אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְבִן־שָׁם
מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה

“Then he would return to Ramah because his house was there; and there he judged Israel. And he built there an

altar to YHWH” (1 Sam 7:17),

וַיְהִי יְהוָה אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וַיְהִי שְׁמֵעוּ בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ

“So YHWH was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land” (Josh 6:27).

(c) *Narratival* – Due to the frequency of its use, the *waw* consecutive plus imperfect came to be used on its own, independent of a preceding verbal clause, in order to begin a narrative sequence or a new section of narrative: וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה בְּאֵלֵי מַמְרֵי, “Now YHWH appeared to him [Abraham] by the oaks of Mamre” (Gen 18:1). This *narratival* use of the וַיְקַטֵּל pattern may even begin a book: וַיִּקְרָא אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֵלָיו מֵאֶהֱל מוֹעֵד, “YHWH called to Moses and spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting” (Lev 1:1), וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְבַּר סִינַי, “Then YHWH spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai” (Num 1:1).

The *narratival* use is especially common with the imperfect of the verb הָיָה to introduce a new narrative or section of a narrative: וַיְהִי אִישׁ אֶחָד מִן־הָרַמְתַּיִם צוֹפִים, “There was a certain man from Ramathaim Zophim” (1 Sam 1:1), וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־יוֹנָה, “The word of YHWH came to Jonah” (Jonah 1:1).

(d) *Epexegetical* – clarifies, expands, or paraphrases the clause that precedes it (the simple conjunctive *waw* may be used on nouns to perform a similar function; compare section 4.3.3,d): אָבָל אִשָּׁה־אֶלְמָנָה אֲנִי וַיָּמַת אִישִׁי, “Truly, I am a widow; my husband has died” (2 Sam 14:5), וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ מֹשֶׁה וַתֹּאמֶר כִּי מִן־הַמַּיִם מָשִׂיתָהוּ, “She called his name Moses, saying, ‘Because I drew him out of the water’” (Exod 2:10), מָה עָשִׂיתָ וַתִּגְנֹב אֶת־לִבִּי, “What have you done? You have deceived me!” (Gen 31:26).

On occasion, the clarification of the verbal action can repeat the main verbal idea:

וְלֹא־זָכַר שְׂרַר־הַמַּשְׁקִים אֶת־יֹסֵף וַיִּשְׁכַּחְהוּ

“The chief cup-bearer did not remember Joseph; he forgot him” (Gen 40:23),

הָלוֹא־הוּא אָבִיךָ קָנָה הוּא עָשָׂךְ וַיִּכְנַסְךָ

“Is he not your father, who created you, who made you and established you?” (Deut 32:6), וַיִּדְוֶד נָס וַיִּמְלֹט בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא, “David fled; he escaped that night” (1 Sam 19:10).

Nearly identical to this use is *specificiation*, in which *waw* consecutive plus imperfect makes a previous verbal idea more specific:

וַיִּשְׁכַּחוּ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם וַיַּעֲבְדוּ אֶת־הַבְּעֻלִים וְאֶת־הָאֲשֵׁרוֹת

“They forgot YHWH their God, they served the Baals and the Ashtoreth” (Judg 3:7), קָנָא לְאֱלֹהָיו וַיִּכְפַּר עַל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, “He was zealous for his God; thus he made atonement for the people of Israel” (Num 25:13).

(e) **Dependent** – Following temporal clauses, the וַיִּקְטַל pattern will present an action or situation that is dependent on the temporal clause: בְּשָׁנַת־מוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ עֻזְיָהוּ וַאֲרָאָה אֶת־אֲדֹנָי, “In the year of King Uzziah’s death, I saw the lord” (Isa 6:1), “When they were in the field, Cain rose up against Abel, his brother” (Gen 4:8), וַיְהִי כִשְׁמָעָם אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה וַיִּבְדִּילֻהוּ כָּל־עָרֵב מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל, “When they heard the law, they separated all the aliens from Israel” (Neh 13:3).

3.5.2 Perfect plus *waw* Consecutive

The perfect with *waw* consecutive will connote the same aspect of the imperfect, which will often precede it in the previous clause. However, *waw* consecutive plus perfect may also succeed a clause with an imperative, a perfect, a participle, an infinitive functioning as a finite verb, or a nominal clause. In any case, it generally serves as a substitute for the imperfect aspect, adding only the idea of succession. The following nuances will be helpful in interpreting the *waw* consecutive plus perfect.

(a) *Sequential* – expresses temporal sequence, describing an action or situation subsequent to a previous action or situation:

קָרַע יְהוָה אֶת־מַמְלַכּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעַלְיָד הַיּוֹם וַיִּנְתְּנָהּ לְרֵעֵךְ

“YHWH has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and he has given it to your neighbor” (1 Sam 15:28), אֲצַא וְהִיְיָתִי רוּחַ שָׁקֶר בְּפִי כָל־נְבִיאָיו, “I will go out, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets” (1 Kgs 22:22), וּבַיּוֹם פָּקְדֵי וּפְקֻדָתֵי עֲלֵיהֶם חֲטָאתָם, “On the day I punish, I will punish them for their sin” (Exod 32:34), הָעֵלְמָה הָרָה וַיִּלְדֶת בֵּן וְקָרְאת שְׁמוֹ עִמָּנוּ אֵל, “A virgin will be pregnant and she will give birth to a son and she will call his name Immanuel” (Isa 7:14).

(b) *Consequential* – expresses logical result, describing an action or situation resulting from a previous action or situation: אֲנִי יְהוָה וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם, “I am YHWH, and I will bring you out” (Exod 6:6),

וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פְּרוּ וַיִּשְׂרְצוּ וַיִּרְבוּ וַיַּעֲצְמוּ בְּמֵאד מְאֹד וַתִּמְלֵא הָאָרֶץ אֹתָם

“The people of Israel were fruitful, and increased greatly, and multiplied and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them” (Exod 1:7), וַהֲפִיץ יְהוָה אֶתְכֶם בְּעַמִּים וַנִּשְׁאַרְתֶּם מִתִּי מְסָפֵר, “YHWH will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number” (Deut 4:27).

(c) *Volitional* – expresses a command or wish:

וְאַהֲבַתֶּם אֶת־הַגֵּר כִּי־גֵרִים הֵיְיִתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם

“You shall love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Deut 10:19), וְקָשַׁרְתֶּם לְאֹזֶן עַל־יָדְךָ, “You shall bind them as a sign upon your hand” (Deut 6:8). This *volitional* use of the perfect plus *waw* consecutive is often preceded by a clause with a jussive, imperative or cohortative, or an infinitive absolute functioning as an imperative

(see section 3.4.2,d), and functions to express *consecution*:¹⁰⁸ וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ לְאֹדְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ נַעֲרָה בְּתוּלָה וְעַמְדָּה לְפָנַי הַמֶּלֶךְ, “Let them seek a young virgin for my lord the king, and let her attend the king” (1 Kgs 1:2),

לֹא-יָמוּשׁ סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֶּה מִפִּיךָ וְהִגִּיתָ בוֹ יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה

“This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night” (Josh 1:8). The *waw* consecutive plus perfect after a modal, or an equivalent infinitive absolute, may emphasize succession, so that the execution of its action or situation is dependent upon the preceding one: עָשָׂה כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר וּפָנַע בּוֹ וּקְבַרְתּוֹ, “Do as he has said and strike him down and then bury him” (1 Kgs 2:31), וְנִקְרְבָה בְּאַחַד הַמְּקוֹמוֹת וְלָנוּ, “let us approach one of these places, and [then] spend the night!” (Judg 19:13), בְּנֵה-לֶךְ בַּיִת בִּירוּשָׁלַם וְיִשְׁבֹּת שָׁם, “Build yourself a house in Jerusalem, and stay there” (1 Kgs 2:36).

Frequently, the idea of succession can be nuanced to express purpose or result:¹⁰⁹ עֲלֵה נַעֲלָה וְרָשְׁנוּ אֹתָהּ, “Let us go up at once and [so] let us possess it!” (Num 13:30), הֵלֹךְ וְרָחַצְתָּ שִׁבְעַת-פְּעָמִים בַּיַּרְדֵּן, “Go, and wash seven times in the Jordan” (2 Kgs 5:10), וְשׁוּב עִמִּי וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתִי לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, “Return with me, so that I may worship YHWH your God” (1 Sam 15:30), וְזֹאת עֲשׂוּ לָהֶם וְחַיּוּ וְלֹא יָמָתוּ, “Do this to them, so that they may live and not die” (Num 4:19).

(d) *Apodictic* – in a conditional sentence, expresses logical result, describing an action or situation resulting from (or dependent on) a previous action or situation: אִם-חָפֵץ בָּנוּ יְהוָה וְהֵבִיא אֶתְנוּ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת, “If YHWH is pleased with us, then he will lead us into this land”

¹⁰⁸ Lambdin 1971a, 119; Seow 1995, 243–44.

¹⁰⁹ The perfect plus *waw*-consecutive construction most often follows an imperative, and is frequently identical to the person, gender, and number of the imperative. As the last two examples in this paragraph illustrate, however, there are some first- and third-person examples of this construction that carry a successive idea from an imperative (Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 399–400).

(Num 14:8), אִם־יְהוָה אֵלַיִם עִמָּדִי... וְהָיָה יְהוָה לִי לֵאלֹהִים, “If God will be with me... then YHWH will be my God” (Gen 28:20–21), וְאִם־אֵין מוֹשִׁיעַ אֶתָּנוּ וְיִצְאָנוּ אֵלֶיךָ, “If there is no one to deliver us, then we will surrender to you” (1 Sam 11:3).

Quite often, *waw* consecutive plus perfect functions not to present the apodosis, but to provide an expansion of the idea in either the protasis, or the apodosis: אִם־שָׁמוּעַ תִּשְׁמָעוּ בְּקוֹלִי וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת־בְּרִיתִי, “If you fully obey my voice and keep my covenant” (Exod 19:5), כִּי תַעֲזֹבוּ אֶת־יְהוָה וְעַבַדְתֶּם אֱלֹהֵי נָכַר, “If you forsake YHWH and serve foreign gods...” (Josh 24:20),

כִּי־יִחַדְוּ לָהֶם דְּבַר בָּא אֵלַי וּשְׁפַטְתִּי בֵּין אִישׁ וּבֵין רֵעֵהוּ
וְהוֹדַעְתִּי אֶת־חֻקֵי הָאֱלֹהִים וְאֶת־תּוֹרֹתָיו

“If they have a dispute, it comes to me, then I judge between a person and that person’s neighbor, and I make known the statutes of God and his instructions” (Exod 18:16).

Verbal sequence relationships are not limited to *waw* consecutive forms, but can also be expressed by verbs that are prefixed with the simple *waw* conjunctive. Thus, a *waw* conjunctive on a perfect¹¹⁰ or imperfect¹¹¹ form can also express succession or consecution. Consider: עָשִׂיתִי לִי גְנוֹת וּפְרָדִים וְנָטַעְתִּי בָהֶם עֵץ כָּל־פְּרִי, “I made

¹¹⁰ Particularly in LBH, the *waw* conjunctive plus perfect is viewed as a substitute for the *waw* consecutive plus imperfect. This use is based on the theorized influence of Aramaic, which lacked *waw*-consecutive forms (Smith 1991, 27–33). However, evidence from the Tel Dan inscription indicates that there very well could have been a *waw* consecutive plus imperfect construction employed in Aramaic (see Emerton 1994, 255–58; and 2000, 35). This is in addition to a ninth-century Aramaic inscription in which this construction is found (KAI 202, line 11).

¹¹¹ It should be remembered that certain imperfect forms take a shortened form before the *waw* consecutive and a normal form (so-called longer form) with *waw* conjunctive. Thus, the imperfect of these verbs makes a morphological distinction between imperfect with *waw* consecutive and imperfect with *waw* conjunctive. See beginning grammars for more on the morphology of the *waw* consecutive.

for myself gardens and parks, and [then] I planted in them all kinds of fruit trees” (Eccl 2:5),

וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לְכָל־צָבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיַּעֲבֹד אֹתָם וַיִּבְנֶה מִזְבְּחוֹת
בְּבַיִת יְהוָה

“He worshiped all the hosts of heaven, and he served them, and he built altars [for them] in the house of YHWH” (2 Chr 33:3-4), וַיִּשְׁמַע אֶת־דְּבָרוֹ, “But who has stood in the council of YHWH, that they should see and hear his word” (Jer 23:18),

הֲאִין פֹּה נָבִיא לַיהוָה עוֹד וַנְּדַרְשָׁה מֵאוֹתוֹ

“Is there not yet a prophet of YHWH here, so that we may inquire of him” (1 Kgs 22:7).

Additionally, the *waw* conjunctive on a finite verbal form expresses all the various functions of the *waw* conjunction (see section 4.3.3), in particular, verbal hendiadys (section 4.3.3.g), coordination (section 4.3.3.b), or continuation.¹¹²

3.5.3 Commands in Verbal Sequences

As noted, the perfect plus *waw* consecutive may express volition (see section 3.5.2,c). BH may also use the *waw* conjunctive with imperfects and volitives (and at times perfects) to express sequential commands, which may connote succession or purpose.¹¹³

(a) **Succession** – shows an action that temporally follows the main verb: אַל־נָא יֵחַר לְאָדְנִי וְאַדְבָּרָה, “May my lord not be angry, and I shall speak” (Gen 18:30), שְׁאַל אֶת־נְעָרֶיךָ וַיְגִידוּ לָךְ, “Ask your young men, and they will tell you” (1 Sam 25:8),

וַיִּזְעַק אֵלַיךְ מִצָּרְתָּנוּ וְתִשְׁמַע וְתוֹשִׁיעַ

¹¹² Niccacci 1990, 40, and Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 540-41.

¹¹³ Lambdin 1971a, 119; Seow 1995, 243; Niccacci 1990, 187.

“We will cry out to you in our distress, and *you will hear us*, and *save us*” (2 Chr 20:9), לָךְ וּבֵאתָ לְךָ אֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה, “Go, and [then] enter into the land of Judah” (1 Sam 22:5).

(b) *Purpose* – expresses the purpose or motivation behind the main verb: וְהֵבִיֵּאתָ לִי וְאָכְלָהּ, “Bring it to me, so that I may eat” (Gen 27:4),

אָסַרְהָנָא וְאַרְאָה אֶת־הַמְרָאָה הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה

“Let me turn *in order to see* this great sight” (Exod 3:3), וְהִרְגִנּוּם וְהִשְׁבַּתְנוּ אֶת־הַמְּלָאכָה, “Kill them, and [so], put a stop to the work” (Neh 4:5 [Eng. 4:11]), וְאַשְׁלַחָהּ אֶת־הָעָם וַיִּזְבְּחוּ לַיהוָה, “I will let the people go, *that they may sacrifice* to YHWH” (Exod 8:4).

3.5.4 Interruptions in Verbal Sequences

The *waw* conjunctive employed with a verbal idea is also used in narrative texts to present an idea that is strongly disjunctive from the *waw* consecutives in context. This disjunction occurs with both perfect and imperfect verbs, but typically, the *waw* conjunctive is not prefixed onto the verbal form, but an associated noun (that is, either the subject or the object of the noun).¹¹⁴ The nonsuccessive idea presented by the *waw* conjunctive can express several nuances.

(a) *Distinct subject* – the *waw* conjunctive points to a seemingly successive action performed by a different subject, thereby placing emphasis on an agent who is distinct from the agent of the main verb, and, in effect, presenting an opposition of subjects:

וַיֵּט מֹשֶׁה אֶת־מַטְהוֹ עַל־הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיַּהֲוֶה נָתַן קִלְתוֹ וּבָרַד

¹¹⁴ This “*waw*+subject+finite verb” sequence is variously diagrammed as “w...qatal/w...yiqtol” (Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 390 and 397) or “*waw* x qatal” (Niccacci 1990, 49–72).

“Moses stretched his staff to the heavens, and YHWH sent thunder and hail” (Exod 9:23),

וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת-הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּלְכוּ וְהוּא-בָא וַיַּעֲמֵד אֶל-אֲדֹנָיו

“He sent the men away and they left. But he himself went and stood before his master” (2 Kgs 5:24–5).

(b) *Simultaneous action* – The *waw* conjunctive expresses an action that is not successive, but simultaneous with the main verb: וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לְאֹר וְיֹם וּלְחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לַיְלָה, “God called the light day, and he called the darkness light” (Gen 1:5), וַיֵּלֶךְ שְׂמוּאֵל הַרְמָתָה וְשָׂאוֹל עָלָה אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ גִּבְעַת שָׂאוֹל, “Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul” (1 Sam 15:34), וְהָרְגוּ אֹתִי וְאֵתְךָ יָחִיו, “They will kill me, but they will let you live” (Gen 12:12).

(c) *Anterior action* – The *waw* conjunctive signals an action or situation that is out of chronological order in the narrative flow, and is equivalent to the English pluperfect or present perfect in narratives of past time. On occasion, parenthetical remarks within a narrative will be presented in this manner:¹¹⁵

וַיָּבֵא לָבֵן בְּאֵהָל יַעֲקֹב וּבְאֵהָל לְאֵה וּבְאֵהָל שְׁתֵּי הָאֵמָהֶת
וְלֹא מִצָּא וַיֵּצֵא מֵאֵהָל לְאֵה וַיָּבֵא בְּאֵהָל רַחֵל וְרַחֵל
לָקְחָה אֶת-הַתְּרָפִים

¹¹⁵ Some assert that this pluperfect use is expressed not only by the *waw* conjunctive but also by the perfect plus *waw* conjunctive (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 541–42, and Johnson 1979, 41; and cf. וַיִּרְא עֵשָׂו כִּי-בֵרַךְ יַצְחָק אֶת-יַעֲקֹב וְשָׁלַח אֹתוֹ פָּדָנָה אֲרָם, “Esau saw that Isaac blessed Jacob, and had sent him to Padan-Aram” [Gen 28:6]). Niccacci further states that the perfect plus *waw* conjunctive expresses background or parenthetical comments in narrative (1990, 35). Recently, Zevit has argued that authors of BH narrative could mark pluperfect or present-perfect time unambiguously by following a narrative past-time clause with the following sequence: *waw* conjunctive plus subject (noun or pronoun) plus perfect finite verb (Zevit 1998, 15–37).

“Laban went into Jacob’s tent, and into Leah’s tent, and into the tent of the two maid-servants, but he did not find [them]. He came out from Leah’s tent, and went into Rachel’s tent, but Rachel had taken the household idols...” (Gen 31:33–34),

וּשְׁמוֹאֵל יָמָת וַיִּסְפְּדוּ-לוֹ כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְבְּרוּהוּ בְּרָמָה וּבְעִירוֹ
וַיֵּשְׂאוּל הַסִּיר הָאֲבוֹת וְאֶת-הַיָּדְעָנִים מִהָאָרֶץ

“Samuel was dead, and all Israel mourned for him, and they buried him in Ramah, his city. And Saul had expelled the mediums and the spiritists from the land” (1 Sam 28:3),

וַיִּתְחַפֵּשׂ מִלְךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיָּבֹא בַמִּלְחָמָה וּמִלְךְ אָרָם צָוָה אֶת-שָׂרֵי
הָרֶכֶב אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁנַיִם

“The king of Israel disguised himself and went into battle. Now, the king of Aram had commanded the thirty-two officers of his chariots” (1 Kgs 22:30–31).

4 *Particles*

In addition to nouns and verbs, Hebrew syntax employs another category of words, often referred to as *particles*. This is an inclusive term often used for a wide-ranging number of parts of speech. Here we will use it to refer to prepositions, adverbs, conjunctions, the particles of existence and nonexistence, and the particles הִנֵּה and הִנֵּהוּ.¹

4.1 Prepositions

In general, prepositions in BH are difficult to categorize because their function in the syntax may be viewed from a variety of perspectives. As relational terms standing before nouns (or noun equivalents), prepositions may be viewed primarily as “nominal” in orientation and function.² On the other hand, most of the Hebrew prepositions have no obvious morphological connection to nouns, and their nature as “particles” is frequently evident in their function as adverbs or conjunctions. However, a third perspective, the “semantic” perspective of prepositions, has become increasingly more prominent in modern grammars, and is important to consider here. In

¹ Because Hebrew grammars traditionally include so many parts of speech under the rubric, some have chosen to use “other word classes,” or something of the like (van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 271).

² On these three perspectives of Hebrew prepositions, see Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 187–90.

essence, this perspective means that some prepositions in particular uses have connotations determined by the verb with which they are used. In other words, the meaning of certain prepositions is not so much determined by morphological origins or by use with specific nouns as it is by the particular pattern of *verb plus preposition plus object*. Because of the use of these patterns, it is insufficient to study only the use of prepositions in isolation, as we will present them here. It will also be necessary to consider the way individual prepositions are used with particular verbs, which is ultimately a lexical matter. Since the meaning of some prepositions is determined by the verbs that govern them, it is necessary for the exegete to learn particular prepositions used with certain verbs, or to use the lexica for specific verbs to determine their meaning when used with a given preposition.

The following are the most common prepositions (in alphabetical order) and their uses.³

4.1.1 אַחַר / אַחֲרָי

(*a*) **Spatial** – indicates localization, especially “behind” a place: אַחֲרֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן, “*behind* the tabernacle” (Num 3:23), עוֹמֵד אַחֲרַי כְּתִלְנוּ, “he is standing *behind* our wall” (Song 2:9).⁴ Related to this spatial use is the *directional* use of אַחֲרַי. In BH, the four directional compass points are often expressed from an eastward-facing position, so that left and right represent north and south respectively, while front and back represent east and west. Hence, “behind” (אַחֲרַי) represents “west”: הֲיִנָּה אַחֲרָי קִרְיַת יְעָרִים, “it is *west* of Kiriath-jearim” (Judg 18:12).

³ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 190–225; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 277–94; Williams 1976, 44–63; Kautzsch 1910, 377–84; Bauer and Leander 1991, 634–47; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 482–92. In addition to these, the lexica are also frequently important for the study of these prepositions, especially *DCH* and *HALOT*.

⁴ The particle in its plural construct (אַחֲרָי) also serves as a substantive, referring to “back parts, rear” (*DCH* 1:199–200; *BDB* 30).

(b) *Temporal* – points to an event that comes chronologically “after” another event. The preposition normally precedes the noun or verb denoting the first event: וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה (1 Kgs 21:1), “It happened after these things” (1 Kgs 21:1), אַחֲרַי בָּאוּ מִחֶבְרוֹן, “after coming from Hebron” (2 Sam 5:13), אַחֲרַי הוּלִידוּ אֶת־שֵׁת, “after he became the father of Seth” (Gen 5:4).

At times, אַחֲרֵי serves as an adverb of time expressing *manner*, and is best translated by the English adverb “afterward”: אַחֲרֵי תֵלֵךְ, “afterward she may go” (Gen 24:55), וְאַחֲרַי יִלְדָה בֵּת, “and afterward she bore a daughter” (Gen 30:21), וְאַחֲרֵי בָאוּ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־פַּרְעֹה, “and afterward Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh” (Exod 5:1).⁵

(c) *Metaphorical* – denoting a behavior patterned after or according to that of another, or in support of another: וַיִּלְךְ אַחֲרֵי חַטָּאת יִרְבָּעָם, “and he followed [literally: went after] the sins of Jeroboam” (2 Kgs 13:2), אַחֲרֵי עֵינַי הִלְךְ לִבִּי, “my heart has followed [literally: gone after] my eyes” (Job 31:7), וְהֵיטֵם גַּם־אַתֶּם וְגַם־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר מֶלֶךְ עָלֵיכֶם אַחֲרֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, “and both you and the king who reigns over you will follow [literally: be after] YHWH your God” (1 Sam 12:14).

4.1.2 אֶל־ / אֵל

(a) *Terminative* – marks movement “to” or “into” something, especially when the goal of the movement is reached: כִּי־תָבֹא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ, “when you come into the land” (Deut 17:14), לֹא־יָרַד אֲוִרְיָה אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ, “Uriah did not go down to his house” (2 Sam 11:10), וַיֵּצֵא אֶל־אָחָיו, “and he [Moses] went out to his brothers” (Exod 2:11), גּוֹי לֹא־יָדְעוּךָ אֵלַיְךָ יְרוּצוּ, “nations that do not know you shall run to you” (Isa 55:5). This may become “on(to)”

⁵ When occurring in the plural construct form, the adverbial takes the compound אַחֲרֵי־כֵן (see HALOT 1:36; DCH 1:197; BDB 30).

or “upon” when the motion is vertical:⁶ וַיִּפֹּל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־פָּנָיו, “and Joshua fell on his face” (Josh 5:14), וַיֵּאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלָיִךְ, “may YHWH make his face shine on you” (Num 6:25), וַתִּכְבֵּד יַד־יְהוָה אֶל־הָאֲשֻׁדּוּדִים, “and the hand of YHWH was heavy upon the people of Ashdod” (1 Sam 5:6).

The motion or movement takes on a *directional* connotation when the goal is not reached, sometimes resulting in a translation “toward(s)” or “in the direction of”: אֲשַׁתְּחִנֶּה אֶל־הַיְכָל־קִדְשֶׁךָ, “I will bow down toward your holy temple” (Ps 5:8), וַיִּפְּנוּ אֶל־הַמִּדְבָּר, “they [the Israelites] turned toward the wilderness” (Exod 16:10), וַאֲרָאָה וְהִנֵּה־יָד שְׁלֹחָה אֵלַי, “and I looked and a hand was extended to me” (Ezek 2:9).

Often in the *terminative* use of אֶל־/אֵל, as with some of the other uses that follow (see especially the *declarative* and *perceptual*), the preposition also serves to mark a simple *indirect object*:⁷ וַנִּתֵּן אֵלָיִךְ אוֹת, “and he gives [to] you a sign” (Deut 13:2), קָחֶם־נָא אֵלַי וְאֲבָרְכֶם, “bring them to me that I may bless them” (Gen 48:9), וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב מִלְּאָכִים לְפָנָיו אֶל־עֵשָׂו, “and Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau” (Gen 32:4).

(b) *Estimative* – expresses interest/advantage or indifference/disadvantage in something, and often requires “for” or “against” in translation: כִּי הִנְנִי אֵלֵיכֶם, “see now, I am for you” (Ezek 36:9), וְאֶקְבְּצָה אֶל־אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל, “and let me gather all Israel for my lord the king” (2 Sam 3:21), וּנְבַקְעֵנָה אֲלֵינוּ, “and let us conquer it for ourselves,” (Isa 7:6), חֲרוֹן אַף־יְהוָה אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל, “YHWH’s fierce anger against Israel” (Num 32:14). An extreme variant of the *estimative* אֶל־/אֵל is its use with militaristic verbs, the most obvious being לחם in the Niphal (וַיִּנְלַחְמוּ אֵלֶיךָ, “and they will fight against you,”

⁶ See *DCH* 1:260–64 for the distinction between horizontal and vertical motion.

⁷ Or the so-called datival use (see Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 193).

[Jer 1:19]), but occurring with many other verbs as well: וַיִּפְשְׁטוּ אֶל־הַגְּבֵעָה, “and they marauded against Gibeah” (Judg 20:37), מַה־לִּי וְלָךְ כִּי־בָאתָ אֵלַי לְהִלָּחֵם בְּאַרְצִי, “what is there between us that you have come against me to fight against my land” (Judg 11:12).⁸

(c) *Declarative* – involves proclamation or locution (marking the object/recipient of a verb of speech), and at times with an *estimative* connotation as well. An extension of the *terminative* use of אֶל־/אֵל, the *declarative* marks the recipient of verbs of speech (דבר, קרא, אמר, ספר, etc.): וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה, “and he [the serpent] said to the woman” (Gen 3:1), דַּבְּרוּ עַל־לֵב יְרוּשָׁלַם וְקְרְאוּ אֵלֶיהָ, “speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her” (Isa 40:2), וְקְרָא אֵלֶיהָ אֶת־הַקְּרִיָּאָה אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי דֹבֵר אֵלֶיךָ, “and proclaim to it [Nineveh] the message that I tell [to] you” (Jonah 3:2), וַיְסַפֵּר אֶל־אָבִיו וְאֶל־אָחָיו to, “and he related it to his father and to his brothers” (Gen 37:10).

(d) *Perceptual* – marks one’s disposition or predilection toward another person or place. As another extension of the *terminative*, the *perceptual* marks the recipient of verbs of perception (שמע, ראה, etc.), aptitude (שמר, בין, ידע, זכר), or emotion (עגב, רנן): שָׁמַע יְהוָה אֶל־עֲנִיָּךְ, “YHWH has given heed to your affliction” (Gen 16:11), וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם, “and YHWH appeared to Abram” (Gen 12:7), לָמָּה לֹא שָׁמַרְתָּ אֶל־אֲדֹנֶיךָ הַמֶּלֶךְ, “Why have you not kept watch over your lord the king” (1 Sam 26:15), לֹא יְבִינּוּ אֶל־פְּעֻלַת יְהוָה, “they do not regard [literally: understand about] the works of YHWH” (Ps 28:5), גִּוַדְעָתִי אֵלֵיהֶם, “I [YHWH] made myself known to them” (Ezek 20:9), וַיִּזְכֹּר עֵוֹן אֲבוֹתָיו אֶל־יְהוָה, “let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before YHWH” (Ps 109:14), לְבִי וּבִשְׂרִי יִרְנְנוּ אֶל־אֱלֹהֵיךָ, “my heart and my flesh sing for

⁸ For many other examples, see *DCH* 1:267–68, section 6.

joy *to* the living God” (Ps 84:3), וַתַּעֲנֵב עַל־מְאַהֲבֶיהָ אֶל־אַשּׁוּר, “and she [Oholah] lusted after her lovers, *after* the Assyrians” (Ezek 23:5).

With verbs of writing, giving, or commanding, the *perceptual* use of אֶל/אל, may connote “addressed to” or “intended for”: וַיִּכְתֹּב דָּוִד סֵפֶר אֶל־יֹאָב, “and David wrote a letter *intended for* Joab” (2 Sam 11:14), וַאֲנָרַת אֶל־אַסָּף, “and [let] a letter [be] *addressed to* Asaph” (Neh 2:8).

(e) **Addition** – denotes circumstances over and above certain others, requiring such translations as “in addition to,” or “as well as”: אַשָּׁה אֶל־אָחֹתָהּ לֹא תִקַּח, “You shall not marry a woman *in addition to* her sister” (Lev 18:18), הוּסַפַּת חִכְמָה וְטוֹב אֶל־הַשְּׂמוּעָה אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתִּי, “You have added wisdom and prosperity *together with* the report which I heard” (1 Kgs 10:7).

(f) **Spatial** – indicates localization, especially “at,” “in,” “by,” “in the vicinity of,” or “alongside”:

קָבַר אַבְרָהָם אֶת־שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ אֶל־מְעָרַת שְׂדֵה הַמַּכְפֵּלָה

“Abraham buried Sarah his wife *in* the cave of the field at Machpelah” (Gen 23:19),

כִּי אִם־אֶל־הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֶל־הֵיךְ לִשְׁכֵן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם

“but *at* the place where YHWH your God chooses to establish his name” (Deut 16:6), הוּא־בָא וַיַּעֲמַד אֶל־אֲדֹנָיו, “he went in and stood *in the presence of* his master” (2 Kgs 5:25).

(g) **Specification** – clarifies or explains further what immediately precedes, which would otherwise be generally or ambiguously stated. This use of the preposition often requires “about” or “concerning”: וַתִּשְׁמַע אֶת־הַשְּׂמוּעָה אֶל־הַלְקַח אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים וּמַת חַמִּיהָ וְאִישָׁהּ, “and she heard the news *concerning* the capture of the ark of God and the death of her father-in-law and husband”

(1 Sam 4:19), לָכֵן כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֶל־מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר, “therefore, thus says YHWH *concerning* the king of Assyria” (Isa 37:33), בִּי תוֹרֵם אֶל־הַדֶּרֶךְ הַטּוֹבָה אֲשֶׁר יִלְכוּ־בָהּ, “indeed, teach them *about* the good way in which they should walk” (2 Chr 6:27).

At times, the use of אֶל־/אֵל, for specification takes on a *causal* connotation: הִתְאַבֵּל שָׁמוּאֵל אֶל־שָׂאוּל, “Samuel grieved *concerning* [*because of*] Saul” (1 Sam 15:35), אֶל־הַכֶּעַס אֲשֶׁר הִכְעִסְתָּ, “*because* of the provocation with which you have provoked” (1 Kgs 21:22).

4.1.3 אֶצֶל

Spatial – Expresses concepts of nearness or close proximity, usually requiring “beside,” “with,” or “near”: וַיִּצְיֵנוּ אֹתוֹ אֶצֶל דָּגוֹן, “and he set it *beside* Dagon” (1 Sam 5:2), וַתִּעַמְדִּנָּה אֶצֶל הַפָּרוֹת עַל־שֵׁפֶת הַיָּאֵר, “and they stood *near* the other cows on the bank of the Nile” (Gen 41:3).

4.1.4 אֵת / אִתָּ

(a) **Accompaniment** – This preposition⁹ shows attendant circumstances: אַתָּה וּבְנֵיךָ אִתְּךָ, “you and your children *with* you” (Num 18:2), וַיִּתְהַלֵּךְ חֲנוּךְ אֵת־הָאֱלֹהִים, “And Enoch walked *with* God” (Gen 5:22), וַיְהִי אֵלֵהִים אֵת־הַנֶּעֱר, “God was *with* the young boy” (Gen 21:20). A finer nuance of the usage is the *personal accompaniment*, which expresses accompaniment for the purpose of providing help: קָנִיתִי אִישׁ אֵת־יְהוָה, “I have gotten a man *with the help of* YHWH” (Gen 4:1), וַיֵּדְעוּ כִּי מֵאֵת אֱלֹהֵינוּ נַעֲשֶׂתָה הַמְּלָאכָה הַזֹּאת, “They knew that this work was accomplished *with the help of* our God” (Neh 6:16).

⁹ This preposition is presumably based on the root אֵתָּ since suffixed forms double the *-t* (אֵתָּ, and note the Akkadian preposition *itti*). Thus, it should not be confused with the definite direct object marker, which may be based on the root אֵית in light of its forms with suffixes (אֵיתָּ).

(b) *Possession* – expressing ownership:

הִנֵּה־הַכֶּסֶף אִתִּי אֲנִי לְקַחְתִּיו

“behold, the silver is with me, I took it” (Judg 17:2),
 מָה אִתָּנוּ, “What do we have [lit: What (is) with us]”
 (1 Sam 9:7), הַנְּבִיא אֲשֶׁר־אִתּוֹ חֲלוֹם יְסַפֵּר חֲלוֹם, “The
 prophet who has a dream (literally: the prophet, to whom,
a dream is with him), may tell the dream” (Jer 23:28).

(c) *Complement* – with verbs of speaking, dealing, or mak-
 ing: וַיְדַבֵּר אִתָּם קָשׁוֹת, “and he spoke harshly with them”
 (Gen 42:7), וַיֵּדְעֵתֶם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה בְּעֲשׂוֹתִי אִתְּכֶם, “Then you
 will know that I am YHWH, when I have dealt with you”
 (Ezek 20:44).

(d) *Spatial* – denotes a sense of nearness or prox-
 imity: בְּצִעֲנַנִּים אֲשֶׁר אֶת־קֵדֶשׁ, “in Zaananim, which is
near Kedesh” (Judg 4:11 *Qere*), וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה הִנֵּה מְקוֹם אִתִּי,
 “YHWH said, ‘See, there is a place beside me” (Exod 33:21),
 אֶל־הַמְּרֻכָּבָה בְּמַעַל־הַגּוּר אֲשֶׁר אֶת־יִבְלֵעַם,
 “[so they shot him] in the chariot, at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam”
 (2 Kgs 9:27).

4.1.5 ך

(a) *Spatial* – This preposition¹⁰ indicates localization, es-
 pecially “in,” “at” or “on” a place:

לְעֹשׂוֹת זְבָחִים בְּבַיִת־יְהוָה בִּירוּשָׁלַם

“to offer sacrifices in the house of YHWH at Jerusalem” (1
 Kgs 12:27), וַיִּזְבַּח יַעֲקֹב זְבַח בְּהָר, “Then Jacob offered a sac-
 rifice on the mountain” (Gen 31:54), הַכְּנַעֲנִי אֹז בְּאֶרֶץ, “the
 Canaanites were then in the land” (Gen 12:6).

¹⁰ Approximately 58% of the uses of ך in the Bible are *spatial*, while only about 16% are temporal (Jenni 1992, 69). For a complete list of uses and numerous examples, see *HALOT* 1:104–05; *DCH* 2:82–86.

With certain verbs of motion or movement, **בְּ** denotes the route “through”: וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם בְּאֶרֶץ, “and Abram passed through the land” (Gen 12:6), קוּם הִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּאֶרֶץ, “rise up, walk through the land” (Gen 13:17). At other times, **בְּ** refers to the movement “into” or rest “in” a place (“terminative”): הַבָּאִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם בַּיָּם, “those who went after them into the sea” (Exod 14:28), וְשִׁלַּח אֶת־הַשְּׂעִיר בַּמִּדְבָּר, “and he shall send forth the goat into the wilderness” (Lev 16:22), בְּנֵי אָדָם בְּצֵל כַּנְּפֵיךָ יִחְסִיּוּ, “all people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings” (Ps 36:8). Included in this category of localization are those times when **בְּ** connotes “in the domain of,” that is, inclusion “among” or “within” a group: וְהִפִּיץ יְהוָה אֶתְכֶם בְּעַמִּים וְנִשְׁאַרְתֶּם מִתִּי מִסֶּפֶר בְּגוֹיִם, “YHWH will scatter you among the peoples and you shall be left few in number among the nations” (Deut 4:27), אֲדַוְךָ בְּעַמִּים אֲדָנִי, “I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples” (Ps 57:10). At times, **בְּ** appears to connote movement or action away “from” a place, especially in poetry: אֲדָנִי מֵעוֹן אֶתָּה הָיִיתָ לָנוּ בְּדֹר וָדֹר, “Lord, you have been our dwelling place from all generations” (Ps 90:1), אֵין יְשׁוּעָתָה לֹא בְּאֱלֹהִים, “he has no salvation from God” (Ps 3:3), דָּיִן אֱלֹמְנוּת אֱלֹהִים בְּמַעוֹן קִדְשׁוֹ, “a protector of widows is God from his sanctuary” (Ps 68:6), הַלְיָכוֹת אֱלֹי מַלְכִי בַקִּדְשׁ, “the processions of my God, my King, from the sanctuary” (Ps 68:25).¹¹

(b) *Temporal* – expresses a moment or point of time when an action takes place: בְּיוֹם עָשׂוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמַיִם, “in the day when YHWH God made earth and the heavens” (Gen 2:4), בְּיוֹם בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אָדָם, “in the day when God created humankind” (Gen 5:1), בְּיָמַי קִצִּיר־חִטִּים, “in the days of wheat harvest” (Gen 30:14), וַיָּבֵא יַעֲקֹב מִן־הַשָּׂדֶה בְּעֶרֶב,

¹¹ The so-called double meaning of **בְּ** (“in” and “from”) has been heavily debated in light of Ugaritic evidence, which seems to support “from” in these poetic contexts, especially in the Psalms. For bibliography, see *DCH* 2:602. See also on **לְ** in 4.1.10.

“and Jacob came from the field in the evening” (Gen 30:16), בְּכָל־עֵת אָהַב הָרַע, “a friend loves at all times” (Prov 17:17). When used with the infinitive construct, כִּי frequently connotes “when,” or “whenever”: בְּהִבְרָאֵם, “when they [the heavens and the earth] were created” (Gen 2:4), בְּצֵאתָם מִמִּצְרַיִם, “when they [the Israelites] came out of Egypt” (Josh 5:4); and see the famous examples in the verses following the Shema: וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָם בְּשֹׁבְתֶךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִקְחֶךָ וּבְדַרְדְּרְךָ וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמֶךָ, “and you shall speak of them [God’s words] when you sit at home and when you are on the road, when you lie down and when you rise” (Deut 6:7).

(c) *Instrumental* – refers to an inanimate object used to perform a certain action: בְּשֵׁבֶט יַכּוּ, “with a rod they will smite [him]” (Mic 4:14), וְהָרַגְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בַּחֶרֶב, “and I will kill you with the sword” (Exod 22:23). Similar to this use is the כִּי of *material*, which indicates the material with which something is made or formed: וְצָרַף בְּזָהָב יִרְקַעְנֻהוּ, “and a goldsmith overspreads it with gold” (Isa 40:19).

(d) *Adversative* – indicates a relationship of disadvantage: בּוֹ בְּכָל־יָד וְיָד כָּל־בּוֹ, “his hand shall be against everyone and everyone’s hand against him” (Gen 16:12). In some contexts, the *adversative* כִּי connotes “in spite of” in translation: לֹא־אֵי־אֱמִינֻהוּ בִּי בְּכָל־הָאֵתוֹת אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי בְּקִרְבּוֹ, “they do not believe in me in spite of all the signs that I have done among them” (Num 14:11).

(e) *Specification* – clarifies or explains further an immediately preceding verbal action, which would otherwise be generally or ambiguously stated:

וְשִׂמְחָתָּ בְּכָל־הַטּוֹב אֲשֶׁר נָתַן־לְךָ יְהוָה

“and you shall rejoice in all the good which YHWH has given to you” (Deut 26:11). The כִּי of *specification* may also particularize the parts of which the general whole consists: וַיִּגְוַע כָּל־בָּשָׂר הָרֹמֵשׁ עַל־הָאָרֶץ בְּעוֹף וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבַחַיָּה וּבְכָל־הַשָּׂרִץ

“and all flesh died that moved on the earth – birds, cattle, wild animals, all swarming creatures” (Gen 7:21),

וַיִּמְרְרוּ אֶת־חַיֵּיהֶם בְּעִבְדָּה קָשָׁה בַחֲמֹר וּבִלְבָנִים וּבְכָל־עֲבָדָה
בַּשָּׂדֶה

“and they made their lives bitter with hard service – *in* mortar and *in* brick and *in* all field service” (Exod 1:14).

(f) *Causal* – identifies a cause or reason: אִישׁ בְּחַטָּאוֹ יוּמָתוֹ, “each person shall be put to death *because of* his own sin” (Deut 24:16),

הֵן הִנֵּה הָיוּ לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּדַבֵּר בְּלַעַם לְמַסְר־מַעַל בִּיהוָה

“behold, these women caused the Israelites, *because* of the word of Balaam, to act treacherously against YHWH” (Num 31:16),

וּרְאִיתֶם אֶת־כְּבוֹד יְהוָה בְּשָׁמְעוֹ אֶת־תְּלַנְתִּיכֶם עַל־יְהוָה

“and you shall see the glory of YHWH, *because* he has heard your complaining against YHWH” (Exod 16:7), בַּעֲזֹבְכֶם אֶת־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה, *because* you have forsaken the commands of YHWH” (1 Kgs 18:18). The preposition may be combined with אֲשֶׁר to form a causal conjunction: בְּאֲשֶׁר אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ, “*because* you are his wife” (Gen 39:9), בְּאֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אִתּוֹ, “*because* YHWH was with him” (Gen 39:23).¹²

(g) *Accompaniment* – denotes circumstances occurring “together with”: יֵצְאוּ בְרִכְשׁ גָּדוֹל, “they shall come out *with* great possessions” (Gen 15:14), נִטְּהוּ אֶת־יָדְךָ בַּמַּטֵּן, “stretch out your hand *with* your staff” (Exod 8:1), בְּעֶצֶב תִּלְדֵי בָנִים, “*with* pain you shall bring forth children” (Gen 3:16), וַיֵּצֵא אֶדוֹם לְקָרְאוֹתוֹ בְּעַם כָּבֵד, “and Edom came out against them *with* a large force” (Num 20:20).

¹² HALOT 1:99 at §B,c; DCH 1:433 at §4c(5).

(h) *Essence*¹³ – marks identity of a noun in the context, occasionally with a predicate, and connoting “(having the same nature) as” or “(consisting) of”: וְעָשָׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ, “let us make humankind [*in the same nature*] *as* our image” (Gen 1:26), בְּדְמוּת אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֹתוֹ, “*as* the likeness of God he made him” (Gen 5:1), וְאָרָא אֶל-אַבְרָהָם אֶל-יִצְחָק וְאֶל-יַעֲקֹב בְּאֵל שַׁדַּי, “and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob *as* God Almighty” (Exod 6:3), הִנֵּה אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה בָּחֻזְקוֹ יָבוֹא, “behold, Lord YHWH comes *as* a mighty one” (Isa 40:10), וַיֵּנָדַר שָׁם בְּמַתִּי מְעַט, “and he [Jacob] sojourned there [*consisting*] *of* men few in number” (Deut 26:5).

(i) *Manner* – describes the way in which an action or situation is performed or the attendant circumstances of the action. In such cases, בְּ has an adverbial force: בְּכֹחַ בְּקוֹל גָּדוֹל, “weeping *aloud* [literally: *with* a great voice]” (Ezra 3:12), וְעַתָּה שׁוּב וְלֵךְ בְּשָׁלוֹם, “go back now, and go *peaceably* [literally: *in* peace]” (1 Sam 29:7).

(j) *Price* – indicating the cost or price of something, and at times connoting “at the risk of” or “in exchange for”: בְּכֶסֶף מְלֵא יִתְּנֶנָּה לִי, “let him give it to me *at the cost of* full silver [i.e., full price]” (Gen 23:9), אֲעַבְדְּךָ שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים בְּרַחֵל בְּתִדְךָ הַקְטַנָּה, “I will serve you seven years *as the price of* your younger daughter Rachel” (Gen 29:18), וַיִּמְרוּ אֶת-כְּבוֹדָם בְּתַבְנִית שׁוֹר אֹכֵל עֵשֶׂב, “and they changed their glory *in exchange for* the image of an ox that eats grass” (Ps 106:20).

4.1.6 בֵּין

Denotes the interval “between” two points, usually *spatial* and occasionally *temporal*. In 80 percent of its

¹³ Known by older grammarians as *beth essentiae* (Kautzsch 1910, 379). See Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 486–87, and *DCH* 2:84–85.

occurrences, *בֵּין* is paired with itself (“... וּבֵין... בֵּין”) in order to denote the interval between two points or two parties, in which case the second *בֵּין* is not repeated in translation:¹⁴ *בֵּין בֵּית־אֵל וּבֵין הָעֵי*, “*between* Bethel and Ai” (Gen 13:3), *וַיְהִי שָׁלוֹם בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבֵין הָאֱמֹרִי*, “and there was peace *between* Israel and the Amorites” (1 Sam 7:14), *בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ*, “[let there be] a treaty *between* me and you” (1 Kgs 15:19), *הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יְהוָה בֵּינִי וּבֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהַר סִינַי*, which YHWH established *between* himself and the Israelites on Mount Sinai” (Lev 26:46). The second *בֵּין* of the idiom may be repeated, in which case the idea appears to be “between A (on the one hand) and B and C (on the other)”: *וַיִּכְרַת יְהוֹיָדָע אֶת־הַבְּרִית בֵּין יְהוָה וּבֵין הַמֶּלֶךְ וּבֵין הָעָם*, “Then Jehoiada made a covenant *between* YHWH on the one hand, and the king and people on the other” (2 Kgs 11:17).¹⁵

In other occurrences, *בֵּין* is used only once, and stands before the plural or dual of a noun or with plural suffixes to refer to a group, in which case the preposition may denote “among”: *אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם וְאֱלֹהֵי נָחוֹר יִשְׁפֹּטוּ בֵּינֵינוּ*, “the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor judge *between* us” (Gen 31:53), *רִיב בֵּין אָנָשִׁים*, “a dispute *between* men” (Deut 25:1), *מְשַׁלַּח מְדָנִים בֵּין אַחִים*, “and one who sows discord *among* brothers” (Prov 6:19).¹⁶

4.1.7 בַּעַד / בְּעַד

(a) *Spatial* – indicates localization especially “behind” something: *הָאָרֶץ בְּרַחֲמֶיהָ בַּעֲדַי לְעוֹלָם*, “[I went down to] the earth whose bars [are closed] *behind* me forever” (Jonah 2:7 [Eng. 2:6]). With the verb “close, shut” (סָגַר), the concept is to close off or shut up inside: *וַיִּסְגֹּר יְהוָה בַּעֲדוֹ*, “and YHWH

¹⁴ For the statistics, see Waltke and O’Connor 1990 (199–201) and *DCH* 2:146–49.

¹⁵ For more on this, and other variations of the idiom, see *DCH* 2:146.

¹⁶ On such uses as “inclusive,” and on the distinction between *inclusive* and *exclusive* uses of *בֵּין*, see Waltke and O’Connor 1990 (199–201).

closed it behind him” (Gen 7:16), וּבָאת וּסְגַרְתָּ הַדֶּלֶת בְּעַדְךָ, “and go in and shut the door behind you” (2 Kgs 4:4), וּסְגַר יְהוָה בְּעַד רַחֲמָהּ, “YHWH closed her womb” (1 Sam 1:6).

With verbs of motion (בוא, ירד [Hi]), נפל, etc.), the preposition often denotes a sense of movement “through” an object: בְּעַד הַחַלּוֹנִים יָבֵאוּ כְּגַנָּב, “through the windows they enter like a thief” (Joel 2:9), וּתּוֹרְדֵם בַּחֲבֵל בְּעַד הַחַלּוֹן, “then she let them down by a rope through the window” (Josh 2:15).

Used metaphorically, the spatial sense of “around” or “round about” can take on an *advantage* idea related to the next usage:

הֲלֹא־אַתָּה שָׂכַתָּ בְּעֵדוֹ וּבְעַד־בֵּיתוֹ וּבְעַד כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ מִסָּבִיב

“Have you not put a fence around him, his house, and all that he has, on every side?” (Job 1:10 *Qere*), אַתָּה יְהוָה מִגֵּן בְּעַדִּי, “You, O YHWH, are a shield around me” (Ps 3:4).

(b) *Advantage* – indicates a relationship of interest or advantage, often requiring “for” or “on behalf of”: יִתְפַּלֵּל בְּעַדְךָ וְחַיָּה “he will pray for you and you will live” (Gen 20:7), אוּלַי אֶכַפְּרָה בְּעַד חַטָּאתְכֶם, “perhaps I can make atonement for your sin” (Exod 32:30), וְכַפַּר בְּעַדְךָ וּבְעַד הָעָם, “and make atonement for yourself and for the people” (Lev 9:7),

לְכוּ דַרְשׁוּ אֶת־יְהוָה בְּעַדִּי וּבְעַד־הָעָם וּבְעַד כָּל־יְהוּדָה

“Go, inquire of YHWH on my behalf, and on behalf of the people and all Judah” (2 Kgs 22:13).

4.1.8 יַעַן

Causal – More often used as a conjunction, יַעַן denotes a causal sense: יַעַן כָּל־תּוֹעֵבֹתֶיךָ, “because of all your abominations” (Ezek 5:9), יַעַן מָאֲסַתְּ אֶת־יְדֵי בֵר יְהוָה וַיִּמְאַסְךָ מִמְּלִךְ, “because you despised the hands of YHWH and he despised you from his king,”

“*Because* you rejected the word of YHWH, he has rejected you as king” (1 Sam 15:23). For more specific constructions in which the particle appears, refer to “Causal Clauses” (section 5.2.5).

4.1.9 ׀

׀, unlike other prepositions, has no spatial use, and has a temporal use only with the infinitive construct. Instead, it shows comparison or correspondence relationships.

(a) *Agreement* – The preposition often denotes a sense of *agreement in quantity or measure*: יִסַּף עֲלֵיכֶם כְּכֶם אֶלֶף פְּעָמִים, “[may YHWH] make you a thousand times as many as you are” (Deut 1:11). This type of quantitative agreement can be *approximate* as well: וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם כְּעֶשֶׂר שָׁנִים, “they lived there about ten years” (Ruth 1:4), כְּאַרְבָּעִים אֶלֶף חֲלוּצֵי הַצָּבָא, “about forty thousand armed for war” (Josh 4:13).

Along with quantitative agreement, ׀ also expresses agreement in *kind* or *quality* as well: וְהָיִיתָם כְּאֱלֹהִים, “you will be like God” (Gen 3:5),

הֲלוֹא יָדַעְתֶּם כִּי־נִחֵשׁ יִנְחֵשׁ אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר כְּמוֹנִי

“Do you not know that a man like me practices divination?” (Gen 44:15), וּבֶעֱרֵב יְהוָה עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן כְּמֵרְאֵה־אֵשׁ עַד־בֹּקֶר, “In the evening, [the cloud] was over the tabernacle, like the appearance of fire, until morning” (Num 9:15).

(b) *Correspondence* – a comparison that establishes an equivalence between the things that are compared, and often clarifying the identity of what is compared: הוּא כְּאִישׁ אֱמֹתָה, “he is truly a man of truth” (Neh 7:2). This is especially common with the ׀...׀ construction: וְהָיָה כָּעַם כְּכֹהֵן כְּעַבְד כְּאֲדֹנָיו, “And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the slave, so with his master” (Isa 24:2).

(c) **Temporal** – with the infinitive construct, expresses “when” or “as soon as”: וְהָיָה כִּי־אֵין הַנֶּעֱר וְיָמָת, “As soon as he sees that the boy is not with us, he will die” (Gen 44:31),

וַיִּצַו אֲבִשְׁלוֹם אֶת־נַעֲרָיו לֵאמֹר רְאוּ נָא כְּטוֹב לִב־אֲמֹנֹן בֵּינָן
וְאָמַרְתִּי אֲלֵיכֶם הִכּוּ אֶת־אֲמֹנֹן וְהָמַתֶּם אֹתוֹ

“Absalom commanded his servants, saying ‘Watch; when Amnon’s heart is merry with wine, and I say to you “Strike Amnon,” then put him to death’ ” (2 Sam 13:28).

4.1.10 ל

(a) **Spatial** – most often, indicates *direction* “to” or “toward” the object of the preposition:

הַבּוֹא נָבוֹא אֲנִי וְאִמִּי וְאֶחָיִךְ לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְךָ אָרְצָה

“Will we indeed come, I and your mother and your brothers, to bow down to you, to the ground?” (Gen 37:10), הַרְיֵעוּ לֵאלֹהִים בְּקוֹל רִנָּה, “Shout to God, with a voice of joy” (Ps 47:2 [Eng. 47:1]),

With verbs of motion, spatial ל can take on a *terminative* sense, expressing movement wherein the goal is reached: הַיּוֹם בָּא לְעִיר, “he came to the city today” (1 Sam 9:12), וַיִּשְׁלַח הָאֱלֹהִים מַלְאָךְ לִירוּשָׁלַם, “and God sent a messenger to Jerusalem” (1 Chr 21:15). Occasionally, the *spatial* ל has an ablative function, indicating movement “away from” the object: לֹא יִמְנַע־טוֹב לְהַלְכִים בְּתָמִים, “He does not withhold goodness from those who walk in uprightness” (Ps 84:12), וְלִיהוָה אֲדַנִּי לְמָוֶת תּוֹצֵאֹת, “Escape from death belongs to YHWH, the lord” (Ps 68:21 [Eng. 68:20]).

(b) **Locative** – locates the object of the preposition “in” or “at” a certain point: וַתֵּשֶׁב לְיָמִינוּ, “she sat at his right” (1 Kgs 2:19), לְפֶתַח חַטָּאת רֹבֵץ, “Sin is crouching at the door” (Gen 4:7), וַיַּעֲלֵוּ וַיִּתְּרוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ מִמֶּדְבַר־צֶן עַד־רְחֹב לְבַא חֲמַת,

“They went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin to Reho, at Lebo Hamath” (Num 13:21).

(c) *Temporal* – similar to the *locative* use, *temporal* לְ locates the object of the preposition “in,” “at,” or “during” a certain period of time: וַתָּבֵא אֵלָיו הַיּוֹנָה לַעֶת עָרֵב, “the dove came to him at the time of evening” (Gen 8:11), וַהֲבִיאוּ לַבֶּקֶר זִבְחֵיכֶם, “Bring your sacrifices in the morning” (Amos 4:4). Temporal לְ also functions to indicate movement toward a moment in time, or the duration of an action/situation “until” a moment in time: כָּל־יְמֵיךָ לְעוֹלָם, “all your days to eternity” (Deut 23:7 [Eng 23:6]), וְלֹא־יֵלֵין מִן־הַבֶּשֶׂר אֲשֶׁר תִּזְבַּח בְּעָרֵב בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן לַבֶּקֶר, “None of the flesh which you slaughter in the evening of the first day shall remain overnight until the morning” (Deut 16:4).

(d) *Purpose* – frequently with the infinitive construct, in order to show the aim or goal of another verb: הַמָּאֹר הַגָּדוֹל לְמִמְשָׁלַת הַיּוֹם, “the greater light to rule the day” (Gen 1:16), וַיּוֹצֵא מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הָעָם לִקְרֹאת הָאֱלֹהִים מִן־הַמַּחֲנֶה, “then Moses brought the people out from the camp to meet God” (Exod 19:17),

אִתָּהּ יָדַעְתָּ אֶת־דָּוִד אָבִי כִּי לֹא יָכַל לְבַנוֹת בַּיִת לְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו

“You know that David my father was unable to build a house for the name of YHWH his god” (1 Kgs 5:17 [Eng 5:3]).

Related to this use is the *causal*, where לְ shows the motive behind an action: אִישׁ הָרַגְתִּי לְפָצְעִי, “I have killed a man for wounding me” (Gen 4:23),

לֹא תִתְגַּדְדוּ וְלֹא תִשְׂמִימוּ קַרְחָה בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם לְמַת

“You shall not cut yourselves or shave your foreheads because of the dead” (Deut 14:1).

(e) *Quasi datival* – לְ has several datival uses. One of the more common indicates the indirect object of verbs of

giving, speaking, listening, or sending: תִּתֶּן־לוֹ, “you will give to him” (Deut 15:14),

אַלְפָּה לַמִּטָּה אַלְפָּה לַמִּטָּה לְכָל מִטּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּשְׁלַחוּ לַצָּבָא

“A thousand from each tribe of all the tribes of Israel you shall send to the war” (Num 31:4),

חָלָא הוּא אָמַר־לִי אַחֲתִי הוּא

“Did he himself not say to me, ‘She is my sister?’” (Gen 20:5).

(e.1) *Interest/advantage* – Sometimes called the *ethical dative*, לְ marks the person or object for whom an action is directed or intended: אַל־תִּבְכוּ לַמֵּת, “Do not weep for the dead” (Jer 22:10), הֲטוֹב לָךְ כִּי־תַעֲשֶׂק, “Is it right for you to oppress?” (Job 10:3),

שִׁמָּה בְּפִיהֶם לְמַעַן תִּהְיֶה־לִּי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לְעֵד בְּבִנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

“Put it in their mouths, so that this song will be a witness for me against the people of Israel” (Deut 31:19).

לְ sometimes expresses the exact opposite, indicating that an action or situation is directed “against” someone or something: גַּם־אֲנֹכִי אוֹתָךְ מִחַטּוֹ־לִי, “I also kept you from sinning against me” (Gen 20:6).

(e.2) *Product* – with verbs of making, indicates a thing that is made, or a person who is altered, either in status or in form: וְאָעֲשֶׂךָ לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל, “I will make you [*into*] a great nation” (Gen 12:2), וַיִּבֶן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַצֵּלַע אֲשֶׁר־לָקַח מִן־הָאָדָם לְאִשָּׁה, “And YHWH God made the rib which he took from Adam into a woman” (Gen 2:22), יָצָא מִמְּקוֹמוֹ לְשׁוּם אַרְצָךְ לְשִׁמָּה, “He has gone out from his place to make your land into a desolation” (Jer 4:7).

(f) *Possession* – shows that the object of the preposition is in possession of something: כֶּסֶףְךָ וְזָהָבְךָ לִי־הוּא, “your silver and your gold are mine [literally: *to/for me*]” (1 Kgs 20:3), הַמֵּת לִירוֹבָם בְּעִיר יֵאָכְלוּ הַכְּלָבִים, “Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city, the dogs will eat” (1 Kgs 14:11).

The *possessive* use of לְ is quite frequent with the particle of existence, to show possession, or with the particle of nonexistence, to show lack of possession. See sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.2.

(g) **Genitival** – nouns in a genitival relationship formed by the construct chain necessarily agree in definiteness. BH forms genitive relationships between nouns that do not agree in definiteness by לְ: הִנֵּה רָאִיתִי בֶן לְיִשִׁי בֵּית הַלְחָמִי לְ: “Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite” (1 Sam 16:18), וְאִתְּכֶם יְהוּי אִישׁ אִישׁ לְמִטָּה, “A man of each tribe will be with you” (Num 1:4).

(h) **Specification** – calls attention to the object of the preposition: וְלִישְׁמַעֲאֵל שְׁמַעְתִּיךָ, “With regard to Ishmael, I have heard you . . .” (Gen 17:20),

שְׁלַף חֶרְבְּךָ וּמִוֹתְתֵנִי כִּן־יֹאמְרוּ לִי אִשָּׁה הִרְגָתְהוּ

“Draw your sword and kill me, so that it will not be said of me, ‘A woman killed him’” (Judg 9:54), לֹא־יִטְפוּ לְאָדָהּ לֹא יִסַּג כְּלָמוֹת, “If they do not speak out concerning these things, reproaches will not be turned back” (Mic 2:6).

(i) **Normative** – often translated “according to,” classifies the object of the preposition, sometimes dividing a larger whole into parts: הִתְיַצְבוּ לְפָנַי יְהוָה לְשִׁבְטֵיכֶם וּלְאֲלֵפֵיכֶם, “present yourselves before YHWH according to your tribes and according to your thousands” (1 Sam 10:19), יַעַן פְּרֵי עֵשֶׂה פְּרֵי לְמִינוֹ, “fruit trees bearing fruit of its kind” (Gen 1:11), בְּנֵי מֶרָרִי לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם לְבֵית־אֲבֹתָם תִּפְקֹד אֹתָם, “As for the Merarites, you shall number them by their families and by their fathers’s households” (Num 4:29).

(j) **Manner** – expresses action that is in accordance with a certain standard or principles, which is denoted by

the preposition:

יִצַב גְּבֻלַת עַמִּים לְמִסְפַּר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

“He fixed the boundaries of the people according to the number of the people of Israel” (Deut 32:8), לֹא-לְמַרְאֵה עֵינָיו יִשְׁפּוֹט וְלֹא-לְמִשְׁמַע אָזְנוֹ יוֹכִיחַ, “He will not judge by what his eyes will see, and he will not make a decision by what his ears hear” (Isa 11:3).

(k) *Estimative* – expresses the opinion or perception held by the object of the preposition: (cf. DCH 4:484a): וְאֶהְיֶה תָּמִים לוֹ, “I was blameless to him” (2 Sam 22:24), כִּי מֶרְדֵּכַי הִיְהוּדִי מְשֻׁנָּה לְמֶלֶךְ אַחַשְׁוֵרוּשׁ וְגִדּוּל לְיְהוּדִים, “For Mordecai the Jew was second to the King Ahasuerus and great among the Jews” (Esth 10:3). Where a divine name is the object of an *estimative* לְ, the *superlative* is intended, וְנִינְוָה הָיְתָה עִיר-גְּדוֹלָה לְאֱלֹהִים, “Nineveh was an exceedingly great city” or “Nineveh was a great city in the eyes of God” (Jonah 3:3).

(l) *Agent* – With passive verbs, לְ often indicates the one who performs the action: בְּרוּךְ אַבְרָם לְאֵל עֲלִיּוֹן קִנְיָה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ, “Blessed be Abram, by God most high, maker of heaven and earth” (Gen 14:19), וְנִבְחַר מָוֶת מִחַיִּים לְכָל הַשְּׂאֲרִית, “Death will be chosen, rather than life, by all the remnant” (Jer 8:3).

(m) *Reflexive* – The לְ preposition also functions *reflexively*, where the object of the preposition is always the same as the subject of the verb. This use is especially common with verbs of motion or with imperatives. לֶךְ-לְךָ, “Go!” (Gen 12:1), קוּם בְּרַח-לְךָ אֶל-לָבָן אָחִי חָרְנָה, “Arise, and flee to Laban, my brother; to Haran” (Gen 27:43), וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה כְּתֹב-לְךָ אֶת-הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה, “YHWH said to Moses, ‘Write these words’ ” (Exod 34:27).

4.1.11 למען

(a) **Purpose** – Paired with an infinitive form, the preposition functions to show *purpose*:

וַיְהוּא עֹשֶׂה בְעֵקֶבָהּ לְמַעַן הָאֲבִיד אֶת־עַבְדֵי הַפֶּעַל

“But Jehu did it in cunning, in order to destroy the servants of Baal” (2 Kgs 10:19),

אֲמַר־נָא אַחֲתִי אַתָּה לְמַעַן יִיטַב־לִי בְעַבְוֹרְךָ

“Please say that you are my sister, so that it will go well for me because of you” (Gen 12:13).

(b) **Causal** – denotes the cause of an action or situation: וַיִּתְעַבֵּר יְהוָה בִּי לְמַעַן כֹּחַם, “and YHWH was angry with me because of you” (Deut 3:26),

הַשִּׁבְט הָאֶחָד יִהְיֶה־לּוֹ לְמַעַן עַבְדֵי דָוִד וּלְמַעַן יְרוּשָׁלַם

“He will have one tribe, because of my servant David and because of Jerusalem” (1 Kgs 11:32).

4.1.12 לפני

This preposition is a compound of the simple preposition לְ prefixed to the substantive פְּנִים in the construct state.

(a) **Locative** – The basic *locative* sense of the preposition points to what is “before,” or “in front of”: וַאֲבָרָהֶם עוֹדְנֵו עִמָּד לְפָנֵי יְהוָה, “and Abraham was still standing before YHWH” (Gen 18:22),

וְהִנַּחְתֶּם בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לְפָנֵי הָעֵדוּת אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹעַד לָכֶם שָׁמָּה

“Deposit them in the tent of meeting in front of the testimony, where I meet with you” (Num 17:19 [Eng 17:4]).

Though translated “before,” the particle can place emphasis not on the location of its object but on the fact that the object has been placed at one’s disposal,

or possession: הנה־רַבְּקָה לְפָנֶיךָ קַח וְלֵךְ, “Here is Rebe-
kah before you; take her and go” (Gen 24:51),
אָתְנוּ תֵשְׁבוּ וְהָאָרֶץ תִּהְיֶה לְפָנֵיכֶם,
and the land shall be open before you” (Gen 34:10).

(b) *Temporal* – points to an action that occurred in the past relative to the concurrent situation in the context, that is “before”: שְׁנַתִּים לְפָנֵי הָרָעַשׁ, “two years before the earthquake” (Amos 1:1), לְפָנֵי קְצִיר, “before the harvest” (Isa 18:5).

(c) *Perceptual* – expresses someone’s personal view, or introduces events or situations that comes to one’s attention: מָה חִטָּאתִי לְפָנֵי אָבִיךָ כִּי מִבְקֵשׁ אֶת־נַפְשִׁי, “What is my sin against your father that he seeks my life?” (1 Sam 20:1), וַתִּשְׁחַת הָאָרֶץ לְפָנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים, “The earth was corrupt in the sight of God” (Gen 6:11),

מִכָּל חַטָּאתֵיכֶם לְפָנֵי יְהוָה תִּטְהָרוּ

“You will be clean from all your sins before YHWH” (Lev 16:30).

מִן 4.1.13

(a) *Source* – One of the most common uses of מִן designates where something or someone originated: אִבְזָן מִבֵּית לָחֶם, “Ibzan from Bethlehem” (Judg 12:8),

וְעַתָּה קַחוּ לָכֶם שְׁנַי עָשָׂר אִישׁ מִשְׁבְּטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

“Now, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel” (Josh 3:12).

מִן can place emphasis not just on the point of origin but also movement *away from* that point of origin, making it *ablative*: לְהוֹצִיאֵם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, “to bring them out from the land of Egypt” (Exod 12:42), וַיֵּצֵאתִי אַחֲרָיו וְהִכְתִּיו וְהִצַּלְתִּי מִפִּיו, “I went after him and I struck him and I rescued [the lamb] from his mouth” (1 Sam 17:35).

(b) *Temporal* – similar to *source*, marks the beginning point of a given temporal period:

אֲנִי הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי לְפָנֶיכֶם מִנְעָרֵי עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה

“I have walked before you from my youth until this day” (1 Sam 12:2), וּמִלְךְ יְהוָה עֲלֵיהֶם בְּהַר צִיּוֹן מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם, “YHWH will reign over them in Mount Zion from now, until eternity” (Mic 4:7),

מִן־הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶת־עַמִּי אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם

“Since the day when I brought my people Israel out of Egypt...” (1 Kgs 8:16).

(c) *Material* – identifies the material with which an action is performed, most often with verbs of formation: וַיִּצְרֶה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם עָפָר מִן־הָאָדָמָה, “And YHWH God formed man from the dust of the ground” (Gen 2:7), מִסֶּכֶה מִכֶּסֶפֶם, “Idols made from their silver” (Hos 13:2).

(d) *Causal* – shows the reason or rationale behind an action: הָרִים רָעְשׁוּ מִמֶּנּוּ, “The mountains quake because of him” (Nah 1:5), חָלִילָה לִּי מִיְהוָה אִם־אֶעֱשֶׂה אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה לְאֹדְנִי, “Far be it from me, because of YHWH, to do this thing against my lord” (1 Sam 24:7 [Eng 24:6]), וַיֵּצֵא שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־כָּל־הַכֵּלִים מְרֹב מְאֹד מְאֹד, “Solomon left all the vessels unweighed, because they were very numerous” (1 Kgs 7:47).

In showing cause, מִן can at times designate the agent of a passive verb: לֹא־יִכָּרֵת כָּל־בָּשָׂר עוֹד מִמֵּי הַמַּבּוּל, “All flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of a flood” (Gen 9:11).

(e) *Estimative* – expresses the opinion of one who is making an evaluation or judgment:

כִּי־כָבֵד מִמֶּנָּךְ הַדָּבָר לֹא־תוּכַל עֲשׂוֹהוּ לְבַדְּךָ

“For the task is too hard *for you*; you are not able to do it alone” (Exod 18:18),

קָטַנְתִּי מִכָּל הַחֲסָדִים וּמִכָּל הָאֱמֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ

“I am *unworthy of* the steadfast love and faithfulness you have shown to your servant” (Gen 32:11 [Eng 32:10]).

(f) *Partitive* – designates a part of a larger whole: *עָצְאוּ מִן־הָעָם*, “*Some* of the people went out...” (Exod 16:27), *וַיָּמָוְתוּ מֵעַבְדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְגַם עַבְדְּךָ אֲוִרְיָה הַחִתִּי מוֹת*, “*Some of the servants* of the king are dead, as well as your servant, Uriah the Hittite” (2 Sam 11:24), *טוֹב־עַיִן הוּא יִבְרָךְ כִּי־נָתַן מִלֶּחֶמוֹ לְדָל*, “The generous man is blessed, because he gives *some of his food* to the poor” (Prov 22:9).

(g) *Privative* – marks something missing or lacking from the object of the preposition: *בְּתֵיהֶם שָׁלוֹם מִפֶּחַד*, “their houses stand *without* fear” (Job 21:9), *כִּי־אָז תִּשָּׂא פָנֶיךָ מִמוֹם*, “Then, indeed, you could lift up your face *without* blemish” (Job 11:15), *כָּל־קַצִּינֶיךָ נִדְדוּ־יַחַד מִקִּשְׁתׁ אֶסְרוּ*, “All your rulers have fled together, they have been captured *without* the bow” (Isa 22:3).

(h) *Comparative* – BH does not have a comparative morpheme (-er in English), but rather, uses *מִן* in comparative relationships (see section 2.5.4). Typically, the preposition is prefixed to the noun that is to be surpassed, and preceded by the adjective, although the word order is not always static, particularly in poetry: *מִה־מֵתוֹק מִדְּבַשׁ*, “What is *sweeter than* honey?” (Judg 14:18), *עַם גְּדוֹל וָרֵם מִמֶּנּוּ*, “The people are *bigger* and *taller* than we are” (Deut 1:28), *וַיִּחָכֵם מִכָּל־הָאָדָם*, “He was *wiser* than all people” (1 Kgs 5:11 [Eng 4:31]), *אָרוּר אַתָּה מִכָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה וּמִכָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה*, “Cursed are you *more than* all cattle, and *more than* all the beasts of the field” (Gen 3:14), *טוֹבִים הַשְּׁנָיִם מִן־הָאֶחָד*, “Two are *better than* one” (Eccl 4:9).

(i) **Compound** – מִן is commonly used to form compound particles with other prepositions, sometimes carrying the force of only one of the particles, but at other times carrying the combined meaning of both particles. Compare: לֹא-יִסּוּר שֵׁבֶט מִיְהוּדָה וּמַחֲקֶק מִבֵּין רַגְלָיו, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet” (Gen 49:10); מִבֵּין עֵפָאִים וְתַנּוּקוֹל, “They lift up voices among the branches” (Ps 104:12); אֵין כַּמוֹד אֱלֹהִים בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל-הָאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת, “There is no god like you in heaven above, or on the earth below” (1 Kgs 8:23); וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מִתַּחַת סִבְלַת מִצְרַיִם, “I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians” (Exod 6:6).

4.1.14 מִפְּנֵי

This preposition is a compound construction, consisting of the simple preposition מִן prefixed to the substantive פְּנִים in the construct form.

(a) **Ablative** – with verbs of motion, indicates motion *away from* a position “before” or “in front of” the object of the preposition: וְהִיא אָמְרָה מִפְּנֵי שָׂרִי גְבֵרַתִי אֲנֹכִי בָרַחַת, “and she said ‘I am fleeing from my mistress Sarah’” (Gen 16:8); וַיִּסַּע עִמּוּד הָעָנָן מִפְּנֵיהֶם וַיַּעֲמֵד מֵאַחֲרֵיהֶם, “and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and stood behind them” (Exod 14:19); אֲנֹכִי אוֹרִישׁם מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, “I will drive them out from before the people of Israel” (Josh 13:6).

(b) **Spatial** – marks a location “before” or “in front of” the object of the preposition: הִס מִפְּנֵי אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה, “Be silent before the lord, YHWH” (Zeph 1:7); אַל-תַּחַת מִפְּנֵיהֶם, “Do not be dismayed before them” (Jer 1:17).

(c) **Causal** – denotes the cause of an action or situation: וַיֵּבֵא נֹחַ וּבָנָיו וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּנְשֵׁי-בָנָיו אֹתוֹ אֶל-הַתֵּבָה מִפְּנֵי מַי הַמַּבּוּל, “Then Noah and his wife and the wives of his sons with him went into the ark because of the waters of the

flood” (Gen 7:7), וַיִּגַר מוֹאָב מִפְּנֵי הָעָם מְאֹד, “Moab was in great fear, because of the people” (Num 22:3), וַיֵּנָס יוֹתָם וַיִּבְרַח וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּאֶרֶץ בְּשָׁרָה וַיֵּשֶׁב שָׁם מִפְּנֵי אֲבִימֶלֶךְ אָחִיו, “Then Jotham escaped and fled, and went to Beer, and remained there because of Abimelech, his brother” (Judg 9:21).

עַד 4.1.15

(a) *Locative* – marks the the extent, limit, or goal of movement (“as far as,” “up to,” “to”): עַד-צְוֹאֵר יָגִיעַ, “it will reach up to the neck” (Isa 8:8), וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד-חָרֶן וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם, “They went as far as Haran, and settled there” (Gen 11:31), וְלֹא-שָׁבַתָם עָדִי, “You have not returned to me” (Amos 4:6).

(b) *Temporal* – indicates the duration of an action: וַיֵּצֵא אָדָם לְפַעֲלוֹ וּלְעִבְדוֹ עַד-יְעֶרֶב, “People go out to their work and their labor until evening” (Ps 104:23), לֹא-בָאתֶם עַד-עֵתָהּ אֶל-הַמְּנוּחָה, “You have not yet (literally: until now) come upon the inheritance (Deut 12:9), עַד-מָתִי מֵאַנְתָּ לְעֵנֹת מִפְּנֵי, “How long (literally: until when) will you refuse to humble yourself before me?” (Exod 10:3).

(c) *Degree* – Quite frequently, עַד is conjoined to the מְאֹד to express a large quantity of a substantive, or an extreme quality of an action or attribute: וַהֲנַעֲרָה יָפָה עַד-מְאֹד, “The girl was very beautiful” (1 Kgs 1:4), וַתְּהִי הַמַּלְחָמָה קָשָׁה עַד-מְאֹד בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא, “The battle was very fierce on that day” (2 Sam 2:17), אַל-תִּקְצַף יְהוָה עַד-מְאֹד, “Do not be exceedingly angry, O YHWH” (Isa 64:8 [Eng 64:9]).

עַל 4.1.16

(a) *Spatial/locative* – עַל shows a variety of spatial/locative uses:

(a.1) *Vertical relationship* – indicates a location “over” or “upon” an object: רַיַח אֱלֹהִים מְרֻחֶפֶת עַל-פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם, “the

spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the water” (Gen 1:2), הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ יָצָא עַל-הָאָרֶץ וְלוֹט בָּא צַעְרָה, “The sun had risen over the earth, when Lot came to Zoar” (Gen 19:23), וַיֵּט אֶהָרֶן אֶת-יָדָיו עַל מִימֵי מִצְרַיִם, “Aaron held out his arms over the waters of Egypt” (Exod 8:2), כַּאֲשֶׁר הָיִיתִי בְיָמַי חֶרְפִּי בְסוּד אֱלֹהֵה עָלַי אֶהְלִי, “When I was in the prime of my days, my God was over my tent” (Job 29:4).

With some verbs of motion, עַל can take on a *terminative* sense, expressing the end goal of vertical motion: וַיִּרַד הָעֵיט עַל-הַפְּגָרִים, “the bird of prey came down upon the carcasses” (Gen 15:11),

וַיִּשָּׂא בַלְעָם אֶת-עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל שֹׁכֵן לְשִׁבְטָיו וַתְּהִי
עָלָיו רִיחַ אֱלֹהִים

“Baalam lifted his eyes and he saw Israel camping tribe by tribe. And the spirit of God came upon him” (Num 24:2).

(a.2) *Horizontal relationship* – indicates a location “at” or “beside”: וַיִּבֶן עַל-קִיר הַבַּיִת, “He built against the walls of the house . . .” (1 Kgs 6:5),

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן בְּהַר הָהָר עַל-גְּבוּל
אֶרֶץ-אֲדוֹם

“Then YHWH spoke to Moses and to Aaron at Mount Hor, at the border of the land of Edom” (Num 20:23), חוֹמָה הָיָה עָלֵינוּ, “They were a wall around us” (1 Sam 25:16).

(b) *Duty* – The preposition can mark a burden or duty that impinges on a person: עָלַי לָתֵת לְךָ עֶשְׂרֵה כֶּסֶף, “I would have had [literally: *it would have been upon me*] to give you ten [pieces] of silver” (2 Sam 18:11), שְׁלוֹם לְךָ רַק כָּל-מַחְסוֹרְךָ עָלַי, “Peace to you; only, let me take care of your needs [literally: all your needs are upon me]” (Judg 19:20), וְזָבַחֵי שְׁלָמִים עָלַי, “I had to make sacrifices of well-being” (Prov 7:14).

(c) **Rank** – indicates a person’s rank, or responsibility over another: יוֹאָב בֶּן־זְרוּיָהּ עַל־הַצָּבָא, “Joab, son of Zeruiah, was over the army” (2 Sam 8:16),

הַגֵּר אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּךָ יַעֲלֶה עָלֶיךָ מֵעֵלָה מֵעֵלָה

“The alien in your midst shall rise above you, higher and higher” (Deut 28:43), אֲדַנִּי אֲתָהּ טוֹבָתִי בְלִעְלֶיךָ, “You are my lord; I have no good greater than you” (Ps 16:2).

(d) **Causal** – expresses the *cause* of an action or situation: הִנָּךְ מוֹת עַל־הָאִשָּׁה, “You will certainly die because of this woman” (Gen 20:3),

וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם מַסָּה וּמְרִיבָה עַל־רִיב בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

“He called the name of the place Massah and Meribah because of the quarrel of the people of Israel” (Exod 17:7), כִּי־עָלֶיךָ הִרְגַנּוּ כָל־הַיּוֹם, “Because of you, we are being killed all day long” (Ps 44:23 [Eng 44:22]), כִּי־בֹזַעַף עִמּוֹ עַל־זֹאת, “. . . for he was angry with him because of this” (2 Chr 16:10).

The *causal* use of על is frequent when conjoined with the particle כִּן:

הִלִּילוּ כִּי קָרוֹב יוֹם יְהוָה כָּשֶׁד מִשְׁדֵּי יָבוֹא עַל־כֵּן כָּל־יָדַיִם תִּרְפְּיָהּ

“Wail, for the day of YHWH is near. It will come as destruction from the Almighty. Therefore, all hands will fall limp” (Isa 13:6–7 [Eng 13:6]), עַל־כֵּן יַעֲזֹב אִישׁ אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אִמּוֹ, “For this reason, a man will leave his father and his mother” (Gen 2:24).

(e) **Manner** – behavior or action *according* to a standard: וְנִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה וְלֹא יִנָּחֵם אֶת־הַכֹּהֵן לְעוֹלָם עַל־דְּבַרְתִּי מִלְּכִי־צֶדֶק, “YHWH has sworn, and he will not change his mind. ‘You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek” (Ps 110:4), הוֹצִיאוּ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם עַל־צַבְאוֹתָם, “Bring out the people of Israel from the land of Egypt

according to their hosts” (Exod 6:26),

עַל־כֵּן קָרְאוּ לַיָּמִים הָאֵלֶּה פּוּרִים עַל־שֵׁם הַפּוּר

“Therefore, they called these days Purim, according to the name of Pur” (Esth 9:26).

(f) *Adversative* – shows action directed *against* another: וְאִם־לֹא תִשְׁלַם עִמָּךְ וְעָשְׂתָה עִמָּךְ מִלְחָמָה וְצָרָתָ עָלֶיךָ, “But if it does not make peace with you, and makes war against you, then you shall make siege against it” (Deut 20:12), וַיִּקְשֹׁר עָלָיו בַּעֲשָׂא בֶן־אֲחִיָּה לְבֵית יִשְׁשָׁכָר, “Then Baasha, the son of Ahijah of the house of Issachar, conspired against him” (1 Kgs 15:27),

וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶת־יְהוֹרָם בֶּן־אֲחָזָב מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִלְחָמָה עַל־חֲזָאֵל
מֶלֶךְ־אַרָּם

“He went with Jehoram, son of Ahab, king of Israel, to fight against Hazael, king of Aram” (2 Chr 22:5).

Adversative עַל also shows that an action can occur, despite circumstances that make it seem unlikely to the speakers: וְעַתָּה יִשְׁמְכֶנּוּהָ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־זֹאת, “Yet now, there is hope for Israel, in spite of this” (Ezra 10:2), כִּי עַל־כָּל־אֵלֶּה וְהֵאמְרִי כִי נְקִי־אֲנִי, “Yet in spite of all these things, you said ‘I am innocent.’” (Jer 2:34-35).

(g) *Accompaniment* – denotes circumstances that occur with another: לֹא שָׂתֵם עִלְצָאֵן לְבָן, “he did not set them with the flock of Laban” (Gen 30:40), לֹא־תִשְׁחַט עַל־חֶמְצֵן דָּם־זֹבָחִי, “You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread” (Exod 34:25), וְאֶת־מַלְכֵי מִדְיָן הָרְגוּ עַל־חַלְלֵיהֶם, “They killed the kings of Midian, along with the rest of their slain” (Num 31:8).

Similarly, עַל can express a sense of *addition*: שָׁבַר עַל־שָׁבַר נִקְרָא, “Disaster upon disaster is proclaimed” (Jer 4:20).

(h) *Interest* – על with verbs of thinking, feeling, or emotions marks the object of interest: וַיִּגֵּל עֲלֶיךָ בְּרִנָּה, “he will rejoice over you with shouts of joy!” (Zeph 3:17), וַאֲנִיד לָהֶם אֶת־יַד אֱלֹהֵי אֲשֶׁר־הָיָא טוֹבָה עָלַי, “I told them of how the hand of my God had been gracious upon me” (Neh 2:18).

(i) *Emotive* – functions to highlight or emphasize the subject of the emotion, as well as the expression of emotion: בְּהִתְעַטֵּף עָלַי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה זָכַרְתִּי, “When my life was ebbing away (literally: in feebleness upon me), I remembered YHWH” (Jonah 2:8 [Eng 2:7]), נִהְפָּךְ עָלַי לִבִּי, “My heart is turned over within me” (Hos 11:8).

עם 4.1.17

(a) *Accompaniment* – This preposition expresses additional participants in the discourse through a sense of *accompaniment*:¹⁷ וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתּוּ הוּא וְהָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־עִמּוֹ, “Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank” (Gen 24:54), עַתָּה שְׁמַע בְּקוֹלִי אֵינְצִיךָ וַיְהִי אֶל־הֵימ עִמָּךְ, “Now, listen to my voice, I will give you counsel, and may God be with you” (Exod 18:19).

Similarly, עם expresses a sense of *addition*:

עַם־עָרֵיהֶם הִחָרִימָם יְהוֹשֻׁעַ

“Joshua exterminated them along with their cities” (Josh 11:21), הֲאֵפָּה תִסָּפֵה צְדִיק עִם־רָשָׁע, “Will you indeed sweep away the righteous along with the wicked?” (Gen 18:23).

(b) *Personal complement* – resembles a dative function, to mark the recipient of an action: וַעֲשֶׂה־חֶסֶד עִם אֲדֹנָי אַבְרָהָם,

¹⁷ BDB notes that the comitative/accompaniment sense of אִתֹּךְ is much more intimate and expresses closer association than the comitative sense of עִם (37).

“And show kindness *to* my master Abraham” (Gen 24:12),
 וְלֹא אִם-עוֹדֵנִי חַי וְלֹא-תַעֲשֶׂה עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד יְהוָה וְלֹא אָמוּנָה
 “If I am still alive, will you show *to me* the faithfulness of YHWH,
 that I may not die?” (1 Sam 20:14),

הֲנֵה אָנֹכִי בָּא אֵלַיךְ בְּעַבַּב הָעֲנָן בְּעַבּוֹר יִשְׁמַע הָעַם בְּדַבְרֵי עִמָּד

“Behold, I will come to you in a pillar of cloud, so that the
 people will hear when I speak *with* you” (Exod 19:9).

Similarly, this preposition may indicate dealings
 or relationships with another: תָּמִים תִּהְיֶה עִם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ,
 “Be blameless *before* YHWH, your god” (Deut 18:13),
 וְהָיָה לְבַבְכֶם שָׁלֵם עִם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 “Let your hearts be wholly
 devoted *to* YHWH, our god” (1 Kgs 8:61).

(c) *Locative* – marks a locality or position:

וַיָּשֶׁב יִצְחָק עִם-בְּאֵר לַחֵי רֹאִי

“and Isaac lived *near* Beer-lahai-roi” (Gen 25:11),
 וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אַנְשִׁים מִירִיחוֹ הָעִי אֲשֶׁר עִם-בֵּית אָוֶן
 “Joshua sent out men from Jericho to Ai, which is *near* Beth-Aven”
 (Josh 7:2), הִמָּה עִם-בֵּית מִיכָה, “[When] they were *near* the
 house of Micah” (Judg 18:3).

(d) *Restrictive* – presents an exception to a circumstance
 or action: רְאוּ עַתָּה כִּי אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא וְאֵין אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי, “See now
 that I, I am he, and there is no god *besides* me” (Deut 32:39),
 מִי-לִי בַשָּׁמַיִם וְעִמָּדִי לֹא-תִפְצְתִי בָאָרֶץ,
 “Whom do I have in heaven *but you*, and I desire nothing else on earth”
 (Ps 73:25), יְהוָה אֵין-עִמָּדִי לְעֹזֵר, “O YHWH, there is no one
 besides you to help” (2 Chr 14:10 [Eng 14:11]).

4.1.18 תַּחַת

(a) *Vertical relationship* – This preposition locates an object
 “under” another: יְהִיוּ אַפְרַת תַּחַת רְגְלֵיכֶם, “they will be

ashes under the soles of your feet” (Mal 3:21 [Eng 4:3]), וַיָּבִיאוּ מֵעֵטְמִים וַיְרַחֲצוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם וְהִשְׁעֵנוּ תַּחַת הַעֵץ, “Let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree” (Gen 18:4), וְהָיָא יוֹשֶׁבֶת תַּחַת הַתְּמָר דְּבוֹרָה, “She used to sit under the oak of Deborah” (Judg 4:5), וְזֶה רָע בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר-נַעֲשֶׂה תַּחַת הַשָּׁמֶשׁ, “This is an evil in all that is done under the sun” (Eccl 9:3).

(b) **Static position** – The locative תַּחַת can also express a *static position* of “on the spot,” or “in that place”: וְעַמְדָנוּ תַּחְתֵּינוּ וְלֹא נַעֲלֶה אֲלֵיהֶם, “We will stand in our place, and we will not go up to them” (1 Sam 14:9), שָׁבוּ אִישׁ תַּחְתּוֹ, “Remain, every person, in their place” (Exod 16:29), לֹא-רָאוּ אִישׁ אֶת-אָחִיו וְלֹא-קָמוּ אִישׁ מִתַּחְתּוֹ שְׁלֹשַׁת יָמִים, “They could not see one another, and they did not rise from their place for three days” (Exod 10:23).

(c) **Metaphorical** – expresses *subordination* or *obedience* to the influence of another: וְהִכְנַע מוֹאָב בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא תַּחַת יַד יִשְׂרָאֵל, “On that day, Moab was subdued under the hand of Israel” (Judg 3:30), תַּחַת אָן רְאִיתִי אֶחְלִי כוֹשֵׁן, “I saw the tents of Cushan under distress” (Hab 3:7), אִם-לֹא שָׁכַב אִישׁ אִתְּךָ וְאִם-לֹא שָׁטִית טְמֵאָה תַּחַת אִישׁךָ, “If no man has lain with you, and if you have turned to uncleanness under the authority [literally: under] your husband...” (Num 5:19).

(d) **Substitution** – A common secondary use of תַּחַת is to show *substitution*, that is, “instead of” or “in the place of”: וְשֵׁת־לִי אֱלֹהִים וְרַע אַחֵר תַּחַת הַבֵּל, “God has appointed to me another offspring in place of Abel” (Gen 4:25), וַיִּמְלֹךְ פַּרְעֹה נְכוֹחַ אֶת-אֱלִיָּקִים בֶּן-יֹאשִׁיָּהוּ תַּחַת יֹאשִׁיָּהוּ אָבִיו, “Pharaoh Neco made Eliakim, son of Josiah, king in place of Josiah, his father” (2 Kgs 23:34), וַיֵּשֶׁב שְׁלֹמֹה עַל-כִּסֵּא יְהוָה לְמִלְכּוֹ תַּחַת-דָּוִד אָבִיו, “Then Solomon sat on the throne of YHWH, as king, in place of David his father” (1 Chr 29:23).

4.2 Adverbs

The adverb in any language is typically the most complicated and least understood of the traditional parts of speech. It is elusive due to its wide range of functions, modifying a single word or an entire clause, as well as because an adverb can be classified as other parts of speech. In BH, both levels of complexity are present in the adverbs. Many, if not most, of the adverbs in BH can function as conjunctions or prepositions. To complicate matters, adverbial function is not limited to the adverbs in BH; it can be performed by accusatives (section 2.3.2), by infinitives absolute (section 3.4.2,b and c), and by certain verb plus verb constructions (see section 4.3.3.g on hendiadys).¹⁸ BH adverbs have two major divisions: Those that modify clauses or words in a way that is related to the discourse are the *clausal/item* adverbs.¹⁹ Those that specify the time, place, or manner of the predicated situation are called the *constituent* adverbs. There are some adverbs that are classified in both groups; thus, the distinction seems to lie in syntax, not morphology.

The following are the most common adverbs and their uses.²⁰

4.2.1 אָן / אַן

(a) *Temporal* – Typically rendered “then,” this adverb²¹ functions to indicate a subsequent action within the

¹⁸ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 656. The authors note that the verbs שׁוּב and פָּדָה are paired with other verbs to indicate a repetition or continuation of action.

¹⁹ Item adverbs, which modify single words, are quite rare in BH. Because they serve a function similar to the clausal adverbs, they should be considered together. See Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 656; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 58 and 305–20.

²⁰ Kautzsch 1910, 483–84; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 655–73; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 305–20; Williams 1976, 63–66; Bauer and Leander 1991, 630–34; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 329–36. See also BDB, HALOT, and DCH.

²¹ אָן is the poetic form of the adverb.

discourse: וַיֵּאֱמִינוּ בַיהוָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ אֲזַי שִׁיר־מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 “Then they believed in YHWH and in Moses, his servant.
Then Moses and the people of Israel sang” (Exod 14:31–
 15:1),

וּלְשֵׁת גַּם־הוּא יֵלֶד־בֶּן וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ אֲנוֹשׁ אֲזַי הוֹחֵל לְקָרָא
 בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה

“To Seth, to him also, was born a son, and he called his
 name Enosh. Then people began to call on the name of
 YHWH” (Gen 4:26),

אָבִיךָ חָלוּא אָכַל וְשָׁתָה וְעָשָׂה מִשְׁפָּט וַצְדָקָה אֲזַי טוֹב לוֹ

“Did your father not eat and drink, and do justice and
 righteousness? Then it was well with him” (Jer 22:15).

(b) **Logical** – often marks a logical turn in the flow of the dis-
 course: וְשָׁנַתִּי אֲזַי יָנוּחַ לִי, “I would have slept, and [as a result]
 I would have been at rest” (Job 3:13),

לֹא־יָמוּשׁ סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֶּה מִפִּיךָ וְהָגִיתָ בוֹ יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה לְמַעַן
 תִּשְׁמֹר לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכֹל־הַכְּתוּב בּוֹ כִּי־אֲזַי תִּצְלִיחַ
 אֶת־דְּרָכְךָ וְאֲזַי תִּשְׁכִּיל

“This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but
 you shall meditate upon it day and night, so that you may
 be careful to do all that is written in it. For then you shall
 make your way prosperous, and then you shall succeed”
 (Josh 1:8),

וְלֹא־יָסֵף עוֹד מִלְאֹךְ יְהוָה לְהֵרָאֵה אֶל־מְנוּחַם וְאֶל־אִשְׁתּוֹ
 אֲזַי יָדַע מְנוּחַם כִּי־מִלְאֹךְ יְהוָה הוּא

“The messenger of YHWH did not appear again to Manoah
 and his wife; then Manoah knew that it was the messenger
 of YHWH” (Judg 13:21).

(c) **Condition** – can also introduce the apodosis of a con-
 ditional statement, and often implies the fulfillment of

that condition:

אם תִּבְקֹשׁנָה כְּכֶסֶף וְכַמְטָמוֹנִים תִּחְפְּשֶׁנָּה אַז תִּבִּין יְרֵאתָ יְהוָה
וְדַעַת אֶל הַיָּם תִּמְצָא

“If you seek her as silver, and search for her as hidden treasure, *then* you will understand the fear of YHWH and you will find the knowledge of God” (Prov 2:4–5), אַחֲלִי אֲדַנִּי לִפְנֵי הַנְּבִיא אֲשֶׁר בְּשֹׁמְרוֹן אִז יֵאָסֶף אֹתוֹ מִצָּרְעָתוֹ, “Ah that my lord were before the prophet that is in Samaria, *then* he would cure him of his leprosy” (2 Kgs 5:3), לִוְלִי תוֹרַתְךָ שֶׁעָשִׂי אִז אֲבֹדְתִי בְּעִנְיִי, “If your law had not been my delight, *then* I would have perished in my affliction” (Ps 119:92).

4.2.2 אֵךְ

(a) *Restrictive* – often functions to establish a clarification of or mild contrast with ideas preceding in the discourse. It is a restriction or limitation, however, and not a strong disjunction because there is not a complete reversal of what has preceded. Rather, there is a limitation placed on the previous clause(s):

כָּל־פֶּטֶר רֶחֶם לְכָל־בֶּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרִיבוּ לַיהוָה בָּאָדָם וּבַבְּהֵמָה
יְהוּהָ לָךְ אֵךְ פְּדוּהָ תִפְדֶּה אֶת בְּכוֹר הָאָדָם

“Every first issue of the womb of all flesh, which they offer to YHWH, whether man or animal, shall be yours. *Nevertheless* the firstborn of man you shall redeem.” (Num 18:15), וַיֵּשְׂאֵר אֲדֹנָיִךְ וְאֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ בַּתְּבֵבָה, “*Only* Noah, and those who were with him in the ark, [were] left” (Gen 7:23),

אַל־תִּירָאוּ אֹתָם עֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת כָּל־הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת אֵךְ אַל־תִּסּוּרוּ
מֵאַחֲרֵי יְהוָה

“Do not fear. You have committed all this evil; *yet* do not turn from serving YHWH” (1 Sam 12:20).

(b) *Asseverative* – Often rendered “surely,” אֵךְ introduces a statement or expression of truth, or highlights an

unexpected truth, quite often in speech or colloquial language, by expressing a conviction as to its correctness:²² אֲדָּנִי יְהוָה מְשִׁיחוֹ, “Surely before YHWH is his anointed” (1 Sam 16:6), אֲדָּנִי מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא, “Surely it is the king of Israel” (1 Kgs 22:32), אֲדָּנִי עֲצָמִי וּבָשָׂרִי אַתָּה, “Surely you are my bone and my flesh” (Gen 29:14).

4.2.3 אַל

While translated much like לא (“not”), אַל may be found in specific constructions.

(a) **Prohibition** – typically negates imperatival forms to denote a *specific* or *immediate prohibition*: אַל־תִּשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל, “Do not rejoice, O Israel” (Hos 9:1), וְנָקִי וְצַדִּיק אַל־תִּהְרַג, “Do not kill the innocent and the righteous” (Exod 23:7), הֲלוֹא צִוִּיתִיךָ חֹזֵק וְאַמִּץ אַל־תִּעְרֹץ וְאַל־תִּחַת, “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble, and do not be dismayed” (Josh 1:9).

(b) **Negative volition** – As the negation of the modals jussive and cohortative, אַל expresses their same nuances negatively, usually in the form of a negative wish or negative prayer: אַל־יִמְשְׁלוּ־בִי, “Do not let them rule over me” (Ps 19:14), אַל־נָא תְהִי מַרְיָבָה בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶיךָ, “Let there be no strife between me and you” (Gen 13:8), אַל־יֵצֵא אִישׁ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי, “Let no one go out from their place on the seventh day” (Exod 16:29).

4.2.4 אֵת

The first of two major coordinating adverbs (אֵת being the second), אֵת²³ is closer to the simple וְ conjunction, and

²² Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 670.

²³ Generally more common in poetry and later prose, while אֵת is more common to prose.

may at times be translated simply “and.” In general, it also associates its clause (i.e., one that follows it) with a preceding clause (Waltke and O’Connor 1991, 663).

(a) *Addition* – indicates that an entity is added to another: אֲנִי בְחֵלוֹמִי אֶף־אֲנִי בְחֵלוֹמִי, “I also had a dream [literally: also I in my dream]” (Gen 40:16),

וְזָכַרְתִּי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי יַעֲקֹב וְאֶף־אֶת־בְּרִיתִי יִצְחָק וְאֶף־אֶת־בְּרִיתִי
אֲבְרָהָם אֲזָכֹר

“Then I will remember my covenant with Jacob; I will remember also my covenant with Isaac and also my covenant with Abraham” (Lev 26:42), לְךָ יוֹם אֶף־לְךָ לַיְלָה, “Yours is the day, yours also the night (Ps 74:16).

When the entity added is unexpected, אֶף may be translated “even” and is sometimes said to be an *emphatic* use of the particle, although the concept of emphasis is too broad to be of much use:²⁴ וְיִסְרַתִּי אֶתְכֶם אֶף־אֲנִי, “I, even I, will punish you myself” (Lev 26:28). Such a use may occur in questions: הֲאֶף־אִמְנָם אֵלֶּךְ וְאֲנִי זָקֵנָתִי, “Shall I indeed even bear a child, now that I am old?” (Gen 18:13).

(b) *Asseverative*²⁵ – Especially in poetry, אֶף introduces a statement or expression of truth and expresses a conviction as to its correctness: אֶף־נִחַלְתָּ שְׂפָרָה עָלַי, “Surely my heritage is beautiful to me” (Ps 16:6), אֶף־מִן־קַמִּי תִרְוַמְמֵנִי, “Indeed you exalted me above my adversaries” (Ps 18:49 [Eng 18:48]).

(c) *Rhetorical* – A variation of the *asseverative*, this particle is often combined with כִּי to express a comparative assertion in which two clauses are related, the second one bearing persuasive force: וְזָבַח רְשָׁעִים תֹּעֵבָה אֶף־כִּי־בִזְמַה יְבִיאֵנִי, “the

²⁴ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 618.

²⁵ The asseverative/emphatic use of אֶף, as well as אִם (4.2.5), may not be original to either particle, but a nuance of their primary use as particles denoting addition (Muraoka 1985, 142–43).

sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; *how much more* when he brings it with evil intent” (Prov 21:27). This may also be expressed negatively (i.e., with a negated first clause):

הַגָּהַ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְשָׁמַיִם הַשָּׁמַיִם לֹא יִכְלְלוּךָ אֶף כִּי־הִבִּיתִּי הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר
בְּנִיתִי

“Even heaven and the highest heavens cannot contain you; *how much less* this house that I have built!” (1 Kgs 8:27).

This *rhetorical* use of אֶף כִּי may actually introduce a *rhetorical question*, in which the assertion of the clause is confirmed in light of the preceding clause:

הַגָּהַ אֲנַחְנוּ פֹה בִיהוּדָה יִרְאִים וְאֶף כִּי־נִלְחַם קַעְלָה אֶל־מַעְרְכוֹת
פְּלִשְׁתִּים

“Look, we are afraid here in Judah; *how much more* then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?” (1 Sam 23:3), אֶף כִּי־נִתְעַב וְנִאֲלַח אִישׁ־שִׁחָה כַּמִּים עוֹלָה, “*What then* of one loathsome and foul, a person who drinks wrongdoing like water?” (Job 15:16).

גַּם 4.2.5

The second of two major coordinating adverbs (אֶף being the first), גַּם has quite similar uses, although it is much more common in prose, while אֶף is more common in poetry. In general, גַּם may modify either a word or clause, in which case it also associates its clause (i.e., one that follows it) with a preceding clause.

(a) **Addition** – often used to point out an additional participant or party within the discourse: וַתֵּתֵן גַּם־לְאִשְׁהָ עִמָּהּ, “and she gave *also* to her husband with her” (Gen 3:6). When the additional event or statement is unexpected or illogical, “even” may be the best translation: וַיִּפֶן פָּרְעֹה וַיָּבֵא אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וְלֹא־שָׁתָה לְבוֹ גַם־לְזֹאת, “Then Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not take *even* this to heart” (Exod 7:23),

אֵין עֲשֵׂה-טוֹב אֵין גַּם-אֶחָד, “there is no one who does good, not even one” (Ps 14:3).

This usage is not uncommon with an independent personal pronoun following immediately after the particle: גַּם-אַתָּה לֹא-תָבֵא שָׁם, “even you shall not enter there” (Deut 1:37), גַּם-אַתָּה חֲלִיַת כְּמוֹנוֹ, “you also have become as weak as we” (Isa 14:10). This use of גַּם is a means of focusing on the pronoun’s antecedent within the specific clause marked by the particle (van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 314, and 311–18 on גַּם and אַף as “focus particles”).

The use of גַּם as a “double conjunction” is a variation on the *addition* use, and typically denotes the inclusion of *both* entities preceded by the particle:²⁶ וַיַּעַל עִמּוֹ גַּם-רֶכֶב גַּם-פָּרָשִׁים, “both chariots as well as charioteers went up with him” (Gen 50:9), גַּם-תֵּבֶן גַּם-מִסְפּוֹא רַב עִמָּנוּ, “we have plenty of both straw and fodder” (Gen 24:25).

(b) *Asseverative* – adds emphasis or certainty to an idea: וְהָיָה אִם-לֹא יֵאֱמִינוּ גַם לְשְׁנֵי הָאֵלֹהִים, “But, if they will not believe even these two signs” (Exod 4:9), גַּם בֵּין הָעֵמֻרִים תִּלְקַט וְלֹא תִקְלִימֶהָ, “Let her glean even among the sheaves and do not insult her” (Ruth 2:15).

When found at the end of a speech or exposition, or at the end of lists, גַּם may be *climactic*: גַּם-בְּרוּשִׁים שִׁמְחוּ לְךָ, “even the cypress trees exult over you” (Isa 14:8), לָכוּ עֲבְדוּ אֶת-יְהוָה רַק צֹאנְכֶם וּבְקָרְכֶם יֵצֵג גַּם-טַפְּכֶם יִלְךְ עִמָּכֶם, “Go, serve YHWH, only let your flocks and herds be detained; even your little ones may go with you” (Exod 10:24).

(c) *Concessive* – indicates that an action that is or was expected to lead to another action will not, or leads to an unexpected action: בִּהְנוּנִי גַם-רָאוּ פַעְלִי, “they tested me, even though they saw my works” (Ps 95:9), הִבְשׂוּ כִי תוֹעֵבָה עָשׂוּ גַם-בוֹשׁ לֹא-יִבְשׂוּ, “They acted

²⁶ See van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 239 and 314–15, and especially point 5.2(ii) on page 316.

shamefully. They committed abomination. Yet they were not at all shamed” (Jer 8:12).

4.2.6 הרבה

Degree – As an adverb, הרבה²⁷ expresses a great, abundant, or extreme degree of action, and is often used with מאד²⁸ הרבה מאד, “Yes, I have been foolish, and have erred very greatly” (1 Sam 26:21), ואירא הרבה מאד, “Then I was very much afraid” (Neh 2:2).

The particle also functions *adjectivally*, to indicate a large amount of a substantive: וגם הרבה נפל מן העם וימתו, “Also, many of the people fell and they died” (2 Sam 1:4), אל־תִּירָא אַבְרָם אֲנִי לְךָ שְׂכָרְךָ הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד, “Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you. Your reward shall be very great” (Gen 15:1).

4.2.7 יום

Temporal locative – This adverb²⁹ functions to designate a general point in time, “by day” or “daytime,” when an action takes place: וענן יהוה עליהם יום, “the cloud of YHWH was over them by day” (Num 10:34),

וַיְהִי כִּאֲשֶׁר יָרָא אֶת־בַּיִת אָבִיו וְאֶת־אֲנָשֵׁי הָעִיר מַעֲשׂוֹת יוֹמָם וַיַּעַשׂ לַיְלָה

“Because he was too afraid of his father’s house and of the men of the city to do it by day, he did it at night” (Judg 6:27),

²⁷ This adverb illustrates the complexity of Hebrew adverbs generally, since it is in form a Hiphil infinitive absolute. Along with the adverbial function, the infinitive also functions as an adjective, as well as a substantive.

²⁸ HALOT 1:255.

²⁹ The frequentative or repetitive use of the יום is noted in BDB (401) and Seow (44). BDB notes that the repetitive use of this adverb is most often found in poetry, and within a merism, where it is paired with לַיְלָה. It may be, however, that the repetitive force comes not from the adverb alone, but is expressed by the merism instead. For more on merisms in BH, see Krašovec (1977 and 1983).

וְהוֹצֵאתָ כְּלִיךָ כְּכִלְי גֹזְלָה יוֹמָם לְעֵינֵיהֶם, “Bring your baggage out during the day in their sight, like baggage for exile” (Ezek 12:4).

4.2.8 כֹּה

(a) *Manner* – indicates that an action takes place or took place in a certain manner, and often takes “thus” in translation. With verbs of speech, this use often introduces the content of speech: כֹּה תֹאמַר לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, “thus you shall say to the children of Israel” (Exod 3:14), לָמָּה תַעֲשֶׂה כֹה לְעַבְדֶּיךָ, “Why do you deal this way [thusly] with your servants” (Exod 5:15),

וַיִּסְבּוּ אֶת־הָעִיר בַּיּוֹם הַשֵּׁנִי פַעַם אַחַת וַיָּשִׁבוּ הַמַּחֲנֶה כֹּה עָשׂוּ שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים

“On the second day, they surrounded the city once and returned to camp. They did thusly for six days” (Josh 6:14).

(b) *Demonstrative/locative* – points demonstratively to the place of action or discourse: שִׁים כֹּה נֶגֶד אָחֵי, “Set it here before my brothers” (Gen 31:37), הִתְיַצֵּב כֹּה עַל־עֹלְתֶךָ, “Stand here, by your burnt offering” (Num 23:15), וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ סֹב הִתְיַצֵּב כֹּה וַיִּסֹּב וַיַּעֲמֹד, “The king said ‘Turn around and stand here.’ So he turned around and stood still” (2 Sam 18:30).

Rarely, this locative sense refers to a temporal period: כֹּה לֹא־שָׁמַעְתָּ עַד־כֹּה, “Indeed, you have not listened until now” (Exod 7:16).

4.2.9 כִּי

The particle כִּי has a tremendous variety of uses, several of which have adverbial force, which are detailed under “Conjunctions” (see section 4.3.4).³⁰

³⁰ DCH 4:383–91

4.2.10 כֵּן

(a) *Comparative* – typically used in the apodosis of a comparison: כְּעֵינַי שִׁפְתָּהּ אֶל־יַד גְּבֵרָתָהּ כֵּן עֵינַי אֶל־יְהוָה, “As the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to YHWH” (Ps 123:2), וַיְהִי כִּאֲשֶׁר פָּתַרְנוּ לָנוּ כֵּן הָיָה, “As he interpreted to us, so it turned out” (Gen 41:13).

In variation of this use, כֵּן appears in a clause that is not a comparative apodosis, but nevertheless has a comparative force (hence, *manner*): כֵּן יֵאבְדוּ כָל־אֹיְבֵיךָ יְהוָה, “Thus perish all your enemies, O YHWH” (Judg 5:31), וַיְהִי לְמֵאוֹרֹת בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיְהִי־כֵן, “and let them be for lights in the expanse of heaven to give light onto the earth.’ And it was so” (Gen 1:15).

(b) *Compound forms of כֵּן* – The compound form לְכֵן typically indicates a response to a statement of conditions (“the foregoing being the case, therefore...”):³¹ וְאֵת פֶּעַל יְהוָה לֹא יִבְיטוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו לֹא רָאוּ לְכֵן גָּלָה עַמִּי, “But they do not consider the deeds of YHWH nor do they consider the work of his hands; *therefore*, my people go into exile” (Isa 5:12–13),

אַתֶּם עֲזַבְתֶּם אוֹתִי וַתַּעַבְדוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים לְכֵן לֹא־אֹסִיף
לְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶתְכֶם

“You have forsaken me and served other gods; *therefore*, I will no longer deliver you” (Judg 10:13),

יֵעַן אֲשֶׁר־הִכְרַתִּי מִמֶּךָ צַדִּיק וְרָשָׁע לְכֵן תִּצָּא חֶרְבִי מִתַּעֲרָה
אֶל־כָּל־בָּשָׂר מִזָּנֹב צָפוֹן

“Because I will cut off from you the righteous and the wicked; *therefore*, my sword will go out from its sheath against all flesh from south to north” (Ezek 21:9 [Eng 21:4]).

³¹ Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 666.

The compound form על־כֵּן often introduces a statement of effect, linking two clauses with a causal link:

כִּי אֶת־מַעֲשֵׂר בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יָרִימוּ לַיהוָה תְּרוּמָה נָתַתִּי
לְלוֹיִם לְנַחֲלָה עַל־כֵּן אָמַרְתִּי לָהֶם בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא
יִנְחָלוּ נַחֲלָה

“Because of the tithes of the sons of Israel, which they offer as an offering to YHWH, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance; *therefore*, I have said concerning them, ‘They shall have no inheritance among the children of Israel’” (Num 18:24), על־כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמָהּ בָּבֶל כִּי־שָׁם בָּלַל יְהוָה שְׁפַת כָּל־הָאָרֶץ, “*Therefore*, its name is called Babel, because there, YHWH confused the languages of the whole earth” (Gen 11:9).

4.2.11 לֹא

Negation – The primary use of this adverb is to negate verbal clauses.³² The particle functions to negate a verbal idea in an independent verbal clause: רָעָה לֹא רָאִינוּ, “we did *not* see evil” (Jer 44:17), אֲנִכִּי לֹא אֶהְיֶה כְּאֶחַת שִׁפְחוֹתֶיךָ, “I am *not* like one of your maidservants” (Ruth 2:13), נִגַּע וְקָלוֹן יִמְצָא וְחַרְפָּתוֹ לֹא תִמְחָח, “He will find wounds and disgrace, and his reproach will *not* be blotted out” (Prov 6:33).

The negative force of לֹא can also be used with commands to denote a *general* or *permanent prohibition*: לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ, “you *shall not* eat from it” (Gen 2:17), וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר אֵין־לוֹ סִנְפִיר וְקַשְׂקֶשֶׁת לֹא תֹאכְלוּ, “but anything that does not have fins and scales, *you shall not eat*” (Deut 14:10), וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם כָּל־מְלֶאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ, “And on the seventh day you shall have have a holy convocation; *you shall not do* any laborious work” (Num 28:25).

³² Occasionally, and in contrast with the negative particle אַל, לֹא will be used to negate only one word, typically a nominal form: לֹא טוֹב הָיִיתׁוּ הָאָדָם לְבִדּוֹ, “it is not good for the man to be alone” (Gen 2:18).

At times, **לֹא** negates verbless clauses or prepositional phrases: **לֹא בִי־הִיא**, “it is not in me” (Job 28:14), **לֹא־טוֹב הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עוֹשֶׂה**, “The thing you are doing is not good” (Exod 18:17),

וַתַּעֲשֶׂה אָדָם כַּדָּגִים בַּיָּם כַּרֶמֶשׂ לֹא־מִשָּׁל בּוֹ

“You have made humanity like fish in the sea, like crawling things with no ruler over them” (Hab 1:14).

4.2.12 מְאֹד

Intensive – The intensive adverbial use of **מְאֹד** points to a high degree or magnitude in the force of the verb: **וְאַבְרָם כָּבֵד מְאֹד**, “Abram was very rich” (Gen 13:2), **וַיִּירָאוּ מִכֶּם וְנִשְׁמַרְתֶּם מְאֹד**, “They will be afraid of you; so be very careful” (Deut 2:4), **וַיִּירָאוּ מְאֹד מְאֹד**, “They were overcome with fear” (2 Kgs 10:4),

וַיִּקְצַף הַמֶּלֶךְ מְאֹד וַחֲמָתוֹ בָּעָרָה בּוֹ

“Then the king became very angry, and his anger burned within him” (Esth 1:12).

The particle also intensifies an adjective:

הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר עָבַרְנוּ בָּהּ לְתוֹר אֶתְּהָ שׁוֹבָה הָאָרֶץ מְאֹד מְאֹד

“The land which we went through to spy out is a very good land” (Num 14:7),

וַיְהִי כְּכַלּוֹת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַכּוֹתָם מִכָּה גְדוֹלָה־מְאֹד

“When Joshua and the people of Israel had finished slaying them with a great slaughter ...” (Josh 10:20), **כִּי־גְדוֹל יוֹם־יְהוָה וְנִרְאָ מְאֹד וּמִי יִכִּילָנוּ**, “For the day of YHWH is great and very terrible; who can endure it?” (Joel 2:11).

In addition to the adverbial use, **מְאֹד** can also function adjectivally to denote a “large amount,” frequently when paired with either **הַרְבֵּה** or **רַב**: **וּמִבֶּטַח וּמִבְּרַתַי עָרֵי חַדְדָּעֶזֶר לָקַח הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד נְחֻשֶׁת הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד**, “From Betah and Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King

David took a *large amount* of copper” (2 Sam 8:8), ותתן למלך מאה ועשרים כפר זהב ובשמים הרבה מאד, “She gave to the king 120 talents of gold and a *large amount* of spices” (1 Kgs 10:10).

4.2.13 עוד

Manner – expresses a *continual* or *persistent* nature of the verbal clause: ואברהם עמד לפני יהוה, “and Abraham was *still* standing before YHWH” (Gen 18:22), עודני היום חזק כאשר ביום שלח אותי משה (Josh 14:11), “I am *still as strong* as the day when Moses sent me” (Josh 14:11), ומלתם את ערלת לבבכם וערפכם לא תקשו עוד, “So, circumcise the foreskins of your hearts, and stiffen your neck *no longer*” (Deut 10:16),

עודנו הארץ לפנינו כי דרשנו את־יהוה אלהינו

“The land is *still* ours, because we have sought YHWH, our God” (2 Chr 14:6).

This particle also indicates a *repeated* nature of a verbal clause: ויגדע אדם עוד את־אשתו, “Adam had relations with his wife *again*” (Gen 4:25),

בי אדוני איש האלהים אשר שלחת יבואנא עוד אלינו

“O lord, please let the man of God, whom you sent, come to us *again*” (Judg 13:8), ותהר עוד ותלד בת, “She conceived *again* and gave birth to a daughter” (Hos 1:6).

4.2.14 עתה

(a) **Temporal** – places focus on time that is concurrent with the perspective of the discourse, and is most often rendered “now”: עתה ידעתי כי הושיע יהוה משיחו: “*now* I know that YHWH saves his anointed” (Ps 20:7), ותבוא ותעמוד מאז הבקר ועד־עתה זה, “So she came and she stayed from this morning until *now*” (Ruth 2:7), אתה עתה תעשה מלוכה על־ישראל,

“Do you *now* reign over Israel” (1 Kgs 21:7),
 וְגַם־עַתָּה נְאֻם־יְהוָה שְׁבוּ עָדֵי בְּכָל־לִבְבְּכֶם וּבְצוּם וּבְבִכּוֹי וּבְמִסְפַּד,
 “Yet even *now*,” declares YHWH, ‘Return to me with all
 your hearts, and in fasting, weeping, and mourning’”
 (Joel 2:12).

(b) **Logical** – typically occurs through the compound form
 וְעַתָּה and usually indicates a shift in the argument or flow of
 the discourse without a break in the theme. Frequently, this
 is also accompanied by a temporal shift as well, when one
 reflects on past events and commits to present or future
 action:

אַתֶּם חָטְאתֶם חַטָּאתָה גְדוֹלָה וְעַתָּה אֵעֲלֶה אֶל־יְהוָה אוּלַי אֲכַפְּרָה בְּעַד
 חַטָּאתֵכֶם

“You yourselves have committed a great sin; and *now* I will
 go up to YHWH, perhaps I can make atonement for your
 sin” (Exod 32:30),

הֵן הָאָדָם הָיָה כְּאָחַד מִמֶּנּוּ לְדַעַת טוֹב וָרָע וְעַתָּה פָּן־יִשְׁלַח יָדוֹ
 וְלָקַח גַּם מֵעֵץ הַחַיִּים

“Indeed, humanity has become like one of us, knowing
 good and evil; *and now*, they might stretch out their hand
 and take also from the tree of life” (Gen 3:22),

מִדּוּעַ אֵינְכֶם מְחַזְּקִים אֶת־בֶּדֶק הַבַּיִת וְעַתָּה אֶל־תִּקְחוּ־כֶסֶף
 מֵאֵת מִכְרֵיכֶם

“Why do you not repair the damages to the house?
Now, therefore, do not take any money from your acquaintances”
 (2 Kgs 12:8 [Eng 12:7]).

4.2.15 רַק

(a) **Restrictive** – functions to place a limit on an idea:
 רַק אַתְּכֶם יָדַעְתִּי מִכָּל מְשֻׁפְחוֹת הָאָרֶץ, “You, *only*, have I
 known among all the nations of the earth” (Amos 3:2),
 “וַיַּעַשׂ הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה רַק לֹא כַּמְלִכִי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ לְפָנָיו
 He did evil in the eyes of YHWH, *though* not like the

kings of Israel who were before him” (2 Kgs 17:2),
 רַק הַבְּמוֹת לֹא־סֻרוּ עוֹד הָעָם מִזִּבְחִים וּמִקְטָרִים בְּבָמוֹת
 “Only the high places were not removed. The people still sacri-
 ficed and burned incense on the high places” (2 Kgs 14:4).

Occasionally, this restrictive idea can be ex-
 panded into a complete contrast between two ideas:
 וַיַּעַשׂ הַיְיָשׁר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה רַק לֹא כְדוֹד אָבִיו
 “He did right in the eyes of YHWH, but not like his father David” (2 Kgs 14:3).

With discourse involving instruction, the restric-
 tive force of רַק can also indicate a *clarification*:
 הִנֵּה כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לּוֹ בְיַדְךָ רַק אֲלֹוֹ אֶל־תִּשְׁלַח יָדְךָ
 “See, all that he has is in your hands; only, do not send forth your hand
 upon him” (Job 1:12),

אֲנֹכִי אֲשַׁלַּח אֶתְכֶם... רַק הִרְחַק לֹא־תִרְחִיקוּ לְלֶכֶת

“I will let you go... only, do not go very far away” (Exod
 8:24),

וְאִם־לֹא תֵאָבֵה הָאִשָּׁה לְלֶכֶת אַחֲרַיךָ וְנִקִּיתַי מִשְׁבַּעַתִּי זֹאת רַק
 אֶת־בְּנִי לֹא תִשָּׁב שָׁמָּה

“If the woman is not willing to go with you, you will be free
 from this my oath. Only, you must not take my son back
 there” (Gen 24:8).

(b) *Asseverative* – expresses a conviction as to the correct-
 ness of an observation:

אָמַרְתִּי רַק אֵין־יִרְאַת אֱלֹהִים בְּמָקוֹם הַזֶּה

“I thought, there is certainly [literally: I only thought there
 is] no fear of God at all in this place” (Gen 20:11),
 רַק עִם־חָכְם וְנָבוֹן הַגּוֹי הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה
 “Surely, this great nation is
 a wise and discerning people” (Deut 4:6).

4.2.16 שָׁם

(a) *Locative* – points demonstratively to a place, “there,”
 which is the realm of action: וּבָאת עַד־בְּבֵל שָׁם תִּנְצָלִי
 “Go

to Babylon, *there* you will be rescued” (Mic 4:10),

וַיִּשֶׂם שָׁם אֶת־הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר יָצַר

“*There* he placed the man whom he had formed” (Gen 2:8), שָׁם תֹּאכַלְךָ אֵשׁ תִּכְרִיתְךָ חָרָב, “*There* the fire will consume you, the sword will cut you down” (Nah 3:15), וַיַּעַשׂ לוֹ שָׁם סֹכֶה וַיָּשָׁב תַּחְתֶּיהָ בְּצִלַּל עַד אֲשֶׁר יִרְאֶה מִה־יִּהְיֶה בָּעִיר, “He made for himself *there* a booth, and he sat under it until he could see what would happen to the city” (Jonah 4:5).

With the relative pronoun אֲשֶׁר שָׁם functions to introduce a relative clause that points to location:

הָעֶרְפֹּל אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם הָאֱלֹהִים

“the thick cloud *where* God was” (Exod 20:21), וַיֵּלֶךְ לְמַסְעָיו מִנֶּגֶב וְעַד־בֵּית־אֵל עַד־הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־הָיָה שָׁם אֹהֶלוֹ, “He went on his journeys, from the Negeb to Bethel, to the place *where* his tent had been” (Gen 13:3 *Qere*).

(b) *Terminative* – Typically with verbs of motion, and suffixed with the *he locale*, שָׁם has a *terminative* sense, placing emphasis on the end goal of movement, rather than a static location: אֲמַלְטָה נָא שָׁמָּה, “Please let me escape *to there*” (Gen 19:20), וַיְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־נֹון הָעַמִּיד לְפָנֶיךָ הוּא יָבֵא שָׁמָּה, “Joshua, son of Nun, who stands before you; he will enter *there*” (Deut 1:38), וַיָּנָסוּ שָׁמָּה כָּל־הָאֲנָשִׁים וְהַנְּשִׂימִים וְכָל בְּעָלֵי הָעִיר, “All the men and women, and all the leaders of the city fled to *there*” (Judg 9:51).

4.2.17 תָּמִיד

(a) *Manner* – most often expresses a *continual* or *persistent* manner of the action: שְׁוִיתִי יְהוָה לְנִגְדֵי תָמִיד, “I have set YHWH *continually* before me” (Ps 16:8), עֵינַי תָּמִיד אֶל־יְהוָה, “my eyes are *ever* toward YHWH” (Ps 25:15), עַל־מִי לֹא־עָבְרָה רָעַתְךָ תָּמִיד, “on whom has your evil not passed *continually*” (Nah 3:19).

4.3 Conjunctions

Conjunctions join words, phrases, or clauses and express relations between them. They may be of two types: coordinate conjunctions and subordinate conjunctions. The first of these conjoin grammatically equivalent nouns or clauses; in BH, these are ׀ and וְ.³³ The second type, subordinate conjunctions, conjoin a subordinate clause to the main clause, and BH has a number of examples (כִּי, אֲשֶׁר, בְּ, etc.). However, in BH, whether a clause is coordinate or subordinate is often interpretive because of the high frequency of the *waw consecutive* in verbal coordination (see section 3.5). Thus, subordinate clauses are frequently unmarked grammatically because the conjunctions are often imprecise.³⁴

4.3.1 וְ

Alternative – typically functions to provide an option between two or more substantives:

שְׁאֵל־לְךָ אוֹת מֵעַם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ הַעֲמֵק שְׁאֵלָה אוֹ הַגְּבִהַ
לְמַעַלָּה

“Ask for a sign from YHWH your God, as deep as Sheol *or* as high as heaven” (Isa 7:11), וְרַק הִיא יְחִידָה אֵין־לָּהּ מִמֶּנּוּ בֶן אוֹ־בַת, “She was an only child; except for her, he [Jephthah] had no son *or* daughter” (Judg 11:34), אִם־עֶבֶד יִגַּח הַשּׁוֹר אוֹ אִמָּה, “if an ox gore a male slave *or* a female slave” (Exod 21:32).

4.3.2 אִם

(a) *Conditional/contingency* – introduces the protasis (the “if” statement) of a conditional statement: אִם־אֶמְצָא בְּסֹדִם חֲמֻשִׁים צְדִיקִים, “*if* I find

³³ At times אִם and כִּי may serve as coordinates.

³⁴ Meyer 1992, 181–82; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 57–58 and 294–305; and for comparison with epigraphic Hebrew, see Gogel 1998, 223–30.

in Sodom fifty righteous people” (Gen 18:26), אִם־בְּדַרְכֵי תֵלֵךְ וְאִם־אֶת־מִשְׁמְרֹתַי תִּשְׁמֹר וְגַם־אֶתָּה תִּדְרִין אֶת־בֵּיתִי, “If you walk in my ways, and if you keep my requirements, then you will govern my house” (Zech 3:7), אִם־לֵבִי חָפְצָה לְבִי, “My son, if your heart is wise, my heart also will be glad” (Prov 23:15). This use is negated by the particle לֹא, indicating a negative protasis: אִם־לֹא חָפְצָה בָּהּ, “if you are *not* pleased with her” (Deut 21:14), אִם־לֹא יִמָּצָא הַגֵּנֵב בְּעַל־הַבַּיִת אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים, “If the thief is *not* caught, the master of the house shall appear before the judges” (Exod 22:7 [Eng 22:8]).

(b) *Concessive* – אִם can function to indicate that an action that is expected to lead to another action does not: אִם־יָעֲלוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם מִשָּׁם אֲוִרִידִם, “*though* they go up to the heavens, I will bring them down from there” (Amos 9:2), אִם־יַעֲמֹד מֹשֶׁה וְשָׁמוּאֵל לְפָנַי אֵין נַפְשִׁי אֶל־הָעָם הַזֶּה, “*Even if* Moses and Samuel were before me, my heart would not be with this people” (Jer 15:1).

(c) *Alternative* – In an interrogative clause, אִם when repeated functions as an alternative, marking off substantives as options/alternates:

הֲתָבוֹא לְךָ שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים רָעָב בְּאַרְצְךָ אִם־שְׁלֹשָׁה חֳדָשִׁים נֹסֶדָה לְפָנַי־צָרִיד וְהוּא רֹדֶפְךָ וְאִם־הָיוּת שְׁלֹשַׁת יָמִים יִדְבֹר בְּאַרְצְךָ

“Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land? *Or* will you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you? *Or* shall there be three days’ pestilence in your land?” (2 Sam 24:13), הֲלָנוּ אֶתָּה אִם־לְצָרֵינוּ, “Are you for us *or* for our enemies?” (Josh 5:13), הֲלָבֵן מֵאָה שָׁנָה יוֹלֵד וְאִם־שָׂרָה הִבְתַּתְשָׁעִים שָׁנָה תֵלֵד, “Can a child be born to a man 100 years old, *or* will Sarah, who is 90 years old, give birth?” (Gen 17:17).

(d) *Exceptive* – Frequently with כִּי or בְּלִתִּי, אִם marks an action that will not take place unless another action

is taken: לֹא אֲשַׁלְחֶךָּ כִּי אִם־בֵּרַכְתָּנִי “I will not let you go unless you bless me” (Gen 32:27 [Eng. 32:26]), הֲיִיתָן כְּפִיר קוֹלוֹ מִמְעַנְתּוֹ בְּלִתֵּי אִם־לָכֵד, “Does a young lion growl from his den unless he has made a capture” (Amos 3:4). Similarly, the exceptive use of אִם expresses a situation in which there are no other alternatives or possibilities, frequently to emphasize the situation at hand: אֵין זֹאת בְּלִתֵּי אִם־חֶרֶב גִּדְעוֹן בֶּן־יֹאָשׁ אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל, “This is nothing less than the sword of Gideon, son of Joash, a man of Israel” (Judg 7:14), אֵין זֶה כִּי אִם־בַּיִת אֱלֹהִים, “This is nothing less than the house of God” (Gen 28:17).

(e) *Maledictory* – Specifically in oath statements, אִם standing on its own functions to *negate an oath* emphatically, indicating that an action certainly will not take place: אִם־יֵרְאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאֲבֹתָם, “[as I live] . . . they will not see the land which I swore to their ancestors” (Num 14:23), חַיֵּיךָ וְחַי נַפְשֶׁךָ אִם־אֶעֱשֶׂה אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה, “By your life, and by the life of your soul, I will not do this thing!” (2 Sam 11:11), חַי־יְהוָה אִם־יּוֹמָת, “As YHWH lives, he shall not be put to death” (1 Sam 19:6).

(f) *Oath* – Contrasted with the *maledictory* use of אִם, it may be paired with כִּי or לֹא to introduce a positive oath, an action that one has committed oneself to take: נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת בְּנַפְשׁוֹ כִּי אִם־מְלֵאתִיךָ אָדָם, “YHWH of hosts swears by himself, ‘I will surely fill you with people’” (Jer 51:14),

אִם־לֹא הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר דָּרַכְתָּ רַגְלֶךָ בָּהּ לְךָ תִּהְיֶה לְנַחֲלָה וּלְבְנֵיךָ
עַד־עוֹלָם

“Surely the land that your foot has walked upon will be an inheritance to you and your children to eternity” (Josh 14:9), אִם־לֹא יִסָּחֲבוּם צְעִירֵי הַצֹּאן אִם־לֹא יִשִּׁים עֲלֵיהֶם גּוֹחַם, “Surely the little ones of the flock will be dragged away; surely he will make their pasture desolate because of them” (Jer 49:20).

(g) *Interrogatory* – אם will often introduce a question: אִם־תִּתֵּן עֲרֻבוֹן עַד שְׁלַחְךָ, “*Will* you give a pledge until you send it?” (Gen 38:17), אִם־מֵאֵת אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ נַהֲיָה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה, “*Has* this thing been done by my lord, the king?” (1 Kgs 1:27), אִם־יִתְקַע שׁוֹפָר בְּעִיר וְעַם לֹא יִחָרְדוּ, “If a trumpet blows in the city, will not the people tremble?” (Amos 3:6).

4.3.3]

This conjunction functions on two levels, to conjoin nouns and to conjoin clauses. The *waw* conjoined to a finite verbal form can have unique functions (see section 3.5).

(a) *Adversative* – often introduces contrasting or antithetical ideas: וְנַחַמְתִּי כִּי עָשִׂיתֶם וְנַח מִצָּא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה, “I am sorry I have made them.’ *But* Noah found favor in the eyes of YHWH” (Gen 6:7–8),

וַנִּתְּתִיו לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וְאֶת־בְּרִיתִי אֶקִּים אֶת־יִצְחָק

“and I will make him a great nation; *but* my covenant I will establish with Isaac” (Gen 17:20–21), רָאָה נָא אֲנֹכִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּבַיִת אֲרָזִים וְאֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים יֹשֵׁב בְּתוֹךְ הַרְיֵעָה, “See now, I live in a house of cedar, *but* the ark of God dwells within a tent” (2 Sam 7:2).

(b) *Conjunctive* – describes two or more interrelated concepts or situations that may otherwise not be related: קָנָה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ, “Maker of heaven *and* earth” (Gen 14:19), הֲנִי גֹרֵשׁ מִפְּנֵיךָ אֶת־הָאֲמֹרִי וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַחִתִּי וְהַפְּרִזִּי וְהַחִוִּי וְהַיְבוּסִי, “See, I am going to drive out from before you the Amorite, *and* the Canaanite, *and* the Perizzite, *and* the Hittite, *and* the Jebusite” (Exod 34:11), וַיִּקַּח יוֹחָנָן בֶּן־קָרַח וְכָל־שָׂרֵי הַחֲיָלִים אֵת כָּל־שְׂאֵרֵי־יְהוּדָה, “Johanan son of Kareah *and* all the commanders of the armies took the entire remnant of Judah” (Jer 43:5).

(c) *Alternative* – marks off alternatives or options: וְלֹא אוֹשִׁיעֵם בְּקִשְׁתׁ וּבַחֶרֶב וּבַמִּלְחָמָה בְּסוּסִים וּבַפָּרָשִׁים, “I will not save them by bow or by sword or by war or by horses or by horsemen” (Hos 1:7), וְלֹא אֵידַע בְּשֹׁכְבָהּ וּבְקוּמָהּ, “He did not know when she lay down or when she arose” (Gen 19:33), הִכָּה דָּוִד אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְלֹא יָחִיָּה אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה, “David attacked the land and he did not leave man or woman alive” (1 Sam 27:9).

When the conjunction is repeated with each alternative, it is typically rendered “whether...or”: אֲנֹכִי אֶחֱטָאָה מִיָּדַי הִבַּקְשָׁנָה גְּנַבְתִּי יוֹם וּגְנַבְתִּי לַיְלָה, “I bore the loss myself; from my hand you required it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night” (Gen 31:39).

(d) *Epexegetical* – introduces a clause or phrase that clarifies, expands, or paraphrases the clause that precedes it: אָבֵל אִשָּׁה־אֶלְמָנָה אֲנִי וַיָּמַת אִישִׁי, “Alas, I am a widow, that is, my husband died” (2 Sam 14:5), וְעַתָּה שְׁמַע יַעֲקֹב עַבְדֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחַרְתִּי בּוֹ, “And now, listen, O Jacob my servant, [that is] Israel, whom I have chosen” (Isa 44:1), כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר יְהוָה נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע, “All that YHWH has spoken, we will do, that is, we will obey” (Exod 24:7), וַיִּשֶׂם אֹתָם בְּכָלֵי הָרְעִים אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וּבִבְלִקוּט, “He put them in his shepherd’s bag, that is, in the pouch” (1 Sam 17:40).

(e) *Circumstantial* – details the circumstances under which a certain action takes place (see section 5.2.11): וַיָּבֹא מַלְאָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים עוֹד אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה וְהִיא יוֹשֶׁבֶת בַּשָּׂדֶה, “so the messenger of God came again to the woman while she was sitting in the field” (Judg 13:9), הָבֵה נִבְנֶה־לָּנוּ עִיר וּמִגְדָּל וְרֹאשׁוֹ בַשָּׁמַיִם, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower, with its top in the heavens” (Gen 11:4).

(f) *Conditional* – introduces the apodosis of a conditional sentence: כִּבְבֹּאָה רָגְלֶיךָ הָעִירָה וּמָת הַיָּלֵד, “When your feet enter the city, then the child will die” (1 Kgs 14:12),

אִם-כֹּה יֹאמֶר נִקְדִּים יְהוָה שְׂכָרְךָ וַיִּלְדוּ כָל-הַצֹּאן נִקְדִּים “If he said ‘The speckled shall be your wages,’ *then* all the flock brought forth speckled” (Gen 31:8).

(g) *Hendiadys* – The *waw* conjunctive can function to conjoin two or more words into a construction that refers to a single idea, or points to a single referent. Thus, the conjoined words take the place of a single word with modifiers. This expression, called hendiadys,³⁵ can be constructed with two or more nouns, or two or more verbs. *Nominal* hendiadys is a common label for the former. The latter construction, however, which is labeled here as *verbal* hendiadys, is sometimes categorized as an adverbial use of the finite verbal forms of certain roots.³⁶ Verbal hendiadys, however, may also be considered a nuance of the verbal complement function of the infinitive construct (see section 3.4.1.a3).

(g.1) *Nominal hendiadys* – וַעֲתָה יַעֲשֵׂה יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם חֶסֶד וְאֱמֻנָה, “Now, may YHWH show you *true faithfulness*” (2 Sam 2:6), הָאֵל הַנֶּאֱמָן שֹׁמֵר הַבְּרִית וְהַחֶסֶד, “The faithful God, who keeps his *covenant loyalty*” (Deut 7:9), וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תְּהוֹ וְבָהוּ, “The earth was a *formless void*” (Gen 1:2).

(g.2) *Verbal hendiadys* – one verb functioning adverbially to modify the idea of the other verb. The aspect of the verbs can be identical: וַתַּמְהַר וַתִּרְדַּךְ כַּדָּהּ, “She *quickly lowered* her jar” (Gen 24:18), וַתַּמְהַר מֵעַל הַחֲמֹר, “She *quickly dismounted* from the donkey” (1 Sam 25:23), וַיָּשְׁבוּ וַיִּכְּפוּ גַם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, “Also, the people of Israel *wept again*” (Num 11:4); or the two verbal forms can also be of distinct aspect: וְאַתָּה תִּשְׁמַעַת בְּקוֹל יְהוָה, “And you shall *again obey* the voice of YHWH” (Deut 30:8). The root סָךְ in particular is often followed by an infinitive construct, functioning similarly to the verbal complement use of the

³⁵ The term “hendiadys” derives from a Latin modification of the Greek words *hen* (“one”) *dia* (“through”) and *dyoin* (“two”).

³⁶ See Kautzsch 1910, 386; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 650.

infinitive construct: וְלֹא־חָסִיף עוֹד מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם לְצֵאת מֵאֶרֶצוֹ, “The king of Egypt *did not come out of his land again*” (2 Kgs 24:7), לְכִן לֹא־אֹסִיף לְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶתְכֶם, “Therefore, I will not *deliver you again*” (Judg 10:13).

4.3.4 כִּי

(a) *Causal* – This conjunction³⁷ forms a causal link between two clauses, introducing the reason an action or situation takes place, or providing the motivation for why something should be done: קֵץ כָּל־בָּשָׂר בָּא לִפְנֵי כִּי־מְלֹאָה הָאָרֶץ חַמָּס מִפְּנֵיהֶם, “the end of all flesh has come before me *because* the earth is filled with violence because of them” (Gen 6:13), אָהָה לַיּוֹם כִּי קָרוֹב יוֹם יְהוָה, “Alas for the day! *For* the day of YHWH is near” (Joel 1:15), בְּזַעַת אִפְיֶךָ תֹאכַל לֶחֶם עַד שׁוֹבֵד אֶל־הָאֲדָמָה כִּי מִמֶּנָּה לָקַחְתָּ, “By the sweat of your brow, you shall eat food until you return to the earth; *because* you were taken from it” (Gen 3:19), לֹא תָעִלוּ וְלֹא־תִלָּחֲמוּ כִּי אֲנִי בְקִרְבְּכֶם, “Do not go up, or fight, *because* I am not among you” (Deut 1:42).

(b) *Evidential*³⁸ – Although translated similarly to the *causal*, the evidential use of כִּי presents the evidence or motivation that lies behind a statement, rather than presenting the cause of an action or situation. Thus, the causal link is with the action of speech, not the contents of speech; the focus is not on what is spoken but on the reason the speaker is saying something. As such a link, כִּי provides the

³⁷ This particle כִּי is thought to have originated as a demonstrative particle (Kautzsch 1910, 305; Meyer 1992, 436; Brockleman 1956, 151). The various uses of the particle may be classified into two major groups: either some type of emphatic use (Muilenberg 1961, 135–60, with the most extensive treatment), or as a connective (Aejmelaeus 1986, 205). However, Muraoka states that the particle is basically demonstrative, with the emphatic nuance derived secondarily (1969, 132).

³⁸ Claasen 1983, 37–44; Aejmelaeus 1986, 203.

evidence for the whole or a specific part of a statement, a particular word in the statement, or even the emotional tone of the statement:

וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־אַבְנֵר הַלּוֹא־אִישׁ אֶתָּה וּמִי כַּמוֹךָ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל
וְלָמָּה לֹא שָׁמַרְתָּ אֶל־אֲדֹנָיִךָ הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי־בָא אֶחָד הָעָם
לְהַשְׁחִית אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲדֹנָיִךְ

“David said to Abner, ‘Are you not a man? Who is like you in Israel? Why did you not guard your lord, the king? *For* one of the people came to kill the king, your lord.’” (1 Sam 26:15),

וַיֹּאמֶר נָתַן אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶתָּה אָמַרְתָּ אֲדֹנָיִהוּ יִמְלֹךְ אַחֲרָי
וְהוּא יֵשֵׁב עַל־כִּסֵּאִי כִּי יָרַד הַיּוֹם וַיִּזְבַּח שׁוֹר וּמְרִיא־וְצֹאן לְרֹב

“Nathan said, ‘My lord, the king. Did you say “Adonijah will rule after me, and he shall sit on my throne?” *For* he went down today, and he sacrificed oxen, fatted cattle and sheep in abundance’” (1 Kgs 1:24–25).

(c) **Clarification** – introduces a subordinate clause that clarifies or explains the main clause:

זֶה־לְךָ הָאוֹת כִּי אֲנִכִּי שְׁלַחְתִּיךָ

“this will be the sign *that* I have sent you” (Exod 3:12),
בֵּשׂ הַמַּעַט כִּי הֲעֵלִיתֵנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ
“Is it not enough *that* you brought us out from a land flowing with milk and honey?” (Num 16:13).

(d) **Result** – introduces clauses that express the outcome or consequence of the action or situation of the main clause: וְגַם־פֶּה לֹא־עָשִׂיתִי מְאוּמָה כִּי־שָׂמוּ אֹתִי בַּבּוֹר
“Even here, I have not done anything, *that* they should put me into the dungeon” (Gen 40:15). This use of the particle is prevalent after questions: מָה רָאִיתָ כִּי עָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה
“What have you seen, *that* you have done this thing?”

(Gen 20:10), מי אנכי כי אלך אל־פַרעה, “Who am I *that* I should go to Pharaoh?” (Exod 3:11).

(e) *Temporal* – indicates that the time reference of a subordinate clause is contemporary with the situation of the main clause (see section 5.2.4):

וַיְהִי כִּי־הִחֵל הָאָדָם לָרֵב עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה וּבָנוּת יָלְדוּ לָהֶם וַיִּרְאוּ
בְנֵי־הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־בָּנוֹת הָאָדָם כִּי טֹבוֹת הָנָה

“*When* people began to multiply on the face of the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of humanity were beautiful” (Gen 6:1–2), כִּי אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן אֶל־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן, “*When* you cross over the Jordan into the land of Canaan” (Num 33:51), וַהֲיָה כִּי־תִקְרָאנָה מִלְחָמָה וְנוֹסַף גַּם־הוּא עַל־שָׂאֵינוּ of war (literally: *when* war befalls), they will also join themselves to our enemies” (Exod 1:10).

When dealing with future situations, the temporal use is quite similar to the conditional use of כִּי. See (f), which follows.

(f) *Conditional* – introduces the protasis of conditional statements – the “if” statement: כִּי־תִמְצָא אִישׁ לֹא תִבְרַכְנוּ, “*If* you meet any man, do not greet him” (2 Kgs 4:29), כִּי תִקְנֶה עֶבֶד עִבְרִי שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים יַעֲבֹד, “*If* you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years” (Exod 21:2), וְכִי־יִפְתַּח אִישׁ בּוֹר אוֹ כִּי־יִכְרֶה אִישׁ בּוֹר וְלֹא יִכְסֶנּוּ, “*If* a person opens a pit, or *if* a person digs a pit and does not cover it” (Exod 21:33), כִּי אָמַרְתִּי יְשׁוּלִי תִקְוָה, “*If* I said, ‘I have hope’” (Ruth 1:12).

The distinction between temporal and conditional is somewhat vague, especially when dealing with future temporal statements.³⁹ Consider: כִּי־יִשְׁאַלְךָ בְּנֶךָ מָחָר לֵאמֹר... וְאָמַרְתָּ לְבְנֶךָ could be translated as “*If* your son asks you in time saying... then you

³⁹ Aejmelaeus 1986, 197.

shall answer your son” or “*When* your sons asks you in time saying . . . then you shall answer your son” (Deut 6:20–21).

With the particles עַתָּה or אָז, כִּי introduces the apodosis – the “then” statement – of a conditional sentence: כִּי לוֹלֵא הִתְמַהֲמְהֵנוּ כִּי־עַתָּה שָׁבְנוּ זֶה פַּעַמַּיִם, “For if we had not delayed, [*then*] we could have returned twice” (Gen 43:10), חַי הָאֱלֹהִים כִּי לוֹלֵא דִבַּרְתָּ כִּי אָז מִהֲבֹקֵר נֵעְלָה הָעָם, “As God lives, if you had not spoken, *then* the people would have gone away in the morning” (2 Sam 2:27).

(g) *Adversative* – introduces an antithetical statement after a negative clause. It often gives an alternative for the negative statement: לֹא־תִקְרָא אֶת־שָׂמָה שָׂרָי כִּי שָׂרָה שְׂמָהּ, “Do not call her name Sarai, *but* her name will be Sarah” (Gen 17:15), לֹא־תִגַּע בּוֹ יָד כִּי־סָקוּל יִסְקֶל אוֹיְרָה יִירָה, “No hand shall touch him, *but* he shall surely be stoned or shot through” (Exod 19:13), לֹא־אֶקַּח אֶת־כָּל־הַמַּמְלָכָה מִיָּדוֹ כִּי נָשִׂיא אֲשַׁתְּנוּ כָּל יְמֵי חַיָּו, “I will not take the kingdom from his hand, *but* I will make him ruler all the days of his life” (1 Kgs 11:34).

The *adversative* sense is also denoted by כִּי אִם, again, noting an alternative to a negative statement:⁴⁰ לֹא יִירָשֶׁךָ זֶה כִּי־אִם אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִמֶּעֶדְךָ, “This man will not be your heir, *but* one who will come forth from your body . . .” (Gen 15:4), לֹא יַעֲקֹב יֵאמָר עוֹד שְׁמֶךָ כִּי אִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל, “Your name shall no longer be Jacob, *but rather* Israel” (Gen 32:29 [Eng. 32:28]).

(h) *Concessive* – introduces a clause that should, or is expected to, lead to the action of the main clause but, in fact, does not. Thus, the main clause occurs in spite of the clause introduced by כִּי־יִפְּלַל לֹא־יוֹשֵׁל:

⁴⁰ The longer construction כִּי אִם is more common in denoting an adversative sense. The adversative force of this construction likely comes from the adversative use of אִם, which is further enhanced by a pleonastic use of אִם (Schoors 1981, 251–52).

“*though* he falls, he will not stumble” (Ps 37:24), “*Although* you were angry with me, your anger turned away and you comforted me” (Isa 12:1), מאתות השמים אל־תחתו כִּי־יחֲתוּ הַגּוֹיִם מִהֶמָּה, “Do not be terrified by the signs of heaven, *though* the nations are terrified by them” (Jer 10:2).

(i) *Asseverative* – emphasizes the clause it modifies. This use of כִּי may have originated in oath statements, to indicate an action that one will take:⁴¹ חַי־יְהוָה כִּי בֶן־מֹת הָאִישׁ הַעֲשֵׂה זֹאת, “As YHWH lives, *surely* the man who did this thing deserves to die” (2 Sam 12:5), כֹּה־יַעֲשֶׂה אֱלֹהִים וְכֹה יוֹסֵף כִּי־מוֹת תָּמוּת יוֹנָתָן, “May God do this and more; *You shall surely die*, Jonathan” (1 Sam 14:44), חַי פַּרְעֹה כִּי מְרַגְלִים אַתָּם, “As Pharaoh lives, you are *surely* spies” (Gen 42:16).

The construction אִם כִּי highlights a negative oath, an action that one will not take, or an action/situation that one pledges to not allow:

וְאוּלָּם חַי־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל . . . כִּי אִם־נוֹתַר לְנָבָל

“Nevertheless, as YHWH, the God of Israel lives . . . *there would not have been* left to Nabal . . .” (1 Sam 25:34). On occasion, however, the construction אִם כִּי functions identically to the *asseverative* כִּי to indicate an action that one will take: חַי־יְהוָה כִּי־אִם־רָצִיתִי אַחֲרָיו וְלִקְחֹתִי מֵאֹמֶה, “As YHWH lives, *I will run* after him and take something from him” (2 Kgs 5:20), אִם־תַּעֲשׂוּן כִּזְאֹת כִּי אִם־נִקְמָתִי בָכֶם, “Since you act like this, *I will surely take revenge* on you” (Judg 15:7).

The *asseverative* כִּי can function in other types of discourse as well, to place emphasis on the surety of a fact or situation: כִּי יִבְשׂוּ מַאֲלִים אֲשֶׁר חֲמַדְתֶּם, “*surely* they will be ashamed of oaks that they have desired” (Isa 1:29), אִם לֹא תֵאֱמִינוּ כִּי לֹא תֵאֱמִנוּ, “If you do not believe, *surely* you

⁴¹ Williams 1967, 73.

will not last” (Isa 7:9), כִּי אִם־יֵשׁ אַחֲרַיִת “*Surely* there is a future” (Prov 23:18).

(j) *Perceptual* – With verbs of perception (seeing, hearing, believing, feeling, etc) כִּי can function to introduce a subordinate clause that indicates the object of perception: וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב, “God saw *that* [this] was good” (Gen 1:10), וַיְהִי כַשְׂמַע אִיזָבֵל כִּי־סָקַל נָבוֹת וַיָּמָת, “When Jezebel heard *that* Naboth was stoned and died” (1 Kgs 21:15), וַיִּדְעֻתָם כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, “You shall know *that* I am YHWH, your God” (Exod 6:7).

(k) *Subject* – introduces clauses that function as a subject in a sentence: טוֹב כִּי־תִהְיֶה־לָּנוּ מַעִיר לְעֶזְרוֹר, “It is better *that you send us* help from the city” (2 Sam 18:3 *Qere*), אַל־יִחַר בְּעֵינַי אֲדֹנָי כִּי לֹא אוּכַל לָקוּם מִפְּנֵיךָ, “Let not my lord be angry *that I am not able to rise* before you” (Gen 31:35).

(l) *Recitative* – introduces direct speech, and is therefore usually left untranslated:

וַיֹּאמֶר חֲזָה־אֵל כִּי מָה עֲבַדְךָ הַכֶּלֶב כִּי יַעֲשֶׂה הַדָּבָר הַגָּדוֹל
הַזֶּה

“Hazeal said <*that*>, ‘What is your servant, a dog, that he should do this great thing?’” (2 Kgs 8:13),

כִּי כַאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לָךְ בִּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר כִּי־שָׁלֵמָה
בְּגַד יִמְלֹךְ אַחֲרַי

“Surely, as I swore to you by YHWH, God of Israel, saying <*that*>, ‘Solomon, your son, will be king after me’” (1 Kgs 1:30), כִּן אָמַרְתֶּם לֵאמֹר כִּי־פִשְׁעֵינוּ וְחַטָּאתֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ, “Thus, you have said <*that*>, ‘Our transgressions and our sins are upon us’” (Ezek 33:10).

With the interrogative particle הֲ, כִּי can introduce a question posed by a speaker in context: וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד הֲכִי יִשְׁעוֹד אֲשֶׁר נֹתַר לְבַיִת שְׂאוּל, “David said

<that>, ‘Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul?’” (2 Sam 9:1), וַיֹּאמֶר הַכִּי קָרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב, “Then [Esau] said <that>, ‘Is he not rightly named Jacob?’” (Gen 27:36).

(m) *Exceptive* – indicates an action or situation that will not take place unless accompanied or followed by another action/situation. The *exceptive* כִּי is often translated “except” or “unless” in English: וְלֹא יֹאכַל מִן־הַקֹּדְשִׁים כִּי אִם־רָחַץ בְּשֵׁרוֹ בַּמַּיִם, “And he will not eat from the holy [gifts] unless he washes his body with water” (Lev 22:6), אֵין־חֹפֶץ לְמֶלֶךְ בְּמַהֵר כִּי בְמֵאָה עָרְלוֹת פְּלִשְׁתִּים, “The king does not desire any dowry, except for 100 foreskins of the Philistines” (1 Sam 18:25).

After a general negative statement, כִּי אִם often introduces a specific situation that is opposed to, or reverses, the negative statement:⁴² לֹא־תִרְאֶה אֶת־פָּנַי כִּי אִם־לִפְנֵי הַבִּיאֵךְ אֶת מִיכָל, “You shall not see my face, unless you bring Michal” (2 Sam 3:13), נָהַג וְלָךְ אֶל־תַּעֲצֹר־לִי לְרַכֵּב כִּי אִם־אֲמַרְתִּי לָךְ, “Drive and go forward; do not slow down the pace for me unless I tell you” (2 Kgs 4:24).

(n) *Interrogative* – Occasionally, כִּי will function to introduce an interrogative clause: כִּי הָאֲדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה, “Are the trees of the field as human beings?” (Deut 20:19), כִּי־הֲצִילוּ אֶת־שָׁמְרוֹן מִיָּדִי, “Have they delivered Samaria from my hand?” (2 Kgs 18:34).

4.3.5 כִּי־לֵאמֹר

Consequential – This conjunction most often indicates an undesirable action or situation that arises from another action as a consequence: לֹא תֹאכְלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא תִגְעוּ בוֹ פֶּן־תָּמּוּתוּן, “You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die”

⁴² Schoors 1981, 251–52.

אֶל־תִּשְׁמַע קוֹלְךָ עִמָּנוּ פֶּן־יִפְגְּעוּ בְּכֶם אַנְשִׁים מְרִי נִפְשׁ, “Do not let your voice be heard among us, *or else* fierce men will attack you” (Judg 18:25), אֶל־תּוֹכַח לֵץ פֶּן־יִשְׁנֹאֲךָ, “Do not reprove a scoffer, *lest* he hate you” (Prov 9:8).

4.4 Particles of Existence/Nonexistence

Hebrew uses the two words אֵין and שׁוֹ to denote existence or nonexistence.⁴³

4.4.1 אֵין

(a) *Nonexistence* – denies the existence of a substantive, in which case it usually occurs in apposition with a preceding noun: אָדָם אֵין לְעֵבֵד אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה, “*there was no* human to cultivate the ground” (Gen 2:5). However, it may also occur in the construct state with a following noun or pronoun: אֵין־יִרְאַת אֱלֹהִים בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה, “*There is no* fear of God in this place” (Gen 20:11).

(b) *Nonpossession* – The particle is also used with the לְ preposition to show that the object of the preposition does not possess a substantive: אֵין לָהּ וְלֹד, “*she had no* child” (Gen 11:30), וְאִם־אֵין לְאִישׁ גֹּאֵל, “But if *the man has no* next of kin” (Num 5:8).

(c) *Negative* – The particle can also negate verbal clauses when bound with a pronominal suffix. In this construction, the bound pronominal suffix is the subject of the verbal action that is being negated, usually a participle: אֵינִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם תְּבֵן, “*I am not giving* you straw” (Exod 5:10), אֵינִי שׁוֹמֵעַ, “*I will not listen*” (Isa 1:15).

⁴³ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 576 and 604–05; Williams 1976, 67–68 and 79; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 320–21; Seow 1995, 107–08.

4.4.2 שׁ

(a) **Existence** – Antithetical to אֵין, the particle שׁ affirms the existence of a substantive. The particle can function in the same way as אֵין in modifying a nominal clause: הִנֵּה אֵין יְהוָה בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה, “Surely, YHWH is in this place” (Gen 28:16). With the pronominal suffixes, it indicates the subject of a verbless clause: אֶת־אִשֶּׁר יִשְׁנוּ פֹה, “with the one who is here” (Deut 29:14 [Eng 29:15]).

(b) **Possession** – With the preposition לְ bound to a pronominal suffix, שׁ expresses possession, with the pronominal suffix indicating the owner: מַה־יֵּשׁ לְךָ, “What do you have?” (2 Kgs 4:2 *Qere*), יֵשׁ־לִי רַב, “I have enough” (Gen 33:9).

(c) **Predicate** – When bound to a pronominal suffix, שׁ can function to express the subject of a participle. This usage is normally preceded by אֲסֵא to express intention or desire: אֲסֵא אֶת־אָחִינוּ אֲפָנוּ, “If you will send our brother with us” (Gen 43:4), וְעַתָּה אֲסֵא־יִשְׁכֶּם עִשִׂים חֹסֵד, “Now then, if you will deal loyally” (Gen 24:49).

4.5 The Particles הִנֵּה and הִנְּה

Though traditionally rendered in English as “Behold” or “Lo,” neither הִנֵּה nor הִנְּה is limited to a demonstrative function. In fact, the demonstrative nature of either particle is not even the primary aspect. Their primary function, rather, is as a “particle of interest,”⁴⁴ which calls special attention to an element of the context, either a single word or an entire statement. As the particle calls attention to an object, it also indicates a shift in perspective within a narrative. In essence, the particle introduces movement away from the narrational perspective to present vividly the perspective of a particular speaker or figure within the narrative. Consequently, הִנֵּה marks introductory or

⁴⁴ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 300; Pratico and Van Pelt 2001, 148–49.

transitional signals within a dialogue, as the unique view of each speaker is laid out (see “*perception*” in section 4.5.2).⁴⁵ Furthermore, the particle has a strong “overtone of feeling”⁴⁶ based on its nature as an exclamation. Thus, there is no single rendering in English that adequately captures the force of הִנֵּה or הִנְנֶה, since the specific use of either particle is dependent not only on textual context but also on the emotional mindset of the speaker and the other figures of the narrative as well.

4.5.1 הִנֵּה

The particle without the *waw* conjunction is unique in that it is usually used with the verb אָמַר.⁴⁷ Hence, it serves to introduce direct speech, much like the recitative function of the particle כִּי (see section 4.3.4.1). Within this use, there are a variety of nuances that the particle הִנֵּה can express:

(a) **Exclamatory** – functions quite frequently as a “presentative exclamation,”⁴⁸ emphasizing “immediacy” or “here-and-now-ness,”⁴⁹ often as a response to a summons. This exclamatory emphasis is often related to the presence of people or certain objects, calling attention to and focusing upon an object:⁵⁰ הִנְנִי שְׁלַחֲנִי, “*Here I am*, send me!” (Isa 6:8), הִנֵּה הָאֵשׁ וְהָעֵצִים וְאַיִהּ הַשֶּׁה לְעֹלָה, “*Here is* the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the sacrifice?” (Gen 22:7), וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי, “[God] said to him ‘Abraham,’ and [Abraham] said ‘*Here I am!*’” (Gen 22:1).

(b) **Immediacy** – Related to the exclamatory, הִנֵּה used with verbs or participles can point to the immediacy of the action of the verb or participle: הִנֵּה אָבִיךָ חֹלֵה, “Your father is

⁴⁵ Schneider 1989, 261–68.

⁴⁶ McCarthy 1980, 331.

⁴⁷ Zewi 1996, 21–37.

⁴⁸ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 674.

⁴⁹ Lambdin 1971a, 168.

⁵⁰ Berlin 1983, 91. See also Andersen 1974, 94.

now sick” (Gen 48:1), הַהִנֵּה אַנְשֵׁים בָּאוּ הֵנָּה הַלַּיְלָה מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, “Some men from the people of Israel have come here *just* tonight” (Josh 2:2).

4.5.2 הַהִנֵּה

The form of the particle with the conjunction occurs quite often with verbs of sight, or related contexts, typically introducing the object of perception.⁵¹

(a) *Immediate perception* – In some narrative situations, הַהִנֵּה points not to an immediate action but to the immediate perception of an action or the results of an action. Thus, it functions to indicate “suddenness in the presentation of perception,” not a sense of immediacy or suddenness in the events of the narrative: וַיְהִי בַחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה וַיִּחְרַד הָאִישׁ וַיִּלְפַּת וַהֲנִה אִשָּׁה שֹׁכֶבֶת מִרְגְּלֹתָיו, “It happened in the middle of the night that the man was startled and bent forward; and *behold* there was a woman lying at his feet” (Ruth 3:8), וּבִעֵז עָלָה הַשַּׁעַר וַיֵּשֶׁב שָׁם וַהֲנִה הַגֹּאֵל עֹבֵר, “Now Boaz went to the gate and sat there, *and the kinsmen-redeemer was passing by*” (Ruth 4:1).⁵²

(b) *Perception* – With verbs of perception or within a perceptual situation, הַהִנֵּה will introduce a perception from a perspective that is distinct from the narrator or other figures in the narrative⁵³ and unique to the speaker: what may be termed the “participant perspective.”⁵⁴ Unlike “immediate

⁵¹ Zewi 1996, 37.

⁵² Berlin 1983, 91. Berlin notes that in the two verses, the emphasis of suddenness is not placed on the action of Ruth lying down or the redeemer passing by. Rather, the emphasis is on the fact that, at a certain moment, Boaz noticed these actions occurring. Thus, the particle indicates “Boaz’s perception as he becomes aware of Ruth’s presence” and points out that “Boaz suddenly saw the *goel*, and not that the *goel* arrived immediately.”

⁵³ Berlin 1983, 60.

⁵⁴ Andersen 1974, 94.

perception,” this use of וְהִנֵּה refers to the unique perspective of the speaker as he or she perceives an action, and not necessarily the immediate nature of the action. Based on the emotionality of the particle, the object of perception is often colored with a sense of excitement: וַאֲקָם בַּבֶּקֶר לְהִינִיֵּק אֶת־בְּנִי וְהִנֵּה־מַתּוּתָא, “I got up in the morning to nurse my son and [saw that] he was dead” (1 Kgs 3:21),

וְלֹא־הֵאֱמַנְתִּי לְדִבְרִים עַד אֲשֶׁר־בָּאתִי וַתֵּרְאֵנִה עֵינַי וְהִנֵּה
לֹא־הִגַּדְתִּי חֲחָצִי

“I did not believe the reports until I came and my eyes had seen that the half was not told to me” (1 Kgs 10:7).

(c) **Logical** – As it introduces perceptions, the particle also has various *logical functions*, connecting two ideas together:

(c.1) **Causal** – וְהִנֵּה אֵין־יוֹסֵף בַּבּוֹר וַיִּקְרַע אֶת־בְּגָדָיו “Because Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes” (Gen 37:29), וַיָּרֵץ אֶל־תּוֹךְ הַקֶּהֶל וְהִנֵּה חֹחַל הַנִּגְנָף בָּעַם, “Then [Aaron] ran into the midst of the assembly because the plague had begun among the people” (Num 17:12 [Eng. 16:47]).

(c.2) **Occasion/circumstantial** –

וְהִנֵּה אֲנַחְנוּ מֵאֲלָמִים אֲלָמִים בְּתוֹךְ הַשָּׂדֶה

“While we were binding sheaves in the field (Gen 37:7), וַיָּבֵא אֶל־הָאִישׁ וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד עַל־הַגְּמְלִים עַל־הָעַיִן, “He went to the man while he was standing by the camels at the spring” (Gen 24:30).

(c.3) **Conditional** –

וַרְאֵהוּ הַכֹּהֵן בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וְהִנֵּה הִגַּעַע עִמָּד בְּעֵינָיו לֹא־פָשָׁה

“The priest will look at him on the seventh day, and if, in his eyes, the infection has not changed” (Lev 13:5), וְהִנֵּה גִלְדָּךְ וּמַה־נִּבְיֵא לְאִישׁ, “If we go, what shall we take for the man?” (1 Sam 9:7).

(c.4) **Temporal** –

וְהִנֵּה אָנֹכִי בָּא בַקֶּצֶה הַמְּחֻנָּה וְהִנֵּה כְּאֲשֶׁר־אֶעֱשֶׂה כֵּן תַעֲשֶׂוּן

“When I arrive to the outskirts of town, do as I do” (Judg 7:17), וַיֵּרְדֶּה לְפָנַי הַגִּלְגָל וְהֵנָּה אֲנֹכִי יֹרֵד אֵלֶיךָ, “Go down before me to Gilgal, and [*then*] I will go down to you” (1 Sam 10:8).

(c.5) *Result* – הֵן לִי לֹא נִתְּתָה זָרַע וְהֵנָּה בֶן-בֵּיתִי יוֹרֵשׁ אֹתִי, “You have given me no offspring, so one born in my house is my heir” (Gen 15:3), כְּרַתָּה בְרִיתִךְ אִתִּי וְהֵנָּה יָדִי עִמָּךְ לְהִסָּב אֵלֶיךָ אֶת-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל, “Make your covenant with me, so that my hand will be with you to bring to you all of Israel” (2 Sam 3:12).

(c.6) *Adversative* –

כִּי לֹא אֲחַמּוֹל עוֹד עַל-יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ נְאֻם-יְהוָה וְהֵנָּה אֲנֹכִי מִמְצִיא
אֶת-הָאָדָם אִישׁ בְּיַד-רֵעֵהוּ

“‘For I will no longer have pity on the inhabitants of the land,’ declares YHWH, ‘but rather I will cause the men to fall each into the hand of a neighbor’” (Zech 11:6),

וַיִּקְרָא אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לְבָכִי וּלְמִסְפַּד
וּלְקִרְחָה וּלְחִגְרָה שֶׁקַּ וְהֵנָּה שִׂשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה

“The lord, YHWH of hosts, called on that day to weeping and lamenting, to shaving the head and wearing sackcloth. Instead there is rejoicing and merriment” (Isa 22:12–13).

5 *Clauses and Sentences*

Thus far in this book we have treated the syntax of individual words and phrases. By “phrases” we mean the function of individual words and the way they relate to each other in larger units to create noun phrases, verb phrases, adverbial phrases, and prepositional phrases. In most cases, a phrase is a series of words capable of serving the syntactical function of a single word. In this final section, we move beyond phrases to clauses and sentences.¹

The very definitions of “clause” and “sentence” may be problematic, and so we begin by clarifying a few more terms. Put simply, a clause is a group of words containing a subject and only one predicate.² This distinguishes a clause from

¹ As elsewhere in this grammar, we have retained traditional terminology and explanations for most grammatical functions. However, the research of a growing number of scholars employing discourse analysis (or “discourse linguistics,” also known in Europe as “text linguistics”; see Lowery 1995, 107) have highlighted the inadequacy of the traditional word-oriented and sentence-oriented study of BH grammar, emphasizing instead the need to include longer units of text in linguistic study (van der Merwe 1994, 14–15; Andersen 1974, 17–20). Selected studies have been fruitful (see especially Andersen 1970 and 1974, Miller 1996 and 1999, and to some degree the grammar of van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999), but after thirty years of research, this burgeoning discipline lacks consensus of methodology and terminology. See further the various articles in Bodine 1995 and Bergen 1994.

² Behind our brief and functional definitions remain unsettled debates among linguists. For rigorous definitions and explanations of how these

a phrase, which makes no specific grammatical predication. Having clarified clause and phrase, we need to qualify the statement with which we began this unit, “Thus far in this book we have treated the syntax of individual words and phrases.” Exceptions to this statement exist in our treatment of the finite verbal forms (sections 3.2 and 3.3) and verbal sequences (section 3.5). Since Hebrew finite verbs contain implied subjects (embedded by means of pronominal morphemes), the subject and predicate of a clause are both contained in the verb, making it impossible to study verbal syntax without considering clause-level relationships.³ Nonetheless, our study of BH syntax prior to this point in the book has been *primarily* focused on the phrase-level relationships of Hebrew nouns, verbs, and particles.⁴ In section 5, we now turn to clausal and interclausal relationships.

A sentence is comprised of one or more clauses and is the largest grammatical structural unit, except for the discourse or the text itself. Thus, sentences combine to create texts, which may be further analyzed in terms of text-linguistic conventions of cohesion and rhetorical organization.⁵ So the grammatical hierarchy moves from word to phrase to clause to sentence to discourse.⁶

issues relate specifically to the grammar of BH, see Andersen 1974, 21–28; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 561–64; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 59–65; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 77–80.

³ So, for example, כָּתַב in Joshua 8:32 is used in reference to the law of Moses, which *he wrote* in the presence of the Israelites. Since the subject “he” is implied in the verb, there is in the Hebrew syntax no noun phrase separate from the verb phrase “wrote in the presence of the Israelites.” Thus, our treatment of the verbs necessarily went beyond the phrase level and considered the subjects with their verbs in clause-level relationships.

⁴ Thus, until this point in the book, we have limited ourselves to a consideration of morphosyntactical relationships, as much as possible. “Morphosyntax” considers the way two words relate to each other, or in some cases, complex combinations of words in phrases (Richter 1978–80, 2:3–83, esp. 4 for Richter’s definition of *Wortgruppe*, “phrase”).

⁵ Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 21, 51–52, and 65–66.

⁶ Or more fully, from morpheme (the smallest unit of meaningful speech) to word to phrase to clause to sentence to discourse.

Further definition may be needed to clarify the types of sentences possible in BH. A sentence with only one clause may be termed a “simple” sentence, which may be either nominal or verbal (see section 5.1). So, for example, the following nominal clause in Psalm 121:5 could be taken separately as a simple sentence: **יְהוָה שְׂמֹרְךָ**, “YHWH (is) your keeper.” Likewise, the verbal clause in Genesis 1:1 could be isolated as a simple sentence: **בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים**, “God created.” A sentence with two or more clauses of equal syntactical status (or function) is a “compound” sentence.⁷ Consider the following compound sentence from 1 Samuel 3:9: **וַיֵּלֶךְ שְׁמוּאֵל וַיִּשְׁכַּב בְּמִקְוֹמוֹ**, “Then Samuel went and lay down in his place.” The two clauses have the same subject, and are of equal syntactical status, albeit in the second clause, the subject is implied and the action is modified by a prepositional phrase. BH narrative uses the ubiquitous conjunction *waw* in a flexible way to link verbs in chains and sequences in such compound constructions (see section 3.5). A sentence with two or more clauses of unequal status is a “complex” sentence, in which one clause is subordinated to the other, the independent or main clause.

5.1 Nominal and Verbal Clauses

Clauses may be further classified as coordinate or subordinate.⁸ The two categories included in this section are clauses that may be coordinated or juxtaposed in apposition with other clauses to create compound sentences. Thus, the *nominal* and *verbal* clauses are the most basic types of clauses. The

⁷ Andersen is correct in stating that this traditional definition is inadequate for encompassing the realities of BH (1974, 24–28). But the traditional definition of a compound sentence is still useful for our purposes. The reader should also be aware that grammarians have used the designation “compound sentence” in very different ways, as reference to Kautzsch and Meyer will attest (Kautzsch 1910, 457–58; Meyer 1992, 355–57).

⁸ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 561; Andersen 1974, 24–27

various subordinate clauses possible in BH will be covered in section 5.2.⁹

5.1.1 *Nominal Clause*

BH has the ability to form a clause without the use of a finite verb.¹⁰ The subject of such nominal clauses will be a noun or pronoun. Its predicate will be another noun, pronoun, prepositional phrase, adverb, or infinitive construct.¹¹

Nominal clauses can be classified in two general categories. *Identification* clauses signify the nature or identity of the subject, while *description* clauses speak of the quality or attributes of the subject.¹² The former typically answers “who” or “what,” while the latter describes what the subject is like. The expected word order of a nominal clause may be generally classified according to the type of nominal clause. Identification clauses, in general, are ordered subject-predicate and take a definite predicate, while description clauses are generally ordered predicate-subject and have an indefinite predicate. However, there are many exceptions to the ordering, depending on the presence of additional syntactical elements, an intended emphasis

⁹ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 561–86; Meyer 1992, 348–57; Kautzsch 1910, 450–57; Williams 1976, 96–99; Chisholm 1998, 113–14; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 59–65 and 336–50; and for epigraphic Hebrew, see Gogel 1998, 273–92.

¹⁰ Such verbless clauses were also present in the Canaanite dialect of the Amarna letters (Rainey 1996, 1:180).

¹¹ And so more accurately, this could be called a “verbless” clause, since the predicate may be nearly anything except a verb (as per Andersen 1970, 17–30). Recently it has been doubted whether nominal clauses should be considered a distinct clausal type in BH. Rather, it is argued, the copula הָיָה was assumed in such clauses, but was optional and so frequently omitted as unnecessary. In this view, the so-called nominal or verbless clause is simply a variety of the verbal clauses without the copula included (Sinclair 1999, 75).

¹² Andersen preferred to speak of “identification” and “classification” clauses (1970, 31–34).

on one of the elements, or, in some cases, the rhetorical function of the nominal clause.¹³

(a) *Noun as predicate* (see predicate nominative, section 2.1.2) – אַתָּה הָאִישׁ, “You are the man” (2 Sam 12:7), יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ, “YHWH is king” (Ps 10:16). The predicate may be a proper noun: אֲנִי יְהוָה, “I am YHWH” (Gen 15:7), אֲנִי יוֹסֵף, “I am Joseph” (Gen 45:3). Note the predicate-subject word order in *description* nominal clauses: וְנָבִיא הוּא, “he is a prophet” (Gen 20:7).

Sometimes, a *pleonastic* pronoun is situated between the subject and the predicate. The pronoun is redundant since it is not necessary grammatically to complete the predication (compare יְהוָה הָאֱלֹהִים, “YHWH is God” [Josh 22:34] with יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים, “YHWH is God” [1 Kgs 18:39]): עֵשָׂו הוּא אֶדְוִם, “Esau is Edom” (Gen 36:8).¹⁴

(b) *Adjective as predicate* (see section 2.5.2) – הִנֵּה אֲנַחְנוּ פֹה בִיהוּדָה יִרְאִים, “Look, we are afraid here in Judah” (1 Sam 23:3), טוֹב הַדָּבָר, “The word is good” (1 Kgs 2:38), וְהַמַּיִם רָעִים, “The water is bad” (2 Kgs 2:19), וְהַנְּעִרָה יָפָה עַד-מְאֹד, “The girl was very beautiful” (1 Kgs 1:4). The adjective regularly serves as predicate in clauses of description: הִרָה אֲנֹכִי, “I am pregnant” (2 Sam 11:5), טָמֵא הוּא, “he is unclean” (Lev 13:11).

(c) *Participle as predicate* (see section 3.4.3, b) – עֹבְרִים אֲנַחְנוּ מִבֵּית-לַחֶם יְהוּדָה עַד-יִרְכַּתֵי הַר-אֶפְרַיִם, “We are passing from Bethlehem of Judah to the remote part of the hill country of Ephraim” (Judg 19:18), יְהוָה שְׂמֹרְךָ, “YHWH is your keeper” (Ps 121:5), כִּי הִנֵּה-אֲנֹכִי מִקִּים רֹעֶה, “For I am about to raise up a shepherd” (Zech 11:16), בַּדְּוֵעַ פְּנֵיךָ רָעִים וְאַתָּה אֵינְךָ חוֹלֵה, “Why is your face sad, though you are not sick?” (Neh 2:2).

¹³ See Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 130–35; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 568–76; Kautzsch 1910, 454; Williams 1976, 98–99.

¹⁴ Such pleonastic uses of the pronouns are apparently not intended to denote emphasis. See Muraoka 1985, 15.

With the passive participle, there is quite often a desiderative sense in the predication: בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה, “*Blessed is* YHWH” or “May YHWH *be blessed*” (Ruth 4:14), אָרַרְיָךְ אָרוּר וּמְבַרְכֶיךָ בָּרוּךְ, “*Cursed be* those who curse you, and *blessed be* those who bless you” (Gen 27:29).¹⁵

(d) *Prepositional phrase as predicate* – הָאֱלֹהִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם, “God is *in heaven*” (Eccl 5:1 [Eng 5:2]), קוֹל מִלְחָמָה בָּאָרֶץ, “The noise of battle *is in the land*” (Jer 50:22), לִיהוָה הוּא, “It *is* YHWH’s” (Lev 27:26), לֹא בָרַעַשׁ יְהוָה, “YHWH *was not in the earthquake*” (1 Kgs 19:11), יְהוָה עִמָּךְ, “YHWH *is with you*” (Judg 6:12).

5.1.2 Verbal Clause

The subject of a verbal clause will be a noun or pronoun, and its predicate will be a finite verb (i.e., perfect or imperfect aspect), or a nonfinite verb functioning as one.

Because the verbal clause is so prevalent in BH, we offer here a survey of its forms.

(a) Subject of the verbal clause

(a.1) *Noun as subject* – The subject of a verbal clause is most often expressed by a noun: וַיִּצַו יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶת־הַכֹּהֲנִים, “*Joshua* commanded the priests” (Josh 4:17), וַיִּכְתֹּב מֹשֶׁה אֶת כָּל־דִּבְרֵי יְהוָה, “*Moses* wrote down all the words of YHWH” (Exod 24:4).

(a.2) *Pronoun as subject* – When an independent personal pronoun functions as the subject of a verb, there is generally a sense of prominence, since the subject is already inherent in the verbal form.

Specifically, the pronoun as subject can be *disjunctive*, expressing a strong contrasting or disjunctive sense, so that

¹⁵ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 566 and 576.

the subject of the verb is highlighted against another:

וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־הַשְּׂפָחוֹת וְאֶת־יְלָדֵיהֶן רִאשֹׁנָה וְאֶת־לֵאָה וְיְלָדֶיהָ
אֶחָרָיִם וְאֶת־רָחֵל וְאֶת־יוֹסֵף אֶחָרָיִם וְהוּא עָבַר לִפְנֵיהֶם

“He put the maids and their children in front, and Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph next. *But* he passed on before them . . .” (Gen 33:2–3).

The pronoun as subject can also be *emphatic*, highlighting the subject: הוא יִשׁוּפֶךְ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תִּשׁוּפְנוּ עַקֵּב, “*He* shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel” (Gen 3:15), הוא יַעֲבֹר לִפְנֵי הָעָם הַזֶּה, “*he shall go* across before this people” (Deut 3:28).¹⁶

With the first-person pronoun, the emphatic reference to the self can be *assertive*, connoting a sense of self-consciousness or assertiveness:¹⁷ וְאֲנִי גַּמְלָתִיךָ הִרְעָה, “*But I* have dealt wickedly with you” (1 Sam 24:18), אֲנֹכִי אֶשָׁב עַד שׁוּבֶךָ, “*I* will remain until you return” (Judg 6:18).

(a.3) *Indefinite subject* – There are situations in which the subject of a verb points to no person in particular, but to a general “someone,” “one,” or “anyone.” There are several constructions that can express this indefinite¹⁸ or vague¹⁹ subject. First, the *third person masculine singular active verb*, either with a substantival participle as subject, or without a stated subject, often expresses an indefinite subject: עַל־כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמָהּ בָּבֶל, “Therefore one calls its name Babel” (Gen 11:9), כִּי־יִפֹּל הַנֶּפֶל מִמֶּנּוּ, “If anyone falls from it [your roof]” (Deut 22:8). Second, the *third person masculine singular passive verb* also expresses an indefinite subject: וְכִסָּה אֶת־עֵין הָאָרֶץ וְלֹא יוּכַל לִרְאוֹת אֶת־הָאָרֶץ, “And they will cover the surface of the land so that no one will be able to see the land” (Exod 10:5), אָז הִיחַל לְקִרְאוֹ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה, “Then

¹⁶ Muraoka 1985, 48.

¹⁷ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 539–40.

¹⁸ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 70.

¹⁹ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 578.

people began to call on the name of YHWH” (Gen 4:26). Third, the *third person masculine plural verb*, again either with a substantival participle as the subject, or an unstated subject, expresses an indefinite subject: מִן־הַבְּאֵר הַהוּא יִשְׁקוּ הָעֵדְרִים, “*They watered* the flock from that well” (Gen 29:2), שָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ אֶת־אֲבֹרָהֶם וְאֵת שָׂרָה, “There *they buried* Abraham and Sarah” (Gen 49:31). Fourth, the *singular and plural participles* may also express an indefinite subject: לְבָנִים אֹמְרִים לָנוּ עֲשׂוּ, “*They* keep saying to us ‘Make bricks!’” (Exod 5:16), אֵלַי קֹרֵא מִשֵּׁעִיר, “*Someone* is calling me from Seir” (Isa 21:11). Finally, the anarthrous word אִישׁ may also serve as an indefinite subject of a finite verb: לְקַטְוּ מִמֶּנּוּ אִישׁ לְפִי אֲכָלוּ, “Gather from it, *everyone*, as much as they should eat” (Exod 16:16), אִם־נִשְׁנָךְ הִנָּחַשׁ אֶת־אִישׁ וְהִבִּיט אֶל־נַחֲשׁ הַנְּחֹשֶׁת וְחָי, “If the serpent bites *anyone*, and he looks to the bronze serpent, he will live” (Num 21:9).

(b) Predication of the verbal clause

As noted, predication in the verbal clause is achieved by the finite verbs. The full treatment of the syntax of verbs is located in Chapter 3. This discussion will be limited to considering the construction of the verbal clause.

(b.1) *Word order* – The typical word order for a verbal clause is verb – subject – object (VSO): וַיֶּאֱהָב יִצְחָק אֶת־עֵשָׂו, “*Isaac loved Esau*” (Gen 25:28). Frequently, *temporal emphasis* will be marked by a temporal particle or adverbial phrase placed before the verb, describing the circumstances under which the predication of the verb takes place: בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ, “*In the beginning*, God created heaven and earth” (Gen 1:1).

(b.2) The typical order of VSO will often be altered for several reasons. First, the subject can precede the verb to place *emphasis on the subject*: וַנִּחַ מִצָּא חַן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה, “*But Noah* found favor in the eyes of YHWH” (Gen 6:8); וַיְהוָה הֲטִיל רִיחַ־גְּדוּלָּה אֶל־הַיָּם, “*YHWH* hurled a great wind

upon the sea” (Jonah 1:4).²⁰ Second, the subject will often precede the verb when there is a *change of subject* in narrational flow:

וַיִּשָׁבַע לוֹ וַיִּמְכַר אֶת־בְּכֹרְתוֹ לַיַּעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹב נָתַן לְעֵשָׂו לֶחֶם
וּנְזִיד עֲדָשִׁים

“So he [Esau] swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. *Then Jacob* gave Esau bread and lentil stew” (Gen 25:33-4).²¹ Third, the object may also precede the verb to place *emphasis on the object* of the verb: אֶת־קִלְדָּה שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּנֵן, “*Your voice*, I heard in the garden” (Gen 3:10), אֶת־דַּמְכֶם לְנַפְשֵׁיכֶם אֶדְרֹשׁ, “*Your lifeblood*, I will require” (Gen 9:5). Fourth, care must be taken with *poetic texts* because word order in such texts is extremely variable: כִּי־הוּא עַל־יַמִּים יָסְדָהּ, “For he has founded it upon the seas” (Ps 24:2), עַמְדוֹתַי הֵיוּ רַגְלֵינוּ בְּשַׁעְרֵי־ךָ יְרוּשָׁלַם, “Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem!” (Ps 122:2). Fifth, in answers to a question, the essential part of the *reply* usually comes first: וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו אַיֵּה שָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה בָאֵהָל, “They said to him ‘Where is Sarah, your wife?’ He said, ‘*She is in the tent*’” (Gen 18:9),

וַיֹּאמֶר חֲזָאֵל מִדּוֹעַ אֲדֹנָי בָכָה וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי־יָדַעְתִּי אֵת
אֲשֶׁר־תַּעֲשֶׂה

“Hazel said ‘Why is my lord weeping?’ And he said, ‘*Because I know* what you will do’” (2 Kgs 8:12). Finally, *interrogative particles*, introducing both direct and indirect questions, will often come first in the verbal clause: מִי הַגִּיד לְךָ כִּי עִירָם אָתָּה, “*Who* told you that you were naked?” (Gen 3:11), עַל־מָה הַכִּיתָ אֶת־אֲתֹנֶךָ, “*Why* have you struck your donkey?” (Num 22:32).

²⁰ However, it is likely that only the redundant use of the pronoun when a noun is subject marks real emphasis (5.1.2.a2; and see Andersen 1970, 24).

²¹ Gesenius, however, notes that oftentimes when the subject precedes the verb, it is not because of a shift in the narrative but because it is a description of the state of the subject within the narrative. (Kautsch 1910, 455).

5.2 Subordinate Clauses

Subordinate clauses are dependent upon and modify an independent clause (or main clause) in a combination of two or more predications (see “complex” sentence at the beginning of this chapter). The following categories are helpful in considering the different types of subordination. Because BH makes no grammatical distinction between subordination and coordination, the reader should note carefully the variety of particles used to introduce them. However, it should also be kept in mind that most of these clauses can be introduced by a simple juxtaposition of clauses (asyndetically, or without conjunctions), or by the *waw* conjunctive.²²

In general, there are two types of subordinate clauses: *complement* clauses and *supplement* clauses. Complement clauses are subordinate, but are closely linked to the main clause, and in fact cannot be omitted without changing the meaning of the main clause. Supplement clauses, on the other hand, are subordinate clauses that serve an adverbial function and could be omitted without changing the meaning of the main clause.²³ The first of these categories, the *substantival clause*, is a complement clause, and the rest are supplement clauses.²⁴

5.2.1 Substantival Clause

BH can use either a nominal or verbal clause to serve as a noun substitute in nominative, genitive, or accusative

²² The ubiquitous *waw* in BH narrative joins clauses paratactically (in coordination) or hypotactically (in subordination). Niccacci contends that many BH clauses are identified as subordinate due to contemporary conventions in European languages, even though the Hebrew syntax does not require subordination (Niccacci 1990, 128).

²³ Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999, 64–65 and 367. A further distinction is that a speaker cannot perform a speech act in a supplement clause, but can in a complement clause.

²⁴ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 589–645; Meyer 1992, 432–60; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 632–46; Kautzsch 1910, 467–506; Williams 1976, 83–96; Chisholm 1998, 119–35; and for epigraphic Hebrew, see Gogel 1998, 277–91.

functions in relation to the main clause to which it is subordinate. As in our discussion of nouns (Chapter 2), the case names should not imply that BH marks these clauses morphologically as nominative, genitive, or accusative, only that the clauses function syntactically in these distinct roles.

(a) **Nominative** – substitutes for a noun in a nominative function, and is usually marked by the particles **כִּי** or **אֲשֶׁר**, or by an infinitive construct prefixed with the preposition **לְ**. Such a clause may serve as the subject of a main clause (see section 2.1.1): **וַיִּגַד לְמֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם כִּי בָרַח הָעָם**, “The king of Egypt was told that the people had fled” (Exod 14:5), or as a predicate nominative (section 2.1.2): **זֶה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תֹאכְלוּ**, “This is that which you shall not eat” (Deut 14:12), or as a predicate adjective (sections 2.5.2 and 5.1.1,b): **טוֹב אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תִדַּר**, “It is better that you do not vow” (Eccl 5:4). Such clauses also serve as the subject of interrogative sentences. The asyndetic (unmarked) nominative clause is rare.

(b) **Genitive** – substitutes for a noun in a genitive function (see section 2.2), following and modifying a noun or clause that precedes it. The relationship between the genitive clause and the element it modifies can be marked by a noun in construct followed by the genitive clause, or a simple juxtaposition of clauses: **כָּל־יְמֵי הַתְּהַלְכֵנוּ אִתָּם**, “all of the days we went about with them” (1 Sam 25:15). The genitive clause may follow the relative particle **אֲשֶׁר**, as in the following: **כָּל־יְמֵי אֲשֶׁר הִנָּנַע בּוֹ יִטְמָא טְמֵא הוּא**, “All the time that he has an infection, he is unclean” (Lev 13:46).

(c) **Accusative** – substitutes for a noun in an accusative function, indicating the object of a verb (section 2.3.1): **וַיִּרְא יְהוָה כִּי רַבָּה רָעַת הָאָדָם**, “YHWH saw that the evil of humanity was great” (Gen 6:5). An accusative acting as the object of a verb is frequently introduced by **כִּי** or

אֲשֶׁר:²⁵ לֹא־יִתְנַאֵל “But Daniel was resolved (literally: “placed upon his heart”) that he would not defile himself” (Dan 1:8). The particle כִּי is especially common with verbs of perception, or in marking direct narration: וַתִּרְאֵהָ הָאִשָּׁה כִּי טוֹב הָעֵץ, “The woman saw that the tree was good” (Gen 3:6), וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי אֶת־שִׁבְעֵי כִבְשֹׁתֵי הַתְּקַח, “He said ‘Take these seven ewe lambs’” (Gen 21:30). Such clauses may also serve adverbially to modify the action of a verb (section 2.3.2): וַיִּרְאֵהוּ שָׂאוּל אֲשֶׁר־הוּא מִשְׁכִּיל מְאֹד, “Saul saw that he was prospering greatly” (1 Sam 18:15). The accusative function is the most frequent of the substantival uses.

5.2.2 Conditional Clause

Conditional sentences (expressing the “if . . . then . . .” relationship) are introduced by subordinate *conditional clauses* detailing the condition(s), that is, the “protasis.” Several particles are used to introduce conditional clauses, including occasionally the simple *waw* conjunctive. At times the apodosis will be introduced by the simple *conditional waw* (section 4.3.3,f): וְרָאִיתִי מָה וְהִגַּדְתִּי לָךְ, “If I see anything, then I will tell you” (1 Sam 19:3), וְיֵשׁ יְהוָה עִמָּנוּ וְלָמָּה מִצָּאֵתָנוּ כָּל־זֹאת, “If YHWH is with us, why then has all this befallen us?” (Judg 6:13).

The two primary types of conditional clauses are the real and unreal. The former points to an action or situation that either has been fulfilled in the past or has the potential of being fulfilled, while the latter is an action or situation that cannot be fulfilled, or stands contrary to what has occurred in the past.

(a) *Real conditional clauses* are most often introduced by the particles כִּי, אִם, or הֲיֵן, “If you become like us . . .” (Gen 34:15), כִּי־תִמְצָא אִישׁ לֹא תִבְרַכְנוּ, “If you encounter a man, do not greet him” (2 Kgs 4:29),

²⁵ At times even with the DDO, 1 Kgs 18:13.

מה־נֹאכֵל בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית הֵן לֹא נִזְרַע “What shall we eat in the seventh year *if we cannot sow?*” (Lev 25:20).

On occasion, אֲשֶׁר can also function to indicate real conditional clauses:

אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם

“the blessing [will obtain], *if you listen to the commands of YHWH, your God*” (Deut 11:27).

A negative real conditional clause can be introduced by אִם־לֹא “*If you are not pleased* with her...” (Deut 21:14).

(b) *Unreal conditional clauses* are primarily marked by the particle לוֹ, and the related particle לוֹלֹא “*if we had not delayed*” (Gen 43:10,)

לוֹ הַחַיִּים אוֹתָם לֹא הִרְגֵנִי אֶתְכֶם

“*if you had let them live*, I would not kill you” (Judg 8:19). The particle כִּי can also function in this manner.

5.2.3 Final Clause

BH does not always make a sharp distinction between final and result clauses, which taken together may also be called “telic clauses.”²⁶ A primary means of introducing final clauses is with the infinitive construct prefixed with the לְ preposition: וַיַּעֲלֶה אַחָאָב לֶאֱכֹל וְלִשְׁתּוֹת “so Ahab *went up to eat and to drink*” (1 Kgs 18:42, a final clause), לְמָה לֹא־מָצַתִּי הֵן בְּעֵינַיִךְ לְשׁוֹם אֶת־מִשְׁאֵ כָּל־הָעַם הַזֶּה עָלַי, “why have I not found favor in your eyes, *that you laid the burden* of all this people on me?” (Num 11:11, a result clause).

(a) *Final clauses* – express the purpose or motivation for the action or situation of the main clause. They are often introduced by the particle אֲשֶׁר. The particles לְמַעַן or בְּעֵבֹר also function in this manner,

²⁶ Joñon and Muraoka 1993, 633–35; Williams 1967, 86.

often with the particle **אֲשֶׁר**, but not necessarily so: **וְאֲשַׁמְעֵם אֶת־דְּבָרַי אֲשֶׁר יִלְמְדוּן לִירְאָה אֹתִי**, “I will make them hear my words, *so that they may learn to fear me*” (Deut 4:10), **לְמַעַן יֵאֱמִינוּ כִּי־נִרְאָה אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה**, “*so that they might believe that YHWH appeared to you*” (Exod 4:5).

Purpose can also be expressed by an imperative with a simple prefixed *waw* conjunctive:

מָה אֶעֱשֶׂה לָכֶם וּבִמָּה אֶכַּפֵּר וּבָרְכוּ אֶת־נַחֲלַת יְהוָה

“What can I do for you, and how can I make atonement *that you will bless the inheritance of YHWH?*” (2 Sam 21:3).

(b) **Result clauses** – express the end result or consequence of the action or situation of the main clause. Like final clauses, result clauses are introduced by **אֲשֶׁר**. The particle **לְמַעַן**, governing a finite or infinitive verb, also functions to introduce result clauses:²⁷ **וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָהָם שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא יְהוָה יִרְאָה אֲשֶׁר יֵאָמֵר הַיּוֹם**, “Abraham called the name of that place ‘YHWH will provide,’ *so that it is said to this day . . .*” (Gen 22:14).

Often, if the main clause is a question, the result clause is marked by **כִּי**: **מָה אֲנֹשׁ כִּי־תִזְכְּרֵנִי**: “What is man *that you remember him?*” (Ps 8:5),

הֲאֵל־הִים אֲנִי לְהַמִּית וּלְהַחְיֹת כִּי־נָה שְׁלַח אֵלַי לְאַסֵּף אִישׁ מִצָּרְעָתוֹ

“Am I God, to kill and to make alive, *that this man is sending word to me to cure a man of his leprosy?*” (2 Kgs 5:7).

(c) **Negative final/result clauses** – serve as the negative of either the final or result clause, and are introduced with **אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ אִישׁ שֶׁפֶת רֵעֵהוּ**: **אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ אִישׁ שֶׁפֶת רֵעֵהוּ**: “*so that they will not understand each other*” (Gen 11:7, a negative final clause), **אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יֵאָמְרוּ זֹאת אֵיזֶבֶל**, “*so that no one will say* ‘This is Jezebel’” (2 Kgs 9:37, a negative result clause).

²⁷ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 638.

The particles לֹא, לְבַלְתִּי, and לְמַעַן function to mark a negative final clause: בְּלִבִּי צִפַּנְתִּי אֶמְרֹתֶיךָ לְמַעַן לֹא אֶחַטְאֶלְךָ, “I have hidden your word in my heart, so that I will not sin against you” (Ps 119:11, a negative final clause).

5.2.4 Temporal Clause

The subordinate *temporal clause* expresses the time frame of an action or situation, and how it relates to the idea of the main clause. A primary means of expressing temporal clauses is the infinitive with the prepositions בְּ, אַחֲרַי, אַחֲרֵי, or בְּמִן; but other prepositions are used as well. As demonstrated by the variety of temporal clauses that follow, so the infinitive can express a simultaneous, preceding, or succeeding action (see section 3.4.1,b): בֶּן-שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה דָּוִד בְּמָלְכוֹ, “David was about thirty years old when he began to reign” (2 Sam 5:4), בְּעֶרֶב כְּבוֹא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ, “in the evening, when the sun sets” (Deut 16:6), אַחֲרֵי הַכְּתוֹת אֶת סִיחֹן, “after he had defeated Sihon” (Deut 1:4), וַיִּמָּלֵא שִׁבְעַת יָמִים אַחֲרֵי הַכּוֹת־יְהוָה אֶת־הַיַּאֲר, “seven days passed after YHWH had struck the Nile” (Exod 7:25).

In addition to the infinitive, there are also other means by which a temporal clause is expressed.

(a) *Contemporary action or situation* – Introduced by כַּאֲשֶׁר or כִּי, a subordinate clause can describe an action or situation that is contemporary with the main clause: וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּלָה לְהַקְרִיב אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־הָעָם, “When he [Ehud] presented the tribute, he sent the people away” (Judg 3:18), וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר הַקְרִיב לְבוֹא מִצְרַיִם, “When he [Abraham] came near to Egypt” (Gen 12:11).

(b) *Later or succeeding situation* – Introduced by עַד, which is also used in the compound forms עַד אֲשֶׁר אִם, עַד אֲשֶׁר אִם, or עַד כִּי the *temporal clause* may express action that is *later* than the action of the main clause. The particle טָרַם, also found prefixed with the preposition

כִּי, also expresses a later situation. The idea of succeeding action is also expressed by the *wayyiqtol* pattern, as well as the conjunction לְפָנַי and the adverb בְּרֵאשֵׁיטָה. It should be noted that the translation of the various particles ranges from “until” and “before” to “after.” What is critical to note, however, is that the subordinate clause refers to a situation that comes temporally after the main clause, regardless of how the particles are translated in English: תָּמִים אָתָּה בְּדַרְכֶיךָ מִיּוֹם הַבְּרָאָה עַד-נִמְצָא עוֹלָתָה בָּךְ “You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, until iniquity was found in you” (Ezek 28:15), וְלֹא-הֵאֱמַנְתִּי לְדַבָּרִים עַד אֲשֶׁר-בָּאתִי וַתִּרְאֶינָה עֵינַי, “I did not believe things until I came and my eyes saw” (1Kgs 10:7), וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּלּוּ הַגְּמֵלִים לְשִׁתּוֹת וַיִּקַּח הָאִישׁ נָגֶם זָהָב, “When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold ring” (Gen 24:22), וַיִּלְנוּ שָׁם טָרַם יַעֲבֵרוּ, “They camped there before they crossed over” (Josh 3:1).

The construction אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים is often used in narrative to indicate a later situation:

אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה הָיָה דְבַר-יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם

After these things, the word of YHWH came to Abram” (Gen 15:1).

(c) *Preceding situation* – shows a situation that occurred before the action of the main clause and is introduced most often by אַחֲרַי/אַחֲרֵי, which can be used with אֲשֶׁר. Less frequently, the particle מֵאֲזַי is also used in this manner. Again, it is important to note that the subordinate clause refers to a situation coming before the main clause: בַּאַרְבַּע עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה אַחֲרֵי אֲשֶׁר הִכְתָּה הָעִיר “... in the fourteenth year after the city was captured” (Ezek 40:1), אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבַר הַזֶּה לֹא-שָׁב יִרְבַּעַם מִדְּרָכּוֹ הָרָעָה, “After this event, Jeroboam did not turn from his evil ways” (1 Kgs 13:33),

וַיְהִי בְּרֹד בָּרֹד וְאִשׁ מִתְּלַקַּחַת בְּתוֹךְ הַבְּרָד כִּבְד מֵאֲד אֲשֶׁר
לֹא-הָיָה כְּמֹהוּ בְּכָל-אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מֵאֲזַי הָיְתָה לְגוֹי

“So there was hail and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail, very severe, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt *since it became a nation*” (Exod 9:24).

Often, the *waw* conjunctive plus subject (noun or pronoun) plus perfect denotes present perfect or pluperfect in English (only context dictates which is intended):²⁸ וַיָּשָׁב אַהֲרֹן אֶל־מֹשֶׁה אֶל־פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְהַמִּגַּפָּה נִעְצְרָה, “Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the tent of meeting; now the plague *had been checked*” (Num 17:15 [Eng. 16:50]), הַבֶּקֶר הָיָה וְרוּחַ הַקֶּדִים נָשָׂא אֶת־הָאֲרָבָה, “When it was morning, the east wind *had (already) brought* the locusts” (Exod 10:13).

5.2.5 Causal Clause

The subordinate *causal* clause shows the reason or basis for the action or situation of the main clause. BH has a variety of causal clauses that are introduced by a simple *waw* conjunctive,²⁹ an infinitive clause (typically an infinitive construct with the לְ preposition), a verbal clause (with perfect plus *waw* consecutive), or the particles כִּי and אֲשֶׁר, although Joüon notes that the latter particle often shows weak causation.³⁰ Both כִּי and אֲשֶׁר can also be used in conjunction with יַעַן, which can be used alone as well. The preposition עַל can also be used to denote a causal clause, either alone or in conjunction with כִּי or אֲשֶׁר. The preposition is also used in the formulaic statement עַל־דָּבָר אֲשֶׁר.³¹ There are also many less frequent combinations of particles and prepositions that are used to introduce causal clauses.

²⁸ So *waw* + S(subject) + perfect = anterior action or situation. Zevit has demonstrated the clarity with which authors of BH could thus mark anterior action, that is, action that began prior to the action of the main clause (Zevit 1998, 15–37, and see Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 624).

²⁹ Kautzsch 1910, 492.

³⁰ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 638.

³¹ Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 640.

Examples: כִּי עָשִׂיתָ זֹאת אָרוּר אַתָּה, “*Because* you did this, you are cursed” (Gen 3:14), וַיֵּן אֲמַרְכֶם אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה, “*because* you speak this word” (Jer 23:38),

וְגַר לֹא תִלְחֹץ וְאַתֶּם יֹדְעִים אֶת־נַפְשׁ הַגֵּר

“You shall not oppress a stranger, *since* you know the life of a stranger” (Exod 23:9).

(a) Joüon notes that the particle עֲקָב, which is sometimes with אֲשֶׁר, has a special causal nuance, expressing “in recompense for the fact” of some action, or in a negative manner, “in punishment for the fact”:³² וְהִתְבָּרְכוּ בְּזֶרְעֶךָ כֹּל גּוֹי הָאָרֶץ עֲקָב אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹלִי, “By your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed, *because* you obeyed my voice” (Gen 22:18), כִּן תֵּאבְדוּן עֲקָב לֹא תִשְׁמַעוּן בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, “... so you shall perish *because* you have not listened to the voice of YHWH your God” (Deut 8:20).

(b) The preposition מִן can also function to indicate cause: וְנַעֲלִינוּ בָּלֵו מְרַב הַדֶּרֶךְ מְאֹד, “Our sandals are worn out *because* of our long journey” (Josh 9:13), לֹא יָכַל עוֹד לְהַשִּׁיב אֶת־אֲבְנֵר דָּבָר מִיִּרְאַתוֹ אֹתוֹ, “He could no longer speak a word to Abner, *because* he was afraid of him” (2 Sam 3:11).

5.2.6 Comparative Clause

(a) A subordinate clause will often function to make a comparison with the action or situation of the main clause. The situation that is the standard of comparison is usually stated in the main clause, or apodosis. The compared situation is typically denoted by the subordinate clause, the protasis. The most common construction for the comparative clauses is כַּאֲשֶׁר plus protasis, followed by כִּן plus apodosis: וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר פָּתַרְנוּ לָנוּ כִּן הָיָה, “And *just as* he interpreted for us,

³² Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 639.

so it happened” (Gen 41:13). The reverse order, where the apodosis comes first, also occurs: So do, just as you have spoken” (Gen 18:5).

(b) The comparative relationship between clauses is also denoted by the particles כִּי and כֵּן, where the former governs the main clause, typically a verbal or infinitival clause,³³ and the latter governs the subordinate clause:

כְּעֵינֵי עֲבָדִים אֶל־יָד אֲדוֹנֵיהֶם כְּעֵינֵי שִׁפְחָה אֶל־יָד גְּבֵרָתָהּ
כֵּן עֵינֵינוּ אֶל־יְהוָה

“Just as the eyes of the servants [look] to the hand of their masters; just as the eyes of the maidservant [look] to the hand of her mistress; so our eyes [look] to YHWH” (Ps 123:2).

The subordinate clause of the comparative relationship can also be introduced by the preposition כִּי: “for you are like Pharaoh” (Gen 44:18), “As you are, so is the alien before YHWH” (Num 15:15).

5.2.7 Exeptive Clause

This subordinate clause functions to present an exception to the idea, action, or situation that is presented in the main clause. The particle אִם, used either alone or with the particles בְּלֹתִי (which also functions alone) or כִּי and אִפְסֵס כִּי, as well as אִךְ and רַק, introduce these clauses (see sections 4.2.2 on אִךְ, 4.2.9 on כִּי, 4.2.15 on רַק): “I will not release you, unless you bless me!” (Gen 32:27 [Eng 32:26]),

גַּם־יְהוָה הֶעֱבִיר חֲטָאתֶךָ לֹא תִמּוּת אִפְסֵס כִּי־נֹאֲמַן נֹאצָּת
אֶת־אִיבֵי יְהוָה בְּדָבַר הַזֶּה

³³ Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 641.

“YHWH has taken away your sin; you will not die. However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of YHWH to blaspheme . . .” (2 Sam 12:13–14).

5.2.8 Restrictive Clause

This clause places a limitation on the idea or action of the main clause. These clauses are most often introduced by the particles **כִּי**, **אֲפֹס**, **אֲדָ**, or **רַק** (see section 4.2.2,a on **אֲדָ**, 4.2.15,a on **רַק**):

וְהַשְׁמַדְתִּי אֶתְהָ מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה אֲפֹס כִּי לֹא הִשְׁמִיד אֲשָׁמִיד
אֶת־בַּיִת יַעֲקֹב

“I will destroy it from the face of the earth, but I will not completely destroy the house of Jacob” (Amos 9:8), **לֶחֱמֹנֵנוּ נֹאכַל וְשִׁמְלֹתֵנוּ נִלְבָּשׁ רַק יִקְרָא שְׁמֹךְ עָלֵינוּ**, “We will eat our own bread, and wear our own clothes; only let us be called by your name (Isa 4:1), **הֲלֹךְ אֵלֶיךָ עִמָּךְ אֲפֹס כִּי לֹא תִהְיֶה תִפְאָרְתְּךָ**, “I will surely go with you; nevertheless, the honor shall not be yours” (Judg 4:9).

5.2.9 Intensive Clause

This subordinate clause expands and adds to the idea of the main clause. The primary markers of these clauses are **גַּם** and **אֲף** (see sections 4.2.4,b on **אֲף**, 4.2.5,b on **גַּם**): **וַתִּקַּח מִפְּרִיָו וַתֹּאכַל וַתִּתֵּן גַּם־לְאִשָּׁה עִמָּהּ וַיֹּאכַל**: “She took from its fruit and ate, and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate” (Gen 3:6); **אֲף־אֲנִי בַחֲלוֹמֵי**, “I also saw in my dream” (Gen 40:16).

5.2.10 Adversative Clause

This subordinate clause presents an antithesis to the idea of the main clause. The relationship between those clauses can be marked by **לֹא**, **כִּי** (which is

also used with אִם), or the particles אֵלֶם and אֲבָל: וְגַם־הוּא יִהְיֶה־לְעָם וְגַם־הוּא יִגְדֹל וְאִלֶּם אֲחִיו־הַקָּטָן יִגְדֹל מִמֶּנּוּ, “He also will become a people, and he, too, will be great. But, his younger brother shall be greater than he” (Gen 48:19), וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא כִי אֲנִי שֶׁר־צָבָא־יְהוָה עִתָּה בָאתִי Rather, I come now as the captain of the army of YHWH” (Josh 5:14).

The *waw* conjunction can also perform this function: וְלֹא־יִקְרָא עוֹד אֶת־שְׁמֹךְ אַבְרָם וְהָיָה שְׁמֹךְ אַבְרָהָם, “No longer will your name be Abram, but it will be Abraham” (Gen 17:5), אַל־תִּלְךָ הַלַּיְלָה בְּעַרְבוֹת הַמִּדְבָּר וְגַם עֲבוֹר תַּעֲבוֹר, “Do not spend the night at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means, cross over” (2 Sam 17:16).

5.2.11 Circumstantial Clause

This subordinate clause describes the circumstances under which the action or situation of the main clause takes place. Frequently, the simple conjunction ׀ functions to introduce a circumstantial clause (see section 4.3.3,e): מִגֹּדֵל וְרֵאשׁוֹ בַשָּׁמַיִם, “a tower with its top in the sky” (Gen 11:4), כֹּה הִרְאֵנִי וְהִנֵּה אֲדֹנָי נֹצֵב עַל־חֹמַת אֲנָף וּבִידּוֹ אֲנָף, “Thus he showed me – the lord was standing on a vertical wall with a plumb line in his hand” (Amos 7:7).

Quite often, the circumstantial clause is juxtaposed to the main clause with no connecting particle: וַיִּטֵּא אֶהְלֵה בֵּית־אֵל מִזֵּם, “He pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west” (Gen 12:8), וַיִּתְקַעֵם בְּלֵב אַבְשָׁלוֹם עוֹדְנֵו חַי, “and he thrust them through Absalom’s heart while he was still alive” (2 Sam 18:14).

As illustrated, the predicate of a circumstantial clause that is concomitant with the situation of the main clause is expressed by nouns, adjectives, or prepositional phrases. The participle serves this same function: וַיָּבֵא אֱלִישָׁע דְמוֹשֶׁק וּבֶן־הַדָּד מִלֶּךְ־אָרָם חֲלָה, “Elisha

came to Damascus while Ben-Hadad, King of Aram was ill (2 Kgs 8:7),

וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה בְּאֵלֵי מַמְרֵא וְהוּא יָשָׁב פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל כְּחֹם הַיּוֹם

“Now YHWH appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day” (Gen 18:1).

Finite verbal forms are used to express circumstances that are either in the past or the future.³⁴ A perfect verb as the predicate of the circumstantial clause expresses anterior action (see section 3.5.4.c): אַל־תִּתְאַחֲרוּ אֵתִי וַיְהִי הַצְּלִיחַ דְּרַכִּי, “Do not delay me, since YHWH has prospered my way” (Gen 24:56), וַיִּשְׁבוּ אֶת־הַנְּשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־בָּהּ מִקְטָן וְעַד־גָּדוֹל לֹא הָמִיתוּ אִישׁ, “They took captive the women who were in [the city], both small and great, without killing anyone” (1 Sam 30:2).

An imperfect verb as the predicate expresses future circumstances:

הַמְכַסֶּה אֲנִי מֵאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה וְאַבְרָהָם הִיוּ יְהִיָּה לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וְעָצוּם

“Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, since he will become a great and mighty nation?” (Gen 18:17–18), אֶעֱבְרָה בְּאַרְצְךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ אֲלֶךְ לֹא אֶסּוּר יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאל, “Let me pass through your land; I will travel only on the highway; I will not turn to the right or to the left” (Deut 2:27).

5.2.12 Concessive Clause

This subordinate clause denotes “causal contrast”;³⁵ that is, it presents an action or situation that would

³⁴ Williams 1976, 83. Gesenius further notes that circumstantial clauses employing a verb particularize the action of the main clause, or provide a reason for the action of the main clause (Kautzsch 1910, 490).

³⁵ Joñon and Muraoka 1993, 641.

seemingly lead to, or be expected to cause, the action or situation of the main clause, but, in fact, does not. The clause can be asyndetic, that is, without any markers, by juxtaposition, or it can take a simple *waw* conjunctive: הִנֵּה־נָא הוֹאֲלֹתִי לַדְּבָר אֶל־אֲדֹנָי וְאֲנֹכִי עֹפֵר וְאֶפֶר, “Certainly, now, I have ventured to speak to the lord, although I am dust and ashes” (Gen 18:27). The particles כִּי, לְ, or כִּי גַם also express the idea of “although,” while the particles אֲמַ and כִּי express the notion of “even though” (see sections 4.3.2,b and 4.3.4,h): גַּם כִּי־תִרְבוּ תַפְלָה אֲנִינִי שִׁמְעֵ: “Even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen” (Isa 1:15), וְלֹא־נָחַם אֱלֹהִים דְּרָךְ אֲרָץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים כִּי קָרוֹב הוּא, “God did not lead them by the way of the Philistines, even though it was near” (Exod 13:17), כִּי אִם־תִּכְבְּסִי בְּנֹתָר וְתִרְבִּי־לָךְ בְּרִית נִכְתָּם עֹנֶךָ לְפָנַי, “Although you wash yourselves with lye and use much soap, the stain of your iniquity is before me” (Jer 2:22).

5.2.13 Relative Clause

This clause stands subordinate to a main clause and attributes a quality, state, or verbal idea to the main clause. This group can be further divided into *limiting* and *nonlimiting* relative clauses.³⁶ A *limiting* relative clause functions to make a distinction between more than one member of a group or class: הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מֵעַל לַרְקִיעַ, “The waters which were above the firmament” (Gen 1:7). A *nonlimiting* relative clause simply marks a general attribute of the antecedent without setting it off against other members of its “class”:³⁷ וְעַתָּה אָרוּר אֶתָּה מִן־הָאֲרָמָה אֲשֶׁר פָּצַתָּה אֶת־פִּיהָ,

³⁶ Gesenius prefers the categories “complete” and “incomplete” relative clauses, the former used for “the nearer definition of a noun,” and the latter, relative clauses that are not dependent on a noun (Kautzsch 1910, 485).

³⁷ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 592.

“And now, you are cursed from the ground which has opened its mouth” (Gen 4:11). (a) The

most frequent indicator of the relative clause is the particle אֲשֶׁר. In poetry, or in later texts, the prefix -שׁ identifies the relative clause. Within more archaic poetry, the particles וּ, וֹ, or וְהַ are used. Occasionally, the attributive use of the participle can also mark a relative clause. Examples: אָתָּה וְכָל־הָעָם הַזֶּה אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹתֵן לָהֶם, “You and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them” (Josh 1:2), הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר מָלַךְ דָּוִד עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל, “The days that David reigned over Israel” (1 Kgs 2:11), בְּרֶשֶׁת־וֵו טָמְנוּ, “In the net in which they hid” (Ps 9:16), מִה־שֶׁהָיְתָה הוּא שֶׁיִּהְיֶה, “That which has been done is that which will be” (Eccl 1:9). The relative clause can also be asyndetic: בְּאָרֶץ לֹא לָהֶם, “In a land that is not theirs” (Gen 15:13).

(b) With certain relative clauses, in particular those pointing to a geographical location, a resumptive pronoun, referring to the antecedent of the relative pronoun, occurs, but is best left untranslated:³⁸ הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אָתָּה עוֹמֵד עָלָיו אֲדַמְתָּ־קֹדֶשׁ הוּא “The place which you are standing upon is holy ground [literally: The place which you are standing upon it, it is holy ground]” (Exod 3:5), גּוֹי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תִשְׁמַע לְשׁוֹנוֹ, “A nation whose language you will not understand [literally: a nation, whose its language you will not understand]” (Deut 28:49), וְיִוָּדַע הַנְּבִיא אֲשֶׁר־שָׁלַח יְהוָה בְּאַמְתּוֹ, “The prophet will be known as the prophet whom YHWH has truly sent [literally: The prophet will be known as the prophet whom YHWH has truly sent him]” (Jer 28:9).

(c) *Paronomasia* – The repetition of a word both in the main clause and the relative clause can be used to express

³⁸ Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 333–35; Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 595–600; Kautzsch 1910, 444–46.

a sense of indeterminateness:³⁹ הוֹלֵךְ עַל אֲשֶׁר-אֲנִי הוֹלֵךְ, “. . . while I go wherever I will go” (2 Sam 15:20), וַיֵּתְהַלְכוּ בְּאֲשֶׁר יִתְהַלְכוּ, “They went wherever they could go” (1 Sam 23:13), וַיְהִי כִּי אֶחָד מֵעַמְּךָ יֵצֵא אֶת-אֶרְצְךָ, “I will be gracious to whomever I will [literally: to whom I will be gracious] and I will show compassion on whomever I will [literally: to whom I will show compassion]” (Exod 33:19).

5.2.14 Disjunctive Clause

This subordinate clause represents an idea that is alternative to, or stands apart from, the idea of the main clause. Typically, the conjunction אוֹ denotes the idea of “or”: הִגִּידוּ לִי וְאֶפְנֶה עַל-יְמִינִי אוֹ עַל-שְׂמֹאלִי, “Let me know, that I may turn to the right or to the left” (Gen 24:49). The idea of “or” can also be expressed by the *waw* conjunctive: וְלֹא אוֹשִׁיעֵם בְּקִשְׁתׁ וּבַחֶרֶב וּבַמִּלְחָמָה בְּסוּסִים וּבַפָּרָשִׁים, “I will not save them by bow or by sword or by war or by horses or by horsemen” (Hos 1:7). The notion of “either . . . or” or “whether . . . or” can be expressed by consecutive *waw* conjunctions: וְגִנֵּב אִישׁ וּמָכְרוֹ וְנִמְצָא בְיָדוֹ מוֹת יוֹמָת, “He who kidnaps a man, whether he sells him or he is found in his possession . . .” (Exod 21:16). The notion of “whether . . . or” is also expressed by consecutive אִם particles:

אִם-בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה שָׁם אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ אִם-לְמוֹת
אִם-לְחַיִּים כִּי-שָׁם יִהְיֶה עַבְדְּךָ

“Wherever my lord the king may be, whether for death or for life, there your servant will be” (2 Sam 15:21).

5.3 Additional Sentence Types

At the beginning of this chapter, we provided working definitions for “simple,” “compound,” and “complex” sentences, as

³⁹ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 599.

well as the slippery term “sentence” itself. In what follows, we offer an overview of other important sentence types in BH.

5.3.1 Interrogative Sentences

An interrogative clause, in its most basic sense, poses a direct question, which can be pointed to the reader or confined within the narrative. This question can be genuine, or it can be rhetorical, in which case it is not expected to be answered. Interrogative sentences are often distinguished only by intonation, as they are not marked with any morphological tags: וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלֹמֹ בְּוֹאֶיךָ, “And [Samuel] said, ‘Do you come peacefully?’” (1 Sam 16:4). However, the following are particles for marking interrogatives.

(a) Interrogative clauses may be marked by the particle הֲ to indicate direct questions: וְאַל־תִּירָאוּ כִּי הִתַּחַת אֲלֵהִים אָנֹכִי, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?” (Gen 50:19), הֲשָׁלוֹם לְנֶעֱר לְאַבְשָׁלוֹם, “Is it well with the young man Absalom?” (2 Sam 18:32).

(b) In the case of a disjunctive question, “X or Y?” the particle אִם will introduce the second option: הֲלָנֹכְנוּ אִתָּהּ אִם־לְצָרֵינוּ, “Are you with us or with our enemies?” (Josh 5:13).

(c) In addition to the particle הֲ, there is a group of interrogative pronouns that introduce specific types of questions, including מִי, מַה, מַאי, מַאֵן, אַי, אַיֵּךְ, etc.:

מַה חָרִי הָאֵף הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה

“Why this great anger?” (Deut 29:23 [Eng. 29:24]), מִי הַגִּיד לְךָ כִּי עִירָם אֶתָּה, “Who told you that you were naked?” (Gen 3:11), אַיֵּךְ תֹּאמַר אֶהְבֵּתִיךָ, “How can you say ‘I love you?’” (Judg 16:15), אַי הַבֵּל אַחִיךָ, “Where is Abel, your brother?” (Gen 4:9).

(d) The particle אַפּוֹא often follows an interrogative to give an additional emphasis to the question: מִי־אַפּוֹא הוּא הַצֹּדֶד־צִיד, “Who was it, then, who hunted game?” (Gen 27:33).

These interrogative markers can also mark *exclamatory clauses*: הַנִּגְלָה נִגְלָתִי אֶל־בֵּית אָבִיךָ, “I certainly revealed myself to the house of your fathers” (1 Sam 2:27), אֵיךְ נָפְלוּ גִבּוֹרִים בְּתוֹךְ הַמִּלְחָמָה, “How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle!” (2 Sam 1:25), מַה־פִּיבּוֹ אֹהֲלֶיךָ יַעֲקֹב, “How beautiful are your tents, O Jacob!” (Num 24:5). Additionally, a *substantive* can function as an exclamation. This use is not marked by morphology, and so is context sensitive: וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־אָבִיו רֹאשִׁי רֹאשִׁי, “He said to his father, ‘My head! My head!’” (2 Kgs 4:19).

Interrogative clauses can also function to denote *indirect questions*, which report or refer to the question of another speaker, although that first question need not be explicitly stated. Because indirect questions logically refer to another’s speech, they are not meant to be answered. These clauses are introduced in the same manner as direct questions: לֹא יָדַעְתִּי מֵאֵין הֵמָּה, “I do not know where they are from” (Josh 2:4), לֹא יָדַעְנוּ מִי־שָׁם כִּסְפֵנוּ בְּאִמְתָּחַתֵּינוּ, “we do not know who put our money in our sacks” (Gen 43:22), שְׂאֵל מָה אֶעֱשֶׂה־לְךָ, “Ask what I should do for you” (2 Kgs 2:9).

5.3.2 Oath Sentences

A maledictory oath, or curse, is often introduced by the formulaic statement – “May God add to this and more. . . .” The content of the oath itself, the apodosis, is marked by ׀א if the oath statement is negative, expressing an action that one will not take, whereas אם לא and כִּי function to introduce positive statements, actions that one will take.

Examples:

כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה לִי וְכֹה יִסְיַף כִּי הַמּוֹת יִפְרִיד בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ

“Thus may YHWH do to me and more if anything but death part you and me [that is, Nothing but death will part you and me.]” (Ruth 1:17),

כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה־לִּי אֱלֹהִים וְכֹה יִסִּיף כִּי אִם־לִפְנֵי בּוֹא־הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ
אֲטַעֵם־לֶחֶם אוֹ כֹּל־מֵאוֹמֶה

“Thus may God do to me and more also if I taste bread or anything else before the sun goes down [that is, I will not taste bread or anything else . . .]” (2 Sam 3:35).

The protasis of an oath is also introduced by several constructions involving the adjective הַי or הֵי and either the self (אֲנִי/אֲנִי) or an authority figure, such as Pharaoh, but more frequently, the divine (יְהוָה or אֱלֹהִים). The apodoses of these oaths are introduced by the same particles as already noted – אִם for negative statements and אִם לֹא or כִּי for positive statements: הַי־יְהוָה כִּי בְנִי־מֹות אֲתָם, “As YHWH lives, all of you must surely die!” (1 Sam 26:16), הַי פְּרַעֲהַ כִּי מְרַגְלִים אֲתָם, “By the life of Pharaoh, you are surely spies!” (Gen 42:16).

5.3.3 Wish Sentences

Desiderative clauses express a strong wish or desire. Often, the expression of a wish can take on the character of a question or exclamation.

(a) The most common means of expressing a desire in BH is through the use of the volitional verbs (see section 3.3): הִיְי אֹר, “Let there be light” (Gen 1:3), הִפְרֵד נָא מֵעָלַי, “Please separate from me” (Gen 13:9). Occasionally, an optative clause introduced by a finite verb is marked with לוֹ or אִם: וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־הַאֱלֹהִים לֹא יִשְׁמַעֲלֵי יְחִיָּה לְפָנַיִךְ אִם: “Abraham said to God, ‘O that Ishmael might live before you!’” (Gen 17:18), לֹא־מָתָנוּ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, “Would that we died in the land of Egypt!” (Num 14:2).

(b) The expression of a wish can often resemble a question. Thus, the interrogative particles, in particular *מִי*, can be used to introduce a strong wish or desire: *מִי־יִשְׁמְנֵי שִׁפְט בְּאֶרֶץ*, “*O that someone would appoint me judge in the land*” (2 Sam 15:4). The construction *יִתֵּן מִי* is a notable peculiarity in BH expressing an optative sense, sometimes with the sense of “God grant!”:⁴⁰ *יִתֵּן אֶת־הָעַם הַזֶּה בְּיַד־י* “*Would that this people were under my authority!*” (Judg 9:29), *וּמִי יִתֵּן כָּל־עַם יְהוָה נְבִיאִים*, “*Would that all YHWH’s people were prophets!*” (Num 11:29).

(c) The expression of a wish can also be constructed with a participle or a prepositional phrase acting as the predicate in the clause: *אֲרִי־יָד אָרוּר וּמְבָרֵךְ־יָד בְּרוּךְ*, “*Cursed be those who curse you and blessed be those who bless you*” (Gen 27:29), *שְׁלוֹם לָכֶם*, “*Peace to you*” or “*May you have peace*” (Gen 43:23).

(d) Similar to the statements of oath are *asseverative clauses*, which also express a strong assertion. This statement may be an oath, in which case the asseverative clause functions as an elliptical oath statement. However, the clause can simply be a reinforcement or affirmation of a fact. In addition to the particles already noted, *אָבֵל*, *אֲמֵנָה*, *אֲמֵן*, *אָךְ*, *רַק*, *אָכֵן*, *וְרַק*, and *הִנֵּה* are all used to mark affirmation: *רַק אֵין־יִרְאֵת אֱלֹהִים בְּמָקוֹם הַזֶּה*, “*Surely there is no fear of God in this place*” (Gen 20:11), *אָבֵל אֲשָׁמִים אֲנַחְנוּ עַל־אָחֵינוּ*, “*Surely we are guilty concerning our brother*” (Gen 42:21), *הִנֵּה אֲשָׁמִים אֲנַחְנוּ עַל־אָחֵינוּ*, “*Surely YHWH is in this place*” (Gen 28:16), *הַגֵּיהַ מִשְׁמֵנֵי הָאֶרֶץ יִהְיֶה מוֹשָׁבֶד*, “*Your dwelling will certainly be away from the fertility of the land*” (Gen 27:39).

⁴⁰ Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 616.

5.3.4 Existential Sentences

There are two main ways in which the existence of a thing or person is expressed in BH.

(a) For *past or future time*, a form of the verb הָיָה expresses existence: הַנָּחֵשׁ הָיָה עָרוּם מִכָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה, “The serpent was more crafty than any other animal of the field” (Gen 3:1), אִישׁ הָיָה בְּאֶרֶץ-עוּז, “There was a man in the land of Uz” (Job 1:1), כֹּה יִהְיֶה נְרַעְךָ, “So shall your descendants be” (Gen 15:5).

(b) For *present time*, the verb הָיָה is not used. Rather, the particle of existence יֵשׁ is used (see section 4.4.2). This particle is not negated, but rather, the absence of something in present time is expressed by the particle אֵין (section 4.4.1): אַכֵּן יֵשׁ יְהוָה בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה, “Surely, YHWH is in this place” (Gen 28:16), אָדָם אֵין לְעַבֵּד אֶת-הָאָדָמָה, “There was no human to cultivate the ground” (Gen 2:5).

5.3.5 Negative Sentences

(a) Typically, verbal clauses are negated by לֹא, although לֹא is used with the imperfect as a functional equivalent to a negated imperative or the other volitional verbs (see sections 4.2.3, 4.2.11): לְאָדָם לֹא-מָצָא עֹזֵר כְּנִגְדּוֹ, “for Adam, there was not found a suitable helper” (Gen 2:20), אַל-תִּירָא מִפְּנֵיהֶם, “Do not be afraid of them” (Josh 11:6).

(b) Nominal clauses are typically negated by אֵין, although לֹא can also negate nominal clauses: אֵין לָהּ יֶלֶד וְלֹד, “She had no child” (Gen 11:30), לֹא-טוֹב הָיִוֶת הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ, “It is not good for the man to be alone” (Gen 2:18).

(c) Specifically for negation of infinitives construct, לְבַלְתִּי is used: לְבַלְתִּי סוּר-מִמֶּנּוּ יָמִין וּשְׂמָאוֹל, “So that you might not turn from it to the right or to the left” (Josh 23:6), הִשָּׁמֵר לְךָ פָּן-תִּשְׁכַּח אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְבַלְתִּי שְׂמֹר מִצְוֹתָיו, “Take

care that you do not forget YHWH your God *by not keeping* his commandments” (Deut 8:11).

5.3.6 Elliptical Clauses and Sentences

At times, BH omits certain parts of speech from clauses. Close attention to context generally reveals the omitted element(s), and ambiguity is seldom a result.

(a) Substantives are often omitted in *comparisons*, particularly in the clause presenting the compared situation: מְשֹׁהָה רַגְלֵי כַּאֲלֹת (2 Sam 22:34 *Qere*), “He makes my feet like *hinds [feet]*” (2 Sam 22:34 *Qere*), וַתְּרַם כַּרְאִים קַרְנֵי, “You have exalted my horn like *[that of] the wild ox*” (Ps 92:11).

(b) Pronouns are often omitted when their antecedents are clear from the context, primarily in two situations: as the *subject of nonfinite verbs*: בַּהֲפֹךְ אֶת־הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר־יָשַׁב בָּהֶן לוֹט, “*When he overthrew* the cities in which Lot lived” (Gen 19:29), עֶמֶד עַל־הַנְּמָלִים עַל־הָעַיִן, “*He was standing* by the camels at the well” (Gen 24:30); and when functioning as the *object of the verb*: וַיָּבֵא אֶל־הָאָדָם, “He brought *them* to the man” (Gen 2:19).

(c) Certain expressions of quantitative measure, such as “day,” “month,” or “year” are omitted after numerals: אַךְ בְּעָשׂוֹר לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי, “On exactly the *tenth [day]* of the seventh month” (Lev 23:27),

וְלֹא אֲנֹכִי שֶׁקֶל עַל־כֶּפִי אֶלֶף כֶּסֶף

“Even if I should receive a *thousand [pieces]* of silver” (2 Sam 18:12 *Qere*).

(d) Ellipsis also occurs frequently with negatives: אֵל בְּנֹתַי, “*No*, my daughters (Ruth 1:13), הֲיֵשׁ יְהוָה בְּקִרְבָּנוּ אִם־אֵין, “Is YHWH in our midst or *not [in our midst]?*” (Exod 17:7).

APPENDIX I: *Stem Chart*

| | | <u>Horizontal Axis</u> – “Type” | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| | | Simple | Factitive-Causative | Causative |
| <u>Vertical Axis</u> – “Voice” | Active | קָל QAL (G) | פָּעַל PIEL (D) | הִפְעִיל HIPHIL (H) |
| | Passive | נִפְעַל NIPHAL (N) | פָּעַל PUAL (Dp) | הִפְעִיל HOPHAL (Hp) |
| | Reflexive | נִפְעַל NIPHAL (N) | הִתְפַּעֵל HITHPAEL (HtD) | ∅ |

Sources: Joüon and Muraoka 1993, 124; Greenberg 1965, 42; Goshen-Gottstein 1969, 70–91, esp. 74–75; Harper 1888, 71; and Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 353–54.

APPENDIX II: *Expanded Stem Chart*

| <u>Axis of Causation</u> – Voice of the Undersubject | | | | |
|---|---------|--|---|---|
| | | No Causation | Brings about a <i>State</i> | Causes an <i>Action</i> |
| | | No Generated Predication | Generates a Nominal Predication | Generates Verbal Predication |
| | | No Undersubject | Patency Nuance | Agency Nuance |
| <u>Axis of Voice</u> – Voice of the Primary Subject | Active | QAL Stative | PIEL Factitive 1 makes 2 <i>be</i> x Outcome describable by <i>adjectival</i> clause | HIPHIL 2 Place Ingressive 1 makes 2 <i>become</i> x 1 Place Internal 1 makes <i>self</i> do/become x |
| | | Fientive ➤ Intransitive ➤ Transitive | Resultative 1 makes 2 <i>be</i> x-ed Outcome describable by <i>participle</i> clause | 2 Place Causative 1 makes 2 <i>do</i> x 3 Place Causative 1 makes 2 <i>do</i> x to 3 |
| | Passive | (Qal Passive) NIPHAL | PUAL Passive of Piel | HOPHAL Passive of Hiphil |
| | Middle | NIPHAL Middle Adjectival Reflexive-Reciprocal | HITHPAEL Reflexive-Reciprocal of Piel Also later Passive | HISHTAPHEL only in הִשְׁתַּפְּחֵל |

Source: Based on Waltke and O'Connor 1990 (343–61), and with the help of Lawson G. Stone.

Glossary

- Ablative** Expresses a relationship of separation, or movement away from a substantive. 4.1.10; 4.1.13; 4.1.14
- Absolute Noun** The basic, lexical form of a noun in Hebrew; can function as a nominative, dative, or accusative.
- Accompaniment** Expresses addition to a noun, or to a verbal action or situation. 4.1.4; 4.1.5; 4.1.16; 4.1.17
- Accusative** The noun case that marks the direct object, the recipient of action, of a verb. Example: “I hit *the ball*.” 2.3
- Active Voice** Construction of a verbal clause in which the subject performs an action. Example: “He cut the grass.” See Passive Voice. 3.1.1.
- Addition** See Accompaniment. 4.1.2; 4.1.16; 4.2.4; 4.2.5
- Advantage** Specifically here, an action or situation that is meant for the benefit of another. 4.1.2; 4.1.7; 4.1.10
- Adverb** A word that modifies a verb or adjective, but also other adverbs (item adverbs) and, in many cases, entire clauses (clausal adverbs); typically expresses how an action or situation takes place. 4.2
- Adversative** Expresses opposition or antithesis. 4.1.5; 4.1.16; 4.3.3; 4.3.3; 4.5.2
- Agency Nuance** With Hiphil or Hophal causatives, indicates that the secondary subject takes action toward a third object; the secondary subject is effected to take action toward a third object. See Patency Nuance. 3.1; 3.1.3; 3.1.6
- Agent** The one who performs the action of a verb. 3.1.2; 3.5.4; 4.1.10; 4.1.13
- Agreement** Expresses similarity. 4.1.9
- Alternative** Expresses a choice between two or more options. 4.3.1; 4.3.2; 4.3.3
- Anaphoric** A syntactical element, typically a pronoun, used to refer to something or someone that has been mentioned earlier in the text.

Anarthous See Indefinite.

Aorist Greek verbal tense, generally referring to past time, that focuses on the completed nature of a verb, rather than its duration.
3.2.1

Apodosis The main clause of a conditional statement; the “then” statement. 3.5.2; 4.2.1; 4.2.10; 4.3.3; 4.3.4; 5.2.6; 5.3.2

Apposition Construction in which two nouns are juxtaposed, refer to the same element, and have the same grammatical function; the second noun (the apposition) typically modifies the first noun (the leadword).
2.4

Aspect From the German *Aspekt*; the manner in which the action or situation of a verb relates to time, in terms of completeness or lack of, in Hebrew and other Semitic languages. 3.2

Assertive Expresses a notion of confidence or boldness. 5.1.2

Asseverative Expresses emphasis or surety. 4.2.2; 4.2.4; 4.2.15; 4.3.4; 5.3.3

Asyndetic A string of words, phrases, or clauses that are not connected by a conjunction that is expected. 5.2.1,a; 5.2.12; 5.2.13,a

Attributive Construction that functions to describe a quality or attribute. 2.2; 2.2.5; 2.3.1,c 2.4.2; 2.5.1; 3.4.3,a; 5.2.13,a

Benediction A blessing spoken by one, meant to bless another. 3.3.1,c

Biblical Hebrew The language of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament; contrast with Epigraphic Hebrew, which focuses on extra-biblical inscriptions; or Rabbinic Hebrew, which focuses on Hebrew texts written after the Bible.

Cardinal Number A number used in counting, to indicate the quantity of objects. 2.7.1

Case The function of a noun within a sentence; see Accusative, Dative, Genitive, Nominative. 2.0

Causal Expressing the cause of an action or situation. 2.2.7; 4.1.2,g; 4.1.5,f; 4.1.8; 4.1.10,d; 4.1.11,b; 4.1.13,e; 4.1.14,c; 4.1.16,d; 4.2.10,b; 4.3.4,a, b; 4.5.3,c1; 5.2.5

Causation Refers either to the act or process of causing an action/idea to take place. 2.3.1,e; 3.1; 3.1.3; 3.1.6

Causative A verbal notion that expresses the subject of the verb causing another (the secondary subject) to take some action. 2.3.1,d; 3.1.3; 3.1.4; 3.1.5; 3.1.6; 3.1.7

Circumstantial Refers to the conditions under which, or the manner in which, an action is performed. 4.3.3,e; 4.5.2,c2; 5.2.11

Clause A group of words with a subject and only one predicate, forming the basic unit of predication; can be verbal or verbless, dependent or independent. See Nominal Clause, Verbal Clause, Subordinate Clause, Independent Clause. 5.1

- Cognate Accusative** Construction in which the verb and its object are derived from the same root. Example: “*I dreamt a dream.*” 2.3.1,c
- Cohortative** An expression of strong wish or desire directed to the first person, the self. 3.3.3
- Comitative** See Accompaniment.
- Comparative** A relationship in which the quality or quantity of two or more nouns is compared. 2.5.4; 4.1.13,g; 4.2.4,c; 4.2.10,a; 5.2.6
- Complement Accusative** An object that is used with certain intransitive verbs, which are modified to function as transitive verbs. 2.3.1,d
- Complete Passive** A passive voice construction in which the agent of the verb is specified. Most English passive constructions are complete passives, whereas most Hebrew passive constructions are incomplete passives. Example: “The book was written *by the author.*” See Incomplete Passive, Passive voice. 3.1.2,a
- Complex Sentence** A sentence in which two or more clauses are joined together, and in which one clause is subordinate to another. 5.0
- Concessive** Expresses an action or situation that is expected, or may lead to another action but, in fact, does not. 4.2.5,c; 4.3.2,b; 4.3.4,h; 5.2.12
- Conditional** An action or situation that may or may not occur, dependent on the completion, or incompleteness, of another action. Real conditions are those that can potentially be fulfilled, whereas unreal conditions are those that cannot or will not be fulfilled. 5.2.2
- Conjugation** Different forms of the verb that make it specific for person, gender, and number, as well as aspect and type of action. 3.0
- Conjunction** A particle that joins two or more words, or clauses, together. 4.3
- Consequential** Expresses the potential or actual consequences of an action/situation. 3.5.1,b; 3.5.2,b; 3.5.3,b; 4.3.5
- Construct Chain** A phrase with a construct noun followed by an absolute noun, expressing a genitive relationship between the two nouns. 2.3
- Construct Noun** A form of the noun in Hebrew that functions to form genitive relationships. 2.3
- Contingent** An action or idea that is dependent on another action/idea. 3.2.2,d
- Coordinate** Expresses some notion of equality, either in stature, rank, or quality. 5.1
- Coordinate Conjunction** A conjunction that joins nouns or clauses that have identical grammatical functions. 4.3
- Coordinate Relationship** A linkage of two or more verbs, in which the leading, or governing, verb influences the aspect and mode of the linked verb. 3.5

- Coordinating Adverb** An adverb that functions to show coordination between two clauses. 4.2
- Correspondence** Expresses a complete equality in identity and quality between two substantives. 4.1.9,b
- Customary** Describes action occurring in past or present time with regular repetition. 3.2.2,b
- Dative** Case that marks the indirect object of a verb – often the recipient in verbs of speaking or giving. Example: “I threw the ball *to my dog*.” 4.1.10,e
- Declarative** An expression of assessment, judgment, or evaluation. 3.1.3,d; 3.1.6,c; 4.1.2,c
- Declensions** Different forms placed on nouns or adjectives that give them specific function and reference according to gender and number.
- Definiteness (or Determination)** A noun having the definite article; refers to a specific or known person, place, or thing. 2.6
- Degree** With the preposition ׀, expresses a large quantity or an extreme quality. 4.1.15,d
- Demonstrative** A substantive that points to, or highlights, other substantives. Also labeled “deictic.” Example: “He wrote *this* book.” 2.5.1; 2.6.6; 4.2.8,b
- Denominative** A verbal form that is derived from a noun. Recall that in Hebrew, the verbal form is primary, while nominal forms are derived from the verbal form. 3.1.3,b; 3.1.5,d; 3.1.6,d
- Desiderative** Expresses a wish or desire. 5.3.2
- Determination** See Definiteness. 2.6
- Direct Object** The recipient of verbal action. Example: “He kicked *the ball*.” 2.3.1
- Disjunctive** Establishes a contrast between words or clauses. 5.2.14; 5.3.1,b
- Distributive** Reference to each and every member of a group. 2.7.1,d
- Double Accusative** The use of two accusatives, or direct objects, with factitive or causative verbs; one receives action from the main subject, while the other receives action from the secondary subject. See Agency Nuance, Patience Nuance, Secondary Subject. 2.3.1,e1
- Duration/Durative** Expresses progressive, continuous action. 3.4.2,b; 3.4.3,b
- Duty** An action that one is compelled to take. 4.1.16,b
- Elliptical** Describes a clause from which certain parts of speech have been omitted. 5.3.5
- Emotive** With the preposition ׀, indicates an expression of emotion. 4.1.16,i
- Epexegetical** Providing an additional explanation or clarification. 2.2.6; 3.5.1,d; 4.3.3,d

- Essence** Specifically with the $\bar{\alpha}$ preposition, marks the predicate of a clause. 4.1.5,h
- Estimative** Expresses judgment or assessment of the value, worth, significance, or status of a substantive. 4.1.10,k; 4.1.13,d
- Ethical Dative** Action that is on behalf of another; action that is meant to benefit another. 4.1.10,e1
- Euphonic** A particle or part of speech that has no syntactical function, but is added for an audible effect. 3.3.2.
- Evidential** Expresses the evidence or motivation for speech; does not focus on what is said, but the reason for speaking. 4.3.4,b
- Exceptionive** Taking out or omitting something from a situation. 4.3.2,d; 4.3.4,m; 5.2.7
- Exclamatory/Exclamation** A sharp or sudden utterance; a sudden expression of emotion. 4.5; 5.3.1; 5.3.3
- Exhortation** Speech or language intended to encourage. 3.3.3,c
- Existential** Expresses the existence or presence of a substantive. 4.4; 5.3.4
- Experience** Expressed by a verb, a state of mind, such as “love,” “hate,” “fear.” 3.2.1,c
- Explicative** A substantive that typically precedes the subject, and explains what is contained in the subject. 2.2.12; 2.4.5
- Factitive** A verbal form that expresses the causing of a state. 3.1.3,a
- Fientive** A verb that describes an action or change of state. 3.1.1,a
- Final Clauses** Subordinate clauses that express the purpose or motivation behind the idea of the main clause. 5.2.3
- Finite** A verb that is inflected for aspect, person, gender, and number; can stand as a predicate in independent clauses.
- Frequentative** Describes action that is repeated, either over time or space. See Iterative, Pluralic. 3.1.3,c
- Generic** Refers to a class or group of similar or identical substantives, rather than a specific individual or type. 2.6.5
- Genitive** A relationship between nouns, often denoting attribute or possession, but other relationships as well; usually noted in English by the particle “of.” 2.2
- Gentilic** A noun that refers to a single member of a collective group, typically an ethnic or national group. 2.6.3.
- Governing Verb** The first verb in a coordinate relationship within a narrative text; typically influences the aspect and usage of linked verbs that follow. 3.5
- Hapax Legomenon** From Greek for “read once,” an expression, word, or form that is used only once in a text.
- Hendiadys** Expression of a singular idea by two independent words. 4.3.3,g

- Immediacy** Expresses action that takes place with little or no loss of time; emphasis on the “present,” relative to the narrative. 4.5.1,a
- Imminence** An action or situation that is impending (taking place soon, relative to the context). 3.4.1,f
- Imperative** An expression of will directed to another; expressing a command, entreaty, or wish to another party. 3.3.2
- Incomplete Passive** A passive voice construction in which the agent of the verb is not expressed. Example: “*The book was written.*” See Complete Passive. 3.1.2,a
- Indefinite** Describes a noun without the definite article; typically refers to a general or generic, rather than specific, individual. 2.6
- Indefinite Subject** An unspecified agent of a verb, usually expressed in English by “someone” or “anyone” 5.1.2,a3
- Independent Clause** A clause that can stand on its own, with complete meaning. 5.2
- Indeterminate** see Indefinite. 2.6
- Indicative** A verbal form that expresses actions or states objective facts. 3.2.2
- Indirect Object** A noun representing the secondary goal of the action of the verb. See Dative.
- Indirect Questions** Phrases that report or refer to a question from another; the first question need not be explicitly stated. Example: “She knows *where the cat is hiding.*” 5.1.2,b2; 5.3.1
- Infinitive** A verbal form, functioning as a verbal noun, that is, not limited to person, gender, or number. 3.4.1; 3.4.2
- Inflexion** A morphological change in words that marks distinctions such as case, gender, number, tense, person, mood, or voice. 2.0
- Ingressive** Expresses entry into a state. 3.1.2; 3.1.6,d
- Instrumental** Identifies a person, place, or thing used as a means, agent, or tool with which an action is performed. 4.1.5,c
- Intensive** Adding force or emphasis; specifically with Piel verb forms, expressing a repeated or enhanced action. 3.1.3,c; 4.2.12; 5.2.9
- Interest** Action that is meant for the benefit of another; with the preposition לָ, indicates the one for which an emotion is intended. See Ethical Dative, Advantage. 4.1.16,i
- Internal Accusative** An abstract noun that is identical to the action expressed by the verb. Example: “He will live *life.*” See Cognate Accusative. 2.3.1,c
- Interrogative** Expresses a question; often introduced by interrogative particles, which introduce questions. 4.3.4,n; 5.3.1
- Intransitive Verb** A verb that does not have a direct object.
- Iterative** Expresses repetition of an action over time. 3.1.3,c
- Jussive** Expresses a command or wish predominantly to the third but to the second person as well. 3.3.1

- Juxtaposition** Position of two parts of speech directly next to each other; the position of being directly next to another.
- Leadword** The first noun in an appositional construction; typically modified by the second noun, termed the apposition. 2.4
- Linked Verb** A verb in a coordinate relationship that is typically influenced by, and successive to, the governing verb. 3.5
- Locative** Expresses the location of a noun or clause at a point in time or point in space. 4.1.10,b; 4.1.12,a; 4.1.15,a; 4.1.16,a; 4.1.17,d; 4.1.18,b; 4.2.7; 4.2.8,b; 4.2.16,a
- Logical** Expresses the expected consequence or result of an action or situation. 3.3.2; 3.5; 4.2.1,b; 4.2.14,b; 4.5.3,c
- Maledictory** An oath statement that express a curse or ill will. 5.3.2
- Manner** The fashion, custom, or procedure of an action. 2.3.2,c; 3.4.2,c; 4.1.1,b; 4.1.5,i; 4.1.10,j; 4.1.16,e; 4.2.8,a; 4.2.10,a; 4.2.13,a; 4.2.17
- Material** The matter with which some other thing is created or formed. 2.2.10; 2.3.2,f; 2.4.3; 4.1.5,c; 4.1.13,c
- Means** Points to a substantive by or with which an action is performed. 2.2.9
- Measure** Expresses the quantity of a substantive. 2.2.11; 2.4.4; 2.7.1,a
- Merism** A construction involving two polar nouns to express the totality between those two poles. Example: “night and day,” referring to totality of time, not just the two periods of “night” and “day.” 4.2.7, n.29
- Middle Voice** Verbal construct in which the subject and the object are identical, but without the emphasis on the subject acting upon itself, as with the reflexive. 3.1.2,b
- Modal** A verbal form that expresses a strong wish or desire. 3.3
- Mood** A verbal inflexion that expresses the factuality of the verb, either real, as with indicative verbs, or unreal, as with volitional or modal verbs.
- Morpheme** The smallest meaningful unit of language; typically refers to a single “word” or particle, which is formed by a group of phonemes.
- Morphology** The study of the formation of parts of speech.
- Naming** With the definite article, the indication that a common noun is to be viewed as a proper noun. 2.6.3
- Narrative** Presentation of events or theme as a story.
- Nominal Clause** A unit of predication that does not include a finite verb; a predication formed by two substantives. 5.1.1
- Nominative** A noun case that typically marks the subject of the verb. 2.1
- Normative** Expresses classification of a substantive according to a standard; oftentimes, will express division of a larger group according to smaller divisions. 4.1.10,i
- Northwest Semitic** Group of languages, including Aramaic, Ugaritic, and Phoenician, to which Hebrew belongs.
- Oath** A solemn commitment to the truth of one’s words; a commitment to take, or not to take, a certain action. 5.3.2

- Object** see Direct Object; Indirect Object.
- Obligation** An action that should or should not be done, according to societal, cultural, or historical traditions. 3.2.2,d3
- Optative** Expresses a strong wish or desire. 5.3.3
- Ordinal Number** A number designating the place of order occupied by an item in a sequence. 2.7.2
- Paronomasia** A word play; figure of speech that involves a play on words, often with words that sound similar; within relative clauses, paronomasia often functions to express indefiniteness. 5.2.13,c
- Participle** A part of speech having the characteristic of both verb and adjective. 3.4.3
- Particle** A unit of speech with a connective or limiting function – articles, prepositions, conjunctions, adverbs; or as utterances – interjections and exclamations.
- Partitive** A portion or part of a larger group. 4.1.13,e
- Passive Voice** Construction in which the subject of the verb receives the action of the verb. Example: “The building *was built* by the contractor.” 3.1.2,a
- Patiency Nuance** With factitive verbs, indication that the secondary subject does not have a role in the action of the verb; the secondary subject is affected, only, and does not take other action. See Agency Nuance. 3.1.3
- Perceptual** Marking the object of perception; identifying the thing that is perceived. 4.1.2,d; 4.3.4,j; 4.5.2,b
- Performative** Describes an action that is completed by speech or utterance. Example: “Your name will no longer be Abram, but Abraham.” 3.2.1,f
- Permissive** Describes an action that is agreeable to the object, and allowed to occur by the subject. 3.1.6,e
- Personal Complement** Marker of the indirect object of a verb. 4.1.17,c
- Perspective** The specific view or perception of a speaker within the narrative.
- Phoneme** A unit of letters in a language that functions to produce a single, distinctive sound in that language.
- Phonology** The study of the sounds of a language.
- Phrase** A group of words that can syntactically function as one word. 5.0
- Pleonasm/Pleonastic** An expression that employs unnecessary words; a redundant expression. 5.1.1,a
- Pluralic** Describes action that is intensified over space. 3.1.3,c
- Possession** Expresses that a person, place, or thing belongs to another. 4.1.4,b; 4.1.10,f; 4.1.12,a; 4.4.1,b; 4.4.2,b
- Postpositive** The location of a part of speech after a specified position; a postpositive infinitive, for example, comes after the finite verb it

- modifies. An infinitive absolute that comes before the finite verb would be *prepositive*. 3.4.2,b
- Predicate** A substantive or verb that makes an assertion about the subject of a sentence. 2.1.2; 2.5.2; 3.4.3,b; 4.4.2,c; 5
- Predicate Adjective** An adjective that makes an assertion about the substantive it modifies. 2.5.2
- Preposition** A part of speech that expresses various spatial, temporal, logical, or comparative relationships between nouns or clauses. 4.1
- Preterite** Verbal form referring specifically to indicative action in the past. 3.2.2
- Privative** Expresses removal or extraction. 4.1.13,f
- Prohibition** An act of restraining; a command meant to restrain or stop an action. 4.2.3; 4.2.11
- Promise** With imperatives, an assurance that the addressed party will take some action in the future. 3.3.2,c
- Protasis** The introductory clause of a conditional statement – the “if” clause. 5.3.2; 5.2.2; 5.2.6
- Purpose** An expression of the reason or rationale behind an action. 2.2.8; 3.4.1,c; 3.5.5,b; 4.1.10,d; 4.1.11,a
- Quasi-Active** Describes verbs that are normally passive, but used with identical subject and object. See Middle Voice. 3.1.2,b
- Quasi-Datival** Describes constructions that indicate the indirect object of verbs. 4.1.10,e
- Rank** With the preposition 𐤁𐤅, indicates one’s position or responsibility. 4.1.16,c
- Reciprocal** Describes action in which two or more parties both affect each other; action that is mutual. 3.1.2,c; 3.1.5,b
- Recitative** With the preposition 𐤁𐤆, introduces the contents of direct speech; functionally, marks a direct quotation. 4.3.4,1
- Referential** With the definite article, refers to a person, place, or thing that has been previously mentioned in the narrative. 2.6.1
- Reflexive** Describes action that is directed to the self; hence, the subject and the object of the verb are identical. 3.1.2,c; 3.1.5,a
- Relative Clause** A dependent clause that modifies the main clause. 5.2.13
- Resolve** Expression of self-determination. 3.3.3,a
- Restrictive** Expressing a limitation, exception, or restriction of an action or idea. 4.1.17,e; 4.2.2,a; 4.2.15,a; 5.2.8.
- Result** The end/outcome of an action. 2.2.9; 3.4.1,d; 4.3.4,d; 4.5.2,c5
- Resultative** With Piel verbs, describes the bringing about of the outcome of an action designated by the verbal root. 3.1.3
- Result Clause** A subordinate clause that expresses the end result of the idea of the main clause. 5.2.3,b

- Rhetorical** Specifically with the particle ׀, expresses a comparison established between two clauses, with the second clause typically indicating some persuasion. 4.3.4.c
- Rhetorical Question** A question with no expected answer. 4.3.4.c; 5.3.1
- Secondary Subject** With causative or factitive verbs, the substantive in which an action, state, or change of state is brought about by the main subject of the verb; also referred to as “under subject.” 3.1
- Sentence** A grammatical unit comprised of one or more clauses. See Simple Sentence and Complex Sentence. 5; 5.3
- Simple Sentence** A sentence consisting of only one clause. See Complex Sentence. 5; 5.3
- Simultaneous** Describes action that occurs, or a state that exists, at the same time as another. 3.4.1.b1; 3.4.1.b2; 3.4.2.c; 5.2.4
- Solitary** With the definite article, identifies common nouns that refer to a singular entity, and hence, are on their way to becoming proper nouns. 2.6.4
- Source** The point of origin, or the initiator of action. 4.1.13.a
- Spatial** Expresses how a noun is related to space. 4.1.1.a; 4.1.2.f; 4.1.3; 4.1.4.d; 4.1.5.a; 4.1.6; 4.1.7.a; 4.1.10.a; 4.1.14.b; 4.1.16.a
- Species** Classification of a substantive with others according to their type, group, or quality. 2.4.1
- Specification** A clarification or explanation of verbal action or situation; an expression that specifically points out a substantive. 2.2.6; 2.3.2.e; 3.4.1.g; 3.5.1.d; 4.1.2.g; 4.1.5.e; 4.1.10.h
- Stative Verb** A verb that expresses a state, rather than an action or change of state; usually, in English, this function is completed through predicate adjectives. 3.1.1.b
- Stem (or Derived Stem)** A vowel pattern applied to a Hebrew verbal root, which functions to specify type of action. 3.1
- Subject** The agent who or that performs the action of a verb. 2.1.1
- Subjunctive** A verbal form that expresses nonfactual actions or situations, such as wishes, expectations, possible actions, and conditional actions. 3.2.2
- Subordinate Clause** A clause that is associated with, and modifies the meaning of, an independent clause. 5.2
- Subordinate Conjunction** A conjunction that joins a subordinate clause to a main, independent clause. 4.3
- Substantive** A word or a group of words functioning as a noun.
- Substitution** The replacement of one substantive for another. 4.1.18.d
- Succession** In coordinate relationships, the primary relationship formed between governed and linked verbs denoting an action or situation that follows, either temporally or logically, another action or situation. 3.5

- Superlative** The highest degree of an adjective. Example: “*tallest*.” 2.2.13; 2.5.4,b; 4.1.10,k
- Syntax** The organization of grammatical parts of speech to form meaningful units, such as phrases or clauses.
- Telic** Expresses a goal, or movement toward a goal; with subordinate clauses, typically expresses the result of an action, or the motive behind an action.
- Temporal** Expresses a substantive’s relationship to time; with clauses, can express how the time of a subordinate clause relates to the time of the main clause. 3.4.1,b; 3.5.1,a; 3.5.2,a; 3.5.5,a; 4.1.1,b; 4.1.5,b; 4.1.6; 4.1.9,c; 4.1.10,c; 4.1.12,b; 4.1.13,b; 4.1.15,b; 4.2.1,a; 4.2.7; 4.2.14,a; 4.3.4,e; 4.5.2,c4; 5.2.4.
- Tense** Distinction in the form of a verb to express the time or duration of action. Note that in BH, verbs are not strictly marked for tense; rather, their relationship to time is noted by aspect.
- Terminative** Expressing movement, with special emphasis on the completed goal of that movement. 4.1.2,a; 4.1.5,a; 4.1.10,a; 4.1.16,a; 4.2.16,b
- Transitive** A fientive verb with an identified direct object. 3.1.1,a
- Verbal Clause** A clause in which the predicate is formed by a finite verb. 5.1.2
- Verbal Complement** An infinitive that functions to complete the meaning of certain verbs. Example: “I know how *to play* the piano.” 3.4.1,a3
- Vocative** Grammatical case that marks direct address. 2.1.3; 2.6.2
- Voice** Verbal inflection that indicates the relationship of the subject of the verb to the action of the verb. In English, voice is established, typically, by word order, whereas in BH, it is established by the derived stems. See Active Voice, Passive Voice. 3
- Volitional** Describes a verbal form that expresses a choice or decision to which one has committed or will commit. 3.5.2,c

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