LESSON 22   GUTTURAL VERBS

VERBS WITH א, ה, ח, and ע as root consonants belong to a subset of the basic verb called *guttural* verbs. There are five types, identified according to the position of the guttural consonant. Some verbs with ר also share the characteristics of the guttural verbal roots, since ר does not double.

I-guttural (and I-ר)	פ-guttural	עבר	*cross over*
I-א	פ"א[1]	אמר	*say*
II-guttural	ע-guttural	בער	*burn*
(and II-ר)	ע"ר	ברך	*bless*
III-guttural	ל-guttural	שלח	*send*
III-א	ל"א	מצא	*find*

22.1   THE BASIC DIFFERENCES

Four characteristics of the gutturals (one of which they share with ר) cause the vowels of some forms to differ from those of the basic verb.

1.   א, ה, ח, ע, ר *do not double* (geminate), so that *dageš forte* is absent when a guttural or ר occurs in a doubled radical (e.g., the middle radical in D, Dp, and Dt). This failure to geminate often causes the preceding vowel to lengthen, because a syllable is open, rather than being closed by *dageš forte*.

2.   א, ה, ח, ע are followed by *hatef*-vowels instead of *šewa*.
     a.   I-guttural verbs often have a *hatef*-vowel after the first radical instead of *šewa* (vocal or silent)
     b.   II-guttural roots have *hatef*-vowels instead of vocal *šewa* after the second radical (i.e, before vocalic endings)

3.   ה, ח, ע tend to occur with *a*-vowels, either full vowels or *patah furtivum*, so that *patah* may occur where the basic verb has *holem or sere*.

4.   א does not close a syllable, so that verbs whose roots end in א tend to have long vowels after the second radical. Although ה (i.e., without *mappiq*) does not close a syllable, verbs that end in ה belong to their own type (below); verbs ending in ה- are strong, and considered III-guttural.

These characteristics cause most of the differences between guttural verbs and the basic verb. In this table, each pair of examples has the same parsing; the second example is the basic verb.

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[1]The " means that this is to be read as an abbreviation or symbol, not a word. Labels such as פ"א are read from right to left (*pe-'alef*); the other names are read left to right.

Guttural Verb	Basic Verb	Parsing	Nature of the Difference	Reason for the Difference
יֵעָמֵד	יִמָּשֵׁל	3ms N F	no *dageš forte*; *long* vowels instead of short	Since gutturals don't double, the syllable is open; this also affects roots I/II-ר in certain stems (below).
בֵּרֵךְ	מִשֵּׁל	2ms D V		
יִשְׁמַע	יִמְשֹׁל	3ms Q F	*a*-vowels (esp. *pataḥ*) after the second radical	Word-final gutturals tend to be preceded by an *a*-vowel.
יְשַׁמַּע	יְמַשֵּׁל	3ms D F		
בָּחֲרוּ	מָשְׁלוּ	3cp Q P	*hatef*-vowels instead of vocal *šewa*	Gutturals have *hatef*-vowels where the basic verb has vocal *šewa*
עֲמַדְתֶּם	מְשַׁלְתֶּם	2mp Q P		
יַעֲמֹד	יִמְשֹׁל	3ms Q F	*hatef*-vowels under the first radical instead of silent *šewa* in forms with prefixes (F, Pr)	Initial guttural that closes the prefix syllable (i.e., where the first radical is followed by silent *šewa* in the basic verb) is often followed by the *hatef*-vowel that matches the prefix vowel.
יַעֲמִיד	יַמְשִׁיל	3ms H P		
יֶחְדַּל	יִמְשֹׁל	3ms Q F	*segol* as prefix vowel instead of *hireq*	Initial gutturals, especially ח, may have *segol* as a prefix vowel where the basic verb has *hireq*.
מָצָאתִי	מָשַׁלְתִּי	1cs Q P	*long* vowel after the second radical, no *šewa* before PGN ending; no *dageš* in ת of PGN ending	III-א forms generally have a *long* vowel after the second radical of the verbal root. The ת of PGN endings lacks *dageš lene* since it is "preceded" by a vowel (final א is not considered consonantal).
יְמָצָא	יְמֻשַּׁל	3ms Dp F		
וְצָמִית	מָשַׁלְתְּ	2fs Q P	Missing final א	[Silent] א drops out of some III-א forms (usually noted in *Mp*; Lesson 29).
מָצִתִי	מָשַׁלְתִּי	1cs Q P		
וַיָּבֹו	וַיִּמְשֹׁל	3ms Q Pr		

22.2 I-Guttural Roots

These verbal roots differ from the basic verb wherever the first radical is followed by *šewa* (*qal* imperfect; *nifal* perfect and participle; all forms of *hifil* and *hofal*) or doubled (*nifal* imperfect, imperative, infinitive construct). The D-stems are not affected.

1. 2mp and 2fp *qal* perfect have *hatef-pataḥ* under the first radical (מֹשֵׁל is for comparison).

מְשַׁלְתֶּם   2mp Q P   *You served*   עֲבַדְתֶּם

2. Wherever the basic verb has silent *šewa* after the first radical, guttural roots have a *hatef*-vowel, with the corresponding full vowel under the prefix (מֹשֵׁל is for comparison).

הִמְשִׁיל   3ms H P   *He enslaved*   הֶעֱבִיד

אֶמְשֹׁל   1cs Q F   *I [will] seize*   אֶחֱזַק

3. Whenever the initial radical of the basic verb is doubled (*nifal* F, V, NC), the prefix vowel is long (*sere*). Since ר does not geminate, this also applies to verbs that are I-ר.

יֵעָזֵב	*It will be forsaken*	3fs N F	תִּמָּשֵׁל
וַיֵּאָכֵל	*It was eaten*	3ms N Pr	וַיִּמָּשֵׁל

22.3 I-א Roots

This sub-set of the I-guttural roots, introduced in §6.2 (*q.v.*), contains only five verbs (אמר, אכל, אבד, אבה, אפה). They differ from other I-guttural verbs (above) only in Q F and Pr.

22.4 II-Guttural Roots

These verbal roots differ from the basic verb wherever the second radical is doubled (all three D-stems), or followed by vocal *šewa* (all forms with vocal PGN sufformatives, in all stems except *hifil*). The forms of II-guttural verbs are not affected in *hifil*.

1. The D-stems follow one of two patterns:
   a. In some II-guttural roots the vowel after the first radical is *long* (*qames* or *sere* in *piel*, *hitpael*; *holem* in *pual*), since that syllable is open.

בֵּרֵךְ	*He blessed*	3ms D P	מִשֵּׁל
בֹּרַךְ	*He was blessed*	3ms Dp P	מֻשַּׁל
מְבֹרָךְ	*Blessed*	Ms Dp Ptc	מְמֻשָּׁל

   b. Other II-guttural roots look just like the basic verb, but without *dageš forte*, so that the vowel after the first radical is *hireq* or *patah* (*piel*, *hitpael*) or *qibbus* (*pual*).[2]

בָּחַר	*He chose*	3ms D P	מִשֵּׁל
נִבָּחֵר	*We will be chosen*	1cp Dp F	נְמֻשַּׁל

2. With vocalic PGN suffixes, these roots have a *hatef*-vowel after the second radical instead of vocal *šewa* (all stems):

גָּאֲלוּ	*They redeemed.*	3cp Q P	מָשְׁלוּ
בַּחֲרוּ	*Choose!*	2mp Q V	מִשְׁלוּ
הִגָּאֲלוּ	*Redeem yourselves!*	2mp N V	הִמָּשְׁלוּ

22.5 III-Guttural Roots (III-ה/ע/ח only)

These verbal roots differ from the basic verb mainly by having *patah* after the second radical, or *patah furtivum* after its vowel. *Mappiq* in the final ה of these roots means that the ה is a consonant, not a vowel letter (as it is in roots III-ה; below).

1. If a form has no ending or suffix, the vowel after the second radical is *patah*, except in H (which will, nonetheless, have *patah furtivum*):

יִבְרַח	*He flees*	3ms Q F	יִמְשֹׁל
יַשְׁמִיעַ	*He causes ____ to hear*	3ms D F	יְמַשֵּׁל

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[2]This is called *virtual doubling/gemination* because the Masoretes pointed the word with a short vowel (since the syllable would have been closed if the radical had been doubled)—the term is confusing, since nothing is in fact doubled.

וַיִּשְׁמַע	*He heard*	3ms Q Pr	וַיִּמְשֹׁל
וַיַּשְׁמִיעַ	*He caused ___ to hear*	3ms H Pr	וַיַּמְשִׁיל

2. If the vowel after the second radical is written with a vowel letter, *pataḥ furtivum* is added (see also the last example in #1, above):

שָׁמוּעַ	*Heard*	ms Qp Ptc	מָשׁוּל
יַשְׁמִיעַ	*He will cause _____ to hear*	3ms H F	יַמְשִׁיל

3. 2fs P (all stems) has *pataḥ* after the third radical instead of silent *šewa*:

שָׁמַעַתְּ	*You heard*	2fs Q P	מָשַׁלְתְּ
הָשְׁמַעַתְּ	*You were caused to hear*	2fs Hp P	הָמְשַׁלְתְּ

22.6 III-א Roots

These forms differ from the basic verb because א *cannot close* a syllable; at the end of a syllable it becomes silent and the preceding vowel lengthens (if possible), usually to *qameṣ* or *ṣere*. Forms with vocalic endings (וֹ -, יָ -, הָ -), where א begins the final syllable, are like the basic verb.

1. The vowel after the second radical is long, and the PGN ending (תּ) does not have *dageš lene*, because the א is silent (and therefore ignored).

מָצָא	*He found*	3ms Q P	מָשַׁל
מָצָאתָ	*You found*	2ms Q P	מָשַׁלְתָּ

The [silent] א may even be missing (the verbal root is צמא):

צָמֵת	*You are thirsty* (Ru 2.9)	2fs Q P	מָשַׁלְתְּ

2. With the ending נָה- (2/3fp F, Pr, V), the vowel after the second radical is *segol* (all stems):

תִּתְמַצֶּאנָה	*You/they [will] find your/themselves*	2/3pf Dt F	תִּתְמַשַּׁלְנָה
תִּמְצֶאנָה	*You/they [will] find*	2/3fp Q F	תִּמְשֹׁלְנָה

NB: This is a great deal of information about guttural verbal roots, but the rules are given to demonstrate that the patterns are predictable and regular, given the presence of the gutturals.

22.7 The Most Common Guttural Roots

This table lists all guttural roots with pointing *that is affected* by the presence of a guttural or ר that occur more than two hundred times in BH, listed by type. Verbs are listed according to the type of weakness that actually occurs (e.g., ירא does not occur in the D-stems, and so is listed as III-א, but not as II-ר; ירד does not occur in the D-stems, and so is not listed).

I-א		III-א	
אמר	*say, speak* (> 5000x)	בּוֹא	*come, go* [in], *enter* (2530x)

אכל	*eat, devour, consume* (795x)		יצא	*go out, leave, exit* (1055x)
אהב	*love* (205x)		קרא	*call; name; invite; read* (730x)

III-guttural

שמע	*hear, listen [to]; obey* (1136x)		נשׂא	*lift up, carry, bear; forgive* (651x)
ידע	*know, understand; notice, recognize* (924x)		מצא	*find, discover* (451x)
לקח	*take, get, acquire* (964x)		ירא	*fear, be afraid [of]* (377x)
שלח	*send [away], let go; stretch out, reach, extend* (839x)		מלא	*be[come] full* (250x)
ישׁע	*save, deliver, triumph* (205x)		חטא	*sin, miss [a target]* (237x)

I-guttural (not I-א)

עשׂה	*do, make; act [perform a deed]* (2573x)		עבד	*serve, be servant to* (289x)
ראה	*see* (1294x)		חזק	*be[come] strong (Q); seize, grab; hold (H)* (288x)
עלה	*go up, ascend* (879x)		חיה	*live, be alive* (281x)
עבר	*cross/pass over/through/by* (539x)		חטא	*sin, miss [a target]* (237x)
עמד	*stand; stop* (519x)		אסף	*gather, collect* (203x)
ענה	*answer; testify* (314x)		עזב	*leave, forsake, abandon* (212x)

II-guttural (or ר)

בֵּרֵךְ	*bless, worship* (D) (328x)

22.8 Concepts

doubling	I-guttural	II-guttural	III-guttural	mappiq
gemination	פ-gutteral	ע-guttural	ל-guttural	"virtual doubling"

22.9 Vocabulary

sight, appearance	מַרְאֶה	.327	*length*	אֹרֶךְ	.319
south, Negev	נֶגֶב	.328	*turn, overturn, destroy*	הָפַךְ	.320
skin, leather	עוֹר	.329	*animal(s) [coll.]*	חַיָּה	.321
cloud(s)	עָנָן	.330	*wounded, slain, dead* (adj.)	חָלָל	.322
foot, step; time (i.e., once, three times); *twice* (dual)	פַּעַם פְּעָמַיִם	.331	*male donkey/ass*	חֲמוֹר	.323
rest, sabbath	שַׁבָּת	.332	*on account of, for the sake of* (prep.); *because [of]* (cj.)	יַעַן	.324
forget	שָׁכַח	.333	*vineyard*	כֶּרֶם	.325
regularly, continually, always (adv.); in construct chain, refers to something repeated/regular (תָּמִיד עֹלָה, *perpetual offering*)	תָּמִיד	.334	*sell*	מָכַר	.326

22.10 Exercises

After studying the characteristics of the guttural verbs, please gloss these clauses, parsing the verbs.

1. אֵיפֹה הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר הֲרַגְתֶּם

Jg 8.18; אֵיפֹה *Where?*

2. וַיַּחֲלֹם יוֹסֵף חֲלוֹם

Gn 37.5; חלם *dream*; Joseph

3. הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ יֵהָפֵךְ לְחֹשֶׁךְ וְהַיָּרֵחַ לְדָם

Joel 3.4; יָרֵחַ *moon*

4. וַיֶּחֱזַק הָרָעָב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם:

Gn 41.56

5. וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמָעוּנִי יְהוּדָה וְיֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם הַאֲמִינוּ בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְתֵאָמֵנוּ הַאֲמִינוּ בִנְבִיאָיו וְהַצְלִיחוּ:

2 Ch 20.20; צלה *succeed, prosper*; Judah, Jerusalem

6. וְעַתָּה קוּם עֲבֹר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה אַתָּה וְכָל־הָעָם הַזֶּה אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לָהֶם לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Josh 1.2; קוּם *stand, rise* (2ms Q V; this form often introduces another imperative); Jordan

7. אַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהַי אַל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי:

Ps 38.22 (יהוה and אֱלֹהַי are vocative; each line is a clause)

8. הַשְׁמִיעֵנִי בַבֹּקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ כִּי־בְךָ בָטָחְתִּי כִּי־אֵלֶיךָ נָשָׂאתִי נַפְשִׁי: ...

Ps 143.8a, b (in reading poetry, "b" refers to the second half (" ")of the second line ("b") of a verse of poetry)

9. וַאֲבַדְתֶּם בַּגּוֹיִם וְאָכְלָה אֶתְכֶם אֶרֶץ אֹיְבֵיכֶם:

Lv 26.38 (each line is a clause)

10. לָכֵן אֱמֹר לִבְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי יְהוָה

Ex 6.6

11. וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֶל־הַנָּחָשׁ מִפְּרִי עֵץ־הַגָּן נֹאכֵל:

Gn 3.2; נָחָשׁ *snake*

12. וְלֹא אָמְרוּ הָעֹבְרִים בִּרְכַּת־יְהוָה אֲלֵיכֶם בֵּרַכְנוּ אֶתְכֶם בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה:

Ps 129.8; בְּרָכָה *blessing*

13. וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הָעָם אַתֶּם חֲטָאתֶם חֲטָאָה גְדֹלָה

Ex 32.30; חטא *sin* (v.) ; חֲטָאָה *sin* (n.), more commonly חַטָּאת; the second line contains the quotation; Moses

14. תּוֹעֲבַת יְהוָה דֶּרֶךְ רָשָׁע וּמְרַדֵּף צְדָקָה יֶאֱהָב:

Pr 15.9; תּוֹעֵבָה *abomination*; each line is a clause

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Jr 22.21	כִּי לֹא־שָׁמַעַתְּ בְּקוֹלִי׃ ...	15.
Gn 27.34; צעק *cry out* [for help] ; צְעָקָה *cry* (n.); מַר *bitter* (adj.); אָבִי is vocative; Esau	כִּשְׁמֹעַ עֵשָׂו אֶת־דִּבְרֵי אָבִיו וַיִּצְעַק צְעָקָה גְּדֹלָה וּמָרָה עַד־מְאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָבִיו בָּרֲכֵנִי גַם־אָנִי אָבִי׃	16.
1 Kgs 3.3; לָלֶכֶת *by walking* (Q NC < הלך + לְ); בָּמָה *high place, cultic center*; Solomon, David	וַיֶּאֱהַב שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־יהוה לָלֶכֶת בְּחֻקּוֹת דָּוִד אָבִיו רַק בַּבָּמוֹת הוּא מְזַבֵּחַ וּמַקְטִיר׃	17.
Jr 17.14; תְּהִלָּה *praise* (n.)	רְפָאֵנִי יהוה וְאֵרָפֵא ... כִּי תְהִלָּתִי אָתָּה׃	18.
Ex 12.46; עֶצֶם *bone*; this is from the instructions about the Passover	בְּבַיִת אֶחָד יֵאָכֵל ... וְעֶצֶם לֹא תִשְׁבְּרוּ־בוֹ׃	19.
Mi 3.4; זעק *cry out* [for help]; יַעֲנֶה *he will answer* (3ms Q F < ענה)	אָז יִזְעֲקוּ אֶל־יהוה וְלֹא יַעֲנֶה אוֹתָם וְיַסְתֵּר פָּנָיו מֵהֶם בָּעֵת הַהִיא	20.
2 Kg 24.2; גְּדוּד *band, troop*; multiple national/ethnic names	וַיְשַׁלַּח יהוה בּוֹ אֶת־גְּדוּדֵי כַשְׂדִּים וְאֶת־גְּדוּדֵי אֲרָם וְאֵת גְּדוּדֵי מוֹאָב וְאֵת גְּדוּדֵי בְנֵי־עַמּוֹן וַיְשַׁלְּחֵם בִּיהוּדָה לְהַאֲבִידוֹ כִּדְבַר יהוה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּיַד עֲבָדָיו הַנְּבִיאִים׃	21.
Dt 7.24a	וְנָתַן מַלְכֵיהֶם בְּיָדֶךָ וְהַאֲבַדְתָּ אֶת־שְׁמָם מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמָיִם	22.

22.11 ENRICHMENT: VOCABULARY

A common standard for determining "fluency" in a language is a threshold vocabulary of about 1000 words. This seems to be the point at which most people can begin to communicate with native speakers with some degree of comfort. There are at least two effective ways to approach this goal; many students find that they work well in tandem.

1. Memorize *more vocabulary*, using, e.g., Mitchel (see Bibliography), which allows you to learn glosses for words that occur in descending frequency in BH. If you are learning new words *and* reading the text, you will find that the two often reinforce each other, as when you encounter a newly memorized word (or a closely related form) in the passage that you are reading.

2. Learn words *as they occur* in whatever text you are reading. Since, e.g., fifty of fifty-two occurrences of קֶרֶשׁ *plank* are in the book of Exodus (describing the Tabernacle), there is not much sense in learning to gloss this word unless you plan to read Exodus. But if you are going to read Exodus, then taking time to learn this word will be worth your while.

Continuing to strengthen your grasp of vocabulary (through memorization), and to see how it functions in a variety of contexts (through reading) will increase your ability to both read and understand the text.

LESSON 23   BASIC TOOLS

IN ADDITION TO the *Hebrew Bible* itself, there are many tools designed to help you understand the biblical text. *Lexical aids* suggest glosses (lexicons and word lists), or discuss the use, distribution, and broader function of individual words (theological dictionaries and wordbooks). There are also *grammatical aids* (e.g., reference grammars), and guides to *textual criticism*, the *masora*, and other technical aspects of the biblical text. Most of these are discussed briefly in Appendix F (below). This Lesson focuses on the text of BHS and the major lexical tools.

23.1   *BIBLIA HEBRAICA STUTTGARTENSIA* (BHS)

Since its completion, BHS has been the basis for nearly every Bible translation, Hebrew-based commentary, and reference work on BH, whether in print and or electronic. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (*BHS*), named for its place of publication, is the fourth "scholarly" edition of the Hebrew text. It began to appear in 1967 and was complete ten years later; several corrected versions have appeared since then. A fifth edition, to be known as *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (5th) has been announced for release in the next decade.

The *canonical order* differs slightly from the EB, because English Bibles follow the general order of the Septuagint (pre-Christian, Greek translation of the Hebrew text), rather than the Hebrew Bible:

> Ruth, Lamentations, Daniel, Esther, Ezra-Nehemiah, & Chronicles are among the Writings, rather than the historical and prophetic books.

Samuel, Kings, Ezra-Nehemiah, & Chronicles are each a single book, thus there is no new title page for the "second half", although the chapter numbering begins anew with the "second book" in each pair.

Because the Latin titles are used, some will not look familiar (e.g., *Regum*/Kings, *Threni*/Lamentations). This lists the order, opening page numbers and Hebrew and Latin title of the books.

Although BHS claims to reproduce the text of the codex, the book of Chronicles precedes Psalms in the codex, rather than concluding the Bible, as it does in BHS.

Text Pages

The name of the biblical book is listed at the top of each page (Hebrew on the right page, Latin on the left). Page numbers are on the upper inside corners; chapter/verse references on the upper outside corners.

There are four blocks of material on each page. In the center of each page is the biblical text itself. This reproduces the text of Codex Leningrad, which is considered the oldest representative of the best masoretic scribal tradition, manuscripts copied and corrected by the family of Ben Asher. This text therefore represents a single manuscript, and is therefore a single witness to the biblical text (much as Alexandrinus or Vaticanus is to the text of the GNT). The UBS and Nestle-Aland Greek New Testaments contain an *eclectic* text that represents a committee's conclusions about the best reading for each verse, based on a comparison of many manuscripts, so that there is probably no single manuscript of the Greek NT with exactly the same text as the UBS/Nestle-Aland NT. *BHS* presents a single manuscript, and is thus no different in principle from a Greek NT that reproduces the text of only one manuscript, such as B (Codex Vaticanus).

In the outside margin are masoretic notes—*masora parva* [*mp*] or *masora marginalis*—which contains the Masoretes' comments on anything that they thought worthy of note, often unusual or rare forms. Written in Hebrew and Aramaic, they refer to the words in the text with small circles over them. We will discuss some of these, and how to read them.

At the bottom of each page are two sets of footnotes. The first set, consisting of raised numbers followed by "Mm" and a number, refer you to Weil (1971) for further information about some of the notes in *mp*. The second set of footnotes records whatever variants the editor of that biblical book thought worthy of notice, along with suggested alternate readings that are unsupported by manuscript evidence.

Each verse is preceded by its number. In *prose* passages, the verse number is repeated on the *inner* margin of the line on which the verse begins (but not on the left page if the verse begins at the right margin). In *poetry*, most verses begin at the right margin of the page. There are many differences in verse numbering between the Hebrew and English texts, and quite a few differerences in chapter divisions. You need to know which system a commentary or reference work is using, so that you can be sure that you are looking at the verse that the reference work is discussing.

Some Marks in the Text

:   *sof pasûq*, "end of *pasûq*", marks the end of nearly every "verse", *not* the end of a sentence. The final masora (at the end of each biblical book) lists the number of *pasûqîm* in the book.

ס/פ   Scattered across the pages are solitary unpointed *samek* and *pe*, which mark textual breaks that were apparently based on content. These paragraphs, called פְּתוּחָה ("open") or סְתוּמָה ("closed") were separated by either *samek* or *pe*, to indicate whether the next section began on the same line (ס) or the on the next line (פ, i.e., "Leave the rest of this line open"). Because these have been collated from various reading traditions their occurrences in BHS are no longer consistent.

In the inner margin large *samek*s headed by a rotated *qames* mark the *s^edarîm*, a system of dividing the text into units for weekly reading in the synagogues. Each is numbered (the small letter with a superscript dot under the *samek*). The final masora for each book also lists the total number of *s^edarîm* in that book (except the Minor Prophets, which the rabbis considered one book).

accents Nearly every biblical word is marked with an accent that shows which syllable is accented, how the word should be sung (cantillated), and how closely it is related to the following word. Your copy of *BHS* should include a card marked *Tabula Accentum* that lists disjunctive and conjunctive accents from strongest to weakest. There are two lists because the accents have different musical value in Psalms, Job, and Proverbs (*Accentus poëtici*). See Lesson 27 and HBI §4.

23.2 LEXICA

As the term is commonly used today, "lexicon" refers to a bi-lingual dictionary that offers a set of glosses to render words from one language into another. As noted above (Lesson 2), however, these are *glosses*, not definitions. For discussions of a word's function within the language as a whole, it is necessary to turn to a theological wordbook or dictionary, which usually discusses each word's frequency, patterns of occurrence, and suggests nuances of function, as well as its relationship to any synonyms and antonyms.

23.2.1 LEXICONS

BDB Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, & Charles A. Briggs. 1907. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament with an appendix containing the Biblical Aramaic*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Words are grouped according to putative root (e.g., nouns, adjectives, and prepositions follow the verbal root from which they supposedly developed; so-called "denominative" verbs follow the noun which was their "source"). The list of abbreviations is helpful; the list of *sigla*—"signs" (p. xix)—is crucial. In addition to its eighteenth-century linguistics, major twentieth-century archaeological and epigraphic finds were not available to the editors. [See the appendix on BDB.]

HALOT Köhler, L., and W. Baumgartner, eds. 2001. *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Study Edition. 2 vols. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000.

The most complete modern lexicon of BH. It generally follows the same classical approach as BDB, except that words are listed alphabetically rather than by root. The first edition was published in German, then published with both German and English. [Holladay (below) contains the English portion of this edition, without the etymological and cognate information, and fewer references.] The third edition contains a plethora of bibliographic references, supplemented by an extenstive bibliography at the end of the second volume.

DCH Clines, David J.A., *et al.*, eds. *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Vols. 1 - . Sheffield: University of Sheffield, 1991 -.

Projected to fill ten volumes, DCH covers all Hebrew (BH, seals, inscriptions, Ecclesiasticus, DSS) except rabbinic Hebrew. All words, including proper names, are listed alphabetically by actual spelling, which makes nouns and adjectives much easier to find. It includes no etymological or other cognate information, even when the suggested gloss depends on a cognate. It is essentially an analytical concordance, which lists, e.g., every subject, object, and preposition with which every verb occurs, as well as synonyms and antonyms. Ideal for this type of search, although a computerized database will yield the same results.

HOLLADAY Holladay, W. L. 1971 *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

An abridgement of an earlier edition of KBL (above), Holladay is more current than BDB (i.e., cognate and extra-biblical evidence), but does not have nearly as much information about usage, occurrences, collocations, &c. as BDB, *DCH*, or KBL. Words are listed alphabetically, rather than grouped by root, and so are easier to find than in BDB. Popular because it is easy to use, but diligent students will outgrow its resources fairly rapidly.

23.2.2 THEOLOGICAL DICTIONARIES

TDOT Botterweck, G. J., and H. Ringgren 1974 - *Theological Dictionary of the OT*. Vols. 1 – . Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

A translation into English of a massive German work, appearing at the rate of one volume every 2-3 years. Copious information on etymology, usage, context, discussions of function, related terms, &c.

NIDOTTE van Gemeren, Willem, ed. 1997 *The New International Dictionary of OT Theology & Exegesis*. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Detailed studies of nearly every word (even words occurring only one or two times), essays on theological topics (e.g., "Theology of Retribution"), and an essay on the theology of every biblical book (e.g., "Theology of Samuel"). First volume includes essays on exegesis and theology (but not on the language itself).

TWOT Harris, R. L., G. L. Archer Jr., and B. K. Waltke, eds. 1980 *Theological Wordbook of the OT*. 2 vols. Chicago: Moody.

A solid, basic tool with brief essays. A handy quick reference with more semantic information than a lexicon, but much less than either TDOT or NIDOTTE.

23.3 The challenges of Lexicons

If you don't find what you are looking for in a few minutes, then you are looking in the wrong place, or have misidentified the form. Skip it and come back later, or ask your teacher (bring the lexicon for reference). Difficulty often arises from:

1. Confusing letters that look alike (especially ה and ח, שׂ and שׁ);

2. Confusing letters that sound alike (especially א and ע) when you say the word to yourself as you look for it;

3. Looking for a word that is written defectively (i.e., without a vowel letter) in your passage, but is listed in its "full" spelling in the lexicon (i.e., with the vowel letter);

4. Looking in the Aramaic section for a Hebrew word (especially words at the end of the alphabet, since the Aramaic section usually follows the listings for Hebrew);

5. Looking under the wrong "root" (for lexica arranged by "root").

6. Having the wrong parsing.

23.3 Vocabulary

bone; *essence* (i.e., the inmost part)	עֶצֶם	.343	*cult center* (trad., "high place")	בָּמָה	.335
dust, dirt, soil	עָפָר	.344	*redeem, purchase as a kinsman-redeemer*; *redeemer* (Q Ptc.)	גָּאַל גֹּאֵל	.336
fruit; *descendants, offspring*	פְּרִי	.345	*straight, upright*; *honest* (adj.)	יָשָׁר	.337
chariot(s); *chariot force*	רֶכֶב	.346	*put on, clothe* (oneself); *wear*	לָבֵשׁ	.338
who, which, what (with *dageš forte* in the following consonant); = אֲשֶׁר	שֶׁ	.347	*tongue, language*	לָשׁוֹן	.339
pour [*out*]; *shed* [blood]	שָׁפַךְ	.348	*reject, refuse*	מָאַס	.340
lie, falsehood; *deception*	שֶׁקֶר	.349	*kingdom, realm*; *kingship, dominion, royal power/authority*	מַמְלָכָה מַלְכוּת	.341
abomination (something horrific)	תּוֹעֵבָה	.350	[permanent] *river*; both הַגָּדוֹל & הַנָּהָר refer to Euphrates (rarely as פְּרַת נָהָר)	נָהָר	.342

23.4 Exercises: BHS

1.   Please fill in the information missing from the following chart (not all biblical books are included):

Hebrew Title	Gloss the Hebrew Title	Latin Title	English Title	First Page
בראשית				1
ויקרא		Leviticus		
שמואל				
		Reges		
ירמיה				
		Micha		
תהלים				1087
משלי				
שיר השירים		Canticum		
איכה				
דברי הימים				

2. Please gloss these clauses, parsing the verbal forms, and using the lexicon where necessary.

Ps 19.10

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a. יִרְאַת יְהוָה טְהוֹרָה עוֹמֶדֶת לָעַד
מִשְׁפְּטֵי־יְהוָה אֱמֶת צָדְקוּ יַחְדָּו׃
</div>

Ho 8.1; the context suggests that עבר (*cross over/through*) signifies a trespass or transgression.

<div dir="rtl">

b. עָבְרוּ בְרִיתִי וְעַל־תּוֹרָתִי פָּשָׁעוּ׃
</div>

Jr 51.62; לְבִלְתִּי הֱיוֹת *so that there would not be*

<div dir="rtl">

c. וְאָמַרְתָּ יְהוָה אַתָּה דִבַּרְתָּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה
לְהַכְרִיתוֹ לְבִלְתִּי הֱיוֹת־בּוֹ יוֹשֵׁב
לְמֵאָדָם וְעַד־בְּהֵמָה כִּי־שִׁמְמוֹת עוֹלָם תִּהְיֶה׃
</div>

Jos 24.9; וַיָּקָם *he rose* (< קוּם); Balak, Zippor, Moab, Balaam, Beor

<div dir="rtl">

d. וַיָּקָם בָּלָק בֶּן־צִפּוֹר מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב וַיִּלָּחֶם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל
וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיִּקְרָא לְבִלְעָם בֶּן־בְּעוֹר לְקַלֵּל אֶתְכֶם׃
</div>

1 Kgs 2.42; Shimei

<div dir="rtl">

e. וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּקְרָא לְשִׁמְעִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו
הֲלוֹא הִשְׁבַּעְתִּיךָ בַיהוָה
</div>

Gn 42.4; Benjamin, Joseph, Jacob; אָסוֹן *trouble, disaster*

<div dir="rtl">

f. וְאֶת־בִּנְיָמִין אֲחִי יוֹסֵף לֹא־שָׁלַח יַעֲקֹב אֶת־אֶחָיו
כִּי אָמַר פֶּן־יִקְרָאֶנּוּ אָסוֹן׃
</div>

Lv 1.5; Aaron

<div dir="rtl">

g. וְשָׁחַט אֶת־בֶּן הַבָּקָר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה
וְהִקְרִיבוּ בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת־הַדָּם
וְזָרְקוּ אֶת־הַדָּם עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ
סָבִיב אֲשֶׁר־פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד׃
</div>

Jr 36.4; מְגִלָּה *scroll* ("something rolled up" < גלל); Jeremiah, Baruch, Neraiah

<div dir="rtl">

h. וַיִּקְרָא יִרְמְיָהוּ אֶת־בָּרוּךְ בֶּן־נֵרִיָּה
וַיִּכְתֹּב בָּרוּךְ מִפִּי יִרְמְיָהוּ אֵת כָּל־דִּבְרֵי יְהוָה
אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו עַל־מְגִלַּת־סֵפֶר׃
</div>

Nu 27.1 … 2; Zelophehad, Moses

<div dir="rtl">

i. וַתִּקְרַבְנָה בְּנוֹת צְלָפְחָד … וַתַּעֲמֹדְנָה לִפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה
</div>

1 Kgs 15.7; Abijam; Jeroboam; Judah

<div dir="rtl">

j. וְיֶתֶר דִּבְרֵי אֲבִיָּם וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הֲלוֹא־הֵם
כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה
וּמִלְחָמָה הָיְתָה בֵּין אֲבִיָּם וּבֵין יָרָבְעָם׃
</div>

23.5 ENRICHMENT: USING THE LEXICON

The greatest danger in using a lexicon is failing to recognize that lexicons list *glosses*, not definitions, meanings, or descriptions. The lexicon often gives no more or less information than a mere word-list *when it comes to exegesis*; its great benefit is its topical or functional arrangement of the occurrences of the word(s), as well as identifying collocations in which they occur, such as a particular combination of a verbal root with certain subjects or prepositions.

The glosses suggested for the various stems often assume that, e.g., the *hifil* is the causative of the *qal*, or that the function of *any* stem in which a verb occurs is somehow related to its function in *qal*. This is often (but not always) true, and should *never* be assumed. Since lexica offer glosses instead of definitions, other tools, such as theological dictionaries and wordbooks, are often more helpful than a lexicon when determining the range of a word's function, and where within that range its use in a given passage lies.

The lexica will suggest this if the listing is exhaustive, by assigning each lemma to either a gloss or functional category. You will then need to examine the other passages listed under that gloss or function to be sure that they are related to passage that you are studying.

As an example, consider the verbal root בָּרַךְ, glossed as *kneel* (Q) or *bless* (D). Many contemporary translations of the Bible render the *piel* as "bless" when its object is human, but "praise" when the object is divine. Ps 103.1, for example, has traditionally been rendered as "*Bless* the LORD, O my soul" (KJV, NAS, ESV), but many contemporary translations read "*Praise* the LORD, O my soul", apparently to avoid implying that anyone can somehow do something that will benefit YHWH. HALOT suggests that the function of בָּרַךְ is either to "endue with special power" when God is its subject, or "declare God to be the source of special power = bless" when it occurs with a human subject and divine object (HALOT, I: 160). Discovering the word's function requires searching the biblical text, looking for patterns of usage, and, perhaps asking whether or not "bless" (in this case) is still the best basic gloss for this verbal root.

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LESSON 24   OTHER KINDS OF VERBAL ROOTS

THERE ARE TWO MAIN TYPES of verbal root in BH: those which "have three unchangeable root consonants" (Joüon-Muraoka 1991, §40c), and which are called "strong", and those which lack one or more of their radicals in some forms, and may be called "weak" or "variable".[3] Up to this point we have studied only the forms of verbs with strong roots, but we now turn to the other types.

Although it is tempting to think in terms of "regular" and "irregular" verbs, Hebrew verbs are more or less regular. Even the types of roots to which we now turn are fairly consistent. There are five main types of variable verbs in BH, named according to the position of the weak letter, using either Roman numerals or the letters of the traditional paradigm verb פעל ("do, make").

24.1 THE TYPES & EFFECT OF ROOT WEAKNESS

Name	Lexical Form	The Nature of the Variation (effect of the weakness)
Initial Weak	I-נ פ"ן נפל *fall*	Initial נ assimilates to (and doubles) the second radical of the verbal root whenever the first radical is followed by silent *šewa*.
	I-ו/י פ"י/ו ישׁב *sit, settle*	Initial י either disappears or becomes a vowel letter whenever the first radical is followed by silent *šewa* (and in a few other forms).
Middle Weak (Hollow)	II-ו/י ע"י/ו שׁיר *sing*	Lacking a second radical (thus "hollow"), these roots differ from the basic verb in all forms except the D-stems (where they are rare). Unlike other verbs, their lexical form is Q NC.
Final Weak	ע"ע geminate סבב *surround*	The second and third radicals are the same ("geminate" means "twinned"); they are weak in most forms except the D-stems.
	III-ה ל"ה בנה *build*	The final ה of the lexical form is a vowel letter, replacing an original י, which is still present before verbal (PGN) endings; the most consistent weak verbs.

The nature and location of the different weaknesses means that not all forms of a weak verb are, in fact, weak (i.e., some forms look just like the basic verb). This chart shows which forms of each type vary from the strong verb.

Weakness	Qal	Nifal	D-stems	H-stems
I-נ I-ו/י	Weak in imperfect, preterite imperative, infinitive construct	Weak in perfect & participle	Strong in all forms	Weak in all forms
II-ו/י Geminate	Weak in nearly all forms		Replaced by *polel, polal, hitpolel*	
III-ה	Weak in preterite, jussive, infinitive construct, & all forms with PGN endings			

---

[3]English distinguishes strong from weak verbs by the form of their past tense. Verbs which add "-ed" to form the past are considered strong, since the form of the verbal root does not change ("look", "*look*ed"), whereas verbs that indicate the past in some other way (by changing a vowel ("run", "*r*an"), or all or part of their form ("go", "went"; "teach", "taught"; "be", "are")).

24.1.1 CONSISTENCY AMONG VERBAL FORMS

Each verbal stem is fairly consistent, using, for example, the same prefix vowel for each type of weakness. In addition, the III-ה verbs (for example) are weak in many forms, but their weakness is consistent across all stems and conjugations, and—which is especially important—does not affect any of the diagnostics that we learned for the basic verb, which means that they are fairly easy to recognize.

It is tempting to see the strong and weak forms as vastly different, but they are in fact quite closely tied to the forms of the strong verb (more strongly than, e.g., "be", "was", "are", and "am", or even   and   ).

1.   The subject [PGN] affixes are the same in all verbal forms (e.g., ־נו is always 1cp perfect, whether the stem is strong or weak).
2.   The weaknesses of these verbal roots are only morphological—they only affect the *shape* of the verbal form. They do not affect the function or syntax of the stems or conjugations (i.e., the preterite delineates the narrative backbone, and the *hifil* is generally transitive).

24.2   III-ה VERBS

The final ־ה of the lexical form of these verbal roots is a vowel letter, not a consonant. These verbs originally ended in י, which thus "replaces" the final ־ה before consonantal PGN endings and in Q passive participle. This weakness does not affect anything in front of the second radical of the verbal root, which means that their stem diagnostics are identical to those of the basic verb. These roots are also called ל"ה and "final ה".

N.B.   Verbal roots ending in ־ה (ה with *mappiq*) are *not weak*, but III-guttural (above); *mappiq* shows that the final ה is a consonant, not a vowel letter (e.g., גָּבַהּ, "be high"; נֹגַהּ, "shine/be bright").

24.2.1 FORM

1.   If there is *no PGN ending*
     a)   All forms except jussive, preterite, and infinitive construct end in ה. Each *conjugation* has a specific vowel before the final ה, regardless of the stem (on J, Pr, and NC, see below).

Ending	Conjugation	Example	Parsing	Where this Ending Occurs	
־ָה	perfect	בָּנָה	3ms Q P	3ms P only	
־ֶה	imperfect	יִבְנֶה	3ms Q F	1cs F, 2ms F, 3m/fs F, 1cp F only	all stems
	participle	מַבְנֶה	ms H Ptc	ms Ptc only	
־ֵה	imperative	בְּנֵה	ms Q V	2ms V only	
	infinitive absolute	הַבְנֵה	H NA	H & Hp NA	H & Hp only
־ֹה	infinitive absolute	הִתְבַּנֹּה	Dt NA	NA only	all stems except H & Hp
־וֹת	infinitive construct	בְּנוֹת	Q NC	NC f.p. Ptc	all stems

     b)   In the jussive and preterite of all stems, the final ה drops off forms without a PGN ending, and a "helping" vowel—usually *segol*—is added between the first and second radicals of the root.

	Perfect	Imperfect	Jussive	Preterite	
Q 3ms	בָּנָה	יִבְנֶה	יִבֶן	וַיִּבֶן	*and he built*
1cp	גָּלִינוּ	נִגְלֶה	נִגֶל	וַנִּגֶל	*and we revealed*
N 3ms	נִרְאָה	יֵרָאֶה	[יֵרָא]	וַיֵּרָא	*and he appeared*
D 3ms	צִוָּה	יְצַוֶּה	יְצַו	וַיְצַו	*and he commanded*
Dp 3ms	צֻוָּה	יְצֻוֶּה	יְצֻו	וַיְצֻו	*and he was commanded*
Dt 3ms	[הִתְכַּסָּה]	יִתְכַּסֶּה	[יִתְכַּס]	וַיִּתְכַּס	*and he hid [himself]*
H 3ms	הִשְׁקָה	יַשְׁקֶה	יַשְׁק	וַיַּשְׁק	*and he poured out*
Hp 3ms	הָגְלָה	[יָשְׁקֶה]	[יָשְׁק]	[וַיָּשְׁק]	*and it was poured out*

c)   In the *qal* passive (Qp) participle the final radical is יְ instead of ה:

בָּנוּי   *built*

גָּלוּי   *revealed*   ms Qp Ptc

2.   If there is a *PGN ending*:

   a)   *Vocalic* PGN endings are added directly to the second radical of the root. This occurs with וּ- and יְ -, but not with the 3fs perfect ending (ה -; #3 below):

יִבְנוּ   *They will build*   3mp Q F

תִּבְנִי   *You* (fs) *will build*   2fs Q F

בְּנִי   *Build!*   2fs Q V

צַוּוּ   *Command!*   mp D V

   b)   With *consonantal* endings יְ replaces the ה of the lexical form,[4] and comes between the verbal root and the ending. It is preceded by *ḥireq* or *ṣere* (in P), or *segol* (F, V).

בָּנִיתִי   *I built*   1cs Q P

הִשְׁקִיתָ   *You* (ms) *watered*   2ms H P

תִּבְנֶינָה   *You/they* (fp) *will build*   2/3fp Q F

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[4]As mentioned above, יְ was the original final letter of the III ה verbs.

3. In 3fs P (all stems), תָ- is added to the second radical of the root:

בָּנְתָה	*She built*	3fs Q P
הָבְנְתָה	*She was caused to build*	3fs Hp P
הִפְנְתָה	*She caused to turn*	3fs H P

4. The infinitive construct in all stems is formed by replacing the final ה with וֹת- :

בְּנוֹת	*to build*	Q NC
הִבָּנוֹת	*to be built*	N NC
הַבְנוֹת	*to cause to build*	H NC

5. The cohortative and imperfect look alike (i.e., cohortative ה is not used), so that it can only be detected from the context.

נִבְנֶה	*Let us build!*	1cp Q C *or*
	We shall build	1cp Q F

6. III- ה roots which are also I-ע (עָלָה, עָנָה, עָשָׂה) have *hatef-patah* under the ע and *patah* as prefix vowel in both Q and H. When this is combined with the loss of the final ה in the preterite (#1b, above), some forms of *qal* and *hifil* look exactly alike, and can be distinguished only from the context. Many of these verbs are intransitive in *qal* (e.g., עָלָה), and so will *not* have a direct object (*He went up*), but will have one in H (*He took [X] up*).

עֲשִׂיתֶם	*You* (mp) *made*	2mp Q P
תַּעֲלוּ	*You* (mp) *go up/ascend* or *You* (mp) *take [cause to go] up* [requires an object]	2mp Q F or 2mp H F
וַיַּעַל	*He went up* (Q) or *He [caused to go] took up* (H) [requires an object]	3ms Q Pr or 3ms H Pr
עֲנֵה	*Answer* [ms]!	2ms Q V

For a complete paradigm of the III-ה verb, please see **Appendix D**.

24.3 THE VERB היה (REVIEW)

The verb היה (introduced in §15.2) is the most common verb in the Bible (more than 3500x), Its forms are rather unusual due to its final ה- and medial -יִ-. Since it is a III-ה root, it follows the patterns described above, but whenever the *yod* ends a verbal form (in, e.g., 1cs, 2ms, 3ms, and 3fs preterite), it becomes a vowel letter and the form ends in long *hireq* (יִ -).

24.3.1 FORMS OF היה (ALL *QAL*)[5]

P 1cs	הָיִיתִי	*I was*
3cp	הָיוּ	*They were*
F 3ms	יִהְיֶה	*He shall be*
3mp	יִהְיוּ	*They shall be*
Pr 3ms	וַיְהִי	*Now he/it was* or *Then there was a/some …*
3mp	וַיִּהְיוּ	*They were*
J 3ms	יְהִי	*Let/May he/it be/happen*
NC	חֱיוֹת	*to be/[by] being*

24.3.2 FUNCTION (CF. §15.2.2)

Although היה is often glossed "be" or "become", its most common function in biblical narrative is to introduce a change of setting or circumstance—a shift of scene or focus—in a biblical narrative. The form most commonly used for this function is 3ms *qal* preterite (וַיְהִי), which functions as a discourse-level particle except when followed by a nominal subject.[2] In Ruth 1.1, for example, the first וַיְהִי is *introductory* and thus not represented in the translation, but the second is followed by a subject, (רָעָב) and therefore is predicate (and glossed in English). The circumstantial clause is formed with NC, as is frequent in BH:

וַיְהִי	[signals past reference]
בִּימֵי שְׁפֹט הַשֹּׁפְטִים	*In the days when the judges were judging,*
וַיְהִי רָעָב בָּאָרֶץ	there was a famine in the land [וַיְהִי has a subject],
וַיֵּלֶךְ אִישׁ	and [so] a man went … (Ru 1.1)

The circumstantial element can also be a nominal prepositional phrase, usually with a word of time or place:

וְהָיָה	[signals future reference]
בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים	*at the end of the days*
הַר יִהְיֶה בֵּית־יהוה נָכוֹן	the mountain of YHWH's house [temple] will be established (Mi 4.1)

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[5] היה also occurs in *nifal*.

24.4 FREQUENCY   This lists all III-ה verbal roots that occur *fifty times or more* in BH, in order of descending frequency.

היה	be, become, happen	c. 3500x	חנה	camp, encamp	143x
עשׂה	do, make, act	2573x	פנה	turn (aside)	134x
ראה	see	1294x	בכה	weep	114x
עלה	go up, ascend	879x	ידה	throw (D); thank, praise (H)	115x
נכה	hit, wound, defeat	504x	זנה	fornicate	95x
צוה	command (D)	494x	חרה	be(come) angry, hot	94x
בנה	build	373x	ענה (II)	be humbled, humiliated (Q)	79x
ענה (I)	answer	314x	שׁקה	water, give to drink (H)	79x
חיה	live	281x	חלה	be(come) weak, sick	77x
רבה	increase, multiply	226x	קנה	acquire, get, buy	78x
כלה	cease, finish, end	204x	חזה	see	72x
נטה	stretch out, turn	215x	פדה	buy, ransom	56x
שׁתה	drink	217x	אבה	agree, accept	54x
גלה	reveal, uncover	187x	ירה (III)	teach, instruct (H)	54x
רעה (I)	feed, graze, tend	171x	רצה	be pleased with, like	50x
כסה	cover, conceal (D)	157x	תעה	wander (lost)	50x

24.5 CONCEPTS

circumstantial   strong verb   weak verb

24.6 VOCABULARY

answer, reply; respond	עָנָה (I)	.359	build	בָּנָה	.351
be humbled, afflicted; humble, afflict (D)	עָנָה (II)	.360	uncover, reveal	גָּלָה (I)	.352
			go into captivity/exile	גָּלָה (II)	
do, make; act	עָשָׂה	.361	live, be/stay alive	חָיָה	.353
command, order (D)	צָוָה	.362	cease, finish, end, complete (often with inf. const.)	כָּלָה	.354
see	רָאָה	.363	cover, conceal (D)	כָּסָה	.355
increase, multiply	רָבָה	.364	stretch out; turn	נָטָה	.356
feed, graze, tend; herd	רָעָה	.365	hit, wound, defeat (H)	נָכָה	.357
drink	שָׁתָה	.366	go up, ascend	עָלָה	.358

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24.7 Exercises

After you have studied the III-ה verb, please gloss these sentences, parsing all verbal forms.

Is 40.5	1. וְנִגְלָה כְּבוֹד יְהוָה וְרָאוּ כָל־בָּשָׂר יַחְדָּו כִּי פִּי יְהוָה דִּבֵּר:
Jr 35.17	2. דִּבַּרְתִּי אֲלֵיהֶם וְלֹא שָׁמֵעוּ וָאֶקְרָא לָהֶם וְלֹא עָנוּ:
Jonah 1.10	3. וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ כִּי־יָדְעוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים כִּי־מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה הוּא בֹרֵחַ
Ps 30.11 [EV 30.10; נִי = 1cs suffix]; חנן *be gracious, show favour*; there are three imperatives in this v.	4. שְׁמַע־יְהוָה וְחָנֵּנִי יְהוָה הֱיֵה־עֹזֵר לִי:
2 Ch 19.6	5. רְאוּ מָה־אַתֶּם עֹשִׂים
Gn 13.1; Egypt; Abram, Lot; Negev	6. וַיַּעַל אַבְרָם מִמִּצְרַיִם הוּא וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וְלוֹט עִמּוֹ הַנֶּגְבָּה:
Gn 1.3-4a; the *athnah* (the accent under the first occurrence of אור means "pause here"; see §27.3)	7. וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר וַיְהִי־אוֹר: וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאוֹר כִּי־טוֹב
Gn 1.9; קוה *be gathered* (N)	8. וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יִקָּווּ הַמַּיִם מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם אֶל־מָקוֹם אֶחָד וְתֵרָאֶה הַיַּבָּשָׁה וַיְהִי־כֵן:
Gn 2.18; לְבַד *only, alone*, here with 3ms suffix	9. לֹא־טוֹב הֱיוֹת הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ
Gn 2.24	10. וְהָיוּ לְבָשָׂר אֶחָד
Gn 8.20; Noah	11. וַיִּבֶן נֹחַ מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה
Gn 20.12	12. וַתְּהִי־לִי לְאִשָּׁה
Ex 33.18 [נִי = 1cs suffix]	13. וַיֹּאמַר הַרְאֵנִי נָא אֶת־כְּבֹדֶךָ:

Ex 32.4; יִשְׂרָאֵל is vocative; Egypt	14. וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֶּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלוּךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם:
Dt 9.9	15. לֶחֶם לֹא אָכַלְתִּי וּמַיִם לֹא שָׁתִיתִי:
1 Sa 4.9; פְּלִשְׁתִּים is vocative; Philistines, Hebrews	16. הִתְחַזְּקוּ וִהְיוּ לַאֲנָשִׁים פְּלִשְׁתִּים פֶּן תַּעַבְדוּ לָעִבְרִים כַּאֲשֶׁר עָבְדוּ לָכֶם וִהְיִיתֶם לַאֲנָשִׁים וְנִלְחַמְתֶּם:
1 Sa 26.23	17. וְלֹא אָבִיתִי לִשְׁלֹחַ יָדִי בִּמְשִׁיחַ יהוה:
1 Sa 14.35; Saul	18. וַיִּבֶן שָׁאוּל מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוה
Ne 9.18; נְאָצָה contempt, blasphemy; Egypt	19. וַיֹּאמְרוּ זֶה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הֶעֶלְךָ מִמִּצְרָיִם וַיַּעֲשׂוּ נְאָצוֹת גְּדֹלוֹת:
Lv 18.8; עֶרְוָה nakedness [The "nakedness" commandments occur in Lv 18.6-19.]	20. עֶרְוַת אֵשֶׁת־אָבִיךָ לֹא תְגַלֵּה עֶרְוַת אָבִיךָ הִוא:

24.7 ENRICHMENT: NARRATIVE APERTURE

Circumstantial clauses or phrases, as discussed above, often signal narrative onset (or "aperture"), and thus can signal the author's organization of the story (cf. the examples under in §24.3.2). The significance of this is that we need to beware the tendency to rearrange a text in order to suit our own purposes (i.e., the temptation to use the text merely to make our point). To take the first point of a sermon or exposition from the middle of the story (or poem), the second point from the beginning, and our final point from near the end is merely a way of announcing to others that we would have written the passage differently. It is, in other words, to subordinate our own interests to the interests and concerns of its author.

Our message—which purports to re-present the text to our readers or hearers—must serve the text; the text does not exist to serve our sermon.

Noting narrative aperture is one means of being sure that we are paying attention to the authors' arrangement of the material, and that we are attempting to follow their lead rather than to replace it with our own. Since every aperture also means that the previous section has closed, identifying apertures enables us to note the "breaks" in the story that correspond to the paragraphs, &c. of stories in English. Since the chapter breaks in our modern Bibles were not original, we need to be careful not to assume their priority in the organization of the story, even though they may indicate a "shift" of perspective within a larger, more general topic (cf. §26.8).

Semantic markers of aperture are mainly words that signal a change of some type—especially shifts in time (chronology), place (location), and participants (characters). By the same token, continuity of characters across chapter breaks suggests that the break is ill-placed. In Gn 18 (see §26.7) and 44, for example, the main character in the first unit of the chapter is not identified by name, implying in each case that he is the same person identified as the subject of the preceding clause(s). This in turn implies that the stories now separated by the chapter break are a single story that should be read and studied as a whole.

LESSON 25 "PRE-READING" BIBLICAL NARRATIVE, I

WHEN FACED WITH A PAGE of Hebrew narrative, don't panic! This lesson describes and discusses some textual characteristics of biblical narrative that point the way through biblical stories. These "steps" are intended to help you "pre-read" the story, i.e., to prepare you to read it in Hebrew before studying it.

They provide an artificial, but helpful means of beginning to read, study, and understand the story. In themselves they do not guarantee that you will interpret the story correctly, nor do they provide an expository outline, although, used properly, they should both help avoid misinterpreting the story and suggest an approach to interpreting and explaining the passage.

25.1 PRETERITES

Preterites form the "backbone" of biblical narratives (§6.3), and tie it together, much as sticking to the past tense in English helps the reader or hearer keep track of what happened. Different types of connecting pieces of a story are called "cohesive devices", just as "textual cohesion" or just "cohesion" refers to the way that a story "hangs together". Pronouns are perhaps the most obvious cohesive devices, since, in order to understand "she said" we need to remember who "she" is. By referring back to someone already named the pronoun ties the event described by "she said" to an earlier portion of the story. Verbal conjugation—an example of what we might call *temporal reference*—can also be a cohesive device.

All of this suggests that a helpful first step in breaking the narrative into more manageable pieces is to locate its preterites. When they have been marked (circled, highlighted, &c.), they mark the beginning of many, if not most, of the main narrative clauses, outline the flow of the story, suggest its pacing, and reveal some of its content.

Syntax. Since preterites always open [come first in] their clause, marking the preterites indicates the opening boundary of many—sometimes most or all—of the main narrative clauses. The preterite clauses should be read as syntactical units, without reading "across" preterites (e.g., we should not "move" אַבְרָם *Abram*, the last word in Gn 12.7a, into the following preterite clause).[6]

Since the subject is often the second word in the preterite clause, marking the preterites also suggests where the subject of each clause can be found (this is, of course, a "rule" with frequent exceptions).

Flow & Pace. Preterites outline the story by their spacing and content (lexical function). You may notice that in many biblical narratives preterites tend to come in clusters, with relatively larger stretches of material between these clusters. They are sometimes spaced more evenly throughout the narrative. This spacing suggests that either there will be a great deal of quoted material, introduced by וַיֹּאמֶר, &c., or a large amount of descriptive material (background, &c.) introducing or supporting the chain of events (e.g., 1 Sam 3.1-3).

Content. The content (semantic function) of the preterites also suggests the nature of the story. In, e.g., Gn 12.1-9, the preterite that opens the discourse (וַיֹּאמֶר) introduces three verses of direct quotation (12.1-3), which is followed by a stretch of six preterites (4-6), five of which are verbs of motion or travel. The next two preterites (7a) introduce another, very brief, divine speech (7b), followed by six more preterites, two of which describe the act of building (7c, 8b), and two of which are again verbs of motion (8a, 9a). Simply noting this suggests that the narrative contained in these verses centers on a person or persons moving from one place to another. When you come to read the story, therefore, you expect to find information about this type of activity.

If, on the other hand, most or all of the preterites are verbs of speaking (e.g., Gn 17), you know that the "story" largely records a conversation, which in Scripture will tend to be one person telling another what to do (instruction, exhortation) or what he or she [the speaker] will do (prophecy, promise). In fact, in Gn 12.1-3, this is what we find. God tells Abram what to do (1), and then makes certain promises to him (2-3).

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[6]This does not presume to answer the question of whether or not "Abram" might be more appropriately placed in the following clause in a particular translation.

This leads directly to a second aspect of narrative.

25.2 QUOTATION FORMULAE

A large part of the narrative burden of biblical stories is carried by direct quotations. Often, for example, after relating the details of Moses' or Joshua's instructions, the narrative will remark merely that "and he did so" (וַיַּעַשׂ כֵּן) (Jg 6.20; 1 Kg 20.25; Est 2.4; Is 20.2)) or "so they did what Moses [Josuha] had commanded", without describing their actions or repeating the instructions. This means that although the preterites may carry the narrative flow of the story, the quotations often provide much of its substance.

The second aspect of pre-reading a narrative is therefore to note where the quotations begin and end. They are introduced with a verb of speaking (אמר, דבר, שָׁאל, &c.) that is often followed by the subject and addressee (introduced by לְ). This type of introductory syntagm ("YHWH said to Abram") is called an *introductory formula*, and makes it easy to locate the *aperture* or beginning of the quoted material. Recognizing where they end is not always quite so simple, since other clauses may come between the end of the quotation and the next preterite. For now, merely noting quotation formulae will alert you to the speeches in the passage.

In a narrative, many quotation formulae will already have been marked as preterites, but they also occur in other types of clauses (e.g., in Gn 12.12a2 וְאָמְרוּ falls within Abram's speech). This means that it is not enough merely to check the marked preterites for verbs of speaking.

Quotation formulae also serve another purpose, however. When they occur in consecutive verses, they are more likely to signal a conversation, but, when *repeated* within a unified speech (i.e., not to indicate alternating speakers), they do not re-introduce the speaker (as though the reader had forgotten who was talking), but signal topical shifts within the speech. Here are three examples from the early chapters of Genesis.

In Genesis 1.3-26, the repeated quotation formula וַיֹּאמֶר signals the next divine creative activity. There was no one else to speak, so we must ask why the verb and its subject (וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים) are repeated. The formula initiates each divine act, and, at the end of that chapter, marks the topical division of the divine speech to the newly created man and woman (Gn 1.28-30):

Topic	Gloss	Quotation Formula	Ref.
The blessing of abundance & dominion	*God blessed them … and God said to them, "…*	וַיְבָרֶךְ … וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם	9.1
The provision of food	*And God said, "…*	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים	9.8

In Genesis 9.1-17, the formulae reveal the organization of a long divine speech:

Topic	Gloss	Quotation Formula	Ref.
The command to fill the earth, provision of food, and institution of justice (the human aspects of the covenant)	*And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "…*	וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נֹחַ וְאֶת־בָּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם	9.1
Divine covenant with all life	*And God said to Noah & his sons with him [saying], "…*	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־נֹחַ וְאֶל־בָּנָיו אִתּוֹ לֵאמֹר	9.8
The sign of the covenant	*And God said, "…*	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים	9.12
Reiteration: sign & scope of covt.	*And God said to Noah, "…*	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־נֹחַ	9.17

Genesis 17 illustrates both points about quotation formulae, including the difference between an extended speech and conversation. The announcement of the covenantal sign of circumcision (Gn 17.3b-17) is divided into three sections by further quotative frames:

Topic	Gloss	Quotation Formula	Ref.
YHWH's rôle in establishing the covenant	*And God spoke with him [saying], "…*	וַיְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר	17.3b
Abraham's responsibility within the covenant (circumcision)	*And God said to Abraham, "…*	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם	17.9
Sarah's rôle in the covenantal promise	*And God said to Abraham, "…*	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם	17.15

This is followed by three preterites that describe Abraham's response (*He fell … he laughed … he said to himself …* [17.17]), after which two further quotation formulae introduce the ensuing conversation between Abraham and YHWH:

Topic	Gloss	Quotation Formula	Ref.
Abraham asks about Ishmael	*And Abraham said to God, "…*	וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים	17.18
God reassures him about Ishmael	*And God said, "…*	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים	17.19

Finally, some of the gaps in the preterite chain (which we noted when we marked the preterites, §25.1) should now be filled by quotations. Just as the preterite chain suggests the pace of the story, quotation plays a large rôle in dramatic pacing by slowing and focussing a narrative. In a movie, montages (a series of relatively fast clips, usually without any dialogue) and slow motion are two means of controlling pace. Unlike a movie (which can show someone doing something as they speak), a written text can only mention one thing at a time. As we read a quotation, nothing else happens, which stops the flow of events. If a passage consists largely of blocks of quotation (cf., e.g., Gn 9.1-17; 17.3b-21), not much is going to "happen", even if the passage is fairly lengthy. To invoke a false dichotomy—*what* is said (the content of the quotations) often overshadows *that* it is said (the narrated event).

25.3 וַיְהִי - CLAUSES

One rather special subset of preterites has already been mentioned, namely וַיְהִי—the 3ms Q Pr of היה (§15.2). This form has two primary syntagmatic functions, each of which is related to its function within the larger discourse.

1. *Circumstantial*. When *wayhî* is followed by either a temporal expression, either a nominal phrase or a verbal clause (e.g., וַיְהִי בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא, preposition + infinitive construct), its clause is *circumstantial*. These usually indicate a change in the temporal or locative setting (cf. Gropp 1995, 202).

2. *Predicate*. When a subject follows *wayhî*, the clause introduces a person or object, or describes a change in the larger setting or circumstances of the story.

Wayhî occurrs four times in Genesis 12.10-16. The first (10) and fourth (16b) are predicate, and introduce changes in the narrative situation, the second (11) and third (14) are circumstantial, introducing [events at] stages in Abram's journey to Egypt:

Ref.	wayh Clause	Gloss	Narrative Shift
12.10	וַיְהִי רָעָב בָּאָרֶץ	*There was a famine* in the land	A change in situation, implying that the famine began after Abram was is in the land (background information for what follows)
12.11	וַיְהִי הִקְרִיב לָבוֹא מִצְרָיְמָה	*When he was about to enter* Egypt, …	The second "stage" of Abram's journey to Egypt (cf. v. 10b)
12.14	וַיְהִי כְּבוֹא אַבְרָם מִצְרָיְמָה	*When Abram entered* Egypt, …	The conclusion of Abram's journey to Egypt
12.16	וַיְהִי לוֹ צֹאן־וּבָקָר	*He had* flocks and herds, …	A change in Abram's circumstance because of Sarai

The beginning of 12.10 implies that when Abram had arrived and received the promise of God there was no famine in the land, just as the clause in 12.16 implies that he now had [significantly?] more than he had had before Pharaoh took Sarai.

More theoretically, when *wayhî* is *predicate* (as defined above), it is *morphologically* bound to (or cohesive with) the main storyline since it is a preterite, which suggests that *wayhî* clauses raise the description of a state or condition to the status of the narrative backbone, even though *they do not narrate a sequential or consequential event* (e.g., Gn 12.10).[7] In this case, its function is analogous to that of a preterite of a non-dynamic stative verb. Cf. the difference between, e.g., "Abram *was* very wealthy", which describes a[n ongoing] state, and "Abram *became* [or *had become*] very wealthy", which describes either the beginning of his wealth ("became") or his prior arrival at a state of wealth ("had become"). There is thus the possibility that predicate וַיְהִי clauses may be inceptive: "A famine *came upon* the land" (cf. the prophetic formula, e.g., וַיְהִי דְּבַר־יהוה אֶל־יוֹנָה בֶן־אֲמִתַּי, "YHWH's word *came* to Jonah …" [Jon 1.1]).

In fact, since both types of *wayhî* clauses can signal a change in setting or circumstance (e.g., Gn 12.10), they reveal some of the discontinuities in the story that mark what can be called narrative "seams" or "boundaries", or the onset of narrative "chunks" that begin conceptual units of the story.

Although we need to check our impressions of the function of *wayhî* against the relationship between the content of the *wayhî* clause and the rest of the discourse, this helps us look beyond the individual form to its literary cotext, and encourages us to avoid so-called "literal" renderings such as "and it happened/came to pass".

The combination of preterites, quotations, and *wayhî*-clauses should give us a pretty good grasp of the story's overall structure. Four more aspects to "pre-reading" a text remain (which we shall leave for a later time).[8]

25.4 THE PURPOSE OF TRANSLATION

Forcing ourselves to make decisions
Humility re versions—realizing the choices that have to be made
Realizing that TS is much more than assigning one gloss per word

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[7] The exception to this "rule of non-narration" is when וַיְהִי (and other forms of *hayah*) are followed by a ל showing a change in the subject's status ("became").

[8] They are disjunctive clauses, masoretic accents, narrative boundaries, clause-level particles.

25.4 Vocabulary

teach, instruct (H)	יָרָה (III)	.375	be willing, agree	אָבָה	.367
ransom, buy (back)	פָּדָה	.376	weep, mourn, wail	בָּכָה	.368
turn (toward)	פָּנָה	.377	fornicate, commit illicit sex	זָנָה	.369
acquire, get, buy	קָנָה	.378	see, observe, gaze [at]	חָזָה	.370
be pleased with, like	רָצָה	.379	be/become weak, sick, ill	חָלָה	.371
pleasure, favour	רָצוֹן	.380	camp, encamp	חָנָה	.372
water, give a drink [to someone or something] (H)	שָׁקָה	.381	be/become angry, hot	חָרָה	.373
wander (lost)	תָּעָה	.382	thank, praise (H)	יָדָה	.374

25.5 Exercise

In the reading passage for the next class, please (1) mark (highlight, underline) the preterites; (2) quotation formulae; and (3) any occurrences of *wayhî* (and identify their function as either circumstantial or predicate).

25.6 Enrichment: Participant Identification (I)

Noting the preterites, quotation formulae, and *wayhî*-clauses in a biblical narrative helps us study the text more carefully, but other types of information in narrative also need to be recognized and accounted for. One that can be especially helpful in understanding the author's intention in a passage is *participant identification*. You have probably noticed that the biblical authors tend to identify the main characters (actors) in the story, either by name, or title, or both. In Genesis 16, for example, the use of appositional descriptors underlines the dysfunctionality of the triad of Sarai, Hagar, and Abram (to name them in the order in which they appear in the story).

  Genesis 16 begins with three disjunctive clauses (**16.1**) that set the stage for the story by identifying the major participants, Sarai and Hagar:

1a	וְשָׂרַי אֵשֶׁת אַבְרָם לֹא יָלְדָה לוֹ	Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not born [a child] to/for him,
1b	וְלָהּ שִׁפְחָה מִצְרִית	and she had an Egyptian maid,
1c	וּשְׁמָהּ הָגָר:	and her name was Hagar.

Sarai is identified by her relationship to Abram, and Hagar in relationship to her, as well as by her ethnicity. Abram is mentioned only to establish his relationship to Sarai—to "remind" readers that Sarai was his wife.

  In **Gn 16.2**, Sarai is explicitly named as the subject of the leading preterite, but this is a necessary identification. Since two women were named in v. 1, the 3fs preterite וַתֹּאמֶר requires an explicit subject in order for the reader to know—as the quotation begins—which woman spoke to Abram. At the end of the verse, when Abram agrees acquiesced to Sarai, both actors, already named at the beginning of the verse are again called by name. On the other hand, Sarai does not mention Hagar's name, referring to her merely as "my maid" (שִׁפְחָתִי).

... וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרַי אֶל־אַבְרָם	And *Sarai* said to *Abram*, "...
וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם לְקוֹל שָׂרָי:	and *Abram* listened to *Sarai's* voice (16.2).

  In **Gn 16.3**, both Sarai and Hagar are identified as fully as they were in v. 1, and Abram is named "in both directions"—Sarai as his wife, and he as her husband, probably to highlight the tangled relationships

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that are being created:

וַתִּקַּח שָׂרַי אֵשֶׁת־אַבְרָם
אֶת־הָגָר הַמִּצְרִית שִׁפְחָתָהּ
וַתִּתֵּן אֹתָהּ לְאַבְרָם אִישָׁהּ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה׃

And *Sarai, Abram's wife*, took *Hagar, the Egyptian, her maid*, …

and she gave her to *Abram her husband*, to be a wife for him.

When the relationship between Hagar and Sarai deteriorates (**16.4**), the author places Sarai and Abram on the same level by introducing both of their quotations with both names:

וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרַי אֶל־אַבְרָם …

And *Sarai* said to *Abram*, "… (16.5)

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֶל־שָׂרַי …

and *Abram* said to *Sarai*, "… (16.6)

Throughout this brief conversation, Hagar is again demoted, not mentioned by name, but merely called "my/your maid". At the end of the story, however, Hagar is named three times—always as the subject of the verb ילד (a preterite [15a], a perfect in a relative clause [15b], and an infinitive construct in a temporal clause within the final disjunctive clause [16]).

וַתֵּלֶד הָגָר לְאַבְרָם בֵּן
וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָם שֶׁם־בְּנוֹ אֲשֶׁר־יָלְדָה הָגָר
וְאַבְרָם בֶּן־שְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים
בְּלֶדֶת־הָגָר אֶת־יִשְׁמָעֵאל לְאַבְרָם׃

And *Hagar* bore Abram a son,

and Abram called the name of his son, whom *Hagar* bore … (16.15)

(now Abram was eighty-six years old when *Hagar* bore Ishmael to Abram). (16.16)

Although she is not called Abram's "wife" after v. 3, at the end of the story she is no longer defined in terms of her relationship to Sarai, but in her own right as the mother of Ishmael, which implies some change in her standing within the home.

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LESSON 26   I-נ VERBS

VERBAL ROOTS that begin with נ are weak whenever the first radical of a verbal form is followed by silent *šewa*, since the נ assimilates to the following consonant. Verbs I-נ are therefore weak throughout *hifil* and *hofal*, and in some forms of *nifal* (P, Ptc) and *qal* (F, Pr, V, NC). They are strong throughout all three D-stems, and in some conjugations of *nifal* (F, Pr, V, NC) and *qal* (P, NA, Ptc). This general pattern is the same as the I-י verb (below), so that some forms of these roots are exactly alike, and the lexical form can be determined only by knowing the vocabulary or from context, or both.

Stem	Weak Forms	Strong Forms
Q	F, Pr, V [NC,NA]	P, Ptc [NC, NA]
N	P, Ptc	F, Pr, V [NC,NA]
D, Dp, Dt	None	All forms
H, Hp	All forms	None

When the first radical of a verbal form is followed by silent *šewa* (e.g., יִמְשֹׁל), the initial נ assimilates to the following consonant and doubles it. Each of the following pair of forms has the same parsing; the second verb of each pair is I-נ.

Form	Root	Parsing	Gloss	Dage forte
נִמְשַׁל	משׁל	3ms N P	*He was kept*	In נִגַּשׁ the initial –נ of נגשׁ has assimilated to the גּ; the –נ is the prefix of the *nifal* perfect.
נִגַּשׁ	נגשׁ		*He approached*	
יִמְשֹׁל	משׁל	3ms Q F	*He keeps (will keep)*	In יִפֹּל the initial –נ of נפל has assimilated to the פּ.
יִפֹּל	נפל		*He falls (will fall)*	
הִמְשִׁיל	משׁל	3ms H P	*He caused to keep*	In הִצִּיל the initial –נ of נצל has assimilated to the צ.
הִצִּיל	נצל		*He rescued*	

1. The primary clue that a verbal form is from a I-נ root is that there are only two radicals, the first of which is doubled (if there is any type of stem or subject prefix).
2. If the second radical of a I-נ root is a guttural or ר, the root is like the basic verb (נ does not assimilate).
3. I-נ roots that are also hollow (e.g., נוּס) follow the rules of the hollow verbs (Lesson 28), not I-נ verbs.
4. Some forms of I-נ roots in Q look exactly like I-י forms (Lesson 30).

26.1   I-נ VERBAL ROOTS IN *QAL*

There are three main types of I-נ verb (creatively called Types I, II, and III). Type I occurs in all stems, Type II in Q of some verbal roots; Type III consists of only one verb (נתן). There is no distinction in the other stems (i.e., the differences between Types I, II, & III only appear in *qal*).

26.1.1   TYPE I (Q F WITH *HOLEM*)

This is the most common type of I-נ verb; when the initial נ is followed by silent *šewa* it assimilates to the second radical and doubles it. Type I verbal forms from I-נ roots are therefore weak throughout the H-stems (*hifil, hofal*), in *qal* imperfect and preterite, and in *nifal* perfect and participle. This skeleton paradigm shows the forms of Type I verbs that are affected (*weak*):

Type I		Q	N	H	Hp
P	3ms	נָפַל	נִפַּל	הִפִּיל	הֻפַּל
F	3ms	יִפֹּל	יִנָּפֵל	יַפִּיל	יֻפַּל
V	ms	נְפֹל	הִנָּפֵל	הַפֵּל	---
	mp	נִפְלוּ	הִנָּפְלוּ	הַפִּילוּ	---
NC		נְפֹל	הִנָּפֵל	הַפִּיל	הֻפַּל
Ptc	ms	נֹפֵל	נִפָּל	מַפִּיל	מֻפָּל

1. Shaded spaces mean that those forms are not weak (--- means that this form does not occur).
2. The prefix and its vowel are unaffected (except in Hp, where the prefix vowel is always *qibbuṣ*).
3. The endings and vowels after the second radical are the same as those of the basic verb.

26.1.2 TYPE II (Q F WITH *PATAḤ*)

These verbs differ from Type I only in *qal* imperfect, preterite, imperative, and infinitive construct; all other forms are the same as Type I (above). The paradigm shows only the *weak* forms of this type of I-נ verb, using נגש and לקח, and lists Q forms only, since the other stems are the same as Type I (above).

Type II (Qal)		נגש		לקח	
F	3ms	יִגַּשׁ	*he approaches/ will approach*	יִקַּח	*he takes/ will take*
	3mp	יִגְּשׁוּ	*they approach/ will approach*	יִקְחוּ	*they take/ will take*
Pr	3ms	וַיִּגַּשׁ	*and he approached*	וַיִּקַּח	*and he took*
	3mp	וַיִּגְּשׁוּ	*and they approached*	וַיִּקְחוּ	*and they took*
V	ms	גַּשׁ	*Approach!*	קַח	*Take!*
	mp	גְּשׁוּ	*Approach!*	קְחוּ	*Take!*
NC		גֶּשֶׁת	*[to]* approach	קַחַת	*[to]* take

1. The root sign ( ) is used in studying Hebrew to show that we are discussing or describing forms from a particular verbal root.
2. *Qal* imperfect has *pataḥ* after the second radical.
3. In Q imperative and infinitive construct the initial נ drops off (apocopates).
4. A final ת- is added to Q NC, which has two *seghols* (two *pataḥ*s in II- and III-guttural roots), and looks just like Q NC of some I-י verbs (below).
5. The forms of the verb לקח look just like the forms of a I-נ verb (Type II); any verbal form with קַח- or -קְח- is therefore a form of לקח. It is the only I-ל verb that does this. The medial ק loses *dageš forte* before *šewa*; cf. 3mp Q F (above).

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26.1.3   TYPE III (נתן ONLY)

The most common I-נ verb (c. 2000x in BH), נתן, is the only verb of this type. In *nifal* (the only non-*qal* stem in which it occurs), it is like Type II (above). Its main difference from other verbs in *qal* is that the final ן assimilates to consonantal PGN endings:

Q P	1cs	נָתַתִּי	*I gave*	
N P	2mp	נִתַּתֶּם	*You were given (put, set, made)*	

The other forms of נתן look like Type II (above), except that its stem vowel is *ṣere*. In addition, Q NC lacks both נ's.

F	3ms	יִתֵּן	*He gives/will give*
	3mp	יִתְּנוּ	*They [will] give*
Pr	1cs	וָאֶתֵּן	*I gave*
	3ms	וַיִּתֵּן	*He gave*
V	2ms	תֵּן	
		תְּנָה	*Give!*
	2mp	תְּנוּ	
		תֵּת	*to give*
NC	+1cs sfx	תִּתִּי	*my giving*
	+2ms sfx	תִּתְּךָ	*your giving*

A paradigm listing all forms of נתן that occur in BH follows the I-נ paradigm (Appendix E).

26.2   *NIFAL* OF I-נ VERBAL ROOTS

Like the strong verb (Lesson 18), I-נ verbal roots appear in two basic forms in *nifal*, with a doubled second radical (P, Ptc) or a doubled first radical (F, Pr, V):

נפל

P	3ms	נִפַּל
F	3ms	יִנָּפֵל
Pr	3ms	וַיִּנָּפֵל
V	ms	נִפֹּל
NC		נִפֹּל
Ptc	ms	נִפָּל

1.   In the perfect and participle, the initial -נ assimilates to the second radical. The -נ is the -נ prefix of the *nifal*.
2.   In the other conjugations, the -נ of the *nifal* prefix assimilates to the initial -נ of the verbal root; these forms look just like the strong verb. The visible -נ- is the initial radical of the verbal root.

3.   Unlike *qal*, the *nifal* of I-נ verbal roots appears in only one set of forms.

26.3   *HIFIL & HOFAL* (H, Hp) of I-נ VERBAL ROOTS

Since the *nun* is assimilated in all forms of the *hifil* and *hofal*,[9] the initial –נ of I-נ verbal roots that occur only in the H-stems (e.g., נגד, נשׂג) *never* appears:

		נגד H	נגד Hp	נשׂג H
P	3ms	הִגִּיד	הֻגַּד	הִשִּׂיג
F	3ms	יַגִּיד	---	יַשִּׂיג
Pr	3ms	וַיַּגֵּד	וַיֻּגַּד	וַיַּשֵּׂג
V	ms	הַגֵּד	---	---
NC		הַגִּיד	---	---
Ptc	ms	מַגִּיד	---	מַשִּׂיג

Forms marked with --- do not occur; Hp of נשׂג does not occur.

26.4   FREQUENCY This table lists all I-נ verbs that occur fifty times or more in BH.

נתן	*give*	1994x	נבא	*prophesy* (N)	115x
נכה	*hit, wound, defeat* (H; once each in N, Dp)	504x	נצב	*take one's stand/place* (N, H)	75x
נשׂא	*lift, carry, forgive*	651x	נבט	*look at, pay attention* (once in D; therefore "always" בט-)	70x
נפל	*fall*	433x	נצח	*lead* (D)	65x
נגד	*tell; declare, report, announce* (H; always גד-)	369x	נצר	*watch, guard*	63x
נטה	*stretch out; turn*	215x	נטע	*plant*	57x
נצל	*snatch, rescue, deliver* (H)	208x	נדח	*be scattered* (N); *scatter* (H)	51x
נגע	*touch; reach, come to*	150x	נכר	*recognize* (H); a few times in N, D; therefore usually כר-	50x
נסע	*depart, break camp*	146x	נשׂג	*overtake* (H; always שׂג-)	50x
נגשׁ	*approach, come near*	125x			

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[9]This assimilation always takes place because the first radical of every form in H and Hp is followed by silent *šewa*.

26.5 Vocabulary

depart, break camp, travel	נָסַע	.391	prophesy (N)	נָבָא	.383
fall	נָפַל	.392	look at, pay attention to (H)	נָבַט	.384
take one's stand/place; be assigned (N)	נָצַב	.393	tell; report, declare, announce (H)	נָגַד	.385
lead (D)	נָצָח	.394	touch; reach, come to / blow, assault; plague	נָגַע נֶגַע	.386
rescue, deliver; snatch (all H)	נָצַל	.395	come near, approach	נָגַשׁ	.387
watch, guard, keep, protect	נָצַר	.396	be scattered (st. vb.)	נָדַח	.388
lift, carry; forgive	נָשָׂא	.397	plant	נָטַע	.389
give	נָתַן	.398	pretend (N); recognize (H)	נָכַר	.390

26.6 Exercises

After you have studied the I-נ verb, please gloss these texts, *and then* locate and identify (parse) all of the I-נ verbs in Genesis 11.27-13.14.

1. Gen 32.30; 2ms V with הָ - ending; Jacob

וַיִּשְׁאַל יַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמֶר הַגִּידָה־נָּא שְׁמֶךָ

2. Ex 17.2; ריב *strive*; Moses

וַיָּרֶב הָעָם עִם־מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמְרוּ תְּנוּ־לָנוּ מַיִם וְנִשְׁתֶּה

3. 1 Sa 8.6; וַיֵּרַע *but it was wrong (evil, wicked)*; 2ms V with הָ - ending; פלל *pray*; Samuel

וַיֵּרַע הַדָּבָר בְּעֵינֵי שְׁמוּאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ תְּנָה־לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ לְשָׁפְטֵנוּ וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה:

4. 1 Sa 14.43; Saul, Jonathan

וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל־יוֹנָתָן הַגִּידָה לִּי מֶה עָשִׂיתָה וַיַּגֶּד־לוֹ יוֹנָתָן

5. Is 63.15; זבל *dwelling*

הַבֵּט מִשָּׁמַיִם
וּרְאֵה מִזְּבֻל קָדְשְׁךָ

6. Jr 1.8; ירא *fear, be afraid*

אַל־תִּירָא מִפְּנֵיהֶם כִּי־אִתְּךָ אֲנִי לְהַצִּלֶךָ נְאֻם־יְהוָה:

7. Am 7.15 [2ms QV הלך]; the speaker is Amos

וַיִּקָּחֵנִי יְהוָה מֵאַחֲרֵי הַצֹּאן וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי יְהוָה לֵךְ הִנָּבֵא אֶל־עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

8. Gen 3.6

וַתִּקַּח מִפִּרְיוֹ וַתֹּאכַל וַתִּתֵּן גַּם־לְאִישָׁהּ עִמָּהּ וַיֹּאכַל:

9. Ps 56.14a [ET 15a]; this nomenclature means that the English and Hebrew texts are divided differently; in English this verse is Ps 56.15

כִּי הִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוֶת

10. יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא־יַכֶּכָּה וְיָרֵחַ בַּלָּיְלָה׃   Ps 121.6; ‑כָה is a 2ms suffix

11. וְאִישׁ אֶחָד מִבְּנֵי הַנְּבִיאִים אָמַר אֶל־רֵעֵהוּ בִּדְבַר יְהוָה הַכֵּינִי נָא וַיְמָאֵן הָאִישׁ לְהַכֹּתוֹ׃   1Kg 20.35

12. אֶת־קַשְׁתִּי נָתַתִּי בֶּעָנָן וְהָיְתָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵין הָאָרֶץ׃   Gn 9.13; קֶשֶׁת *bow* (n.)

13. וְנָתַנּוּ אֶת־בְּנֹתֵינוּ לָכֶם וְאֶת־בְּנֹתֵיכֶם נִקַּח־לָנוּ וְיָשַׁבְנוּ אִתְּכֶם וְהָיִינוּ לְעַם אֶחָד׃   Gn 34.16

14. לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת־שֵׁם־יְהוָה־אֱלֹהֶיךָ לַשָּׁוְא כִּי לֹא יְנַקֶּה יְהוָה אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יִשָּׂא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ לַשָּׁוְא׃   Ex 20.7; שָׁוְא *vanity, in vain*; נקה *acquit, leave unpunished*

15. וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־הַכֹּהֲנִים לֵאמֹר שְׂאוּ אֶת־אֲרוֹן הַבְּרִית וְעִבְרוּ לִפְנֵי הָעָם וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֶת־אֲרוֹן הַבְּרִית וַיֵּלְכוּ לִפְנֵי הָעָם׃   Jos 3.6; Joshua

16. וּמָשַׁכְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֶל־נַחַל קִישׁוֹן אֶת־סִיסְרָא שַׂר־צְבָא יָבִין וְאֶת־רִכְבּוֹ וְאֶת־הֲמוֹנוֹ וּנְתַתִּיהוּ בְּיָדֶךָ׃   Jg 4.7; משׁךְ *draw [pull] [out]*; הָמוֹן *host, multitude; tumult, confusion*; Kishon, Sisera, Jabin

17. הִנְנִי נֹתֵן בּוֹ רוּחַ וְשָׁמַע שְׁמוּעָה וְשָׁב לְאַרְצוֹ וְהִפַּלְתִּיו בַּחֶרֶב בְּאַרְצוֹ׃   2 Kgs 19.7; שְׁמוּעָה *report, rumour*; וְשָׁב 3ms Q P + *w* < שׁוּב, *return, go back*

18. וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה אֶת־יָדוֹ וַיַּגַּע עַל־פִּי וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי הִנֵּה נָתַתִּי דְבָרַי בְּפִיךָ׃   Jr 1.9; נָתַתִּי *may be performative* (§10.9)

26.7 Enrichment: Participant Reference (II)

The narrator's choice of *participant reference* (how participants are described; see §25.6) often helps us understand the passage. In Genesis 18.1-5, this choice suggests that the chapter break is ill-placed. After the first two clauses, the narrator does not identify the subject of any of these clauses, nor does he identify the pronominal object אֵלָיו. The significance of this lack of identification again comes from the tendency of Hebrew narrative to identify participants (one of the functions of the passive stems is to *avoid* identifying the subject).

In fact, apart from "YHWH" (18.1a) the participants in these verses are identified only by pronouns and generic nouns (i.e., שְׁלֹשִׁים אֲנָשִׁים; 18.2a)):

וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יהוה	YHWH appeared to *him* …
וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב פֶּתַח־הָאֹהֶל	now *he* was sitting at the entrance to the tent (18.1)
וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא … עָלָיו	and *he* looked up and *he* saw … near *him*.
וַיַּרְא וַיָּרָץ … וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ	and *he* saw and *he* ran … and *he* bowed (18.2)
וַיֹּאמַר	and *he* said, "… (18.3)

Only after the "three men" accept this unnamed person's offer of hospitality (18.4-5) does the author identify him as "Abraham" (18.6), and then, as if to confirm this identification, names "Abraham" as the subject of two of the next three narrative clauses:

וַיְמַהֵר אַבְרָהָם	And *Abraham* quickly … (18.6)
וַיֹּאמֶר	and *he* said, "… (18.6b)
וְאֶל־הַבָּקָר רָץ אַבְרָהָם	and [then?] to the herd ran *Abraham* (18.7a)

The point is that this repeated "non-identification" of the subject, followed by his repeated identification *by name* is that these verses—and the story that they open—were written as part of the preceding story: they do not record a meal isolated from the promises and commandments of Gn 17, but rather the meal that ratifies the covenant that had just been sealed by circumcision (17.23-27).[10] This contextual setting also explains the promises about Sarai's rôle in the covenant's fulfillment (18.9-15; cf. 17.15-16), and YHWH's musings about telling Abraham what he [YHWH] was about to do (18.17-19).

Because we read the biblical stories having heard them in sermons and Bible lessons, we often find it difficult to read them *as they were written*, so that in this case (for example), we already "know" that Abraham is the main participant in vv. 1-5, even though he is never identified (English versions tend to supply "Abraham" in these vv.). Paying close attention to the Hebrew text—especially in light of the normally explicit nature of Hebrew narrative—reveals the misleading nature of this chapter break, and encourages us to read the story *in light of* the covenantal statements of Gn 17.

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[10]For another account of a covenant ratification followed by a meal between the parties, see Ex 24.4-11.

LESSON 27　　　　PRE-READING NARRATIVE, II

EVERY WORD in the biblical text is marked with an accent, added to the text by the Masoretes (scribes) to show logical relationships between words, to mark the accented syllable, and to show how the text was to be sung (cantillation). Although there are some twenty-seven accents, we will learn six, five disjunctive and one conjunctive.

27.1　DISJUNCTIVE CLAUSES

Also important when pre-reading biblical narrative is to note any disjunctive clauses. This has two aspects: (1) identifying clauses; and (2) identifying narrative disjunction.

A *clause* consists of a **topic** (the subject) and a **comment** about that topic (the predicate).[11] A sentence always consists of at least one clause, but a single clause can also be a sentence.[12] In BH, topics and comments can belong to several "classes" of words, and nearly anything that can be a topic can also be a comment (nearly all of these combinations occur in BH; this chart does not imply that any are more frequent or prominent than others):

Topic (word-classes)		Comment (word-classes)	
noun (generic)	נָבִיא	noun (generic)	מֶלֶךְ
noun (proper)	אַבְרָם	noun (proper)	דָּוִד
pronoun (independent)	אַתָּה	participle (predicate)	סֹפֵר
pronoun (suffixed to NC)	לְלֶכְתְּךָ	adjective (predicate)	רַע
pronoun (subject PGN affix)	כְּתַבְתֶּן	infinitive construct	לֶכֶת
participle (substantive)	הַכֹּתֵב	prepositional phrase (usually locative)	בַּבַּיִת
adjective (substantive)	הַגְּדוֹלִים	finite verb (perfect, imperfect, preterite, imperative)	יִשְׁכַּב
infinitive construct	לִהְיוֹת		לֵךְ

Clauses can also have other elements that relate primarily to the entire clause, rather than specifically to the topic or comment. For example, a prepositional phrase that tells us *where* something occurred may also tell us where the subject/topic was when it happened. It thus relates to the entire predication, rather than to one of its elements.

Backgrounded actions, activities, setting, and *irrealis* (i.e., what *didn't* happen) tend to occur in disjunctive clauses, but it is not primarily the verbal conjugation that determines the relative status or function of a clause. Instead, the disjunctive clause signals the reader that the clause is not on the line of the preterite. After noting this, we can address the separate question of what the clause's morphosyntax suggests about its status relative to the storyline. Disjunctive clauses have two primary functions:

1. They present information about a *parallel* activity or state, which either contrasts with or "reflects" that of the previous clause. The parallel clauses will often be chiastic (i.e., the second clause reverses or inverts the word order of the first). After Naomi's second statement, the contrasting responses of her daughters-in-law are described in an on-line clause ("and Orpah kissed …") and a disjunctive clause ("but Ruth clung …"). This example is Ru 1.14b (cf. 1 Sam 1.2b):

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[11] I prefer "comment" since the term "predicate" seems to connote "verb" to many readers (verbs are only one of a number of potential grammatical forms that can function as a comment in BH).

[12] Another benefit of marking disjunctive accents is that the next word often begins a clause; they thus divide the text into clauses.

וַתִּשַּׁק עָרְפָּה לַעֲחמוֹתָהּ   and-she-kissed Orpah her-mother-in-law, [V-S-O]

וְרוּת דָּבְקָה בָּהּ   *but-Ruth she-clung to-her.* [S-V-O]

On the other hand, the wives of Abram and Nahor are introduced in parallel clauses with no implied contrast, the first is asyndetic, and the second disjunctive (Gn 11.29b):

שֵׁם אֵשֶׁת־אַבְרָם שָׂרָי   The-name-of the-wife-of-Abram [was] Sarai,

וְשֵׁם אֵשֶׁת־נָחוֹר מִלְכָּה   *and-the-name-of the-wife-of-Nahor* [was] *Milkah.*

2. Disjunctive clauses also present *parenthetic* information, which tends to be either flashback, information about setting, or other proleptic information that the reader will need in order to understand upcoming events in the narrative. For example, the Canaanite presence in the land, noted in a disjunctive clause (12.6) creates narrative tension with the preceding call (12.1) and the following promise (12.7):

וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי אָז בָּאָרֶץ׃   *Now-the-Canaanites* [were] *then in-the-land.*

3. This information is expanded in a later disjunctive clause that helps the reader understand why Abram and Lot could not stay together (Gn 13.7b):

וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַפְּרִזִּי אָז יֹשֵׁב בָּאָרֶץ׃   *Now-the-Canaanites and-the-Perizzites then lived in-the-land.*

Gn 12 contains four disjunctive clauses. One lists Abram's age (4b), which becomes a touchstone for the refrain of barrenness and age throughout his search for an heir; the second (6b) creates the tension noted above. In 16a the author records that Abram was treated well for Sarai's sake, harking back to his prediction (13b), and is followed by a clause listing the nature of Pharaoh's beneficence. The final disjunctive clause (19b), in Pharaoh's rebuke, begins with וְעַתָּה, *therefore*, which is usually followed in BH by a volitional verbal form that announces a course of action growing out of the preceding material. *Wᵉʿatt* clauses are disjunctive by definition (*w*+non-verb), and usually mark the transition from argument to conclusion.

    When we come to a disjunctive clause, therefore, we expect to find information that is *crucial* to the story, but we also know that it does *not* describe the next event in the narrative sequence.

27.2 CLAUSE-INITIAL PARTICLES

The final step of this pre-reading process is to mark any clause-leading particles (e.g., לְמַעַן, כַּאֲשֶׁר, אֲשֶׁר, כִּי, כֹּה, עַל־כֵּן, וְעַתָּה). "Clause-leading" or "clause-initial" particles are function words that usually open a clause, in contrast with the conjunction *waw*, which functions at all syntagmatic levels, from phrase to discourse.[13] Having a basic idea of the function of these words, we can build our expectations about the progress of the narrative by noting the relationships that these particles signal between clauses and larger chunks of the narrative.

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[13] This does not mean that these [or any] particles cannot have higher-level discourse function.

27.3 MAJOR MASORETIC ACCENTS   **HBI §4**

We will learn to recognize a few Masoretic accents, those that are most helpful when reading narrative (the accentual system changes slightly in the books of Psalms, Job, and Proverbs).

1. *Disjunctive* accents mean "pause after this word". The pause may be large or small, depending on the relative strength of the accent. Nor does the accent's function go beyond the next word (which is why every word is marked). This list of the major disjunctive accents, numbered according to the *Tabula Accentum* that came with your copy of the Hebrew Bible is numbered in the order of their approximate importance (although there is little difference between 5 and 6).[14]

2.	*'aṯnah*	מֶ֑לֶךְ
3.	*sᵉgôlt*	מֶלֶךְ֒
5.	*z q f parva*	מֶ֔לֶךְ
6.	*z q f magna*	מֶ֕לֶךְ
7.	*rᵉḇîa'*	מֶ֗לֶךְ

That is, *'aṯnah* divides the verse into its two main sections (*not* in half), *segolta* divides those sections into their main sections, and so forth. Thus the Masoretes used these accents to divide verses into either semantic or syntactical units (or both). Furthermore, these disjunctive accents often precede preterites (and other clauses), reinforcing the first step. Just as preterites delineate the ebb and flow of the storyline, the major disjunctive accents suggest smaller units of textual organization that also help us "think through" the narrative.

Furthermore, we can read "between" the accents (parallel to reading "between" the preterites), since the material (words) between disjunctive accents should be read as a unit (even though those units are usually minimal syntagms). Although the accents are certainly not original, and although they are occasionally misleading (e.g., 1 Sam 3.3b), they have proved to be another obvious and helpful device for reading the text. [When we read the text aloud in class, we read from "accent to accent".]

2. We will learn ony one *conjunctive* accent: the *munah* binds a word closely to the following word, saying, in essence, "Don't disconnect these two words—they belong together!" *Munah* often links, for example, words in a construct chain, or a noun with its adjective. Noting *munah* keeps us from dividing words that belong together.

N.B. Not every accent occurs in every verse (e.g., Gn 18.1 lacks *aṯnah*; many verses lack *zaqef*, *rᵉḇîa'*); *munah* is often lacking.

27.4 CONCEPTS

accent(s)	comment	disjunctive accent
chiastic/chiasm	conjunctive accent	disjunctive clause
clause		parenthetic information

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[14]I have not included *silluq* (#1), since it ends [nearly] every verse (and is often syntagmatically ill-placed), or *šalšelet* (#4), which is relatively rare.

27.5 Vocabulary

sanctuary	מִקְדָּשׁ	.407	[a] blessing	בְּרָכָה	.399	
dead (adj.)	מֵת	.408	breath, idol; vanity; Abel	הֶבֶל	.400	
[a] witness	עֵד עֵדָה	.409	cry out [for help], shout (cf. צעק)	זָעַק	.401	
reach, overtake (H)	נָשַׂג	.410	strange, foreign; illicit	זָר	.402	
only, surely (often begins clause)	רַק	.411	disgrace, reproach	חֶרְפָּה	.403	
cry out [for help], shout (cf. זעק)	צָעַק	.412	sin, miss [a mark]	חָטָא	.404	
bird, insect [any flying thing]	עוֹף	.413	sin, error, fault; sin-offering	חַטָּאת		
bow, worship, do obeisance; show respect or honor (mainly Dt)	שָׁחָה	.414	Why?	מַדּוּעַ	.405	
			sunrise, east	מִזְרָח	.406	

N.B. Because of its initial sibilant, שׁחה never appears in BH as שׁחה, but only with the initial -שׁ and the ת of the prefix reversed: -שְׁתַּ (metathesized). If the form ends in *šureq* (וּה-), the verb is singular, if in -חַוּוּ or חַוּוּ- (*waw* followed by *šureq*), it is plural. Since it is fairly frequent (172x), here is a skeleton paradigm:

שׁחה			Dt
P	3ms		הִשְׁתַּחֲוָה
	3cp		הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ
F	3ms		יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה
	3mp		יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ
Pr	3ms		וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ
	3mp		וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ
	3fp		תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶינָה
V	mp		הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ
NC			*הִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת
Ptc	ms		מִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה

*Waw is pronounced before the holem: -wôt.

27.6 Exercises

These are based on the reading passage for this lesson. *Before reading the text*, please find and mark …

1.   … any *disjunctive clauses*, and identify their function in the story.
2.   … any *clause-leading particles*, and identify their function (see HBI §3.3).
3.   … the *major disjunctive accents*, and practice reading from accent to accent, first aloud, then as you read. How does their location help you determine the sense of the text?

27.7 Enrichment: An Example of Pre-reading

What is the result of pre-reading a passage of biblical narrative—i.e., of locating the preterites, quotation formulae, occurrences of וַיְהִי, major disjunctive accents, disjunctive clauses, clause-leading particles? In the following brief passage (Ru 2.1-7), the underlining and shading show introductory disjunctive clauses (vv. 1, 4), and the increasingly dialogical nature of the story (vv. 5-7), as well as the use of preterites within direct speech (v. 7; the servant's description of Ruth). Note also the sequence of three preterites (v. 3). Another benefit of this exercise—especially for beginning readers—is that the passage no longer consists of either a single block of text or 105 individual concatenated words, but is made up of functional units, each consisting of two to four words:

¹וּלְנָעֳמִי מְיֻדָּע לְאִישָׁהּ ‖ אִישׁ גִּבּוֹר חַיִל ‖ מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ ‖ וּשְׁמוֹ בֹּעַז:²וַתֹּאמֶר רוּת

הַמּוֹאֲבִיָּה אֶל־נָעֳמִי ‖ אֵלְכָה־נָּא הַשָּׂדֶה וַאֲלַקֳטָה בַשִּׁבֳּלִים ‖ אַחַר ‖ אֲשֶׁר אֶמְצָא־חֵן בְּעֵינָיו ‖

וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ לְכִי בִתִּי:³וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתָּבוֹא וַתְּלַקֵּט בַּשָּׂדֶה ‖ אַחֲרֵי הַקֹּצְרִים ‖ וַיִּקֶר מִקְרֶהָ ‖ חֶלְקַת

הַשָּׂדֶה לְבֹעַז ‖ אֲשֶׁר מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ:⁴וְהִנֵּה־בֹעַז ‖ בָּא מִבֵּית־לֶחֶם ‖ וַיֹּאמֶר לַקּוֹצְרִים יְהוָה

עִמָּכֶם ‖ וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה:⁵וַיֹּאמֶר בֹּעַז לְנַעֲרוֹ ‖ הַנִּצָּב עַל־הַקּוֹצְרִים ‖ לְמִי הַנַּעֲרָה הַזֹּאת:

⁶וַיַּעַן ‖ הַנַּעַר הַנִּצָּב עַל־הַקּוֹצְרִים וַיֹּאמַר ‖ נַעֲרָה מוֹאֲבִיָּה הִיא ‖ הַשָּׁבָה עִם־נָעֳמִי מִשְּׂדֵה מוֹאָב:

⁷וַתֹּאמֶר ‖ אֲלַקֳטָה־נָּא וְאָסַפְתִּי בָעֳמָרִים ‖ אַחֲרֵי הַקּוֹצְרִים ‖ וַתָּבוֹא וַתַּעֲמוֹד ‖ מֵאָז הַבֹּקֶר וְעַד

־עַתָּה ‖ זֶה שִׁבְתָּהּ הַבַּיִת מְעָט:

Key

Double underline	preterite
Single underline	disjunctive clause
Wavy double underline	clause-initial particle
Shaded	quotation
‖	major disjunctive accent

Participant reference (in order of appearance)

Vv.	Observations (based on the table on the next page)
1-3	Boaz is described primarily in terms of his relationship to Naomi (1) and Elimelech (3) [and, implicitly, to Ruth]; these initial disjunctive clauses set the stage for the rest of the book.
3-5	The reapers are merely named—they are props, not actors.
6a	Boaz's servant is described in enough detail to explain his rôle in the story, especially his ability to interact with and observe Ruth.
6b	In this chapter, Boaz's servant gives far more detail about Ruth's provenance than the narrator (N.B.: "She is *a* [sic] Moabite young woman, the one who returned …").

Other	Boaz	Ruth	Naomi	"Voice"	V.
	לְנָעֳמִי		נָעֳמִי	author	1
	מְיֻדָּע לְאִישָׁהּ				
	אִישׁ גִּבּוֹר חַיִל				
	מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ				
	וּשְׁמוֹ בֹּעַז				
		וַתֹּאמֶר רוּת הַמּוֹאֲבִיָּה		author	2
אֲשֶׁר אֶמְצָא־חֵן בְּעֵינָיו				Ruth	
			נָעֳמִי	author	
		וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ		author	
		לְכִי בִתִּי		Naomi	
		וַתֵּלֶךְ		author	3
		וַתָּבוֹא			
הַקֹּצְרִים		וַתְּלַקֵּט		author	
		מִקְרֶהָ		author	
בֹּעַז אֲשֶׁר מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ				author	
	בֹּעַז			author	4
לַקֹּצְרִים	וַיֹּאמֶר			author	
עִמָּכֶם				Boaz	
וַיֹּאמְרוּ	לוֹ			author	
לְנַעֲרוֹ	וַיֹּאמֶר בֹּעַז			author	5
הַנִּצָּב עַל־הַקֹּצְרִים					
		הַנַּעֲרָה הַזֹּאת		Boaz	
וַיַּעַן הַנַּעַר				author	6
הַנִּצָּב עַל־הַקֹּצְרִים					
וַיֹּאמַר					
		נַעֲרָה מוֹאֲבִיָּה הִיא	נָעֳמִי	Boaz's servant	
		הַשָּׁבָה עִם־נָעֳמִי			
		מִשְּׂדֵה מוֹאָב			
		וַתֹּאמֶר		Boaz's servant	7
		וַתָּבוֹא			
		וַתַּעֲמֹד			
		שִׁבְתָּהּ			

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