The Hebrew Letters in Alphabetical Order, Etc.

The chart of the Hebrew alphabet is given below. In explanation, let me point out some things about each column.

1. The square forms of the letters given above are the shape used in Jesus' day. There are six letters known as *begadkephat* (**B**eth, **G**imel, **D**aleth, **K**aph, **P**e, and **T**aw) letters that may be written with or without a dot (called a *Daghesh*) inside that letter resulting in a change in sound. The Daghesh is present when these letters begin a syllable and serves to mark their sounds as hard (or plosive) rather than soft.

2. There are five letters which, when found at the end of a word, have a form different than when they are located elsewhere in the word. These are known as final forms.

3. Many works use transliteration instead of the Hebrew letters. So, you will need to be able to convert Hebrew letters into transliterated symbols and vice versa. Unfortunately, there are a number of different transliteration systems. The one given here is that used by Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007).

4. The sounds of the Hebrew letters are approximated by similar sounds indicated by the sounds of the **bold** letters in the English words listed in the last column. Again, we don't know exactly how they were pronounced but scholars can come up with a fair approximation by comparison of manuscript spellings, by comparison of words in cognate languages, and by seeing how other ancient languages like Greek transliterated Hebrew words.

5. Finally, the Hebrew letters were also used for numbers (the Greeks followed them with a similar system).

Name	Square Forms	Final Forms	Transliteration	Modern Sound	Numeric Vaule
Alef	א		ʾ	(silent)	1
Bet	בּ		*b*	**b**oy	2
	ב		*b*	**v**ery	
Gimel	גּ		*g*	**g**irl	3
	ג		*g*	**g**irl	
Dalet	דּ		*d*	**d**og	4

	ד		*d*	**th**e	
He	ה		*h*	**h**elp	5
Waw	ו		*w*	**w**ay	6
Zayin	ז		*z*	**z**ero	7
Ḥet	ח		*ḥ*	**ch**emistry	8
Tet	ט		*ṭ*	**t**in	9
Yod	י		*y*	**y**ell	10
Kaf	כ	ך	*k*	**k**angaroo	20
	ל		*k*	**ch**emistry	
Lamed	מ		*l*	**l**oud	30
Mem	נ	ם	*m*	**m**arry	40
Nun	ס	ן	*n*	**n**oun	50
Samek	ע		*s*	**s**ee	60
Ayin	פ		ʿ	(silent)	70
Pe	צ	ף	*p*	**p**aint	80
	ק		*p*	**ph**otograph	

Tsade	צ	ץ	*ṣ*	hi**ts**	90
Qof	ק		*q*	**k**angaroo	100
Resh	ר		*r*	**r**ed	200
Sin	שׂ		*ś*	**s**ee	300
Shin	שׁ		*š*	**sh**ed	300
Taw	תּ		*t*	**t**in	400
	ת		*t*	**th**in	

p 9 The Other Kind of Daghesh

As I explained above, the **Daghesh** serves to indicate a hard (or plosive) sound in the *begadkephat* letters and occurs only in these six letters. This particular Daghesh is called the **Daghesh Lene**. There is another Daghesh, called the **Daghesh Forte**, that indicates the doubling of a letter. So, ט without Daghesh Forte is transliterated *ṭ*, and טּ with Daghesh Forte is transliterated *ṭṭ*. Daghesh Forte can occur in any letter (including the *begadkephat* letters) except for א, ה, ח, ע, and ר. These first four letters are called guttural letters (because the sounds are made in the back of the throat), and none of the five can be doubled.[1]

[1] Fields, L. M. (2008). *Hebrew for the Rest of Us: Using Hebrew Tools without Mastering Biblical Hebrew* (pp. 7–9). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

CHAPTER 3

Get the Point?
The Hebrew Vowels

Objectives

1. Write the Hebrew vowels
2. Pronounce Hebrew vowels
3. Transliterate Hebrew to English and English to Hebrew

Introduction

So far, by learning the Hebrew alphabet, you have only learned the consonants. Naturally the question arises, "What about vowels?" As we mentioned in chapter 1, originally Hebrew was written with consonants alone. Of course when people spoke, they pronounced the words with vowel sounds; the vowels simply were not written. The vowel sounds of a written text had to be figured out from context. Scribes later developed systems of indicating vowels without having to alter the consonants. This was done by adding small symbols above or below the consonants. These symbols, arrangements of dots and short lines, are called *vowel points*, as opposed to the consonants, which are called *letters*. Vowels are not called letters as they are in English.

At first, trying to read consonants without any vowels may sound unbelievably difficult. But, if you know the language well (as an ancient native speaker would), it is manageable. You can do this in English:

p 18 **Ths wh tk Hbrw lv t stdy th ld tstmnt.**

This sentence is a pretty complex example for vowelless English, but you probably figured it out without much difficulty as "Those who take Hebrew love to study the Old Testament." In Hebrew, this works out a little easier in one way, since virtually no word or even a syllable starts with a vowel. However, because of Hebrew inflections (changes in form to indicate changes in meaning), there may be more variations than in English. Most Hebrew words are built on three-letter roots that have a basic meaning, to which are added vowels and various combinations of prefixes and suffixes that make meaning more specific. To illustrate, a sentence of unpointed Hebrew might include the word דבר, the root having to do with the formation of words. Without a context, the word might be pronounced in a number of different ways, depending on the intended meaning. In Figure 3.1 I've put the three letters of the root in shaded type and the various vowel points in regular type to give only *some* of the possibilities. In the transliterations, I've shaded the English letters that correspond to the Hebrew consonants.

Figure 3.1: Be Grateful for Vowels!

Pronounced in various ways the form דִּבַּר (without written vowels) might mean any of the following:

Notice:

1. Remember that Hebrew reads right to left, and English, even in transliteration,reads left to right.

p 19 2. Most vowel points are written above or below the consonant.

3. Every consonant in a word, except the last one, has a point with it. The last letter only has a vowel point with it when the word ends in a vowel. The only time when a consonant in the middle of a word will not have a vowel point with it is when the consonant is a vowel letter or when it is Alef at the end of a syllable. Alef is always a consonant and is transliterated as such, but at the end of a syllable it becomes silent. In those instances, there will be no vowel point with it and the preceding vowel will be long. For example, in the second syllable of מָצָ֣אתִי (צָ֣א) the א has no vowel point with it because it is silent. However, the transliteration is still *māṣē᾽tî*, with the א represented by the symbol᾽.

4. The consonant is read first and the vowel is read after. The first word of Figure 3.1 begins with the syllable דִּ. The little dot, or *point*, above the Dalet is a vowel (a Holem sounds like *o* as in *hole*). To pronounce the syllable, the Dalet is read first, then the vowel: *dō*. This syllable sounds just like the English word *doe* (of course there is no correspondence in meaning).

At first these "points" may seem confusing and intimidating. Do not become discouraged! You will soon become familar with them. Besides, this is not the most important material to get right to the smallest detail.

Origins and Systems

The written system of vowels found in the Hebrew Bible are the culmination of many centuries of work. We may describe the development of written vowels to have taken place in three overlapping stages. The first stage is the period of **no vowels**, extending to the tenth century B.C.

The second stage is the period of **vowel letters**, also known as *matres lectionis* ("mothers [aids] of reading"). During this period the consonants ה, ו, and י began to be added to indicate certain vowel sounds. The use of vowel letters generally increased through the biblical period, into the period of the Dead Sea Scrolls (c. 150 B.C.–A.D. 70) and into the Mishnaic period (up through about A.D. 400).

The third stage may be called the period of **vocalization**. Vowel points began to be added to the consonantal text several centuries after the composition of the last book of the OT. Jewish

scholars worked in three regions developing different p 20 systems of vowel pointing known today as the Palestinian, Babylonian, and Tiberian systems. These systems were designed in such a way that vowel sounds could be indicated by adding marks to the text without altering the Hebrew consonants in any way. The system that became standard is the Tiberian system developed by the Masoretes during the period A.D. 500–950. This is the system that you will be learning.

English Vowels

A vowel is a sound made by passing air through the throat and mouth with no stoppage. The English alphabet contains vowels. Of the 26 letters, five are vowels. However, there are more vowel sounds than five and also more than five ways to write vowel sounds. We can speak of simple vowels, "vowel letters," and diphthongs.

Each simple vowel, *a, e, i, o, u,* has at least two sounds, long and short.

Figure 3.2: Simple Vowels in English

Simple Vowel	Short Sound	Long Sound
a	c**a**t	c**a**ke
e	b**e**d	compl**e**te
i	b**i**t	b**i**te
o	**o**r	h**o**le
u	p**u**t	br**u**te

What I'm calling "vowel letters" refers to those consonants that combine with a vowel to form a sound. You know of w and y, but also h are English consonants that combine with vowels to form a sound (in British pronunciation, also r). Here is one example for each: bl**ew**, th**ey**, r**ah**!

English also has many diphthongs. A diphthong is two vowels used for one syllable, e.g., f**ee**t and f**ea**t. Hebrew usually avoids diphthongs, though there is one important exception you will learn about below.

p 21 Hebrew Vowels and Sounds

Hebrew vowels are actually less confusing than English. Whereas English only has five vowel symbols plus three "vowel letters" (not counting the numerous diphthongs), Hebrew indicates sounds using twenty different symbols, two of which represent two different sounds. This amounts to twenty-two different vowel symbols.

Teachers of Hebrew instruct students to pronounce the vowels in different ways. You should follow what your teacher says. I will present vowels according to modern Israeli pronunciation because it is simple and won't offend the ears of modern native speakers and scholars. You will learn to pronounce five vowel sounds.

Classification of Vowels

Hebrew vowels may be classified according to a number of qualities. Fig. 3.3 illustrates how I will present them. Hopefully this classification will help you learn the symbols quickly.

Figure 3.3: Classification of Vowels

Duration	Symbol	Short	Long
Full	Simple		
Full	Composite	Ø	
Duration	**Symbol**	**Silent**	**Vocal**
Reduced	Simple		
Reduced	Composite	Ø	

Notice:

1. The empty spaces in Fig. 3.3 are where vowels will be placed. The symbol Ø represents categories that do not exist.

p 22 2. Vowels may be "full" or "reduced." According to the Masoretic system, full vowels were required to form a syllable; and so a word has as many syllables as it has full vowels. Most modern grammarians treat all vowel points except silent Shewa as syllables. You should follow your teacher.

3. Full vowels are either "simple" (i.e., points with no vowel letters) points or "combination" (i.e., points with vowel letters), and either long or short. The term *long* as opposed to *short* is thought by scholars to refer to the vowel's sound quality (how the vowel sounds) instead of its quantity (the length of time a vowel sound lasts).

4. Reduced vowels are either "simple" (i.e., Shewa alone) or "composite" (i.e., a Shewa + a short vowel). Simple Shewas are either silent (no sound) or vocal (with a very quick sound).

Before we get started on Hebrew vowels, you need to understand three things about transliteration. First, as we mentioned when discussing consonants, there is more than one system of transliteration. When you are reading a book that transliterates Hebrew, there will usually be an explanation or key at the beginning. Some systems are detailed enough to enable you to transliterate back into Hebrew without any confusion, while other systems are simplified to enable you merely to pronounce a word similarly to the Hebrew word, but transliterating from English back to the Hebrew may not always be clear. Most of the time you will have no difficulty. For Hebrew vowels, we are going to use a modification of the system of transliterations found in R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody, 1980) because it is complete and unambiguous.

Second, because English has only five vowels and three vowel letters, transliterating the twenty-two Hebrew vowel symbols into English means that in addition to English letters, extra marks are required, such as "long" marks (e.g., the line above *ō*), etc.

Third, you will need to pay particular attention to the guides to pronunciation, because the symbols used for transliterating foreign languages are different than what you may have learned when you studied English. For example, in English the symbol *ē* represents the vowel sound in f**ee**t; in transliteration this same symbol represents the vowel sound in c**a**ke.

p 23 We will treat full vowels and then reduced vowels. After that you will learn how to tell the difference between a pair of identical symbols that have different sounds.

Simple Full Vowels

Similar to learning the consonants, we will move from simple to more complex. I'm also going to give you the names of the vowels. As non-Hebrew students, I don't think you need to memorize them, though your teacher may require it. You do, however, need to learn what sounds they make so you can pronounce Hebrew words.

There are eight simple vowel points. In Figure 3.4 I use the consonant בּ to represent any given Hebrew consonant. This allows you to see the position of the vowel with a consonant. The vowels are arranged from simple to complex in form. After the symbol I give the name of the letter, then the sound it makes by giving an English word that has the same vowel sound. The last two columns are transliteration and length (**L**ong or **S**hort). The ability to match the sound and transliteration with the correct vowel is important for you to pronounce the word correctly.

Figure 3.4: Eight Simple Hebrew Vowels

Symbol	Name	Sound	Transliteration	Length
בִּ	Hireq	mach**i**ne	*i*	S
בֵ	Tsere	th**ey**	*ē*	L
בֶ	Seghol	th**ey**	*e*	S
בֻ	Qibbuts	br**u**te	*u*	S
בֹ	Holem	h**o**le	*ō*	L
בַ	Pathach	f**a**ther	*a*	S
בָ	Qamets	f**a**ther	*ā*	L

בְּ	Qamets Hatuf	h**o**le	*o*	S

p 24 Notice:

1. When Holem is followed by Shin, sometimes the dot on the right shoulder of the Shin functions as both the marker for Shin and Holem. So the word Moses, *mōšeh*, may be written either מֹשֶׁה or משֶׁה.

2. Qamets and Qamets Hatuf are identical in form but distinct in sound and transliteration. In this chapter I will show you how to tell the difference between the two. Qamets is much more common, so if in doubt, guess Qamets.

Composite Full Vowels

As we mentioned above, Hebrew began to use ה, ו, and י to indicate vowel sounds. Many centuries later, the Masoretes incorporated their points into these vowel letters.

As for the sound these combinations make, the letter plus the vowel go together to form one vowel sound. In transliteration the presence of vowel letters must be indicated. This is done in two ways: (1) placing a circumflex above the English letter (e.g., *ô*) or (2) transliterating both the vowel and the vowel letter (e.g. *ōh*).

Figure 3.5: Nine Hebrew Composite Vowels

Symbol	Name	Sound	Transliteration	Length
בִּי	Hireq Yod	mach**i**ne	*î*	L
בֵּי	Tsere Yod	th**ey**	*ê*	L
בֶּי	Seghol Yod	th**ey**	*ey*	L
בֹו	Holem Waw	h**o**le	*ô*	L
בּוּ	Shureq	br**u**te	*û*	L
בֵּה	Tsere He	th**ey**	*ēh*	L
בֶּה	Seghol He	th**ey**	*eh*	L

בָּה	Qamets He	f**a**ther	*â*	L
בֹּה	Holem He	h**o**le	*ōh*	L

p 25 Notice:

1. All combination vowels are long.
2. Except for Shureq, the names for these vowels are the vowel name plus the letter name.
3. These vowel letters are pronounced after the consonant that precedes them. I think it is helpful to separate the syllables with a vertical stroke (|). So דָּ֫בָר with simple vowels is pronounced *dā|b̲ār* with each simple vowel point pronounced after the consonant above or before it. However, הוֹרִידוּ is pronounced *hô|rî|d̲û*.

Reduced Vowels, Simple and Composite

There are five reduced vowels. These are all forms of Shewa. They are illustrated in Figure 3.6.

Figure 3.6: Five Reduced Vowels

Complexity	Vowel	Name	Sound	Transliteration
Simple Shewa	בְּ	Shewa	b**a**nana	^{e}
	בְּ	Shewa	[silent]	[none]
Composite Shewa	בֲּ	Hateph Pathach	b**a**nana	*ă*
	בֱּ	Hateph Seghol	b**a**nana	*ĕ*
	בֳּ	Hateph Qamets	b**a**nana	*ŏ*

Notice:

1. Vocal Shewa is transliterated with a superscripted e. Thus the word דְּבַר, with Vocal Shewa, is transliterated *d^{e}b̲ar*.

2. Silent Shewa is not transliterated: דִּבְּרִי is transliterated *diḇrê*, not *diḇᵉrê*.

3. The Vocal Shewa and all three of the Composite Shewas may be pronounced the same, namely with a very short "uh" sound as in the first syllable of *banana*. However, they must be transliterated differently.

p 26 Final Steps for Pronunciation

You need to memorize the symbols, their sounds, and their transliterations. One way to do this is to make flash cards, putting the vowel symbol on one side with its name, sound, and transliteration on the other side (see www.teknia.com).

In order to fine-tune your ability to pronounce Hebrew, you will need to know how to do five more things: (1) distinguish Dagesh Forte from Dagesh Lene, (2) distinguish Shureq (וּ) from Waw with Dagesh Forte (וּ), (3) identify syllables, (4) distinguish Silent Shewa from Vocal Shewa, and (5) distinguish Qamets from Qamets Hatuf. To do this quickly takes some practice, so be patient with yourself.

1. Distinguishing Dagesh Forte and Lene (two rules):
   a. If there is a Dagesh in any letter other than a *begadkephat*, it must be Dagesh Forte, the doubling Dagesh. So, in the word קַטֵּל, the Dagesh in the ט must be Forte and the word would be transliterated *qaṭṭēl*.
   b. If a *begadkephat* with Dagesh is immediately preceded by a full vowel, it is Forte. If it is preceded by no vowel, including Silent Shewa, it is Lene.

2. Distinguishing Shureq from Waw with Dagesh Forte (one rule): If the letter before וּ has no vowel, it is Shureq. In כָּתוּב the Taw before וּ has no vowel and so וּ must be the vowel Shureq: *kāṯûḇ*. In מְצַוֶּה the Tsade before וּ has a vowel under it (Pathach) and וּ must be a doubled consonant: *mᵉ ṣawweh*.

3. Syllables and Accents. A word has as many syllables as it has full vowels. Hebrew words are accented only on one of the last two syllables; in this book the accent is marked only when it does not occur on the last syllable. In דָּבָר there is no accent mark, so the accent is on the last syllable. In דֶּרֶךְ there is an accent mark on the next to last syllable. Most commentaries and other Bible study tools that you will use do not mark the accented syllable. When in doubt, accent on the last syllable.

4. Distinguishing Silent Shewa from Vocal Simple Shewa (two rules):

a. Vocal Shewa begins (or is) a syllable. Silent Shewa ends a syllable. In the word דְּבַר, the Shewa is at the beginning of a syllable (obviously, since it is at the beginning of a word) and must be vocal. Composite Shewas are always vocal. In יַעֲשֶׂה the Composite Shewa is vocal and begins the second syllable.

p 27 b. Shewa after a short vowel in an unaccented syllable is silent. In מֶרְכָּבָה, the רְ (Resh + Shewa) is preceded by a short vowel, Seghol, and there is no accent. Therefore the Shewa is silent and closes the syllable. The word מֶרְכָּבָה is a three syllable word (three full vowels) and the syllables may be divided: מֶרְ|כָּ|בָה.

5. Distinguishing Qamets from Qamets Hatuf (one rule): Qamets Hatuf occurs only in a closed, unaccented syllable. In הָכְמָה the כְ closes the syllable and חָכְ is both closed and unaccented. Therefore, the vowel must be Qamets Hatuf and transliterated *ḥoḵmâ*. In וַיָּקָם the Qamets under the Yod appears in an open, accented (note the accent mark) syllable and must be long; the Qamets under the Qof appears in a closed, unaccented syllable and must be short. The transliteration is *wayyāqom*.

Other Marks and Remarks

If you open a printed Hebrew Bible, you will notice that there are many more marks in the text than consonants and vowels. Many of these you can ignore. But some of them you will need to know about.

What You Can Ignore

Almost every word in the Hebrew Bible has some type of accent mark, sometimes even two. The accents, developed by the Masoretes, serve three purposes: (1) to mark the primary stressed syllable, (2) to divide the verse into logical phrases, and (3) to indicate musical notes. These accent marks are very complicated and beyond the scope of what we are doing here. In commentaries and other materials that discuss the text of the Hebrew Bible accent marks are rarely included, but sometimes commentators discuss them as a record of the interpretation of the rabbis.

What You Need To Pay Attention To

There is one accent mark you should pay attention to and some other marks occasionally used in the text that you might want to know about.

1. **Soph Pasuq** (meaning “end of verse”) is an accent mark found at the end of each verse. It looks similar to an English colon (but two diamond shapes): הָאָרֶץ׃. The Hebrew verse divisions are *almost* identical to our English Bibles.

p 28 2. **Mappiq** looks exactly like a Dagesh. However it only appears in the letter He at the end of a word to mark the He as a true consonant instead of a vowel letter: הּ. In this case the הּ is to be pronounced and is always transliterated with *h*. This makes a difference in meaning. For example, סוּס is the word meaning a male "horse." In the word סוּסָהּ, the Mappiq indicates that the ending הּ is a suffix meaning *her* and the entire construction means "*her* horse." On the other hand, in סוּסָה, the הָ ending indicates that the noun is feminine meaning "mare" (a female horse).

3. **Maqqef** looks like and functions similarly to a hyphen in English. The main difference in appearance is that it appears at the top of the line, rather than in the middle; so וּבְכָל־הָאָרֶץ (not וּבְכָל–הָאָרֶץ). It indicates a close connection between two words.[2]

[2] Fields, L. M. (2008). *Hebrew for the Rest of Us: Using Hebrew Tools without Mastering Biblical Hebrew* (pp. 17–28). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

The Text of the OT

Perhaps you have wondered why your version reads differently from others—differences not just representing updating of language, but substantively different words. For example, when reading the phrase "they have pierced" in Ps 22:16, what does the NIV footnote mean when it says, "Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint and Syriac; most Hebrew manuscripts *like the lion*"? Or perhaps you had a night with nothing but time on your hands and you decided to read the Preface to your NIV (seriously, it is valuable reading). You went along pretty well until the sentence, "The translators also consulted the more important early versions—the Septuagint; Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion; the Vulgate; the Syriac Peshitta; the Targums; and for the Psalms the *juxta Hebraica* of Jerome"—at which point you quit reading. These matters deal with the *text* of Scripture, the words of the Hebrew Bible themselves. Included here is the topic of ancient versions, because they also are witnesses to the text.

Why is this question important for Bible believing students? Because our service to others demands it. Dan Wallace is a top-notch conservative scholar of Greek and NT and has worked closely with "nonevangelical" scholars. In his contacts he has learned that most of them used to be conservatives. When confronted with challenges to the inerrancy of the Bible, the answers they received from their conservative friends were either simplistic or wrong. As a result, they concluded that there are no answers for the problems that can allow them to trust in the Bible. Evangelicals need to be able to face questions squarely and honestly, if we really have confidence that God's truth can stand up to close scrutiny. As Wallace has said in one of his lectures, "It would be better for us to have some doubts in our pursuit of truth than no doubts as we try to protect our certainties."

p 39 Transmission of the Hebrew Text

The history of the OT text can be divided into five periods. Prior to AD 100, the books were composed, copied, and translated. The script changed from Paleo-Hebrew to Square Script. There were also changes in spelling and the use of vowel letters. The work of the "scribes," known from the NT, also took place. These men diligently copied and studied the Scriptures. Before 1900, we had no manuscripts from before AD 100. Since then archaeologists have made several important finds of manuscripts from this period. Chief among these are the famous Dead Sea Scrolls (abbreviated DSS), discovered in 1948.

Also during this period the Hebrew OT was translated into Greek and eventually called the Septuagint (a Latin word meaning "seventy" and abbreviated with the Roman numeral LXX), completed at least by 130 BC. Studies in DSS, LXX, and other sources have led some scholars to believe that before AD 100 there were three main text families that all descended ultimately from the original text of the books. The original texts were copied and, while the recognition phase was going on, there developed what scholars call the Proto-Masoretic Text. From the ProtoMasoretic Text came three traditions, each associated with a geographical area: Palestine, Babylon, and Egypt.

Figure 4.4: Textual Families of the OT

Because the DSS biblical texts, written before 100 BC, have more variants than later texts after the destruction of the temple in AD 70, scholars think that by about AD 100 the Jews of Palestine standardized the text from the various traditions. p 40 This important development means that all of our manuscripts after this time largely follow the tradition of this standardized text. This text was copied and preserved by later scholars known as Masoretes.

During the second period, AD 100–300, the Jewish scholars known as Tannaim (תַּנָּאִים) labored. They were the successors of the Scribes (סוֹפְרִים), c. 500 BC to AD 100). The word *Tannaim* is an Aramaic plural noun meaning "repeaters" or "teachers," since much of the learning and teaching they did was by repetition. An important product of their work is known as the Mishnah, which records some of the Jewish oral teachings aiming to apply Mosaic law to daily life in a postbiblical and post-temple world.

The successors of the Tannaim were the Amoraim (אֲמוֹרָאִים), who worked during the third period, AD 300–500. The word itself means *speaker* and then comes to mean "teacher," much like the term *Tannaim*. These men taught and preserved the oral teachings for the Jews and were responsible for its written form in what we know as the Talmud. The Talmud consists of the Mishnah plus additional teaching or commentary, known as Gemara. There are two versions of the Talmud: the Palestinian Talmud, put into writing about AD 400 in Tiberias of Galilee, and the more well-known and much more complete Babylonian Talmud, put into writing about AD 500 or AD 600. These two groups of Jewish scholars were largely responsible for copying the standardized text of the OT.

During AD 500–1000 (the fourth period) the Masoretes were at work. The word *masorah* probably means "tradition," most likely from a Hebrew root meaning "hand over." The Masoretic text (MT) is the textual tradition preserved in manuscripts copied by these people. Besides copying, the Masoretes developed the system of vowel points and accent marks that are used universally in the Hebrew OT. They also collected and recorded special notations, known as *masorah*, to the text for accuracy. They noted variants and even errors, but they would not alter the received text, not even obvious errors though they did carefully note errors in the margins.

Finally, after AD 1000 manuscripts continued to be copied. Manuscripts continued to be produced for synagogue use, but they have no relevance for textual criticism, since their content was set. It is also during this period that chapter and verse divisions were added. The concept of verses is ancient. Rabbinic discussions p 41 at times concerned these divisions. These were standardized by the Masoretes about AD 900. Chapter divisions were added in the fourteenth century following the system derived from Steven Langton (AD 1150–1228).

Textual Criticism

Whenever some people hear the word "criticism" in the context of Bible studies, they think that the Bible is under attack from non-believers. This is not the only use of the term "critical"; here it means a careful analysis of the text of the Bible. Because the original manuscripts of the Bible no longer exist (these are called "autographs"), because there exist hundreds of hand-written Hebrew manuscripts, and because there are differences between them, scholars who print a Hebrew Bible cannot avoid making choices from among the different readings. What we see from the history of the Hebrew OT is that textual criticism has actually been in practice at least since

the time of the Qumran community, who made corrections to the consonantal text of their copies of Scripture.

Editing and correcting certainly continued among the Jews. The Talmud records debates over how to pronounce (that is, what vowels to read in the unpointed text) certain words in the text. The Masorah records various readings and textual difficulties that were known.

As we mentioned above, the Masoretes would not make any changes to their received text—not even to correct obvious errors. However, certain readings were written in the margin and marked "Qere." The word **Qere** is a command to "read" the word in the margin instead of the word in the text. The word in the text is called **Kethib**, meaning "written." So it is not a question of whether textual criticism has been practiced, but how well, and the quality of the work is largely determined by the amount and quality of information possessed by copyists, printers, and translators.

Basically there are two kinds of variants readings: intentional and unintentional. By far the most common intentional changes have to do with spelling—remember the use of vowel letters beginning about 1000 BC and gradually increasing over time. The reason for these changes was almost always not to deceive, but to clarify.

It is the unintentional variation that we may properly call an error. Sometimes when I try to copy something, I amaze myself with the amount of errors I make.This is true especially when I'm in a hurry, but it even happens when I'm trying to be careful. Ancient copyists had the same difficulty, though they were trained and p 42 did far better than I do. Unintentional errors may result in omission of text, addition of text, substitution of text, or wrong word division. These errors can have many causes. There may be mistakes of the ear. If a scribe is copying by listening to someone recite, he may mishear a word, or the reader may mispronounce. Much more common are mistakes of the eye. A scribe might mistake one letter for another. Sometimes when a scribe moves his eye back from his copy to the original, his eye may skip to the text in a different place, either above or below where he was because the same word is repeated, or even because another word begins or ends similarly.

So how do scholars decide which is the correct original text? They look at the evidence from Hebrew manuscripts and ancient translations and analyze it based on general principles. Note that these are *not* strict rules.

1. *Manuscripts must be weighed, not counted*. Generally it makes sense that the text of older manuscripts should be closer to the original than the younger. Since the older manuscripts are much more rare, we can't simply count the number of manuscripts for a given reading and expect to always have the answer. If a mistake occurred in AD 800 and most of the manuscripts after that (the vast majority of all manuscripts) copied the same mistake, then the majority reading would be wrong. This principle applies to the OT text, since the vast majority of MSS are all from the same (Masoretic) tradition. Though older MSS such as the DSS are therefore very important, still one should not automatically assume that they are always better than the MT.

2. *The best reading is the one that explains all the others*. In Gen 20 we read the story of Abimelech taking Sarah into his harem. The Lord appears to him in a dream and threatens him. In v. 4, Abimelech addresses the speaker as אֲדֹנָי. All English versions translate this passage as "Lord," because the Hebrew word אָדוֹן means "master, sir, lord, Lord." The

critical apparatus to the BHS, however, reports that instead of אֲדֹנָי, several manuscripts read יהוה, LORD, the actual name for God! It is much easier to explain how an original יהוה in the mouth of a Gentile might have been changed to p 43 אֲדֹנָי than it is to explain how an original אֲדֹנָי in the mouth of a Gentile came to be changed to יהוה. This suggests that יהוה might in fact be original.

3. *The shorter reading is to be preferred*. The tendency of scribes was to clarify by further explanation, rather than by removing words.
4. *Most difficult reading is to be preferred*. Again, the tendency of scribes was to make a reading more understandable, rather than less so.

Inspired Text

So here's the situation: no autographs (original manuscripts) exist and the manuscripts that do exist show many differences. What do conservatives hold to be inspired? The preservation of God's Word involves two processes: inspiration and providence. Conservatives hold the autographs to be inerrant and infallible (see Figure 4.5 below). God is absolutely perfect and, though infinitely beyond humankind in his being, is perfectly able to communicate to them in a way that they can understand. Men wrote as God miraculously directed them using whatever means he chose.

The other process is providence. Nowhere are we told that copyists or translators were miraculously and infallibly guided by God. Consequently, they were open to error. Yet, God works through his people, faithful and flawed though they be, to work through the evidence that we have.

p 44 **Figure 4.5: Textual Criticism and Inspiration**

Exactly What is Inspired?
Or, God, Man, the Bible and Inerrancy

How can conservatives defend any claim to have God's very words? The situation is not as bleak as it first may appear. Two points are in order. First, the reliability of the OT text is extremely high. Only about 10 percent is disputed at all. And of that 10 percent, the vast majority of variations are matters such as spelling that have no significant affect on the meaning of the text. Second, though the study of textual criticism may affect the meaning of an individual passage, no major doctrine of Scripture rests solely on any disputed text.

Versions

Many people find it confusing when the preacher or teacher they are listening to reads from a Bible version different from the one in which they are reading. Sometimes the versions are nearly

identical. On the other hand, sometimes they are so different that it is hard to believe they translated from the same Hebrew text. This is a question of the modern English *versions* of Scripture.

p 45 To illustrate the issue, compare the following versions of 1 Kgs 20:11.

Figure 4.6: Six Versions of 1 Kgs 20:11

KJV 1611	And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.
LB 1971	The king of Israel retorted, "Don't count your chickens before they hatch!"
NIV 1984	The king of Israel answered, "Tell him: 'One who puts on his armor should not boast like one who takes it off.' "
NASB 1995	Then the king of Israel answered and said,"Tell him, 'Let not him who girds on his armor boast like him who takes it off."
NLT 1996	The king of Israel sent back this answer: "A warrior still dressing for battle should not boast like a warrior who has already won."
NET 1998	The king of Israel replied, "Tell him the one who puts on his battle gear should not boast like one who is taking it off."

Here are some questions for you to consider and discuss:

1. What differences do you notice?
2. Which versions seem to be most literal?
3. Which one changes the imagery? Is that significant?
4. Which version is easier for you to understand? most interesting? most easily memorized?
5. From which versions would you prefer to do detailed Bible study? simple rapid devotional reading?

Remember: a version is rendering from one language into another and a paraphrase is rewording within the same language. To deal with this issue, we'll look at the task of translation.

p 46 The Task of Translation

The process of translation is quite complicated (see Figure 4.7). It begins with the original text and ends with a target text (the translation) in the language of the intended audience. In between

is the original meaning the author intended. The black arrows track the translator's task. The first arrow involves the interpretation of the original text to ascertain the author's original meaning. The second arrow involves the interpretation of the target language (and culture) with the intention that the target text will communicate to the modern reader as nearly as possible the same meaning as the author intended. In the figure, the closer the two circles, the better.

Figure 4.7: Overview of the Translation Process

The process indicated by Figure 4.7 points out some of the issues involved in translation. The first is the quality of the text. How close is it to the original? This is the issue of textual criticism. Second, there are always differences between the original language and the target language. Translators must make choices on how they are going to deal with these differences. What are the translation principles, more formal or more functional? How can the translator bring the circle of "Reader's Understood Meaning" to coincide more closely with the "Author's Intended Meaning"? Third, since the translator must interpret the original text to determine the author's intended meaning as well as interpret the language of the target text, *every translation is an interpretation*.

This need not cause undo concern. First, our English translations are very well done; i.e., the centers of the circles in Figure 4.7 are pretty close. Second, the difference in circles is true of all human communication. Think of the many times you and a friend or spouse have had a breakdown in communication.

p 47 This is also true for readers of the Bible. We would have the same problem even if we were studying full Hebrew—or even if God were speaking to us orally! The good news is, though, that even though there is always a gap, communication still happens with excellent results. When a mom tells her three-year-old not to play in the street, the child knows what not to do. That doesn't always translate into obedience, however. How often God's people are just like children. We usually understand the Bible well enough to understand what behavior is pleasing to God, but that doesn't always translate into obedience.[3]

[3] Fields, L. M. (2008). *Hebrew for the Rest of Us: Using Hebrew Tools without Mastering Biblical Hebrew* (pp. 34–47). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

CHAPTER 6

"Yes, Virginia, There Are … Clauses"

Objectives

1. Understand various types of clauses and how they differ from phrases
2. Identify different types of clauses in Hebrew
3. Flow chart subject, verb, indirect object, and direct object
4. Be motivated to make flowcharts

Introduction

Clauses are not difficult to understand. We use them all the time without need of explaining them. But when we study Scripture, we want to look at the text closely in order to understand and explain the meaning. Identifying clauses is an important part of this process. Explaining them can be tricky, though, when our memory of grammar gets a little foggy. Usually the main idea a writer wants to get across appears in a main clause. If our attention is misplaced in a secondary idea, we run the risk of misunderstanding exactly what the author intended.

In this chapter we will brush the dust off those parts of our brains that once learned clauses in English. Then we will move to the less familiar territory of Hebrew clauses. At this point we are just looking at the big picture of clauses. We will get to the finer points within the clauses in later chapters.

Finally, we will learn a system of flowcharting. Flowcharting is a simplified form of sentence diagramming. If you were one of the few who learned and loved diagramming sentences, I hope you will find this modified form still interesting and perhaps even more useful. If you were one of the many who hated diagramming sentences (I confess that I was), clear away your prejudices and give this a try. I use this all the time in studying Scripture. Sometimes meaning becomes more p 66 clear; sometimes other options of interpretation become apparent. In either case, the text comes alive.

Clauses

We need to start with some terminology. A clause is made up of a subject and a predicate (it contains a verb or finite verbal idea; more on this in the next chapter). The subject or the verb may be present or implied, but both are required. A phrase is a word or word group that does not contain a predicate, i.e., it has no finite verb.

A sentence is made up of one or more clauses. There are two basic types of clauses: independent clauses and dependent or subordinate clauses. Just as the names imply, an independent clause can stand alone; a dependent clause "depends on," or hangs from, another clause.

An *independent clause* can be a complete sentence all by itself. Since a dependent clause by definition requires a main clause, it does not by itself form a complete sentence. When an independent has a dependent clause attached to it, this independent clause is called a main clause. The only difference between a *main clause* and an independent clause is that a main clause has

one or more subordinating clauses modifying it, whereas an independent clause has no subordinate clause.

A *dependent clause* is introduced by a relative pronoun (who, which, that, etc.) or by a subordinating conjunction (words such as after, although, because, if, except, etc.). A relative pronoun introduces a relative clause and functions like an adjective. Dependent clauses introduced by subordinating conjunctions are adverbial; that is, they modify verbs. This simple concept is important to grasp, in order to understand the functions of clauses.

Study the examples below. I have numbered the sentences "S1," etc. Subjects are in bold type; the verbs or verb phrases are underlined; subordinating conjunctions are in italics.

S1. **Bill** loves Hebrew.

S2. *Though* **Bill** loves Hebrew, **he** also likes food.

S3. **Bill** prefers pizza, but **Jill** seafood.

S4. **Bill** will eat seafood, but hates raw oysters.

S5. **Oysters** make Bill sick.

p 67 **S6.** **Bill** made a strange facial expression, *when* he ate raw oysters, *because* **Jill** dared him.

S7. **Jill**, *who* should have been sorry, laughed, *because* **Bill** made a funny face.

S8. **Bill** and **Jill** are still friends.

S1 is an independent clause. A sentence with only one independent clause is called a simple sentence.

S2 has two verbs and subjects. Therefore there are two clauses. The first clause is introduced by a subordinating conjunction, "though," and is dependent. If someone said to you, "Though Bill loves pizza," and stopped, you would be waiting for something to complete the thought. The second clause is the main clause. A main clause plus a dependent clause forms a complex sentence.

S3 also has two clauses, but they are joined by a coordinating conjunction, "but." Both clauses are independent; this is a compound sentence. You will notice that the verb in the second clause is implied.

S4 is another compound sentence, but in the second clause the subject is implied.

S5 has two direct objects (DOs) joined by and, "Bill" and "sick." Both words refer to the same entity. Notice that "and" is not a subordinating conjunction. It is a coordinating conjunction joining elements of equal weight in the sentence.

S6 has three clauses. The main clause comes first. The first subordinate clause depends on the main clause, giving the time when Bill made the face. The second subordinate clause depends on the first subordinate clause (based on context), giving the reason that Bill ate the raw oysters.

S7 again has one main clause and two subordinate clauses. The main subject is Jill, but the comma marks an interruption in the clause. "Who" introduces a relative clause, which functions like an adjective, describing the noun, Jill. Within the relative clause "who" is the subject of the verb phrase "should have been." After a second comma the main clause resumes, and its verb is "laughed." The last clause is introduced by a subordinating conjunction "because" and is adverbial, giving the reason why Jill laughed.

S8 has two subjects and one verb. "Bill and Jill" form a compound subject. In this case, the "and" joins two nouns that both function as subjects of the verb. p 68 Notice that the verb is a form of "to be." The subjects ("Bill and Jill") and the noun "friends" all refer to the same people. Bill and Jill are not doing something to the friends, they are the friends. So the word "friends" is not a DO; it is called a predicate noun in English.

Now that you have the general idea of how clauses function in English, you are ready to be introduced to Hebrew clauses.

Hebrew Verb and Noun Clauses

Hebrew clauses may be analyzed internally and externally. By externally, I mean how a given clause relates to surrounding clauses. By internally, I mean the nature of the verb within the clause itself. In this chapter we will look at clauses internally. There are two types of clauses based on the verb: verb clauses and noun clauses. The identity of the clause is determined by whether the verb is a form of "to be" or not "to be" (with apologies to Shakespeare) in any tense.

If the verb is anything other than a simple "to be," the clause is a verbal clause. Sentences S1–S7 above are verbal clauses; in all of these a verb other than "to be" is either present or implied (S3). This is something so familiar, I don't need to give any biblical examples right now. As in English, the verb may be omitted, especially in poetry, but these are still considered to be verbal clauses, because some verb must be understood from the context. We will treat Hebrew verbal clauses in the unit on the verb.

If, however, the verb is a form of the verb "to be," the clause is a noun clause (or verbless clause). The Hebrew verb for "to be" is הָיָה, but it has a range of meanings. When it means anything other than "to be," the clause is considered to be verbal. Its most common meaning, though, is simply "to be." A peculiarity of Hebrew is that it regularly omits the verb הָיָה ("to be"), unless there is some particular reason for including it, such as to specify time. English will almost always include it in translation. For example, if S7 were in Hebrew, the verb "are" would be omitted.

When Hebrew does omit הָיָה, translators must make a decision about the time frame (past, present, or future) based on context. I give an example of each time frame below with an English interlinear using marks to show where a verb must be understood and then the NIV with the verb in italics. Notice that in each case there is no Hebrew verb "to be" and context determines the time frame.

p 69 **Past Time (Genesis 1:2)**

תְּהוֹם	פְּנֵי	עַל־	•	וְחֹשֶׁךְ
the	the	over	x	and
deep	face of			darkness

and darkness *was* over the surface of the deep

Present Time (Leviticus 19:2)

אֱלֹהֵיכֶם	יְהוָה	אֲנִי	•	קָדוֹשׁ	כִּי
your God	the Lord	I	x	holy	for

for I the Lord your God *am* holy

Future Time (Ruth 1:16)

עַמִּי	•	עַמֵּךְ
my	x	your
people		people

Your people *will be* my people

CHAPTER 7

Wow!
The Conjunction Waw and Friends

Goals

1. Learn conjunctions and their functions
2. Label the functions of conjunctions in flowcharts

Tools Used: Interlinear Bible (electronic or paper)

Introduction

We mentioned in the previous chapter that Hebrew clauses may be classified internally, i.e., by the type of verb in the clause, or they may be classified externally. By "externally" I mean how the clause in question relates to surrounding clauses. Languages that tend to link subordinating clauses to main clauses are called *syntactic* languages. English and Greek are syntactic languages. It is common in these languages to string together series of clauses using subordination. Paul is famous (or infamous among Greek students) for very long Greek sentences with all sorts of subordination.

Languages that link clauses together by coordination instead of subordination are called *paratactic*. Hebrew is paratactic. It does have subordinate conjunctions to introduce subordinate clauses, but more commonly Hebrew joins together clauses by a coordinating conjunction. The most common word in the Hebrew Bible is the coordinating conjunction Waw. It occurs over 50,000 times in the OT! Interestingly, even though it's considered a coordinating conjunction, the Waw can also mark structures that are subordinate. So even though Hebrew is paratactic, Hebrew uses various coordinating arrangements to communicate subordinate ideas. These will p 77 be covered in the coming chapters. You simply need to identify the three structures of Hebrew main clauses and the main functions of one of those structures.

In this chapter we will look first at English conjunctions and how they function. Then we will look at Disjunctive Clauses in Hebrew and the functions of Waw in these situations. Finally, we will look at labeling the functions of these clauses in flowcharts.

English Conjunctions and Functions

Conjunctions are words that join clauses, words, or phrases. As we've seen, there are two types. A coordinating conjunction joins clauses, words, or phrases of equal "weight" (see examples S3,

S4, and S7 from the last chapter). Subordinating conjunctions introduce clauses that depend on another word or clause. The clause on which it depends may be either main or subordinate.

What you ultimately need to do is describe the function of clauses. To do this, you must familiarize yourself with conjunctions and what they mean. To aid you I have prepared three figures below. The first one identifies the more common English coordinating conjunctions; the second identifies the more common subordinating conjunctions. These figures list the conjunctions in alphabetical order and give their possible functions. Coordinating conjunctions are also in bold type. Words that may be used either as conjunctions or prepositions are followed by an asterisk (*). Some conjunctions may also function as adverbs; these are not marked. When you encounter a conjunction, simply find it on the list and write the function in the first column of your chart parallel to the conjunction. If there is more than one alternative, you will have to determine what the author meant based on context. That is part of the fun!

Figure 7.1: Coordinating Conjunctions and Functions

Word	**Functions**
and	Continuation, Addition
but	Contrast
for*	Cause, Explanation, Example
however	Contrast
yet	Contrast
or	Explanatory, Alternative (inclusive or exclusive)

p 78 **Figure 7.2: Subordinating Conjunctions and Functions**

Word	**Function**
after*	Time—prior
although	Contrast, Concession
as	Comparison, Manner
as … as	Measure/degree, Comparison
as … so	Comparison
as a result	Result
as if	Manner
as long as	Extent, Cause

as soon as	Time
as though	Manner
because	Cause
before*	Time—subsequent
besides	Continuative
both … and	Addition
consequently	Result
even as	Comparison
even if	Concession
even though	Concession
except	Restrictive
for example	Example
hence	Result
however	Contrast
if	Condition
in order that	Purpose/result
inasmuch as	Cause
just as	Comparison
just as … so	Comparison
lest	Condition (negative)
not only … but also	Addition
now	Cause
provided (that)	Condition

since	Time (inauguration, cause)
so	Cause, Result
so also	Comparison
so … as	Comparison
so that	Purpose/result

You might be wondering whether the function labels will mean anything to you. Hopefully you will understand most of the labels. Some of them, though, may not seem obvious. In order to clarify the less obvious labels, I have provided a third figure. It is a reverse index of the first two figures. This figure combines both coordinating and subordinating conjunctions into one figure, then alphabetizes the items according to function, listing the conjunctions afterward. I provide a brief explanation for each function.

p 79 **Figure 7.3: Function Explanations for Conjunctions**

Function	Explanation
Addition	Attaching of things or actions not in sequence; common in lists. **Words**: and; both … and; not only … but also
Alternative	(Exclusive) Alternative exclusive means A or B, but not both A and B. **Words**: whether … or
Alternative	(Inclusive) Alternative inclusive means A and/or B. Or in English can function either way. Context must decide. **Words**: or
Cause	The clause so introduced is the cause of the action/state of another clause. **Words**: as long as; because; inasmuch as; now; since; so; whereas; why; for*
Comparison	Marks an item as similar to a previous item. **Words**: as; as … as; as … so; even as; just as; just as … so; so … as; so also; than

Concession	Introduces a clause recognized as compatible with the main clause, when at first glance it might appear that they are incompatible. **Words**: although; even if; even though; though; unless; while; yet
Condition	Introduces a situation necessary for the fulfillment of another clause. **Words**: if; provided (that); unless
Continuation	Marks a clause as sequential (in time) or consequential (logically). **Words**: and; besides; [untranslated]
Contrast	Marks a clause in opposition to another clause. **Words**: although; but; however; whereas; yet
Example	Marks an illustration of a previous thought **Words**: for example; for*
Explanation	Introduces a clause that explains a previous clause. **Words**: for*; or
Extent	Marks the limit of something. **Words**: as long as; till; until*
Inference	Not to be confused with the Adverb of time, the conjunction then marks the main clause, whose fulfillment depends on the fulfillment of a conditional clause. **Words**: then
p 80 **Manner**	Marks the method or attitude in which an action was done. **Words**: as; as if; as though

Measure/degree	Marks or compares the quantity of something. **Words**: as … as; than; that
Place	Indicates the location of an action. **Words**: where(ever)
Purpose/result	Introduces a clause indicating the intent of the agent of an action. (Compare Result) **Words**: in order that; so that; that
Restrictive	Marks an item as excluded from the main clause **Words**: except
Result	Introduces a clause indicating the likely outcome of an action. (Compare Purpose) **Words**: as a result; consequently; hence; so; then, lest (negative);
Time	Marks the time of an action. **Words**: as soon as; when(ever)
Time (inauguration)	Marks the time of the beginning of the action in the main clause. **Words**: since
Time (prior)	Marks a clause whose action occurs prior to the action of the clause it modifies. **Words**: after*
Time (simultaneous)	Marks a clause whose action occurs at the same time as the action of the clause it modifies. **Words**: while
Time (subsequent)	Marks a clause whose action occurs after the action of the clause it modifies. **Words**: before*

Time (termination)	Marks the time of the end of an action in the main clause, without indicating a resulting change in state. **Words**: until*

First, do not memorize any of these figures (whew!). Second, skim over the list of conjunctions one or two times so that you can recognize them as conjunctions and know whether they are coordinating or subordinating. Third, when you are labeling the functions to your flowchart, consult the figures to put in the correct label and to understand the meaning of the label. These figures are suggestive. If none of the categories above seem to fit a word, consult a good English dictionary. p 81 Feel free to add your own categories. After using the figures a while, you will find less need to consult them.

Waw: King of Conjunctions

In the last chapter we mentioned that clauses may be classified externally by the way they are joined together. There are two basic ways that clauses are joined: with a conjunction or without a conjunction. A conjunctive structure exists when two words, phrases, or clauses are joined by a conjunction. An asyndetic structure (the noun you are more likely to read is *asyndeton*) exists when two words, phrases, or clauses simply sit next to each other without a conjunction. (By the way, the word *asyndeton*, of Greek derivation, means "without conjunction"; the word *conjunction* is derived from Latin). Asyndeton is less common than conjunction. It is found mostly in poetry or reported speech. In these cases the writer expects the reader to understand the logical connection between clauses.

Position and the Range of Meaning for Waw

With only a few exceptions, anytime a Hebrew word begins with a Waw, that Waw is the conjunction. Waw is classified as a coordinating conjunction. But it may also introduce a subordinate clause. Waw is such a common and important feature of Hebrew that you will need to spend some time learning about it.

The conjunction Waw never stands alone, but is always prefixed to a word, even before any other prefixes that might be attached. For example, דָּבָר means "word" or "a word"; וְדָבָר means "and a word"; וְהַדָּבָר means "and the word" (הַ is the article; see ch. 10).

Range of Meaning for Waw

Waw is very flexible. The *SNIVEC* translates the Waw conjunction well over 50 different ways! Because of this flexibility it is difficult to classify its uses. Here is a chart listing *some* of its functions. To get an idea of the English words that might be used to express these functions, I give in the final column a list of English glosses. See also Figure 7.3 above. By far the most common uses are addition and continuation.

p 82 **Figure 7.4: Functions of Waw**

	Functions	English Glosses
Coordinating	Addition	and, also
	Alternative	or
	Continuation	and, then, [untranslated]
	Contrast	but
	Emphatic	indeed, even
	Explanation	namely
Subordinating	Cause	because
	Result	so that, so

You probably won't use Figure 7.4 very often. Its purpose is to show that Waw may introduce coordinating or subordinating clauses. More importantly, Waw is a structure marker. Its meaning is determined by structure and context. When a clause begins with וְ + Finite Verb, it is a conjunctive clause. When a clause begins וְ + non-verb (e.g., noun, pronoun, participle, etc.) the clause is disjunctive. We will look at these more closely in ch. 20 on Prose.

Other Conjunctions

The Waw conjunction is certainly the most common conjunction in Hebrew. There are other conjunctions, but none of them are prefixed; they are independent words or word clusters. The rest are subordinating conjunctions. Since you are learning pre-Hebrew, you don't really need to study the others. However, it might be helpful to see some examples. Here are three common conjunctions and their most common functions. For English words with the same function, compare Figure 7.3 above.

אוֹ Coordinating conjunction joining nominals

1. **Alternative.** Gen 44:19: "Do you have a father *or* (**אוֹ**) a brother?" (NIV)

כִּי Either coordinating (1, 2) or subordinating (3–8); it may also be used as an adverb (9). Among the possible functions are the following:

p 83 1. **Explanation.** Gen 3:4–5: "You will not surely die.… *For* (כִּי) God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened.…" (NIV)

2. **Contrast** (after a negative statement). Gen 17:14: "You shall *not* call her name Sarai, *but* (כִּי) Sarah shall be her name."

3. **Time**—simultaneous. Gen 4:12: "*When* (כִּי) you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you." (NIV)

4. **Cause.** Gen 3:20: "Adam named his wife Eve, *because* (כִּי) she would become the mother of all living." (NIV)

5. **Condition**—of a real condition (i.e., a situation that may potentially happen). Gen 4:24: "*If* (כִּי) Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times." (NIV)

6. **Concession.** Joshua 17:18: "For you shall drive out the Canaanites, *though* (כִּי) they have chariots of iron, and *though* (כִּי) they are strong." (ESV)

7. **Result.** Gen 20:9: "How have I wronged you that (כִּי) you have brought such great guilt upon me and upon my kingdom?"

8. **Nominalizing**—this function causes a clause to be treated like a noun. Gen 3:4–5: "You will not surely die.… For God knows *that* (כִּי) when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened.…" (NIV)[1]

9. **Emphasis**—this is really an adverbial function rather than a conjunctive function. Gen 22:17: "I will surely (כִּי) bless you." (NIV)

אִם Among the possible functions are the following:

1. **Condition**—of a real condition. Gen 13:9: "*If* (אִם) you go to the left, I'll go to the right; *if* (אִם) you go the right, I'll go to the left." (NIV)

2. **Concession.** Job 9:15: "*Though* (אִם) I were innocent, I could not answer him." (NIV)

p 84 **3.** **Alternative**—this is a coordinating function used in questions to mark the second question; sometimes left untranslated. Gen 17:17: "Will a son be born

to a man a hundred years old? Will (אִם untranslated) Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?" (NIV)

כִּי אִם This word cluster can work in two ways. First, each conjunction can work independently to introduce two clauses having any of the meanings listed above. Second, the two conjunctions can work together as one compound.

1. As **two separate conjunctions**, each introducing separate clauses. Exodus 9:2–3: "*For if* (כִּי אִם) you refuse to let them go and (וְ) still hold them, behold, the hand of the Lord will fall with a very severe plague.…" (ESV)

   Notice that the *For* (כִּי) introduces the main clause, which is found in v. 3, "behold, the hand of the Lord will fall with a very sever plague." The *if* (אִם) introduces the two conditional clauses in v. 2, which incidentally are connected by Waw conjunction.

2. **Contrast** (compound conjunction indicating a stronger contrast than כִּי). Gen 15:4: "This man will not be your heir, but (כִּי אִם) a son coming from your own body will be your heir."

Comparing Versions

At this point you are able to do some pretty sophisticated Bible study. You can compare versions and use a software interlinear for help. Because Hebrew uses the conjunction Waw so often, and because its most common meaning is addition with the translation "and," translators into English face another challenge: style. Always translating the Waw with "and" is poor style in English. To break up the monotony, translators will use different devices. Sometime they will leave it untranslated; sometimes they will use a different conjunction. Since different conjunctions have different ranges of meaning, a reader of English paying close attention to the connecting words may infer a meaning from the English that is not intended in Hebrew.

p 85 For example, in Exod 3:16–17, the Lord tells Moses to speak to the elders of Israel the Lord's message. In that message is a series of clauses, which I summarize below.

KJV	I have surely visited	… and seen	… And I have said, I will bring you up
NIV	I have watched over	… and have seen	… and I have promised to bring you up
ESV	I have observed	… and	… and I promised that I will bring you up

NASB95	I am indeed concerned	… and	… So I said, I will bring you up

There are several differences you notice and we will come to these in time. Right now I want you to focus on the beginning of the third clause, which is the beginning of v. 17. Of the eight conjunctions, *and* is used seven times. The *and* used to introduce the third clause suggests the function of addition. The NASB95 translates the last one with *so*. When you check Figure 7.2, you see that *so* may function as either cause or result. Checking the context, "result" is the more likely meaning of the NASB95. The NASB95 makes explicit that the result of the Lord's concern was to say that he would bring them up. Checking an interlinear reveals that v. 17 in Hebrew begins with a וְ conjunction. Figure 7.4 reveals that this meaning is within the range of Waw. You have learned that NASB95 might well give the sense.

If you were reading a version other than NASB95, you might not have been aware of the possibility of a cause—result relationship between God's concern (v. 16) and his taking action (v. 17). Since the other versions disagree with the NASB95 on this point, you might be wondering how to check up on this interpretation. Of course you may read commentaries, but in the coming chapters you will learn more to help you make a decision. This is when Bible study can be rich![4]

[4] Fields, L. M. (2008). *Hebrew for the Rest of Us: Using Hebrew Tools without Mastering Biblical Hebrew* (pp. 76–85). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Prepositions

Remember that a clause is made up of a subject and a predicate (something that contains a verb or finite verbal idea) and a phrase is a word or word group that does not contain a predicate, i.e., no finite verb (and therefore no grammatical subject). There are basically three types of phrases: infinitival phrases, participial phrases, and prepositional phrases. In this chapter, we cover only the last of these.

The word preposition (abbreviated "pp") means "placed (-position) before (pre-)"; i.e., a pp is placed before its object (usually a noun or pronoun). A pp plus its object constitutes a prepositional phrase (abbreviated PPhr) The symbol "(T)" refers to an optional article. This is illustrated in Figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1: Structure of Prepositional Phrases

Preposition	*Object of Preposition*
pp +	(T) + N
on	top
with	him
according to	the author

There are a few things to notice:

1. The article may be present between the pp and the object of the pp but is not required.
2. The object of the pp is in the objective case. English nouns are not inflected for case, but pronouns are. "He" is a pronoun in the subjective case; the objective case is "him." The pp is followed by the objective case, "him," rather than in the subjective case, "he."
3. Sometimes a word group, such as "according to," functions as a pp.

The function of a pp is to show the relationship between two words: the object of the preposition and another word outside of the PPhr. The other word may be either noun or verb. You need to conceive of the PPhr as an unbreakable unit. The role of the interpreter is twofold. You need to identify the word that the p 90 PPhr modifies and you need to identify the function of the preposition; in other words, describe how the two words are related.

Below is a list of the most common English prepositions and the functions they can have. Words that may also function as conjunctions are marked with an asterisk (*). Note that the preposition "of" is so flexible that it is treated separately!

Figure 8.2: English Prepositions and Functions

Word	**Function**
about	Measure/degree

above	Place
according to	Cause
across	Place
after*	Time
against	Dis/advantage, Place
among	Association
around	Place
at	Place, Time
because of	Cause
before*	Place, Time
behind	Place
below	Place
beneath	Place
beside	Place
between	Place
by	Agency/means, Place
in accordance with	Cause
in front of	Place
in regard to	Reference/Respect
in spite of	Concession
inside	Place
instead of	Alternative/Substitution
into	Place
like	Comparison

near	Place
of	Composition, Contents
off	Place
on	Place
on account of	Cause
only*	Restriction
out of	Cause, Composition
over	Place
since*	Time
p 91 **by means of**	Agency/means, Instrument
contrary to	Dis/advantage
down	Place
during	Time
except	Restriction
for the sake of	Cause
for*	Dis/advantage, Price
from	Source, Separation
in	Place/sphere
through	Agency/means
to	Destination
toward	Destination
under	Place
until*	Extent, Time

up	Place
upon	Place
with	Association, Instrument

The only way to work with prepositional phrases is to become familiar with prepositions. You should read over the list of prepositions until you can identify them in a text. Some prepositions may be used as conjunctions. You can tell the difference by looking to see what comes after the word. If it is a phrase (without a verb), it is a preposition. If it is a clause (with a verb), it is a conjunction.

The Structure of Hebrew Prepositions

The order of the words in a Hebrew pp is the same as in English: pp-Article (optional)-object of the pp. However, there are two ways they appear, either as prefixes or as independent words. Prepositions that are prefixed are called inseparable prepositions, because they never appear as independent words. Prepositions that are independent words are called separable prepositions.

Only three pps are inseparable, meaning that they attach to their objects as prefixes.

בְּ	"in, with, by"
כְּ	"like, as, according to"
לְ	"to, for"

p 92 **Figure 8.3: Attaching Inseparable Prepositions to Nouns**

Noun	Preposition	Prep Phrase	Translation
מֶלֶךְ	בְּ	בְּמֶלֶךְ	with a king
מֶלֶךְ	כְּ	כְּמֶלֶךְ	like a king
מֶלֶךְ	לְ	לְמֶלֶךְ	for a king

Most prepositions are "separable"; i.e., they stand alone. They may or may not be joined by a Maqqef (see example three below) with no change in meaning. Here are some examples:

לִפְנֵי מֶלֶךְ before a king

עַל בַּיִתon a house

אֶל-בַּיִתto a house

One preposition can be either inseperable or seperable, again with no difference in meaning:

מִן מֶלֶךְfrom a king

מִמֶּלֶךְfrom a king

In the first example, מִן may be followed by Maqqef. In the second example, notice that the Nun of the preposition has been assimilated into the first root letter of the noun and is represented by the Dagesh Forte. There is no difference in the meaning of the preposition מִן with either spelling.

Any of the pps can have a PrnSf attached. The way these attachments are made is beyond what we are doing here. Books and computers that give you parsing information will identify these for you.

Some Functions of a Few Hebrew Prepositions

Of the top eight most frequent words in the Hebrew Bible, prepositions occupy five spots, a total of nearly 55,000 occurrences between them! This doesn't include the sign of the direct object, which has a structure like pps, but basically has only one function. Here are the top five prepositions and a few of their main uses.

p 93 לְ

1. **Marker of Indirect Object (IO).** 1 Kgs 4:29 [Hebrew 5:9]: "God gave [untranslated לְ] Solomon wisdom and great insight" (NIV). Notice that what was given was wisdom and great insight. These are the direct objects. Solomon received them and is therefore the indirect object.

2. **Place** (אֶל [see below] is much more common than simple לְ, though לְ in compounds is commonly used for place or direction). 1 Sam 9:12: "He has just come *to* (לְ) our town today" (NIV).

3. **Dis/advantage.** Gen 47:4: "for there is no pasture *for* (לְ) your servant's flocks …" (ESV).

4. **Reference/Respect.** Exod 1:10: “Come, we must deal shrewdly *with* (לְ) them …” (NIV, ESV).

5. **Time.** Gen 21:2: “Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham *in* (לְ) his old age, *at* (לְ) the very time God had promised him” (NIV).

6. **Possession.** Gen 40:5: “… the cupbearer and the baker *of* (לְ) the king of Egypt …” (NIV).

7. **Purpose.** Gen 50:20: “God intended it *for* (לְ) good …” (NIV). Exod 13:21: “By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud *to* (לְ) guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire *to* (לְ) give them light, so that they could travel by day or night” (NIV). In the first example, the pp לְ is attached to a nominal (technically, this is an adjective being used as a noun) and in the second example the לְ marks an infinitive, just as *to* commonly does in English. Most often these expressions with the infinitive in both Hebrew and English indicate purpose. We will see more on this in ch. 17.

בְּ

1. **Place.** Gen 9:2: “They [the animals] are given *into* (בְּ) your hand” (NIV). Lev 11:33: “everything *in* (בְּ) it will be unclean” (NIV). Josh 3:11: “See, the ark of the covenant of the LORD of all the earth will go *into* (בְּ) the Jordan ahead of you” (NIV).

p 94 2. **Time.** [140 times]: “*in* (בְּ) the morning.” Gen 12:4: “Abram was seventy-five years old *when* (בְּ) he set out from Haran” (NIV). In the first example, the pp בְּ is used with a noun that has to do with time. In the second example, the בְּ is attached to an infinitive. We will see more on this in ch. 17.

3. **Accompaniment.** 1 Kgs 10:2: “Arriving at Jerusalem *with* (בְּ) a very great caravan …” (NIV).

4. **Dis/advantage.** Exod 1:10: “and, if war breaks out, [they] will … fight *against* (בְּ) us …” (NIV).

5. **Instrument.** Judg 15:16: "*With* (בְּ) a donkey's jawbone I have made a donkey out of them" (NIV).

6. **Agency/Means.** Gen 9:6: "Whoever sheds the blood of man, *by* (בְּ) man shall his blood be shed …" (NIV).

7. **Cause.** 2 Kgs 24:3: "Surely these things happened to Judah according to the LORD'S command, in order to remove them from his presence *because of* (בְּ) the sins of Manasseh …" (NIV).

מִן

1. **Separation.** Ps 51:2: "Wash me thoroughly *from* (מִן) my iniquity and cleanse me *from* (מִן) my sin" (ESV). Ps 6:8 [Hebrew 6:9]: "Depart *from* (מִן) me, all you workers of evil" (ESV).

2. **Source.** Ps 68:31 [Hebrew 68:32]: "Envoys will come *from* (מִן) Egypt" (NIV).

3. **Cause.** Gen 16:10: "I will multiply they seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered *for* (מִן) multitude" (KJV). The word *for* here clearly means "because of."

4. **Comparison.** Josh 19:19: "Because the portion of the people of Judah was *too* large *for* (מִן) them, the people of Simeon obtained an inheritance in the midst of their inheritance" (ESV). Ps 84:10 [Hebrew 84:11]: "*Better* (טוֹב) is one day in your courts *than* (מִן) a thousand elsewhere" (NIV). Ps 84:11 illustrates a very common way that Hebrew expresses comparison. An adjective followed by a מִן pp.

p 95 5. **Whole (a.k.a., Partitive).** Gen 6:2: "… and they took wives *of* (מִן) all which they chose" (KJV). The "whole" is represented by the object of the pp, *all*. The "part" is represented by the word "wives."

עַל

1. **Place.** 1 Kgs 4:29 [Hebrew 5:9]: "God gave Solomon … a breadth of insight as measureless as the sand *on* (עַל) the shore" (NIV). Josh 10:5: "The [kings] … encamped *before* (עַל) Gibeon and made war against it" (KJV). More modern translations take this example as Disadvantage. See below.

2. **Dis/advantage.** Josh 10:5: "[They; i.e., the kings] … encamped *against* (עַל) Gibeon and made war *against* (עַל) it" (ESV). Compare: "[They; i.e., the kings] … took up positions *against* (עַל) Gibeon and attacked it." (NIV)

3. **Cause.** Gen 20:3: "You are as good as dead *because of* (עַל) the woman you have taken; she is a married woman" (NIV).

אֶל

1. **Destination.** Gen 2:19: "And [God] brought them *to* (אֶל) the man …" (NIV).

2. **Place.** Gen 24:42: "I came today *to* (אֶל) the spring and said, …" (NIV).

3. **Indirect Object.** 2 Kgs 5:23: "He gave them *to* (אֶל) two of his servants, and they carried them ahead of Gehazi" (NIV). [many places]: "[A] said *to* [B].…" אֶל is commonly found after verbs of speaking indicating the person spoken to. The quotation of the words spoken actually functions as the DO of the verb, which the addressee receives.

4. **Dis/advantage.** Gen 4:9: "Cain rose up *against* (אֶל) his brother Abel and killed him" (ESV).

Prepositions Changing the Meaning of Verbs

Some prepositions actually combine with a verb to change the meaning. When they do that, they may be understood as introducing a DO. English does this as well. For example, if you tell me, "I *worked* today," I imagine you going to a job. p 96 But if you say, "I *worked out* today," I know that you exercised. In such situations, I like to keep the verb and preposition together as the verb phrase; *work* and *work out* simply do not mean the same.

In Hebrew similar things happen. שָׁמַע is a verb meaning "to hear," and may take a DO. For example, in Gen 3:8, "The man and the woman *heard* (שָׁמַע) the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden" (NIV). On the other hand, when this verb is followed by the pp בְּ, as in שָׁמַע בְּ, the expression means "to obey," and the pp בְּ marks the DO. For example, in Gen 26:5, "because Abraham *obeyed* (שָׁמַע בְּ) my voice" (ESV), "my voice" is the object of the pp בְּ and is the DO of the verb "obeyed" (שָׁמַע בְּ).

Flowcharting Prepositional Phrases and Adverbs

There are two things to learn in this section. We have already studied how to flowchart coordinate and subordinate clauses, but in the last two chapters, we ignored prepositional phrases. We are now ready to put these into place. Prepositional phrases may modify either nouns or verbs and should be indented .25 inches above or below the word they modify.

We've worked on Gen 1:1. Now we can complete it. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (NIV).

Function	**Vs**	**Flow Chart**: Genesis 1:1		
Time	1		In the beginning	
Event		**God**	created	è the heavens and è the earth.

This is a simple sentence; i.e., one predicate with no coordinate or subordinate clauses. Notice that "in the beginning" is a pp of time, because *beginning* in this context refers to time. The interpreter must decide which element of the clause it modifies: subject, verb, or DO. Though all three are possible grammatically (remember that a PPhr may modify either a verb or a noun!), the one that makes the best sense is the verb. Therefore I indented the pp about one quarter inch to the right of the verb; I left it above the main clause, because doing that retains English word order. Notice also that I've now added the Functions in the first column. I p 97 indented "Time," because the pp is indented. To the far left I assigned the function "Event" for the independent clause. You will learn those in ch. 13.[5]

[5] Fields, L. M. (2008). *Hebrew for the Rest of Us: Using Hebrew Tools without Mastering Biblical Hebrew* (pp. 89–97). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Nominals and Nouns

A "nominal" is any word that functions as a noun. What besides a noun can function as a noun? Well, pronouns, adjectives, participles, infinitives, prepositional phrases, or even a number. Eventually we will understand that even clauses can function as nouns. For now, however, we will limit our discussion to the basic parts of speech.

A noun is the name of a person, place, or thing. In fact, the Latin word for *noun* is *nomen* (compare with the word *nominal* above), and the Greek word is *onoma*, both of which are nouns meaning "name." Names of persons and places are "proper nouns." We capitalize these in English; e.g., Sam, Evelyn; Chicago, New York. Names of things are common nouns. English used to capitalize these, but no longer does. The "thing" may be either concrete (something you can experience with your senses, such as a flower or the sun), or it may be abstract (something you can only think of, such as beauty or friendship). Note also that the thing may refer to a person, but the emphasis will be on what type of "thing" the person is: policeman, teacher, preacher.

Hebrew nouns have five basic qualities: gender, number, state, case, and definiteness. In this chapter we treat gender and number, in the next chapter state and case, and in chapter 11 definiteness.

Here I reproduce the figure from ch. 5.

Figure 9.2: Parsing Information for Nominals and Verbals

			çVerbal Qualitiesè			çNominal Qualitiesè						
PoS	Word	Lex	Stem	Form	P	G	N	State	Det	Case	Suff	
Nn					x	x	x	x	x			
V			x	x	x	x	x					

In ch. 5 we gave an overview of the meaning of the items in this figure. Let's look at these nominal qualities in more detail.

p 101 Gender

Gender is a categorization of the various forms of nouns. Various languages have three genders labeled masculine, feminine, and neuter (which means "neither" [masculine nor feminine]). The term *common* is used for words that can be any gender without distinction.

The English system of gender is not very well defined. English pronouns carefully preserve gender, but most native English nouns do not, though some words, mostly foreign, may retain a gender-distinctive ending.

Figure 9.3: Gender in English Nouns

Gender	Pronoun	Nouns
Masculine (m)	he	boy, stallion, waiter

Feminine (f)	she	girl, mare, waitress
Common (c)	we	horse, server
Neuter (n)	it	house

Some words maintain gender loosely. For example, *car* can be neuter ("That's my car; I just waxed *it*.") or feminine (That's my car; boy, can *she* fly!"). *Hurricane* used to be feminine, but, because of recent gender sensitivity, now has a common gender (sometimes masculine, sometimes feminine).

Unlike English, Hebrew has a very careful system of gender. A Hebrew noun is either masculine or feminine; there is no neuter (unlike English and Greek). A noun never changes gender, though there are a few nouns with common gender.

It is essential to realize that grammatical gender is a separate quality from physical gender. It is true that words referring to males are normally masculine (e.g., אִישׁ, meaning "man") and words referring to females (e.g., אִשָּׁה, meaning "woman") are normally feminine, but that is not always the case. For example, the word רוּחַ is feminine in gender. It means "wind, spirit, Spirit (as in 'of the Lord')." In spite of the fact that רוּחַ is feminine, in none of these cases is the entity female.

Number

Number is the grammatical quality of singularity or plurality. English nouns have two numbers: singular and plural, normally indicated by adding *-s* or *-es*.

p 102 **Figure 9.3: Number in English**

singular	= one	noun + **no** ending	horse
plural	= two or more	noun + **s** ending	horse**s**

Words that come from foreign languages may retain their original plural form or they may eventually conform to English. For example, *index* is a Latin word that English adopted. The Latin plural is *indices* and English kept that. In recent years, however, English has conformed *index* into the regular pattern and *indexes* is now an accepted term. Then English has its irregular plurals. The plural of *goose* is *geese*, but the plural of *moose* is not *meese*. The plural of *ox* is *oxen*, but the plural of *box* is not *boxen*.

Hebrew nouns have three numbers: singular, dual, and plural. The dual forms would refer to two items as opposed to three or more items indicated by the plural. By the time of Biblical Hebrew, however, dual forms were restricted to things that come in natural pairs, such as eyes or ears. The plural forms, then, can refer to two or more.

Figure 9.4: Number in Hebrew

singular	(s)	= one
dual	(d)	= two
plural	(p)	= two or more

Hebrew uses the grammatical quality of number in a couple of different ways. As in English, the Hebrew singular is commonly used for what we might call a "numeric singular," i.e., one individual. Also, as in English, some nouns are collectives; i.e., a grammatically singular noun for a plural number. An example common to both English and Hebrew is *sheep*, צֹאן, which may be either a "numeric" singular or collective plural. The plural number may be used in several ways in Hebrew.

1. **Numeric Plural.** The plural number is used numerically like English, simply to mean more than one. This is by far the most common use, but there are two other uses that are important.

p 103 2. **Honorific Plural.** The plural in Hebrew can be used to indicate majesty or some kind of intensive idea. Numerous examples exist, especially terms for God, but also terms for humans. For example, in Isaiah 1:3, "the trough of its *master*," the word for "its master," בְּעָלָיו, is a grammatical plural, "its masters," but refers to one master. The most prominent example is treated in Advanced Information at the end of this chapter.

3. **Abstract Plural.** Sometimes nouns are pluralized to convert them to an abstract idea. For example, נַעַר means "boy, lad, youth"; נְעָרִים can be a numeric plural, but is also used to mean the abstract idea of "youthfulness." In Jer 3:4, the Lord says to his rebellious people, "Have you not called to me, 'My Father, my friend from my youth …?' " (NIV). Using the electronic or book tools that we have studied reveals that the word translated "youth" is a masculine plural noun. If it were a numeric plural, then the meaning would be, "My Father, a friend from among my boys." Clearly the Lord is not one of Israel's young boys!

Now for the big question: how can you tell which function of the plural is being used? Most of the time context is clear. But some passages are difficult and you as a pre-Hebrew student are not able to tell. You will have to leave this to the professionals. However, simple awareness of the concept makes it easier to comprehend discussions in commentaries.

The Absolute State

Besides number and gender, Hebrew nouns appear in either of two "states," absolute or construct. Briefly, *construct* nouns are those that are constructed to or bound to a following noun; we will deal with this issue when we study noun cases in ch. 11. The absolute state is simple because this is similar to an English noun. Nouns are called *absolute* because they can stand alone; they are not bound to a following noun.

The lexical form of a noun is the singular absolute form. This means that whenever you look up a noun in *SNIVEC*, the form that appears is the lexical form. On rare occasions, the lexical form will be plural. This occurs because there are a few nouns that do not occur in the singular. So grammarians must decide whether to make the lexical form singular, even though it doesn't exist, or leave it plural.

p 104 Summary

1. Hebrew nouns have five qualities: gender, number, state, case and determination.
2. Hebrew nouns are either masculine (m), feminine (f), or common (c).
3. Hebrew nouns are either singular (s), plural (p), or dual (d).
    a. Singular nouns may be numeric singulars or collectives.
    b. Plural nouns are usually numeric plurals. But two other important uses are the honorific plural and the abstract plural.
4. The lexical form of a noun is the singular, absolute form.[6]

[6] Fields, L. M. (2008). *Hebrew for the Rest of Us: Using Hebrew Tools without Mastering Biblical Hebrew* (pp. 100–104). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

The Article

Objectives

1. Understand that English and Hebrew use articles differently
2. Understand the form of the Hebrew article
3. Understand some facts about how the Hebrew article is used
4. Distinguish between the Hebrew article and the marker for a question

Introduction

I love old movies. One of my favorites is *The Bachelor and the Bobby-Soxer*. There is a running gag in the movie where one person (A) initiates a dialog with another (B), prompting predictable questions:

A1: "You remind me of a man."

B1: "What man?"

A2: "The man with the power."

B2: "What power?"

A3: "The power of Hoo-doo."

B3: "Who do?"

A4: "You do!"

B4: "Do what?"

A5: "Remind me of a man."

B5: "What man?" …

p 107 Maybe it loses something in this book, but in the movie, it's funny. In any case, this little routine illustrates one of the main functions of articles. At the beginning, A1, a character is introduced. Since his identify is not specified, he is called "*a* man"; it could be any man. But in A2 the speaker refers back to the "a man" of A1 and specifies which man. So he is referred to as "*the* man."

If a noun is indefinite, then there is no reference to a specific individual. Instead the "thing" is viewed as any member of a class. If a noun is definite, it refers to a specific entity. The term "definiteness" is used interchangeably with the term "determination." I will use "determination" because it is quicker than saying "having the article or not" and less awkward than "definiteness." In the parsing chart that we have seen, this is indicated in the "Det" column.

Figure 10.1: Parsing Information for Nominals and Verbals

çVerbal Qualitiesè çNominal Qualitiesè

PoS	Word	Lex	Stem	Form	P	G	N	State	Det	Case	Suff
Nn						**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**	
V			**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**				

What we will demonstrate is that though there is overlap between the Hebrew and English definite article, the Hebrew article has additional functions.

Finally, it may seem strange that I've included the Hebrew marker for a question in this chapter (see "Objections"). The reason for this is because Hebrew uses the consonant ה (prefixed) for both, and this requires a little explanation.

The English Articles

English has both a definite article, *the*, and an indefinite article, *a(n)*. To express the idea of definiteness, English adds the definite article; the English article has additional functions as well. To mark indefiniteness, English may use the indefinite article for singular nouns or no article for plural nouns. Here are a few examples to illustrate.

1. I'd like to ride a bicycle.

   No particular bicycle is in view; the focus is on the action of riding.

 2. I'd like to ride the bicycle.

   One particular bicycle is in view and the focus is on the individual bicycle rather than on the riding.

3. The bicycle is a cheap method of transportation.

   This is a generic use of "the;" no particular bicycle is in view, but bicycles as a class is distinguished from other types of transportation. The sentence would have meant the same thing if it had started out "a bicycle.…"

4. I like to ride bicycles.

   Notice that the plural noun bicycles *has no indefinite article, but is still indefinite*.

Determination

Hebrew (and Greek) differs from English in that it has no indefinite article; Hebrew nominals either have the article or they do not. Therefore there is no need to call it a "definite article," though some grammarians do; it is simply the article. When a Hebrew word does not have the article, it may be translated with or without the English indefinite article. So the Hebrew noun דָּבָר may be translated into English as "word" or "a word."

All nouns are either determined or undetermined. Some types of words are always determined even without an article. For example, all proper nouns are determined, because a name functions to identify an individual. All pronouns are determined, because they refer back to a specific noun.

Common nouns may be determined or undetermined. There are two basic ways to make a *common* noun determined: by prefixing the article, or by joining the noun to a following noun that is determined (this includes attaching it to a pronominal suffix; see ch. 11 on the construct state). First we will look at the basic forms of the article.

The Forms of the Article

The article is always prefixed to a word and *never* stands alone. The basic form of the article is הַ֫, that is, the consonant ה plus the vowel Patach and Dagesh Forte in the following letter. Study two examples.

p 109 קוֹל	+	הַ֫	è	הַקּוֹל
voice	+	the	è	the ***voice***
דָּבָר	+	הַ֫	è	הַדָּבָר
word	+	the	è	the ***word***

In the first chapter we learned about certain letters that will not take a Dagesh Forte. When a noun begins with such a letter, Hebrew makes adjustments in the attachment of the article. Below is one possible example.

עַם	+	הַ֫	è	הָעָם
voice	+	the	è	the ***people***

Notice that there is no Dagesh Forte in the ע. To compensate for this loss, the Patach under the article has lengthened to Qamets. What about nominals (N) with both the article (T) *and* an inseparable preposition (pp) and the conjunction (cj) Waw? Any other prefixes attached to a noun with the article come before the article. Hebrew has the same word order as English: PP + Art + N. When you put הַ֫ + בְּ together, the ה drops out and the consonant of the pp takes over the spot previously occupied by the ה. If there is a cj Waw, it comes before the pp.

Figure 10.1: Hebrew Nouns: Some Assembly Required

è HebrewEnglish è

שָׂדֶה	שָׂדֶה			N(a) field
וְשָׂדֶה	שָׂדֶה+	וְ		cj + Nand (a) field
בְּשָׂדֶה	שָׂדֶה+	בְּ		pp + Nin (a) field
וּבְשָׂדֶה	שָׂדֶה+	בְּ+	וְ	cj + pp +and in (a) Nfield
הַשָּׂדֶה	שָׂדֶה+	הַ·		T + Nthe field
וְהַשָּׂדֶה	שָׂדֶה+	הַ·+	וְ	cj + T +and the Nfield
בַּשָּׂדֶה	שָׂדֶה+	הַ·+	בְּ	pp + T +in the Nfield
וּבַשָּׂדֶה	שָׂדֶה+	הַ·+	בְּ+	וְ cj + pp +and in the T + Nfield

p 110 Interrogative ה: The Question Marker

In English we form questions in a couple of different ways. First, we commonly reverse the word order of subject and verb or use an interrogative pronoun at the beginning of the question. Second, when speaking, we will usually raise the pitch of our voice at the end of a sentence, or, when writing, we will conclude the sentence with a question mark.

There is no doubt that Hebrew had voice inflection, but this is lost in writing. Spoken and written Hebrew, however, did have a prefixed ה to mark a question. Whereas the article is ה normally spelled with Patach plus Dagesh Forte, the interrogative particle is ה normally spelled with Hateph Patach: הֲ. This particle is attached at the beginning of the question. It is never attached directly to an article, and only rarely does the conjunction Waw precede the interrogative ה. Look at the following examples:

Gen 4:7

אָנֹכִי	·	אָחִי	הַשֹּׁמֵר
I?	(am)	my	[the]
		brother	keeper of

NIV Am I my brother's keeper?

Expl. The הֲ at the beginning is not the article, but the interrogative ה attached to the nominal.

Gen 18:14

דָּבָר	מֵיְהוָה	הֲיִפָּלֵא
a	from the	Is [it]
thing?	Lord	difficult

NIV Is anything too hard for the Lord?

Expl. Here the הֲ is attached to a finite verb.

Both the article and interrogative particle are spelled in a variety of ways. As a pre-Hebrew student, you will need to rely on additional resources to know the difference between them. To flowchart a question, I leave the sentence in its original order, even though that may mean that the subject will not come first.[7]

[7] Fields, L. M. (2008). *Hebrew for the Rest of Us: Using Hebrew Tools without Mastering Biblical Hebrew* (pp. 106–110). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

The First Three Noun Cases

Hebrew cases may be described similarly to English cases, but different names are used. The *vocative* (Voc) case is the same as in English. The *nominative* (Nom) case corresponds to the subject case, the *genitive* (Gen) case corresponds to the possessive case, and the *accusative* (Acc) case corresponds to the objective case. Hebrew uses these cases for functions, which English renders with prepositions. For the Gen and Acc cases, I have included some key words to illustrate the functions. The Gen case is the most complicated, so we will treat it last.

Nominative

1. **Subject Nom**—The substantive is the subject of an action or state. This is by far the most common use. In Hebrew noun clauses, the PPrn is simply the subject and the clause is disjunctive. Though English requires the same word in the subject case, in Hebrew verbal clauses PPrns are not needed. When they are present, they either indicate emphasis or mark a disjunctive clause.

   2 Sam 12:7: "*You* (אַתָּה) are the man!" (NIV).

   1 Kgs 18:37: "and that *you* (וְאַתָּה) are turning their hearts back again" (NIV).

2. **Predicate Nom**—The substantive refers to the same entity as the subject; most often this occurs in noun clauses, but certain other verbs may be present also have this function.

   2 Sam 12:7: "You are *the man* (הָאִישׁ)!" (NIV).

   You and *the man* both refer to David.

3. **Nom Absolute**—The substantive is isolated from a phrase and is referred to by a pronoun called a "resumptive pronoun." The clause after the Nom Absolute is a complete clause. This use is not considered good grammar in English, so it requires a little explanation. Look at the following interlinear.

p 117 **Gen 9:18**

וְחָם	הוּא	·	אֲבִי	כְּנָעַן
now Ham	he	(was)	the father of	Canaan

NIV (Ham was the father of Canaan.)

Expl. The author draws the reader's attention to a significant feature about Ham.

This is not to be confused with "fronting," in which something other than a verb occurs first in the clause, but there is no resumptive pronoun.

2 Sam 7:15

וְחַסְדִּי	לֹא	יָסוּר	מִמֶּנּוּ
but my love	not	it shall turn aside	from him

NIV But my love will not depart from him.

Expl. This is a disjunctive clause (a non-verb is first; see ch. 20), but there is no resumptive Prn.

4. **Nom in Simple Apposition**—Apposition occurs when two nouns are next to each other, refer to the same entity, and function the same way in the sentence. *Apposition can occur with any case*, including objects of prepositions. Since their function "piggybacks" on that of the first noun, multiple examples are not needed; one example should suffice.

   2 Sam 16:8: "The Lord has handed the kingdom over to your son Absalom." (NIV).

   Son is the object of the pp *to*. *Son* and *Absalom* both refer to the same person and *Absalom* functions in the same way that *son* does, namely, the object of the pp *to*. If you remove either word, the sentence has basically the same meaning.

Accusative

We mentioned that Hebrew usually marks case functions by word order. Hebrew does have a feature that marks the Acc case. When a determined noun is in the Acc case, Hebrew may precede the word with the particle אֵת. This word may be joined to the Acc noun by Maqqef, אֵת־ (with the short vowel) and may p 118 have pronominal suffixes attached, in which case the vowel is long *o*: אֹתִי or אוֹתִי (meaning "me"). The particle אֵת is not used for every determined Acc noun, and there does not appear to be any pattern as to when it is used. This particle is not translated into English, except by word order to mark the direct object. We have already seen this in Gen 1:1: "In the beginning God created *the heavens* (אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם) and *the earth* (וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ)" (NIV).

For the examples below, none of the Acc nouns are in prepositional phrases in Hebrew, even though almost all of them are in English.

1. **Acc of DO**—The most common function with no "key words."

   2 Kgs 17:10: "They set up *sacred stones*" (NIV).

2. **Acc of Place** (*at*)

   Gen 18:1: "while he was sitting *at the entrance* (פֶּתַח־) to his tent" (NIV).

3. **Acc of Direction** (*to*)

   Josh 13:5: "and all Lebanon *to the east* (מִזְרַח הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ)" (NIV; literally, "the rising of the sun").

4. **Acc of Time** (*at, during*)

Gen 14:15: "*During the night* (לַ֫יְלָה) Abram divided his men …" (NIV).

5. **Acc of Manner** (*-ly* or other adverbial expression)

   Jer 7:5: "*day after day* (יוֹם), again and again I sent you my servants the prophets" (NIV; KJV renders "daily").

6. **Acc of Product** (*into*)

   Exod 32:4: "He … made it *a* molten *calf* (עֵגֶל) …" (KJV). Compare NIV: "made it *into* an idol cast in the shape of a *calf*."

7. **Acc of Material** (*from*)

   Gen 2:7: "the Lord God formed the man *from the dust* (עָפָר) of the ground" (NIV).

8. **Acc of Instrument** (*with, using*)

   Josh 7:25: "And all Israel stoned him *with stones* (אֶ֫בֶן) (ESV). Compare the NIV simply, "Then all Israel stoned him."

p 119 Vocative

The vocative is the case of direct address. The substantive is used in conjunction with a second person verb.

1 Kgs 20:4: "As you say, *my Lord* (אֲדֹנָי), *O king* (הַמֶּ֫לֶךְ), I am yours, and all that I have" (ESV). Compare NIV: "Just as you say, *my Lord the king*.…"

Both "my Lord" and "O king" are in the Voc. Notice that the ESV took the article attached to *king* as marking the vocative (in fact, "O king" is a Voc in simple apposition).

The Construct Chain and the Genitive Case

In ch. 8 on prepositions, you learned that Hebrew has no word for the English word *of*; instead Hebrew uses a grammatical construction. That construction is the "construct chain." Some people might suggest that the Gen case means simply *of*. That is mostly true, but in fact the Gen case has a broader range of meaning than the English *of*. In any case, the interpreter of the English Bible must seek to figure out what *of* means any time it appears in the Bible.

All Hebrew nouns are in one of two states: *absolute* (abs), in which the noun is not bound to another form, and *construct* (cst), in which the noun is bound to another following form. The two words so bound are said to be in a *construct chain*. *As a rule, the construct chain cannot be interrupted by anything*. The "glue" that binds the words together is that they are pronounced as a unit. In writing, the first word loses its primary accent, often resulting in changes to the vowels. If

you were learning full Hebrew, you would learn how to read these changes. As a pre-Hebrew student, you will have to rely on the work of others.

Here is how construct chains work. The chains can have several links, but to begin with we will consider only two-link chains. In a two-word construct chain the first word, the head noun (N^h), is in the construct state. The second word, the tail noun (N^t), is in the absolute state and is always in the Gen case. (Note: not all absolute nouns are tails of a cst noun; we are only talking about construct chains here.) The following diagram illustrates this graphically; remember that Hebrew reads right to left and all English letters, even in diagrams, read left to right.

p 120 **Figure 11.4: State and Case**

Notice the following important points:

1. The N^h, דְּבַר has the lexical form דָּבָר, meaning "word"; the cst form means "word *of*. Because of the shift in accent, the vowels have changed. Not all nouns alter vowels when they are in the cst, but most do.

2. The N^t has the article and means "the prophet." The article may only be attached to the N^t. Whenever the N^t is determined, either because of the word being intrinsically determined or because of the article, each member of the chain is also determined; if the N^t is not determined, each member of the chain is undetermined. So, דְּבַר־הַנָּבִיא means "*the* word of *the* prophet"; דְּבַר־נָבִיא would mean "*(a)* word of *(a)* prophet."

3. The example shows the words joined by Maqqef. This is optional and its presence or absence has no affect on the meaning.

4. *If there are three or more links in the chain, the middle items are all in the Gen case, just like the* N^t. This may be graphically illustrated this way: N^h–N–N. The interpreter needs to determine based on word meaning and context the meaning of the Gen relationship, represented by the "–," between each pair.

5. *A PrnSf attached to a noun functions as a N that is determined*. For example, דְּבָרוֹ would mean "*the* word of—him," or "his word."

p 121 **Figure 11.5: Terms and Nouns Bound Together**

Quality	**Head Noun**	**Tail Noun**
Order:	first	last
State:	construct (cst)	absolute (abs)
Case:	any	genitive

Translation:	lexical meaning + "of"	lexical meaning
Article:	no article	article optional

The Functions of the Genitive Case

The Gen case denotes a relationship between two nouns, often translated by the English word "of." The word "of" denotes a wide variety of nuances. I have found it helpful to think of that relationship as a movement either toward or away from the N. The case uses are a function of word meaning and context. In Figure 11.6 below, remember to think about meaning from the perspective of the tail noun. The determination of the function depends on the meaning of the words in the chain and on context. Note that explained examples follow the figure.

Figure 11.6: Genitive Functions of the Construct State

Class	N^h 4 N^t	Description
Possession	Gen of Possessor	N^t possesses N^h
Direction	Gen of Destination	N^t is the destination
Production	Gen of Product	N^t is the thing produced
Agency	Subjective Gen	N^t is the one doing the implied action
Action	Gen of Purpose/	N^t is actual result or intended purpose of N^h
	Result	N^t is actual result or intended
Adjectival	Attributive Gen	N^t functions as Adj describing N
	Gen of Apposition	N^t = N^h (= Explicative Gen)
Partitive	Gen of Material	N^t is material of which N^h is made
	Gen of Measure	N^t is thing measured by quantity N^h
Authority	Gen of Thing Ruled	N^t is governed by N^h
p 122 **Possession**	Gen of One Possessed	N^t is possessed by N^h
Direction	Gen of Source	N^t is the place of origin
Production	Gen of Producer	N^t makes the N^h

Agency	Objective Gen	N^t is the one affected by the implied action
	Gen of Means	N^t is the instrument used to effect implied action
Action	Gen of Action	N^t is the implied action done by N^h
Adjectival	Attributed Gen	N^t is described by Adj
Partitive	Partitive Gen	N^t is the whole of which N^h is a part
	Gen of Degree	N^t is plural form of N^h
Authority	Gen of Ruler	N^t governs N^h

Here are some examples. Note the many nuances of the word "of" in English.

1. **Gen of Possession**
   a. **Possessor**

      Josh 2:1: "So they went and entered *the house of a prostitute* (בֵּית־אִשָּׁה זוֹנָה) named Rahab" (NIV).

   b. **Thing Possessed**

      Exod 21:34: "*The owner of the pit* (בַּעַל הַבּוֹר) must pay for the loss" (NIV).

2. **Gen of Direction**
   a. **Destination**

      Gen 3:1: "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any *tree in the garden* (עֵץ הַגָּן)?' " (NIV; cf. KJV: "*tree of the garden*").

      1 Kgs 12:28: "It is too much for you *to go up to Jerusalem* (מֵעֲלוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם)" (NIV; ignoring the prefixed מִן pp, literally, "*the going up of Jerusalem*").

 b. **Source**

Job 33:17: "to turn *a man from wrongdoing* (אָדָם מַעֲשֵׂהוּ)" (NIV; literally, "*a man of deed*").

Many times: "*the man of God* (אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים)." This might be understood in several ways, but since it is most often a technical term for a prophet, it probably means a man sent from God.

3. **Gen of Production**
   a. **Product**

   Isa 45:9: "Woe to him who quarrels with *his Maker* (יֹצְרוֹ)" (NIV; literally, "*the maker* of *him*").

   b. **Producer**

   Isa 64:8 [Hebrew 64:7]: "and we are all *the work of* your *hand* (וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדְךָ)" (NIV).

4. **Gen of Agency**
   a. **Subjective**

   Isa 53:3: "he was despised and *rejected by men* (וַחֲדַל אִישִׁים)" (NIV; cf. KJV "*rejected of men*").

   b. **Objective**

   Josh 1:1: "the Lord said to Joshua son of Nun, *Moses' aide* (מְשָׁרֵת מֹשֶׁה)" (NIV; literally "*the aide of Moses*").

   c. **Means** (this category is simply impersonal agent and is a subcategory of the Subjective Gen)

   Isa 14:19: "with *those pierced by the sword* (מְטֹעֲנֵי חָרֶב)" (NIV).

5. **Gen of Action**
   a. **Purpose/Result**

   Isa 53:5: "*the punishment that brought* us *peace* (מוּסַר שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ) was upon him" (NIV; cf. KJV: "*the chastisement of* our *peace* was upon him").

   b. **Cause** (focus is on an action implied by a noun rather than on the agent or means)

p 124 Song 2:5: “for I am *faint with love* (חוֹלַת אַהֲבָה)” (NIV; literally, “sick of love”).

Isa 54:4: “you will … remember no more *the reproach of* your *widowhood* (בֹּ֣שֶׁת עַלוּמַ֔יִךְ)” (NIV; i.e., the reproach caused by your being a widow).

6. **Adjectival Gen**

   a. **Attributive**

   1 Sam 2:8: “and *a seat of honor* (וְכִסֵּא כָבוֹד)” (NIV; i.e., an honored position).

   Judg 9:51: “*a strong tower* (וּמִגְדַּל־עֹז)” (NIV; literally, “*a tower of strength*”).

   b. **Attributed**

   Deut 28:20: “until you … perish quickly on account of *the evil of* your *deeds* (רֹ֣עַ מַעַלְלֶ֑יךָ)” (ESV).

   c. **Apposition** (unlike simple apposition in which the two nouns are in the same case, the Gen N may modify a N that is in another case)

   Josh 1:15: “Then you shall return to *the land of* your *possession* (אֶ֣רֶץ יְרֻשַּׁתְכֶ֔ם) and shall possess it” (ESV; meaning, the land which is your possession. Compare NIV, “and occupy your *own* land”).

7. **Partitive Gen**

   a. **Wholative** (a.k.a., Partitive)

   Gen 4:4: “Abel brought fat portions from some of *the firstborn of* his *flock* (בְּכֹרוֹת צֹאנוֹ)” (NIV; i.e., “the flock” is the whole; “the firstborn” are the part).

   b. **Material**

   1 Kgs 12:28: “the king made two *golden calves* (עֶגְלֵי זָהָב)” (NIV; literally “*calves of gold*”).

p 125 c. **Measure** (i.e., of material measured)

Exod 38:27: “The 100 *talents of silver* (כִּכַּר הַכֶּ֫סֶף) were used to cast the bases” (NIV; the “talent” was a unit of weight).

d. **Degree/Emphasis** (subcategory of Wholative)

Exod 29:37: "*the holy of holies* (קֹ֣דֶשׁ קָדָשִׁ֔ים)" (NIV).

8. **Gen of Authority**

a. **Thing Ruled**

Josh 24:9: "*the king of Moab* (מֶ֣לֶךְ מוֹאָ֔ב)" (NIV).

b. **Ruler**

Josh 13:12: "that is the whole *kingdom of Og* (מַמְלְכ֣וּת עֽוֹג) in Bashan" (NIV).

Special Note: "mountain of my holiness" or "my holy mountain"?

The attributive Gen is a common way that Hebrew uses nouns to form adjectival ideas. For example, הַר קֹ֣דֶשׁ, literally, "mountain of holiness," really means "holy mountain." It is easy to understand how adding the 1cs PrnSf, "my," to a cst noun changes הַר, "mountain of" to הָרִי, "the mountain of me" or "my mountain." But, how does Hebrew say, "my holy mountain"? The problem is that you can't break the construct chain הַר קֹ֣דֶשׁ to form הַרִי קֹ֣דֶשׁ. The PrnSf is attached to the end of the chain: הַר קָדְשִׁי. Literally this would be "the mountain of the holiness of me." But the meaning is "my holy mountain." Context decides what the Prn modifies.[8]

[8] Fields, L. M. (2008). *Hebrew for the Rest of Us: Using Hebrew Tools without Mastering Biblical Hebrew* (pp. 116–125). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Adjectives

An *adjective* (Adj) is a word that modifies or describes a substantive. In talking about Adjs, there are two factors: how they function and how they are structured (the arrangement of words).

Adjectives function in three ways: attributively, predicatively, or substantivally. In the first two, the noun is present; in the third, the noun is absent, but understood. In the *attributive* use, the Adj describes a noun, and in the *predicative* use, the Adj ascribes a quality to a noun. In the *substantival* use, the Adj is substituted for a noun. In the following examples, the Adj is in bold type and the Nn it modifies (if any) is underlined.

S1. **Hot** coffee costs a lot.

S2. The **hot** cups are burning my hands.

S3. The cups are **hot**.

S4. **One** dollar still buys a cup of coffee.

S5. If I had a **one** in my wallet, I would buy a cup of coffee.

S6. I have some **ones** in my wallet.

S7. I'll buy some coffee during the time **out**.

S8. How many times **out** are left?

S9. By the way, I actually heard a **sports** announcer on TV say "times out"!

Notice the following:

1. S1, S2 and S4 have attributive Adjs. The Adj is right next to the noun. In English the adjective normally precedes the noun.

2. S3 has a predicative Adj. Notice that a verb, *are*, separates the noun from its adjective. The noun and the Adj with an equative verb both refer to the same thing. Compare the predicate Nom case use from the last chapter.

3. English does not pluralize attributive and predicative Adjs. Whether the noun is singular (S1) or plural (S2 and S3), the Adj does not change; i.e., it is not inflected.

p 135 4. In S5 and S6 there is no noun present; dollar bill(s) is understood. The Adj is substantival. When Adjs substitute for nouns, then they are inflected just like nouns.

5. S7 and S8 also have attributive Adjs. In certain expressions the Adj comes after.

6. S9 is an interesting example of a noun, sports, being used as an Adj. Hebrew does this also.

Hebrew Adjs are similar to English Adjs. They have the same three functions, but there are some differences in grammatical construction. Three factors come into play in Hebrew constructions: the article (T), the Adj, and the noun (Nn). Further, the Adj and the N both have three qualities: gender, number, and definiteness. Here are the principles involved:

1. *Every Adj agrees with its Nn in gender and number*. We have already seen that gender in English is not significant, but it is significant in Hebrew. Additionally, Adjs are inflected for gender.
2. *Every attributive Adj agrees in definiteness*. This is one of the important ways that the Hebrew article is used differently from English. The article with an Adj is there to indicate the relationship to the noun rather than having any other meaning.
3. *Almost every predicative Adj disagrees with its Nn in definiteness*. Predicate Adjs occur mostly in noun clauses. When the Nn is determined and the Adj is not, English needs to insert the verb *to be* between them.

Notice that Adjs have the same kind of parsing information as nouns.

Figure 12.1: Parsing Information for Nominals and Verbals

						çVerbal Qualitiesè					çNominal Qualities è
PoS	Word	Lex	Stem	Form	P	G	N	State	Det	Case	Suff
Nn						**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**	
Adj						**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**	

p 136 All of this leads to there being four possible positions (constructions) of adjectives, nouns, and articles. These positions mark the functions:

Figure 12.2: Positions and Agreement of Adjectives

Construction	Noun	Definite Noun	Article with Adj	Function	Example	Pattern
Attributive	Y	Y	Y	Attributive	הַמֶּלֶךְ הַטּוֹב	T-Nn-T-Adj
					מֶלֶךְ הַטּוֹב	Nn-T-Adj
					the good king	
Predicate	Y	Y	N	Predicative	טוֹב הַמֶּלֶךְ	Adj-T-Nn
					הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב	T-Nn-Adj

					the king (is) good	
Ambiguous	Y	N	N	Attributive or	מֶּלֶךְ טוֹב	Nn-Adj
				Predicative	טוֹב מֶּלֶךְ	Adj-N
					a good king *or* a king (is) good	
Isolated	N	–	Y/N	Substantival	טוֹב	T-Adj
					הַטּוֹב	Adj
					a good (man)	
					the good (man)	

Notice the following:

1. In the attributive Nn-T-Adj construction, the noun must still be definite here, even if there is no article.
2. For the two predicative constructions, whatever is first is the focus. So, the Adj-T-Nn order places the predicate first. This order answers the question, "What is the subject?" So טוֹב הַמֶּלֶךְ answers the question, "What is the p 137 king?" The T-Nn-Adj order places the predicate last, הַמֶּלֶךְ הַטּוֹב answers the question, "Who is good?"
3. In the ambiguous positions, only context can determine whether the Adj is attributive or predicative. Only rarely is the context unclear.
4. The isolated position occurs most commonly with the article. In these cases the Adj agrees in gender and number with the supposed antecedent.

Translating substantival adjectives is interesting because of the difference of English number. For example, a well known chorus, "Blessed Be the Name of the Lord," uses Prov 18:10 as the refrain. Here is an interlinear version comparing versions:

Prov 18:10	וְנִשְׂגָּב	צַדִּיק	יָרוּץ	בּוֹ	יְהוָה	שֵׁם	עֹז	מִגְדַּל
	and he is	the	(he)	into	the	(is) the	strength	tower
	saved	righteous	runs	it	Lord	name of		of

NIV The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.

KJV The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.

ESV The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe.

In the second clause, the subject, "the righteous" is singular. The KJV preserves this by using the singular verbs "runneth" and "is." The ESV preserves the singular number and the masculine gender by adding the word *man*. The NIV could have preserved the singular verb, "runs," but thought that the isolated position "righteous," with a generic meaning, should be understood to include plural people.

A key difference between nouns and Adjs is that whereas nouns have one and only one gender, adjectives must be able to take the endings of either gender. As a pre-Hebrew student, you are not learning the endings, but a couple of examples will help you understand. We will use the Adj טוֹב, meaning "good," and the nouns אִישׁ, "man," and מִשְׁפָּחָה, "family." In the following chart, the endings are gray. The designations "m" and "f" stand for "masculine" and "feminine"; "s" and "p" stand for "singular" and "plural"; and "D" and "U" stand for "determined" and "undetermined."

p 138 **Figure 12.3: Grammatical Agreement of Adjectives with Nouns**

Hebrew	English	GN	Det
אִישׁ טוֹב	(a) good man	ms	U
אֲנָשִׁים טוֹבִים	good men	mp	U
הָאִישׁ הַטּוֹב	the good man	ms	D
הָאֲנָשִׁים הַטּוֹבִים	the good men	mp	D
מִשְׁפָּחָה טוֹבָה	(a) good family	fp	U
מִשְׁפָּחוֹת טוֹבוֹת	good families	fp	U

הַמִּשְׁפָּחָה הַטּוֹבָה	the good family	fs	D
הַמִּשְׁפָּחוֹת הַטּוֹבוֹת	the good families	fp	D

The Adjs agree in gender, number, and determination with their respective nouns. I purposely chose words that would have endings to make that clear. Sometimes the endings are not identical, but the gender and number still are. For example, דֶּרֶךְ is a feminine noun, even though it doesn't end in הָ. Nevertheless, "a good way" in Hebrew is דֶּרֶךְ טוֹבָה.

Adjectives Modifying Nouns in a Construct Chain

Since a construct chain is treated as a unit, it normally cannot be interrupted. If an Adj modifies one element of the chain, it is located after the chain and follows the rules given above. The adjective may modify either element of the chain. Study the following examples of attributive Adjs:

Figure 12.4: Grammatical Agreement of Adjectives with Nouns

Hebrew	English
בֶּן־הַנְּבִיאֵי הַטּוֹב	"the good son of the prophets"
	Explanation: "son" and "good" are both singular
בַּת־הַנְּבִיאִים הַטּוֹבִים	"the daughter of the good prophets"
	Explanation: Both "prophets" and "good" are plural and masculine; בַּת is singular and feminine.
בֶּן־הַנָּבִיא הַטּוֹב p 139	"the good son of the prophet" *or*
	"the son of the good prophet"
	Explanation: Because both nouns and the Adj agree in gender, number, and definiteness, the Hebrew is ambiguous. The English must make a choice. Normally context makes clear which meaning is intended.

What can you do as a pre-Hebrew student?

When comparing versions, if you find differences in number, you can use the tools we have already mentioned repeatedly to get grammatical information.

Adjectives and Comparison

The simple adjective is called the positive. The comparative indicates the member of a group of items that has a certain quality to a greater degree. The superlative indicates the member that has a certain quality to the greatest degree. The figure below gives a few examples.

Figure 12.5: English Degrees of Comparison

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
big	bigger	biggest
fast	faster	fastest
good	better	best

Hebrew expresses degrees differently from English. The comparative may be expressed, as we saw in ch. 8 on prepositions (pp), by the pp מִן following an adjective. We learned in ch. 11 that Hebrew may also express a superlative with an expression that English renders with *of*, as in "king *of* kings," meaning "the greatest king." The superlative may be expressed by a simple adjective, by the phrase "from all/any of" (מִן־כֹּל). It may also be expressed by the repetition of adjectives, "*Holy, holy, holy* is the Lord of hosts" (Isa 6:3).[9]

[9] Fields, L. M. (2008). *Hebrew for the Rest of Us: Using Hebrew Tools without Mastering Biblical Hebrew* (pp. 134–139). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Parsing the Hebrew Verb

We have already mentioned that the Hebrew verbal system is comprised of both finite and nonfinite forms. There are three traditional categories of finite forms: the perfect (ch. 14), the imperfect (ch. 15), and the volitional forms (ch. 16). Hebrew finite verbs convey all the information that English verbs convey by using two main features: a system of *affixatives* and a system of *stems*.

To begin, Figure 13.2 is reproduced from ch. 5:

Figure 13.2: Parsing Information for Nominals and Verbals

			Verbal Qualities					**Nominal Qualities**			
PoS	Word	Lex	Stem	Form	P	G	N	State	Det	Case	Suff
Nn						**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**	
V			**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**				

Besides the root, you may remember that verbs share with nouns the qualities of gender and number (G, N). Unique to verbals is stem and form, and unique to finite verbs is person (P). Hebrew inflects (changes the "shape" of) verbs by using affixatives and stems. In the next chapters, you will get some idea of how that happens. For now, I will simply summarize what information the affixatives and stems provide.

Dynamic and Stative Verbs

One feature of Hebrew verbs (unlike English verbs) is the existence of stative verbs. Hebrew has verbs that indicate state in the Qal stem. These verbs can appear in the Hiphil stem to make them dynamic. For example, גָּדַל in the Qal stem is stative meaning "he was/became great" (note that to form this in English, we must use the verb be/became + the Adj great). In the Hiphil stem the verb הִגְדִּיל means "he made [something] great," and it is no longer stative. Hebrew dynamic verbs may be transitive (taking a DO) or intransitive (not taking a DO). Stative verbs do not take a DO.

p 151 Personal Affixatives

Affixatives are prefixes, suffixes, or a combination of both. These affixatives indicate a number of things.

1. **Person**-first, second, third person
2. **Number**-singular, plural
3. **Gender**-masculine, feminine, common.

The person, gender and number (PGN) agree with that of the grammatical subject. In Hebrew the default gender is masculine. If the subject is "people," a group composed of both men and women, the grammatical gender used to refer to them is the masculine. Sometimes, even when the plural subjects are all women, a masculine personal ending is used, especially in the plural.

4. **"Tense"**-Hebrew traditionally has two "tenses," perfect and imperfect.

5. **Mood**-indicative, subjunctive, imperative, though in a manner different from English. We will use the terms real, corresponding to most of the English indicative mood, and irreal, corresponding to English future tense and subjunctive and imperative moods.

Stem Formatives. The stems in Hebrew indicate:

6. **Voice**-active, passive, reflexive (in which the grammatical subject acts on itself). The doer of the action is the "agent" and the receiver of the action is "patient."

7. **Intensity**-simple, intensive, causative (but these will require a little further explanation).

Closeup on Hebrew Tenses

The word *tense* normally means "time." The English verbal system is dominated by time. The Hebrew verbal system, though, puts "time" in the background. More prominent is aspect, or a description of the nature of the action. English verbs do indicate time and aspect in a way quite unlike Hebrew. English uses auxiliary verbs; Hebrew uses afformatives and word order. Many commentators and grammarians use the word *tense* in reference to the form or "shape" of the Hebrew p 152 word; that is, the verb form with the various afformatives it may take. I use the word *form* to include all verbals, both finite and nonfinite forms.

I will present the Hebrew verb under five verb forms. Unfortunately, there are different names for the Hebrew tenses. Some grammarians use names based on time. Others use names based on aspect, thinking that "Perfect" tense forms represented completed action and "Imperfect" forms represented incompleted action. Due to difficulties with these names, other scholars gave them names based on the shape of the verb. This took two forms. Some named two forms calling them "Prefixed" and "Suffixed" conjugations; others wanted to identify more than two forms and used transliterated forms based on the Hebrew root *qtl* either with or without the vowels.[2] Because different authors use different terminology, you need to know how the different systems compare. Figure 13.3 constitutes a list of the five verb forms we will treat and the various systems of naming.

Figure 13.3: Various Names Used for Hebrew Tense Forms

Form Names	Alternate Names	FormAspect Names	Time Names
qatal = qtl	(Suffixed)	Perfect (Pf)	Past
weqatal = wqtl	(Waw-relative Suffixed)	+ו consecutive + Perfect	

yiqtol = yqtl	(Prefixed)	Imperfect (Imp)	Future
[*weyiqtol*] [= *wyqtl*]	(Simple Waw Prefixed)	+ו conjunctive Imperfect	+[Future]
wayyiqtol = wayyqtl	(Waw-relative Prefixed)	+ו consecutive Imperfect	+Preterite
		ו conversive Imperfect	+
		ו sequential Imperfect	+
qotel	Participle	Progressive	Present

The *weyiqtol* form is in brackets because it has the same range of meanings as *yiqtol* and we will treat them together. I avoid the "Time Names." However, there are advantages to the other systems and I use both interchangeably.

p 153 So, what about time in Hebrew verbs? Hebrew verbs indicate time relative to the context. Basically, Hebrew verbs with prefixed ו have a time that is relative to a previous verb. Hebrew verbs without prefixed ו have their time determined by adverbial time expressions.

Time in Hebrew is complicated and still not fully understood. In this course it is enough to rely on English translations for time and trust the translators and commentators. Mood and relative time can be combined in chart form.

Figure 13.4: Hebrew Verb Forms, Mood, and Relative Time
Time Relative to Previous Verb

	Sequential	**Simultaneous**	**Anterior**	**Background**
qatal (ch. 14)		Real & Irreal	Real	Real
weqatal (ch. 14)	Irreal			
yiqtol (ch. 15)			Irreal	Irreal
wayyiqtol (ch. 15)	Real			
qotel (ch. 17)		Real & Irreal		

The meaning of these time relationships is as follows:

1. **Sequential**-action after the previous modal verb, either chronologically or logically

   But I will establish (V1) my covenant with you, and *you will enter* (V2, וּבָאתָ, *weqatal*) the ark.… (Gen 6:18, NIV-a chronological sequence)

2. **Simultaneous**-action at the same time as the previous verb

   But the LORD came down (V1) to see the city and the tower that the men *were building* (V2, בָּנוּ, *qatal*). (Gen 11:5, NIV)

p 154 3. **Anterior**-action before the previous verb

   God saw (V1) all that he *had made* (V2, עָשָׂה, *qatal*), and it was very good. (Gen 1:31, NIV)

4. **Background**-circumstance existing before the previous verb

   The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt (V1) no shame. Now the serpent was (V2, הָיָה, *qatal*) more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD had made. (Gen 2:25–3:1, NIV)

Close-up on Hebrew Stems

There are seven major verb stems in Hebrew (and a number of minor stems). Some of them, however, are simply the passive forms of the active stems. The most common stem is called the Qal stem. Qal is an actual Hebrew word meaning "light" or "simple," and is used because this stem simply adds personal affomatives to the root without any changes inside the root. The lexical form is the 3ms (third person masculine singular) because it is marked by having no personal affomative; it is "simple."

The other stems are called "derived" stems by modern grammarians, because they are formed by adding some feature to the simple root before attaching the personal affomatives. The name of each of the derived stems is not descriptive, as the word Qal is, but simply an example. Modern grammarians have also created another system of naming using descriptive terms, rather than examples. Since both are used, learning both is helpful.

Figure 13.5: Names and Forms of the Hebrew Stems

Classical Name	HebrewModern PatternName	Explanation
Qal	קַל G *or* Q	"G" is used for a German word meaning "base form"; "Q" is used for Qal. We will use Q.

Niphal	נִפְעַלN	Stem is characterized by a prefixed נ, or "N."
Piel	פִּעֵלD	These stems are characterized by a doubled (hence the "D") second root letter. The active stem has an "e-i" theme vowel (note the Tsere) p 155 under the second root; the passive has an "a" theme vowel (note the Patach below).
Pual	פֻּעַלDp (passive)	See above.
Hiphil	הִפְעִילH	These stems are characterized by a prefixed ה, or "H." Again the active one has an "e-i" theme vowel and the passive has an "a" theme vowel (see below).
Hophal	הָפְעַלHp (passive)	See above.
Hithpael	הִתְפַּעֵלHtd	This stem has a prefixed syllable הִתְ, "Ht," plus a doubled (d) second letter.

The names of the stems and their basic functions are given in the Figure below. I use as a model the Hebrew root קטל, which means "kill"; the meaning is unfortunate, but this root is useful because it has no "weak" letters that cause deviations from the normal patterns of word formation.

Figure 13.6: Overview of Intensity and Voices of Stems

Voice	**Simple**	**Intensive**	**Causative**
Active	Q-Qal	D-Piel	H-Hiphil
	he killed	he brutally killed	he made (someone) kill

	קָטַל	קִטֵּל	הִקְטִיל
Passive	N-Niphal	Dp-Pual	Hp-Hophal
	he was killed	he was brutally killed	he was made to kill
	נִקְטַל	קֻטַּל	הֻקְטַל
Reflexive	N-Niphal	HtD-Hithpael	–
	he killed himself	he brutally killed himself	
	נִקְטַל	הִתְקַטֵּל	

p 156 Two Ways Verbs Take a Direct Object (DO)

You learned that Hebrew nouns and prepositions can take pronominal suffixes (PrnSfs). For example, דָּבָר means "word"; and דְּבָרוֹ means "his word." לוֹ is a prepositional phrase meaning "to him." Hebrew verbs can also take a Prn Sf. This is one of two ways that Hebrew can mark the DO. The other way is to introduce a definite DO with the particle אֵת (or אֹת when the DO is a PrnSf). This particle is never translated with an English word.

In the examples below the DO is in grey type.

בָּרָא אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם	He created	è	***the heavens***.
קָטַלְתִּי אֹתוֹ	I killed	è	***him***.
קָטַלְתִּיו	I killed	è	***him***.

In the first example, the particle אֵת marks הַשָּׁמַיִם as the DO. In קָטַלְתִּי אֹתוֹ, the PrnSf is attached to the other form of the particle אֵת. In קָטַלְתִּיו, the PrnSf is attached directly to the verb. Note three important things:

1. The PrnSf has no effect on the meaning of the verb.
2. The PrnSf attached to a verb functions as the DO.

3. The PrnSf is never reflexive. For example, the form קְטָלוֹ, in which the verb is 3ms and the PrnSf is also 3ms, might be translated "he killed him." The question is, can the PrnSf ("him") ever refer to the grammatical subject ("he") so that it might be understood to mean "he killed himself" with the English reflexive Prn? No, it can't. Hebrew does not have reflexive Prns. Instead it expressed this reflexive idea by using certain verb stems (see Figures 11.1 and 13.6).

Retrieving and Using Information

Getting stem information for Hebrew verbs is now pretty simple. If you were learning full Hebrew, you would learn how to identify the stems from sight. With what you have learned so far, you can use books such as Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, or John Joseph Owens, *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*. Of course the computer Bible programs make these books obsolete. The point is that identifying the stem is simple by using these tools.

p 157 By using these resources you can sometimes figure out the meaning of the verb in its different stems. But there are actually very few verbs in the OT that appear in all seven stems. For example, קטל does not. The meanings I gave are only theoretical to illustrate a point. The actual meaning, as always, must be determined from context. An interesting example of a verb that does appear in all seven stems is ילד. Figure 13.7 provides translations of the word in each stem. In the last column I describe the various roles involved.

Figure 13.7: ילד in Seven Stems

Stem	Definition	Explanation
Qal	Bear children	The action of the mother (but also used of the father)
Niphal	Be born	The action of the child
Piel	Help at birth	The action of the midwife
Pual	Be born	Child born (with help of midwife?)
Hiphil	Beget	The action of the father
Hophal	Be born	Child begotten (by a father)
Hithpael	Register	The action of an official recorder of births

Most of these meanings are pretty simple to figure out, such as the Niphal being the passive of the Qal. Some of them, such as the Hithpael, make sense, but are not predictable.

An Important Warning about Stems and Meaning

Figure 13.7 is actually an oversimplification. Notice that the Qal is used of the mother's role, but it is not exclusive to her. The father's role is described by both the Qal and the Hiphil stems. One cannot determine the meaning of a word solely on the basis of identifying the stem. Meaning is determined by usage.

If you were learning full Hebrew, you would learn more about the functions of the stems. Figure 13.7 above gives you only the general functions.

The *SNIVEC* gives you this information in a reliable format. Take for example the entry for G/K 3086 on p. 1409:

p 158 **Figure 13.8: Verb and Stem Information in SNIVEC**

> **3086** [1]חָרַשׁ *ḥāraš*, v. [27] [è3045, 3046?, 3088, 3093, 3096, 3098, 4739]. [Q] to plow; engrave; plan, plot; [Qp] to be inscribed; [N] to be plowed; [H] to plot against:—plow (6), plot (3), be plowed (2), plowed (2), plowing (2), craftsman (1), devises (1), farmer (1), inscribed (1), plan (1), planted (1), plots (1), plotting (1 [+2021 +8288]), plowman (1), plowmen (1), plows (1), tools (1)

The superscript "[1]" (with [1]חָרַשׁ) indicates that this is the first in a list of roots with the same root letters; "v." means it is a verb; the numbers in brackets after the "è" are other words derived from this root. Then the definitions are given for each of the stems in which the verb appears: Q = Qal; Qp = Qal Passive; N = Niphal; H = Hiphil. The entry concludes with a list of translations and frequencies for each.

What You Can and Cannot Do.

1. You are *not* qualified to determine the meaning of a word based on the general functions of the stems. Leave this to the experts.
2. You *can* find out what stem a given verb is by using books and computer tools mentioned in this chapter.
3. You *can* now understand what the *SNIVEC* is telling you in the dictionary sections to the Hebrew and Aramaic words (and other study tools).
4. You *can* learn the meaning of a given verb in a given stem using lexicons and word books.
5. You *can* sort your words according to stem when you do word studies on OT verbs and take the stem into account when determining meaning.

"Now, about word order you I will tell!"

If you are a Star Wars fan, perhaps you can hear Yoda's voice speaking the title to this section. In Yoda-speak, the subject and verb tend to come last. When we hear it, we laugh, because, though we understand the meaning, the sentence sounds funny. Normally word order in an English clause is Subject-Verb-Object (SVO). Normal Hebrew word order is Verb-Subject-Object (VSO).

Deviations from this order are common. What we mean is that whenever a sentence is not VSO, it may be "marked" for a special purpose.

p 159 Hebrew constructions are best classified according to how they begin. You want to pay particular attention to the following constructions ("cj" means "conjunction"):

1.	וְ	+ verb
2.	וְ	+ nonverb
3.	other cj	+ verb
4.	other cj	+ nonverb
5.	no cj	+ verb
6.	no cj	+ nonverb

Because you know the Hebrew alphabet and the cj Waw, you can identify which structure a Hebrew clause has by consulting an interlinear OT. In the coming chapters we will look at these structures with respect to the verbal forms and in the last unit we will look at them with respect to narrative and poetry.[10]

[10] Fields, L. M. (2008). *Hebrew for the Rest of Us: Using Hebrew Tools without Mastering Biblical Hebrew* (pp. 150–159). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.