

# *Simplified Hebrew*

## *Grammar*

**By**

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## Simplified Hebrew Grammar Introduction

This course is designed to give busy pastors and lay people who want to learn the biblical languages an opportunity to do so without being overwhelmed with the rigors of having to learn the entire grammars of Greek and Hebrew. Most people, therefore, simply want to have a working knowledge of the biblical languages rather than trying to be a scholar in order to attain such knowledge.

Thus, after having taught the biblical languages courses for ten years at Fuller Theological Seminary's Extension School in Colorado Springs, Colorado, the Lord began to impress upon me through a series of events that there was a great need in the body of Christ that wasn't being met; that is, the need to make the acquisition of a working knowledge of Greek and Hebrew available to the masses who want such knowledge, but who do not have the time, giftedness, nor finances to spend on learning the minutiae of the grammars of each language.

During my years of teaching, I noticed that my Greek courses would usually have about a 50% attrition rate, and the Hebrew courses would average around 75%. I know that when I was in seminary there would always be people who would drop the language courses. Many of those who did so would go for degrees that didn't require any language proficiency, or they would pursue degrees that required a bare minimum simply for the sake of stating on one's transcript that they had taken Greek and Hebrew. However, such courses as the latter didn't really give the student anything as far as an ability to practically use the language; in fact, most of the students who took such courses forgot what little they learned soon after graduating! Thus, the idea behind requiring students to take the biblical languages was circumvented for the sake of merely getting a degree. That in turn brings into question the real purpose and motivation for a seminary education which is SUPPOSED TO BE FOR THE TRAINING AND EQUIPPING OF MEN AND WOMEN FOR THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY!

Consequently, this course will require that the student read, study, and memorize; there is NO COURSE DESIGNED THAT CAN DO THOSE THINGS FOR A STUDENT, NOR THAT CAN CIRCUMVENT THE WORK THAT IS NECESSARY FOR ONE TO TRULY LEARN! Nonetheless, this course is designed to help facilitate someone receiving a good, solid, accurate,

working knowledge of Greek and Hebrew without spending the traditional two years of intense grammatical study that is the minimum time necessary to gain a beginning level of understanding for a more scholarly pursuit of the languages.

### **Approach To This Study**

The first section of this course will be aimed at learning the Hebrew letters themselves, their pronunciation, the English equivalent, and how to write the Hebrew letters in cursive form.

The second section will be to put the Hebrew letters and the vowel signs together to form words and learn to pronounce them correctly (e.g., דָּבָר – *dābār* = word – Hebrew is read for right to left). This will be an exciting stage as you actually begin to recognize the Hebrew letters and vowel signs and their proper pronunciation when placed together to form words.

The third section will be learning the various verb tenses, voices, and moods and just what they mean. This probably will be the most exciting, as well as the hardest, in that you will have to begin to change your thought pattern from an English speaker and thinker to a Hebrew speaker and thinker.

The fourth section will be the light at the end of the tunnel as you begin to learn how to go from the *Interlinear Hebrew-English Old Testament*, to Davidson's *Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, and then to Gesenius' *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament* in discovering not only the definition of a word, but also how to understand its usage and application in a particular passage. To know the definition of a Hebrew word is important and beneficial, but to know how it is used and to be interpreted in a passage is the real key to using and understanding Hebrew, and that is what you will learn to do!

The fifth and final section will be the practical exegesis of various passages in the Hebrew Old Testament. In this section you will have repeated opportunity to research and investigate passages of interest to you. You may in turn write an exegesis paper that can be in the form of a sermon message, a Bible study, or a paper or booklet in

which you are writing on a topic to be disseminated for either evangelistic purposes, or for ministry to the body as a whole; the choice will be yours.

### Section One The Hebrew Alphabet

<u>Form</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
א	ʿAlep	ʿ
ב, בּ	Bet	b, <u>b</u> (bh/v)
ג, גּ	Gimel	g, <u>g</u> (gh)
ד, דּ	Dalet	d, <u>d</u> (dh)
ה	He	h
ו	Waw/Vav	w/v
ז	Zayin	z
ח	Het	ḥ (ch-German)
ט	Tet	ṭ
י	Yod	y
כ, כּ, ך*	Kap	k, <u>k</u> , (ch-")
ל	Lamed	l
מ, ם*	Mem	m
נ, ן*	Nun	n
ס	Samek	s
ע	ʿAyin	ʿ
פ, פּ, ף*	Pe	p, <u>p</u> , (ph- <u>Phil</u> )
צ, ץ*	Sade	ṣ (p <u>its</u> )
ק	Qop	q
ר	Res	r
ש, שׂ	Sin, Shin	ś, š (sh- <u>shut</u> )
ת, תּ	Taw	t, <u>t</u> (th- <u>thump</u> )

You will notice in the Hebrew alphabet that there are five letters with an asterisk (\*) beside them (כ, כּ, ך \* [k]; מ, ם \* [m]; נ, ן \* [n]; פ, פּ, ף \* [p]; צ, ץ \* [s]), and the asterisk is indicating the five, final forms of those letters; i.e., this is how that letter will appear when it is the final letter of a word. Otherwise, it will appear as the initial form when it is at the beginning or middle of a word (e.g., the נ [n] in נָבִיא [nābiʾ] is at the beginning of the word, but in צָאן

[*šō'n*], נ [n] is the final letter of the word and takes the final form, ן [n], and this will be the case with the other four letters that also have a final form). In addition, you will also notice that there are six letters that have a form with a dot in the middle of the word, as well as a form without the dot. Those letters are: ב, בּ (b); ג, גּ (g); ד, דּ (d); כ, כּ, ך (k); פ, פּ, ף (p); ת, תּ (t). The letter with the dot in the middle is called a non-spirantized letter, and the letter without the dot is called a spirantized letter. The dot itself is called a *daghes h lene*, and we will discuss this further below, but suffice it to say that all of these forms, dots, etc., are important for you to know in learning the proper pronunciation of the letters.

### Cursive Writing

In the following exercise, I want you to begin practicing writing the Hebrew letters in cursive script; i.e., the script you will use in your own handwriting. The Hebrew cursive will be similar to the printed form, but it will also differ in the same way as English print differs from our cursive handwriting in English. After you write each Hebrew letter, I then want you to transliterate that letter into English (e.g., נ-'; ב-b; ג-g; etc.), and I want you to do this all the way across the line. In addition, I have given you both the non-spirantized and spirantized form of six Hebrew letters mentioned above that have the dot (i.e., the *daghes h lene*). And again, as stated above, the non-spirantized form is the form with the dot in the letter, and the spirantized form does not have the dot. Therefore, I want you to transliterate those letters in the following manner: ב-b; בּ-b (v); ג-g; גּ-g (gh); ד-d; דּ-d (dh); כ-k; כּ-k (ch); ך (when this is the final letter in a word, it is written with these two dots in it, and it is pronounced as a spirant - ch); פ-p; פּ-p (ph); ת-t; תּ-t (th). As you will note, the spirantized, transliterated forms of these letters (i.e., the ones without the dots) have an English letter with a line under it (e.g., תּ-t), and that is the way you write that letter when you are transliterating from Hebrew into

English, and then beside that English letter with the line under it, you will find an English, phonetical pronunciation of that letter, as with t (t h) . The “th” is the way the t is actually pronounced in English. For example, in Hebrew, the word for house is בַּיִת (bayit), I wrote the spirantized form of ת in English as “t,” and the English, phonetic pronunciation of “t” is “th.” In the exercise below, write the formal English transliterated form, and then in parenthesis, write the phonetic pronunciation of that letter, as with ת-t (t h).

ז (z) \_\_\_\_\_

ט \_\_\_\_\_

ח \_\_\_\_\_

צ \_\_\_\_\_

כ \_\_\_\_\_

ק \_\_\_\_\_

ג \_\_\_\_\_

ך \_\_\_\_\_

ל \_\_\_\_\_

מ \_\_\_\_\_

נ \_\_\_\_\_

ס \_\_\_\_\_

ע \_\_\_\_\_

פ \_\_\_\_\_

צ \_\_\_\_\_

ק \_\_\_\_\_

ג \_\_\_\_\_

ך \_\_\_\_\_

ל \_\_\_\_\_

מ \_\_\_\_\_

נ \_\_\_\_\_

ס \_\_\_\_\_

ע \_\_\_\_\_

פ \_\_\_\_\_



ט \_\_\_\_\_

ת \_\_\_\_\_

י \_\_\_\_\_

כ \_\_\_\_\_

ל \_\_\_\_\_

מ \_\_\_\_\_

נ \_\_\_\_\_

ס \_\_\_\_\_

ע (') \_\_\_\_\_

פ \_\_\_\_\_

צ \_\_\_\_\_

ק \_\_\_\_\_

ר \_\_\_\_\_

ש \_\_\_\_\_

ט \_\_\_\_\_

ך \_\_\_\_\_

ש \_\_\_\_\_

ש \_\_\_\_\_

ת \_\_\_\_\_

ת \_\_\_\_\_

## Section Two Word Formation

Hebrew, unlike Greek, has no letters that remotely compare to any English letters. Thus, it is a bit more difficult at first to associate the letters with the correct sound in word formations. In addition, unlike Greek as well, Hebrew does not have any vowel letters (except for ם, ן and ף which help to form vowel sounds with certain vowel marks). Thus, from about the beginning of the seventh century AD toward the end of the tenth century AD, a major effort was undertaken to produce what is today called the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible as the following quote explains:

**Masoretic** (maz-uh-ret'ik) **Text**, the standard or traditional Hebrew text of the Bible, as preserved by the Masoretes, a group of rabbinic scholars active ca. 600–950 CE. There is, however, more than one version of the Masoretic Text. First, there were three major groups of Masoretes: Palestinian, Babylonian, and Tiberian. Of these, Tiberian Masoretes gained prominence, so the Tiberian version of the Hebrew Bible is usually associated with what is called the Masoretic Text today. Beyond this, however, the Tiberian Masoretes differed on minor matters and produced a number of slightly different texts. Those produced by the family of Aaron ben Asher came to be regarded as the best, and these are preserved today in two frequently consulted manuscripts: the Aleppo Codex and the Leningrad Codex. Both of these contain, not only the text of the Bible written out in Hebrew consonants, but also vowels and accent signs determined to be appropriate by the Masoretes. Further, both the Aleppo Codex and the Leningrad Codex contain numerous Masorah, numbers and abbreviations that occur as notes in the margins and other key points in the text. The Masoretic Text of the Bible (as preserved especially in the Leningrad Codex) forms the primary basis for most English Bible translations, including the NRSV, although manuscripts of the LXX are also consulted and sometimes given preference when the reading preserved there is believed to represent a more ancient tradition.<sup>1</sup>

As stated above, this laborious task was completed in the tenth century, and we are still using it today! Therefore, not only do you have to learn the proper phonetic sound of the letters, but you also have to learn the proper pronunciation of those letters combined with the various vowel signs. However, as you memorize and practice both the phonetic pronunciation of the Hebrew letters, as well as the vowel signs and their corresponding sounds that were placed within, underneath, and around the Hebrew letters by the Masoretes, you will in turn be able to pronounce the Hebrew of the Masoretic text.

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<sup>1</sup> Bruce M. Metzger, "Masoretic Text," in *The Harper Collins Bible Dictionary* (revised & updated), 2011.

## Vowel Signs

There are five short and seven long Hebrew vowels:

<u>Short</u>	<u>Long</u>
בַּ Pathah - <u>a</u> as in b <u>a</u> d	*בָּ Qames - <u>ā</u> as in f <u>ā</u> ther
בֶּ Seghol - <u>e</u> as in l <u>e</u> d	בֵּ Sere - <u>ē</u> as in ob <u>ē</u> y
בִּ Hireq - <u>i</u> as in h <u>i</u> d	בִּי Sere-yod - <u>ê</u> as in ob <u>ê</u> y
בּ Qibbus - <u>u</u> as in p <u>u</u> ll	בִּי Hireq-yod - <u>î</u> as in Krist <u>î</u> ne
*בֹּ Qames-Hatuph - <u>o</u> as in m <u>o</u> st	בֹּ - Sureq - <u>û</u> as in fr <u>û</u> it
	בֹּ - Full-Holem - <u>ô</u> as in t <u>ô</u> e
	בֹּ - Defective-Holem - <u>ō</u> in t <u>ō</u> e

\* These two signs are pronounced differently under certain, grammatical conditions. However, for our purposes at this point, you will only be given the long “fāther” form of pronunciation.

## Letters & Vowels

We will now begin to put the vowel signs together with the letters to form words. This will be both challenging and fun as you begin to form actual Hebrew words and pronounce them. However, you must put forth the proper effort in order to do this correctly, or else you will have considerable trouble from this ;point forward; in other words, this is a foundational step, which if you don't master, you will be very frustrated and ineffective in your attempt to accurately and adequately use this material.

In Exercise One, I have written the Hebrew word with the appropriate vowel signs, and next to it I have written its transliterated form in *italics*. It is important that you too learn to properly write and identify the appropriate transliterated form, or else you will mistake what is actually written. After my written form, I want you in turn to copy exactly what I have written, both the Hebrew as well as the transliteration, to the end of the line.

In Exercise Two, I have only written the Hebrew word with the appropriate vowel signs, and you will in turn follow that with the correct transliterated form. At the end of Exercise One I have written the correct answers. But please, for your own sake, don't cheat by looking at the answers before you write the transliterated form; you will only hurt yourself in your learning process.

Exercise Three is the same in reverse form from Exercise Two in that I have given you the transliterated form, and your job is to write the correct Hebrew word, including the correct vowel signs and all other necessary marks. Here too, the correct answers are at the end of the exercise, but don't look at them until you have done your work.

Let us begin!

### Exercise One

אֲבֵד - 'ōbēd \_\_\_\_\_

אֶבֶן - 'eben \_\_\_\_\_

אָדוֹן - 'ādôn \_\_\_\_\_

אֵיךְ - 'ayin \_\_\_\_\_

בָּטַח - bāṭaḥ \_\_\_\_\_

בָּקָר - bāqar \_\_\_\_\_

בָּשָׂר - bāśār \_\_\_\_\_

גָּדַל - gādāl \_\_\_\_\_

גָּמַל - gāmāl \_\_\_\_\_

דָּוִד - Dāvid \_\_\_\_\_

דֶּרֶךְ - derek \_\_\_\_\_

הוא - hū' \_\_\_\_\_

היכל - hêkāl \_\_\_\_\_

זהב - zāhāb \_\_\_\_\_

זרע - zera' \_\_\_\_\_

חדש - ḥōdeš \_\_\_\_\_

חכם - ḥākām \_\_\_\_\_

חלם - ḥālam \_\_\_\_\_

חסד - ḥesed \_\_\_\_\_

חשך - ḥōšek \_\_\_\_\_

יד - yād \_\_\_\_\_

יוסף - Yôsēp \_\_\_\_\_

ילד - yeled \_\_\_\_\_

יפה - yāpeh \_\_\_\_\_

ישב - yāšab \_\_\_\_\_

כבוד - kābēd \_\_\_\_\_

כהן - kōhēn \_\_\_\_\_

כסף - kesep \_\_\_\_\_

לוט - Lōt \_\_\_\_\_

לבן - Leben \_\_\_\_\_

מות - mût \_\_\_\_\_

מַיִם - mayim \_\_\_\_\_

מֶלֶךְ - melek \_\_\_\_\_

מְקוֹם - māqôm \_\_\_\_\_

מֹשֶׁה - Mōšeh \_\_\_\_\_

נָהָר - nāhār \_\_\_\_\_

נָחָשׁ - nāḥāš \_\_\_\_\_

נָטַע - nāṭa' \_\_\_\_\_

סוּס - sūs \_\_\_\_\_

סִינַי - sīnay \_\_\_\_\_

סֵפֶר - seper \_\_\_\_\_

עֵדֶן - 'ēden \_\_\_\_\_

עִיר - 'îr \_\_\_\_\_

\* עֵצָה - 'ēšâ \_\_\_\_\_

עֵבֶר - 'eber \_\_\_\_\_

פֶּה - peh \_\_\_\_\_

פֶּסַח - pesah \_\_\_\_\_

\* פָּרָה - pārâ \_\_\_\_\_

צֵאן - šō'n \_\_\_\_\_

צֶדֶק - šedeq \_\_\_\_\_

קֶבֶר - qeber \_\_\_\_\_

קדוֹשׁ - qādōš \_\_\_\_\_

קוֹל - qôl \_\_\_\_\_

קטוֹן - qātōn \_\_\_\_\_

ראשׁ - rō's \_\_\_\_\_

רגל - regel \_\_\_\_\_

רוח - rūah \_\_\_\_\_

רחל - Rāḥēl \_\_\_\_\_

רעב - rā'ēb \_\_\_\_\_

\* שָׂרָה - sārā \_\_\_\_\_

שׂאוּל - šā'ûl \_\_\_\_\_

# שַׁבָּת - šabbāt \_\_\_\_\_

שָׁהַר - šahar \_\_\_\_\_

שָׁלוֹם - šālôm \_\_\_\_\_

שָׁמַיִם - šāmayim \_\_\_\_\_

שֶׁמֶשׁ - šemeš \_\_\_\_\_

\* שָׁנָה - šānā \_\_\_\_\_

\* שָׂטָה - šātā \_\_\_\_\_

תָּוֶק - tāvek \_\_\_\_\_

\* תּוֹרָה - tōrā \_\_\_\_\_

\* The words that contain the asterisk beside them are unique in that the final form of הַ is transliterated as â. Thus, in the word עֵצָה, it is written 'ēṣâ, with the â indicating a final הַ.

# When one of the **בגדכפת** letters occurs at the beginning of a syllable, either at the beginning or in the middle of a word, then that letter has the *daghesh lene*, provided that there is no vowel immediately before the letter. On the other hand, if a **בגדכפת** does not begin a syllable, or if a vowel is immediately preceding the letter, then the *daghesh lene* is absent, and the letter is pronounced as a spirant. However, there are times when another type of *daghesh* may appear in any of the twenty-two letters in the Hebrew alphabet, except the **אהחער** letters, and it is called the *daghesh forte*. When the *daghesh forte* appears in a letter, that letter is doubled, as in שַׁבָּת (*šabbāt*), with the vowel coming after the second letter of the doubling. In some cases you will also have a doubled letter when it is combined with another word. For example, when a preposition such as מִן (*min*), which means “from,” is attached to a word, the ך (*n*) will drop off. Thus, when מִן is attached to the Hebrew idiom, “presence,” you have the form מִלְּפָנַי, which is transliterated, *millipnê*, with the ל (*l*) doubled containing the *daghesh forte*. Another example is with the phrase, “from there,” which in Hebrew is written מִשָּׁם (*miššām*), where the ש (*š*) has the *daghesh forte* and is doubled.



## Exercise Two

1. אָבב \_\_\_\_\_
2. אָבּה \_\_\_\_\_
3. אָבּיב \_\_\_\_\_
4. אָוּלם \_\_\_\_\_
5. בָּרָא \_\_\_\_\_
6. בּוּדָּי \_\_\_\_\_
7. בּינָה \_\_\_\_\_
8. בְּרִית \_\_\_\_\_
9. גָּלָב \_\_\_\_\_
10. גָּרֶשׁ \_\_\_\_\_
11. דְּבָה \_\_\_\_\_
12. דּוּדָּוָהוּ \_\_\_\_\_
13. הָבָל \_\_\_\_\_
14. הַגָּיוֹן \_\_\_\_\_
15. זָבַל \_\_\_\_\_
16. זָדוֹן \_\_\_\_\_
17. הוּבָה \_\_\_\_\_
18. חָטָה \_\_\_\_\_
19. חָרַף \_\_\_\_\_

20. טָלָה \_\_\_\_\_
21. טָעַן \_\_\_\_\_
22. יוֹם \_\_\_\_\_
23. יוֹבֵל \_\_\_\_\_
24. בְּמֶרֶז \_\_\_\_\_
25. בְּשִׁלּוֹן \_\_\_\_\_
26. לְחֵץ \_\_\_\_\_
27. מִיכָאֵל \_\_\_\_\_
28. נָגִיד \_\_\_\_\_
29. נָשָׂא \_\_\_\_\_
30. סִיעָא \_\_\_\_\_
31. סָלָא \_\_\_\_\_
32. עוֹלָם \_\_\_\_\_
33. עֲתִיד \_\_\_\_\_
34. פִּישׁוֹן \_\_\_\_\_
35. פָּרֵשׁ \_\_\_\_\_
36. צָדִיק \_\_\_\_\_
37. צָנוּף \_\_\_\_\_
38. קִדְּשׁ \_\_\_\_\_
39. קוּם \_\_\_\_\_

40. קָרִים \_\_\_\_\_
41. קָרִיא \_\_\_\_\_
42. רְבִיז \_\_\_\_\_
43. רוּר \_\_\_\_\_
44. רִיקָם \_\_\_\_\_
45. רִשָּׁע \_\_\_\_\_
46. שָׂדֵה \_\_\_\_\_
47. שׁוּב \_\_\_\_\_
48. שָׂכַל \_\_\_\_\_
49. תּוֹצְאוֹת \_\_\_\_\_
50. תִּפְשׁ \_\_\_\_\_

## Answers to Exercise Two

1. 'ābab
2. 'ābâ
3. 'ābîb
4. 'ûlām
5. bārā'
6. bûk
7. bînâ
8. bōrît
9. gālab
10. gāraš
11. dibbâ
12. Dôdāvāhû
13. hebel
14. higgāyôn
15. zābal
16. zādôn
17. hōbâ
18. ḥattâ
19. ḥōrep
20. ṭāleh
21. ṭā'an
22. yôm
23. yûbal
24. kōmer
25. kiššālôn
26. lāḥaṣ
27. Mîkā'ēl
28. nāgîd
29. nāsā'
30. sî'ā'
31. sālā'
32. 'ôlām
33. 'ātîd
34. pîšôn
35. pāraś
36. šādîq
37. šānôp
38. qōdeš

39. qûm
40. qādîm
41. qārî'
42. rābaş
43. rûr
44. rêqām
45. reşâ'
46. şādeh
47. şûb
48. şākōl
49. tōşâ'ôt
50. tāpaś

### Exercise Three

You will now work backwards from a transliterated form to the actual Hebrew. This practice will familiarize you with the Hebrew as you now have to begin thinking in Hebrew, not just English.

1. 'āman \_\_\_\_\_
2. 'āpēs \_\_\_\_\_
3. bāgaḏ \_\_\_\_\_
4. bā'al \_\_\_\_\_
5. gōlan \_\_\_\_\_
6. gāraš \_\_\_\_\_
7. dāhar \_\_\_\_\_
8. dārôm \_\_\_\_\_
9. hêḏāḏ \_\_\_\_\_
10. hāmôn \_\_\_\_\_
11. zûlâ \_\_\_\_\_
12. zeret \_\_\_\_\_
13. hiûb \_\_\_\_\_
14. ḥômâ \_\_\_\_\_
15. ṭāmēn \_\_\_\_\_
16. ṭārap \_\_\_\_\_
17. yāgâ \_\_\_\_\_
18. yāmîn \_\_\_\_\_
19. kābûl \_\_\_\_\_

20. kāsā \_\_\_\_\_
21. lābēš \_\_\_\_\_
22. lā'an \_\_\_\_\_
23. mazzārôt \_\_\_\_\_
24. mārēšâ \_\_\_\_\_
25. nābî' \_\_\_\_\_
26. nāqar \_\_\_\_\_
27. sūgar \_\_\_\_\_
28. sātam \_\_\_\_\_
29. 'ābûr \_\_\_\_\_
30. 'ôlêlôt \_\_\_\_\_
31. pallāsiût \_\_\_\_\_
32. pēšet \_\_\_\_\_
33. şûrîşaddây \_\_\_\_\_
34. şāra'at \_\_\_\_\_
35. qāmôn \_\_\_\_\_
36. qîşşu'â \_\_\_\_\_
37. rāhîţ \_\_\_\_\_
38. raqqāḥâ \_\_\_\_\_
39. sākîr \_\_\_\_\_
40. sārōq \_\_\_\_\_
41. šābîs \_\_\_\_\_
42. şuppîm \_\_\_\_\_

43. kîssē' \_\_\_\_\_

44. yô'ē'lâ \_\_\_\_\_

45. lubîm \_\_\_\_\_

46. mō'ēšâ \_\_\_\_\_

47. nişşâ \_\_\_\_\_

48. 'ēnôṭām \_\_\_\_\_

49. pu'â \_\_\_\_\_

50. qîbbuṣ \_\_\_\_\_



## Answers to Exercise Three

1. אָמֶן
2. אָפֶס
3. בָּנָד
4. בְּעַל
5. גּוֹלָן
6. גֶּרֶשׁ
7. דְּהֶר
8. דְּרוֹם
9. הֵידֶר
10. הַמּוֹן
11. זוּלָה
12. זָרֵת
13. חוּב
14. חוּמָה
15. טָמֶן
16. טָרַף
17. יָנָה
18. יָמֶן
19. כְּבוֹל
20. כֶּסֶה
21. לָבֶשׁ
22. לְעוֹן
23. מְזוֹרוֹת
24. מְרֵשָׁה
25. נְבִיא
26. נֶקֶר
27. סוּגֶר
28. סָתָם
29. עֵבוֹר
30. עוֹלָלוֹת
31. פְּלָצוֹת
32. פֶּשֶׁת
33. צוּרֵי־שָׁדַי
34. צָרַעַת
35. קֶמוֹן
36. קִיצָאָה
37. רְהִיט
38. רִקְחָה

39. שְׁכִיר
40. שָׂרֵק
41. שְׁבִים
42. שְׁפִים
43. כִּסָּא
44. יוֹעֵאֲלָה
45. לְבִים
46. מֵאֲשָׁה
47. נִצָּה
48. עֲנוּתָם
49. פְּעָה
50. קִיבֵץ

## Sewa

The *Sewa* is a sign under a letter indicating that it either has no vowel, or that the vowel sign is an abbreviated one. There are two types: the silent and vocal *sewa* and the composite *sewas*.

### *Silent and Vocal Sewas*

The silent *sewa* consists of two dots under a letter indicating that that letter ends a syllable and thus there is no vowel sound attributed to it other than its phonetic value (which in the case of the ו, ה, י, ע, and א there is no phonetic value/sound). Thus, in the word נִפְתּוּלִים (*naptûlîm*) all you hear under the פ is the *ph* sound. The *silent sewa* will be preceded by one of the short vowels on page 7.

The *vocal sewa* is the same two dots under a letter that either begins a syllable, or is preceded by one of the long vowels listed on page 7. The sound associated with it is a short “e” sound. Thus, in the word סְנֵאָה (*sənā’ā*) you simply pronounce the ס (s) with a short “e.”

### *Composite Sewas*

The *composite sewas* are shortened vowel sounds; i.e., they are vowels, but when pronounced, they are done so with a quick, abbreviated sound:

1. Hateph-Patah - פְּ (חֲסָדִים - *hăṣādîm*)
2. Hateph-Seghol - פֿ (אֵלֹהִים - *’ē lōhîm*)
3. Hateph-Qames - פֿ (בִּקְנָרִים - *biqǒgārîm*)

## Gender & Number in Hebrew Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives, Verbs, & Participles

In Hebrew, you have a masculine and feminine gender in nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, and participles. In English, we too have masculine and feminine pronouns (e.g., “he” and “she”), and although we do not have a specifically designated neuter gender, we often times refer to something as “it” or “that” in our designations of objects, which in some languages such as Greek, Latin, and German, you do have what is called a neuter gender, and whatever gender the noun may be in one of those three languages, the adjective (including the participle when used adjectively) must also correspond with the noun it is modifying in the same gender. The same is true for Hebrew, with the difference being that Hebrew does not have a neuter gender, which is true of all Semitic languages. In addition, that which Semitic languages have that Latin and German do not have is a masculine and feminine form for regular verb forms in the second and third persons, singular and plural.

The first list below contains the primary plural endings for masculine and feminine nouns, adjectives, and participles. However, with the masculine and feminine singular endings, the very best way to unequivocally identify the gender of a noun, adjective, or participle is to look it up in either the *Analytical Lexicon*, or the *Hebrew-English Lexicon*. On the other hand, there are five identifying marks for a singular feminine noun, adjective, or participle that will be helpful, and those identifying, feminine marks are in the second list.

### *First List:*

Masculine Plural – םִי. (*îm*) – However, there are times that a feminine noun will take the masculine plural (e.g., נְשִׂיִם [nāšîm] – “women”). The masculine plural also has what is called a “construct form,” which occurs when the plural, masculine noun is attached to another noun, describing the plural number of whatever is being talked about. Thus, when you read in Genesis 13:13 the following, “and the men of Sodom were very wicked and sinners against the Lord,” the phrase “men of” is in the construct form, and consequently the written form is אֲנָשֵׁי (‘anšê), versus the normal plural of “men,” which is אֲנָשִׁים (‘ānāšîm).

Feminine Plural – תֹּא (ôṭ) – However, some nouns have both masculine and feminine plural endings (e.g., “generation” is a masculine noun, but it has both masculine and feminine, plural endings – דֹּר [dôr], דֹּרִים [dôrîm] and דֹּרוֹת [dôrôṭ]).

*Second List:*

- (1) Female individuals and animals are feminine nouns.
- (2) Typically, nouns ending in the singular form with הַ are feminine nouns.
- (3) Some nouns that are masculine, but also have a female counterpart, are made feminine by appending the הַ to it (e.g., מֶלֶךְ [melek] – “king,” and מַלְכָּה [malkâ] – “queen”).
- (4) Nouns ending in the singular with ת are generally feminine (e.g., אֱמֶת [emet] – “truth”).
- (5) Nouns that refer to those parts of our body that are in pairs are typically feminine (e.g., אוֹז [’ôzen] – “ear” is a feminine noun, and its plural form, which indicates a dual form – that is, two of each – is אוֹזַיִם [’oznayim], which is the typical, masculine, plural form).

### The Definite Article

There is no indefinite article in Hebrew like we have in English, which is the “a” and the “an.” A noun by itself is typically translated, based on the context of the passage, with the English indefinite article “a” or “an.” The definite article in Hebrew, which is “the,” is written as הַ (ha), and the first letter of the word it is attached to contains what is called a Dages Forte in it, which is a dot in the middle of the word, such as the phrase, “the king,” is written in Hebrew as הַמֶּלֶךְ (hammelek). There are other variations of the definite article with what are called guttural letters (e.g., אֶהְיֶה and also the הַ), but for your translation purposes, this is the primary information about the article that is important for you to know.

## The ׀ Conjunction & the ׀ Consecutive

This is called the “waw” or “vav” conjunction, depending upon the way you pronounce the letter (e.g., when I took Hebrew, the ׀ was called the “waw,” but today in more recent, Hebrew grammars, it is called the “vav.” However, regardless of how you pronounce it, it functions as the Hebrew conjunction, and its primary translation is “and,” but there are instances where it is translated as “but” (e.g., “But (׀) a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground” – Genesis 2:6); “now” (e.g., “Now (׀) the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,” – Exodus 14:1); “then” (e.g., “Then (׀) the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,” – Leviticus 5:14); “when” (e.g., “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food,” – Genesis 3:6); “so” (e.g., “But the children struggled together within her; and she said, ‘If it is so, why then am I *this way*?’ So (׀) she went to inquire of the LORD” – Genesis 25:22).

The “vav” consecutive is the use of the “vav” in a continued narration in which either the perfect or imperfect form of a verb is beginning the narration. So, when a narration is begun with a perfect verb form, then the remaining narration is treated as a consecutive action of the initial verb, and thus, the imperfect form of a verb (which normally is translated in English by “will” with the action it represents) will be translated in the perfect as a completed action as well. And the same happens with the perfect when a narration may begin with an imperfect verb form, followed by a perfect with a “vav,” wherein that perfect is then translated with “will” attached to its translation to present a “consecutive” narration that began with the imperfect.

Thus, in the following passage in I Kings 12:15-16, we see a perfect verb form beginning the narration, followed by “vav” consecutives attached to imperfections, which in turn are then given a perfect, or completed translation: “So the king **did not listen** (perfect verb form that begins and leads this narration) to the people; for it was a turn *of events* from the LORD, that He might establish His word, which the LORD spoke through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat. <sup>16</sup> When all Israel **saw** (this is an imperfect verb following the lead of the perfect verb that began the narration) that the king did not listen to them, the people **answered** (imperfect verb form following the lead

of perfect verb) the king, saying, "What portion do we have in David? *We have* no inheritance in the son of Jesse; To your tents, O Israel! Now look after your own house, David!" So Israel **departed** (imperfect verb form following the lead of the perfect verb) to their tents."

However, in the following passage Amos 2:1-2, we see the exact opposite, wherein an imperfect verb form begins the narration, followed by perfect verb forms with a "vav" consecutive attached to them in order to express a continued narration of future time: "Thus says the LORD, 'For three transgressions of Moab and for four **I will not revoke** (this is the future imperfect verb that begins and leads this narration) its *punishment*, because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime.<sup>2</sup> So **I will send** (this is a perfect verb form that it is translated as imperfect, or future, following the narration of the leading, imperfect verb) fire upon Moab, and **it will consume** (perfect verb form following the lead of the imperfect verb) the citadels of Kerioth; and Moab **will die** (perfect verb form following the lead of the imperfect verb) amid tumult, with war cries and the sound of a trumpet."

Now with regard to your interpretive and exegetical analysis of such passages, just remember that both the perfect and the imperfect verb forms still carry their basic meaning even with a "vav" consecutive attached to them. Consequently, in the first passage of I Kings 12:15-16, the "seeing," was something they continued "to see," and their "answer" was a continuous "answer" to Rehoboam, and their "departure" was a continuous "departure" from the rule of Rehoboam. And the same can be said of Amos 2:1-2, in that the "sending" of the fire, the "consummation" of Kerioth, and the "death" of Moab were already completed acts in God's sovereign purpose and judgment, even though they were not happening at that time.

### **The Inseparable Prepositions**

There are three prepositions in Hebrew that are always attached to the word they are modifying, and that is why they are called "inseparable." These three prepositions, with their primary meanings, in alphabetical order are: ׀ – "in, by, with"; ׁ – "as, like, according to"; ׃ – "to, for, at." Now all of these prepositions have other translations as

well (e.g., “among & before” for **ב**; “thus & after” for **כ**; “into & concerning” for **ל**, and many others for all three), but the first ones listed are the ones they are primarily identified with.

### Section Three Verb Tenses

You are now going to be entering an extremely exciting phase of this study as you begin to learn the verb tenses, voices and moods. This is what might be called the "guts" of biblical Hebrew in that this is what will enable you to understand what is actually being said in the Hebrew text.

We will start off by looking at the seven, main verb tenses (I say main because there are some others that we will also include later):

1.	Kal (Qal)	Simple Active	“He shot”
2.	Niphal	Simple Passive and Reflexive	“He was shot” “He shot himself”
3.	Piel	Intensive Active/Causative	“He <i>really</i> shot”
4.	Pual	Intensive Passive	“He was <i>really</i> shot”
5.	Hiphil	Causative Active	“He <i>caused</i> to be shot”
6.	Hophal	Causative Passive	“He was <i>caused</i> to be shot”
7.	Hithpael	Reflexive	“He shot himself”

These are the seven, main verb tenses, but there are also some more that are offshoots of the above with an intensive and reflexive emphasis. And while these are far less frequent than the above (and there are other **Hith** forms even less frequent), you will encounter them, and, therefore, you need to know what they are.

1.	Polel	Intensive Active	“He <i>really</i> shot”
2.	Pilel	Intensive Active	“He <i>really</i> shot”
3.	Polal	Intensive Passive	“He was <i>really</i> shot”
4.	Polpal	Intensive Passive	“He was <i>really</i> shot”
5.	Hithpolel	Reflexive	“He shot himself”
6.	Hithpalel	Reflexive	“He shot himself”
7.	Hithpaal	Causative Passive/Reflexive	“He was <i>caused</i> to be shot”



## Perfect Tense

The perfect tense in the Hebrew verb is translated in much the same way we translate the "past tense" in English. However, in Hebrew there really is no "past tense," only action that is regarded as completed. Thus, the Hebrew perfect tense indicates action that is completed in a variety of forms.

### 1. Simple Perfects

The simple perfect is the most common use of the perfect, and it simply states that an act is completed (in English past time), or it may be stated with a present tense or future usage. If stated in the present tense, it is usually describing a characteristic of a life style within a particular segment of time. However, even in the present tense usage, the main idea of completion is still inherent in its meaning by the person/persons performing the act, etc., only the act is seen as taking place in the present time of the narration, versus at some time in the past. If it is given a future tense translation, it is normally for the purpose of emphasizing "assurance" of the action being described by the verb:

- (a) Past Time - a simple act that belongs to a specific time period considered in the past:
  - 1. "In the beginning God **created** (בָּרָא – *bārā'*) the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1).
  - 2. "Noah **walked** (הִתְלַלֵּךְ – *hitallek*) with God" (Gen. 6:9).
- (b) Present Time - in the use of the present tense, we usually see actions that are considered characteristic of a person or life style of a particular time:
  - 1. "Everything, O king, Araunah **gives** (נָתַן – *nātan*) to the king" (II Sam. 24:23). In this passage, David is wanting to purchase Araunah's "threshing floor . . . in order that the plague may be held back from the people" (II Samuel 24:21). David had taken a census of the people, against God's will, and God gave him a choice of three consequences for his sin, and David chose the "three days pestilence in your land" (II Samuel 24:13). Thus, David is now wanting to purchase Araunah's

threshing floor to build an altar to the Lord, but Araunah is insisting that David simply take the “threshing floor” as a gift to him, and so he says, “Everything, O king, Araunah **has given** (נָתַן - *nātan*) to the king,” which means from Araunah’s perspective, it is a completed act in the sense that all he owns has already been made available to the king, and so, his “threshing floor” “is given” at this very moment to the king, and was so before he even asked. The important thing to remember when attempting to understand the translation of a perfect tense verb into a present time frame is the context in which it is written.

2. “Even the stork in the sky **knows** (יָדָעָה - *yādē‘ā*) her seasons,... but my people **do not know** (לֹא יָדָעוּ ( *yādē‘ū* ) the ordinance of the Lord” (Jer. 8:7).

Once again, the idea of “completeness” is inherent in the translation of these two verbs in that the stork innately and instinctively “has known her seasons” from her conception, and thus, she presently “knows” them, but with God’s people, apart from a re-birth experience such as Abraham had (Genesis 15:6), as well as their hearts having been “circumcised by the Spirit” into an eternal relationship with the Lord (Deuteronomy 30:6; Romans 2:28-29), they have never really “known the ordinance of the Lord as a reality in their hearts and lives,” and thus, they “do not know the ordinance of the Lord.” Thus, the idea of “completeness” is set forth in the present reality from Jeremiah’s perspective.

- (c) Future Time – the use of the future tense with the perfect is to express assurance about the action being expressed by the verb. Thus, its use is to emphasize assurance about whatever is being expressed in the sense that the “completeness” of that event is an assured conviction and truth.

1. “Then Leah said, ‘Happy am I! For women **will call me** (אִשְׂרֵינוּ – *’iššārūnî*) happy’” (Gen. 30:13). That is, in Leah’s mind, she sees the birth of Zilpah’s second son to Jacob (Zilpah was Leah’s personal maid), she assumes that it is a “completed” act in the mind of other women who will hear in the future of her being more fruitful than Rachel and they “call me happy,” that is, she sees in her mind as an already accomplished fact the respect and esteem she wants to garner from other women.
2. “And he spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, ‘If you will only please listen to me; **I will give** (נָתַתִּי – *nāṭattî*) the price of the field, accept it from me, that I may bury my dead there’” (Gen 23:13). Once again, from Abraham’s perspective, his having given the money to Ephron for the field is an already accomplished fact, and he is stating it as such as the English translation gives it in a future tense, but in Abraham’s mind, it is already a “completed act” on his part.

## 2. Previous Perfects

The previous perfect in Hebrew is commonly translated with the English auxiliary verbs “had,” or “have.”

### (a) Past Time

1. “The Lord God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom **He had formed** (יָצָר – *yāṣār*)” (Gen 2:8).
2. “He also made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom Solomon **had married** (לָקַח – *lāqah*)” (I Kings 7:8).

(b) Present Time

1. “Alas, sinful nation, People weighed down with iniquity, Offspring of evildoers, Sons who act corruptly! **They have abandoned** (עֲזַבּוּ – ‘*ozbû*) the Lord (and are presently “abandoning the Lord”), **they have despised** (נִסְּאוּ – *ni’ăšû*) the Holy One of Israel (and are presently “despising the Holy One of Israel”), **they have turned away** (נָזְרוּ – *năzôrû*) from Him (and are presently turning away from Him)” (Is. 1:4).ă
2. “I am unworthy of all the lovingkindness and of all the faithfulness which **You have shown** (אֲשִׁיתָ – ‘*ăšitā*) to Your servant (and are showing “to Your Servant”)” (Gen. 32:10).

In the above two examples, the English translation gives a past tense translation, but the idea inherent in these verbal constructions is that not only is this something that has characterized past action, it is also a picture of a present reality – thus, what began in the past is continuing in the present.

(c) Future Time

1. “It shall be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then you shall act promptly, for then the Lord **will have gone out** (יֵצֵא – *yăšă’*) before you to strike the army of the Philistines” (II Sam. 5:24)
2. “But if they say, ‘Come up to us,’ then we will go up, for the Lord **will have given them** (נָתַתָּם – *nătănām*) into our hands; and this shall be the sign to us” (I Sam. 14:10).

In the above two instances, the “future tense” is stated in the translation, but what is actually stated is that God has already accomplished what He has promised to do, and we will see that accomplishment in future time. As we look at this grammatically, it is also imperative that we see the spiritual truth contained in this wonderful promise, contained in Hebrew grammar, and that is, with God His promises are “Yea and Amen,” which means, in our sense and perception of the past, present, and future, God’s Word and promises are “completed and done”!

### 3. Characteristic Perfects

Characteristic perfects are normally always translated in the present tense, and its emphasis is that of a universal truth. That is, whatever is considered to be true of the subject being described may also be considered to be true for us as well.

Isaiah 40:8: “The grass **withers** (שׁוֹבֵרִים – *yābēš*), the flower **fades** (נֹבֵלִים – *nābēl*), but the Word of our God stands forever.”

Psalm 1:1: “How blessed is the man who does not **walk** (הִלְכָה – *hālak*) in the counsel of the wicked, nor **stand** (עָמַד – *āmād*) in the path of sinners, nor **sit** (יָשָׁב – *yāšāb*) in the seat of scoffers!”

Here too, what we see is an eternal truth that began in the past (Isaiah 40:8 with creation, and Psalm 1:1 with the man at some point in his life began his relationship with the Lord and has carried it forward to a present reality of his current lifestyle)

### 4. Coordinate Perfects

The coordinate perfect is used with the conjunction “and.” What happens is that in a narrative situation (i.e., in a continuing dialog), if the beginning verb of the clause is in the imperfect tense (i.e., future), then the perfect, with the conjunction “and,” will be translated as a future tense. Or, if a participle begins the clause, then the perfect will be translated accordingly to compliment the tense of the participle. What this does is continue the narration in the time frame of the governing verb that began the clause, which may be the imperfect (i.e., future), or a participle, in which case the perfect will complement its usage. Thus, the perfect is “coordinated” with the lead verb.

Genesis 24:7: “**He will send** (יִשְׁלַח – *yislah* – Imperfect) His angel before you **and you will take** (וְלָקַחְתָּ – *valāqahṭā*) a wife for my son from there.” Here the phrase “you will take” is in the perfect, preceded with the conjunction “and,” which has an imperfect as the governing verb of the sentence, “will send.”

Jeremiah 34:2: “. . . Behold, **I am giving** (הִנְנִי נֹתֵן – *hinnî nōṭēn* – Qal Perfect Active Participle) - this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, **and he will burn it** (וְשָׂרַף – *ûsarāpâ*) – perfect) with fire.

### Imperfect Tense

The imperfect tense is translated in Hebrew most often as a future tense, but in reality what is actually being expressed is an incomplete condition, which is what the future tense indicates. However, there are other times when future time is not the focus, but rather continuous, unfinished action which may be expressed in past, present and future time.

#### 1. Simple Future Imperfect

This is the most basic use of the imperfect:

- (a) “On your belly **you shall go** (תֵּלֶךְ – *tēlēk*), and dust **you shall eat** (תֹּאכַל – *tō’kal*) all the days of your life” (Gen. 3:14b).
- (b) “**I will teach** (אֶלְמַדְתִּי – *’ă lammadâ*) transgressors Your ways, and sinners **will turn back** (יָשׁוּבֶיךָ – *yāšûbû*) to You” (Ps. 51:13).

#### 2. Frequentative Imperfect

The frequentative aspect of the imperfect is used to indicate action that is repeated on a continuous basis, or at frequent intervals.

##### (a) Past Time

1. “But a mist ( ) used to rise (יַעֲלֶה – *ya’ăleh* – repeatedly in the past) from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground” (Gen. 2:6).

2. “We who had sweet (נַמְתִּיק – *namtîq* – continually in the past) fellowship together, in the House of God we walked (נַחַלְלֵךְ – *nəhallēk* – continually in the past)-in the throng” (Ps. 55:14).

(b) Present Time

1. “The Lord is far from the wicked, but the prayer of the righteous (He hears (יִשְׁמָע – *yišmā‘* – continually)” (Prov. 15:29).
2. “But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God *sees* not as man sees, for man looks (יִרְאֶה – *yir’eh* – continually) at the eyes, but the Lord looks (יִרְאֶה – *yir’eh* – continually) at the heart’” (I Sam. 16:7).

(c) Future Time

1. “Moreover, he shall speak for you to the people; and **he will be** (יִהְיֶה – *yihəyeh* – continually in future time)-as a mouth for you and **you will be** (תִּהְיֶה – *tihəyeh* – continually in the future) as God to him” (Ex. 4:16).
2. “**I will heal** (אֶרְפָּא – *’erpā* – continually/repetitively into the future) their apostasy, **I will love them** (אֶהְבֵּם – *’əhəbēm* – continually into the future) freely, for My anger has turned away from them” (Hosea 14:4).

3. Progressive Imperfect

The emphasis of the progressive imperfect is action that is moving forward in a progressive manner toward a goal or a specific idea. However, the difference between the progressive imperfect and the frequentative imperfect, is that the progressive imperfect looks at a single thought or action moving toward a goal as one event, versus repeated movements of the frequentative imperfect toward that same goal. Thus, it sees the one event being described as being in a single, progressive state toward the stated goal.

(a) Past Time

1. “Now the angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, **I brought up** (בָּאֵלֶּהָ p – ‘*āleh*) you from Egypt . . .” (Judges 2:1).
2. “Then Solomon **assembled** (יָקַחְהֶם – *yaqhēl*) the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, . . .” (I Kings 8:1).

(b) Present Time

1. “Then Achish said to his servants, ‘Behold, you see the man behaving as a madman. Why **do you bring** (תָּבִיאוּ – *tābī’û*) him to me?’” (I Sam. 21:14).
2. “Woe to us, for the day declines, for the shadows of the evening **lengthen** (יִנָּטוּ – *yinnātû*)!” (Jer. 6:4).

(c) Future Time

1. “And the Lord set a definite time, saying, ‘Tomorrow the Lord **will do** (יַעֲשֶׂה – *y’āseh*) this thing in the land” (Ex. 9:5).
2. “And behold, **I will send** (אֶשְׁלַח – ‘*ešlah*) the lad *saying*, ‘Go, find the arrows.’ . . .” (I Sam. 20:21).

4. Characteristic Imperfect

On occasion the repetitive or frequentative use of the imperfect makes a statement about something or someone that tends to characterize that subject as belonging to a particular delineation or specific group of entities.

- (a) “Benjamin is a wolf that **tears** (יִטְרָפֵהוּ – *yitrāp*) . . .” (Gen. 49:27).
- (b) “...and her salvation like a torch that burns (יִבְעַר – *yib’ār*)” (Is. 62:1).



5. Consecutive Imperfects

At times progressive imperfects are joined whereby they present a sequential order of events.

(a) Past Time

1. “Then the days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years, **and he beget** (וַיֵּלֶד – *vayyōled*) sons and daughters” (Gen. 5:4).
2. “Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew; **and he ate** (וַיֹּכַל – *vayyōkal*) **and he drank** (וַיִּשֶׂה – *vayyēšt*) **and he arose** (וַיִּקָּם – *vayyāqom*) **and he went away** (וַיֵּלֶךְ – *vayyēlak*) . . .” (Gen. 25:34).

(b) Present Time

“The man shapes iron into a cutting tool and does his work over the coals, and with hammers **he fashions it** (יִצְרֶהוּ – *yiṣṣarēhū*) **and makes it** (וַיַּפְעֵלְהוּ – *vayyip‘ālēhū*) with his strong arm...” (Is. 44:12).

(c) Future Time

“For a child will be (was) born to us, a son will be (was) given to us; and the government **will be** (וַיִּתֵּן – *vattəhî*) on His shoulders; and His name **will be called** (וַיִּקְרָא – *vayyiqrā*) Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace” (Is. 9:6).

## Cohortatives & Jussives

One very important aspect of the imperfect tense is the use of what is called the *Cohortative* and *Jussive* usages of Imperfect forms. The *Cohortative* is used with the first person singular and plural in the imperfect, and it is recognizable by an appended הָ to the last syllable of the first person singular or plural Imperfect form. The purpose and reason for the *Cohortative* usage is emphasis. For example, I could say in Hebrew, “I will keep the Law of God” – אֶשְׁמֹר הַתּוֹרַת אֱלֹהִים (‘ešmōr hattōrat ’ēlōhîm) – but with the Cohortative, it will read, “I will *surely* keep the Law of God” – הַתּוֹרַת אֱלֹהִים אֶשְׁמָרָה (‘ešmārâ hattōrat ’ēlōhîm)– with the “*surely*” being employed for the added emphasis. However, there are also times when the first person singular or plural has a Cohortative emphasis without the final הָ, and that in turn requires a judgment call of you, the exegete, in determining if the context requires and allows a Cohortative usage without an appended הָ. There is also an additional particle that is added at times to both the *Cohortative* and *Jussive* for added emphasis – נָּ – , and it is tacked on to the last syllable containing the appended הָ with a maqqef, which will appear as such, נָּהָּ, and the best translation in most usages of נָּ is “please.” However, when used with the *Cohortative* in either the first person singular or plural, the wording might better be, “with permission, we will . . .,” or “with permission, I will . . .” The “please” aspect of the נָּ, therefore, when used with the *Cohortative*, is to affirmatively state, in a courteous manner, the intention of the *Cohortative* action of the verb being used with the idea of allowance of such action by the person or persons being addressed. There are also times when the *Cohortative* will be translated with “let,” but when that occurs, it is used as an emphatic expression of someone’s deep desire for whatever action the verb is expressing. And like the *Jussive*, the *Cohortative* is used with all of the Hebrew verb stems. Below are three examples of the Cohortative in both the first person singular and plural, and in the first example, the Piel stem is used with the first person singular, and in the second, the Qal stem is used with the first person plural as an example of the נָּ being appended to the *Cohortative*, and in the third example, we have the first person singular *Cohortative* used with “let”:

1. וְאִדְבַּרְתִּי בְעֵדוֹתֶיךָ נֶגֶד מְלָכִים וְלֹא אִבּוֹשׁ (wa'ādabbārâ bə'ēdōtêkâ neged

malākîm wəlō' 'ēbôš)– “**And I will speak** (וְאִדְבַּרְתִּי – wa'ādabbārâ – cohortative)

about your testimonies before kings, and I will not be ashamed (*non-cohortative*)” (Psalm 119:46). What is also interesting is that the verb “I will speak” is also a Piel verb stem, which in this case is also emphatic, so David, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is doubly emphatic about his intention to “speak about God’s testimonies before kings.”

2. נִעְבְּרָה־נָּא בְּאַרְצְךָ לֹא נַעֲבֹל בְּשָׂדֶה וּבְכַרְם (na'bārâ-nnā' bə'aršekâ lō'

na'ābōr bəsādeh ūbakerem)– “**With permission, we will pass** (נִעְבְּרָה־נָּא –

na'bārâ-nnā') through in your land; we will not pass through in a field or in a vineyard, . . .” (Numbers 20:17). The translation I am giving you is a bit different from most translations, but when the נָּ is attached to the *Cohortative*, the emphatic force of the *Cohortative* is there for a reason, but it is also coupled with the idea of courteous submission. Therefore, what Moses is saying to the King of Edom in an amplified manner is, “We will indeed pass through your land, with your permission, and in doing so, we will absolutely not exploit any of your resources for your people.” Thus, Moses is categorically affirming that as they pass through Edom’s land, the Israelites will in no way adversely affect any of their produce, etc.

Consequently, even in something seemingly as insignificant as the appended נָּ־הִ on the end of a first person singular or plural imperfect verb form, you can see that it is quite important for you to look at the passage in its total context in order to determine as accurately as possible what the passage is actually saying.

3. וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-יֹסֵף אֲמוּתָהּ הַפֶּעַם אַחֲרַי רְאוּתִי אֶת-פְּנֵיךָ כִּי עוֹדֶיךָ חַי

(wayyō'mer yiśrā'el 'el-yôsēp 'āmûtâ happā'am 'ahārê rā'ôfî 'et-pānēkâ kî 'ôdākā

ḥāy)– “And Israel said unto Joseph, ‘**Let me die** (אַמוּתָהּ – 'āmûtâ) now after I have

seen your face that you are still alive” (Genesis 46:30). The form אַמוּתָהּ ('āmûtâ)

is a Qal Imperfect, 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, from the root verb מוּת (mût), which means “to die,” and it is an Ayin Waw verb, with the Cohortative ending הַי on the last syllable.

Thus, in this instance, and in the context of this passage, the use of “let” is quite applicable and fitting with Jacob’s spiritual and emotional state of finally seeing his long, lost son, Joseph, whom he thought was dead and gone from his life, but now, as he sees Joseph face to face, his joy is complete, and he is ready for his life to end.

However, some translators apply the *Jussive* aspect of “hope,” or “desire,” or “wish” with what they deem is a Cohortative usage of a verb in the first person singular or plural without the appended הַי, and such a translation as, “let me . . .,” or “let us . . .” is at the discretion of the translator because such a verb may just as easily and correctly be translated as “I will . . .,” or “we will . . .” Therefore, just know that when you come to such translations of the Imperfect first person singular or plural such as “let me . . .” or “let us . . .,” as just stated above, those translations can just as easily be translated as “I will . . .,” or “we will . . .,” and my encouragement to you, once again, is to look at such a phrase in the total context of the passage as a whole.

On the other hand, the *Jussive* is translated as carrying the idea of asking permission for a certain action to be or not to be carried out, with the English auxiliary words “let” and “may” being the ones primarily used, and as just stated, the *Jussive* is expressing the speaker’s desire and entreaty, and sometimes even in the form of a command, but a command that is a genuine entreaty. In addition, the *Jussive* is also used in the Imperfect verb form, but with the second and third person singular and plural. However, as with the *Cohortative* above, when the particle **נַּ** is attached to the *Jussive*, then the English auxiliary word “please” is indeed the best, overall translation, and the **נַּ** will be attached to the last syllable of the verb with a maqqef as such, **נַּ־**. Also, the Hiphil verb stem in particular has a shortened, Imperfect form that is translated as a *Jussive* throughout the weak verbs, as well as do the other verb stems in some of the weak verbs. On the other hand, here too, as with the *Cohortatives* above, there are times when the “let” and “may” of the typical, *Jussive* translation may as correctly and legitimately be translated as “I will,” or “we will,” the context of the passage being the determining factor. Below, therefore, are some examples of *Jussive* usage:

1. וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר וַיְהִי-אוֹר (wayyō’mer ’ēlōhîm yəhî ’ôr wayəhî-’ôr) –

“And God said, let there be (יְהִי – yəhî) light, and there was light” (Genesis 1:3).

As you can see above, this verse may also be read, “And God said, light will be, and there was light.” Thus, the *Jussive* here, as elsewhere with normal and shortened forms of the Imperfect, is at the discretion of a translator because theologically, God does not ask permission, nor does He first seek out the “will” of any other being before He does anything.

2. יִסֵּר מֵעָלַי שִׁבְטוֹ וְאַמָּתוֹ אֶל-תִּבְעַתְנִי (yāsēr mē‘ālay šibtô wə‘ēmātô ‘al-tāba‘ātannî) – “**Let Him remove** (יִסֵּר – yāsēr) His rod from me, and **let** not His terror **terrify me** (תִּבְעַתְנִי – tāba‘ātannî)” (Job 9:34). The form יִסֵּר (yāsēr) is an example of the Hiphil, *Jussive* form for the Ayin Waw verb, which in this instance is סוּר (sûr). However, the other Jussive translation at the end of the verse, “let not terrify me,” is a Piel Imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> Fem. Sing. of the verb בָּעַתַּת (bā‘at). This second usage is an example of an interpretive analysis of when a *Jussive* translation is applicable and appropriate, and in this instance of the syntax of the verse and the passage as a whole, it certainly seems appropriate and applicable. In addition, the word “may” could also legitimately be used here (e.g., “May He remove His rod from me, and may His terror not terrify me”), and that is clearly at the discretion of the translator.
3. בְּסוֹדָם אֶל-תִּבְּאֵ נַפְשִׁי בְּקִהְלָם אֶל-תִּתְּחַד כְּבֹדִי כִּי בְּאַפָּם (basōdām ‘al-tābō‘ napšî biqhālām ‘al-tēḥad kabōdî kî b‘appām) – “Do not **let** my soul **enter** (תִּבְּאֵ – tābō‘) into their counsel, do not **let** my glory indeed **unite** (תִּתְּחַד – tēḥad) with their assembly” (Genesis 49:6). In this verse, we have the negative particle אֶל (‘al) joined with the two pleas in this verse – “enter” and “unite” – and without any question, we can clearly the command aspect of the *Jussive* entreaty being legitimately used here in this translation, but the verbal form is not an imperative (i.e., a command), but rather, it is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, imperfect form of the verb. However, this is a good example of the intensity of the *Jussive* that is clearly expressing a strong and compelling request.

## Participles

The participle functions as a verb, and adjective, and as a substantive noun (i.e., in its verbal form, it is describing a person, place, or thing). As a verb, participles describe an ongoing and continuous action, either in past, present, or future time. As an adjective, when used in the passive voice, the participle is making a statement about the noun it is modifying. For example, in the phrase, “the blessed man,” the “blessed” is a passive participle and is functioning adjectively: **הָאִישׁ הַבָּרוּךְ** (*hā'îš habbārûk*)-“the man the blessed one.” The adjective “blessed” in Hebrew is **בָּרוּךְ** (*bārûk*), which is a Qal Passive Participle, which literally means, “the one who is continually being blessed.” In its nominal use, the following sentence is a good example of how the participle functions as a substantive noun: “Wondrously show Thy lovingkindness, O Savior of those who take refuge at Thy right hand from those who rise up *against them*” (Psalm 17:7). In the above verse, the word “Savior” in Hebrew is written as **מוֹשִׁיעַ** (*môshî'a*), which is a Hiphil Masculine Singular Participle, which literally means, “He who is continually causing salvation.”

As far as the action indicated by participles, as already stated above, it is a continuous and ongoing state of activity they represent. The difference, however, between a participle and a progressive imperfect is that the participle has no boundaries as far as to when the action it is describing either began or ended. It simply makes a statement about the action happening, and it is seen as continuous. Adverbs or other particles of speech within the clause will insert a time element that can modify the action pictured by the participle.

### 1. Participles used as Adjectives

#### (a) The attributive use

The participle, when used adjectively, is normally attributing a quality or defining the noun it is modifying in some way. Typically, it follows the noun and agrees with it in gender, number and definiteness. By definiteness, I mean that when the noun has a definite article, so too will the participle, and vice versa (except when the noun being modified is the name of a person and has no definite article, but the participle will). Often times when used in this

fashion, the participles are translated as a relative clause and are accompanied with relative pronouns such as “who,” referring to a person, or “which,” typically referring to a thing or situation, or “that,” which also may be describing an object or a situation.

1. “And Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those **who dwell** in tents and *have* livestock” (Genesis 4:20). In this instance, the participle **וְשָׁב** (*yōshēb*) is describing “those **who dwell** in tents, and thus, the relative pronoun “who” is used.
2. “Watch yourself that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into **which you are going**, lest it become a snare in your midst” (Exodus 34:12). In this verse, the relative particle, **אֲשֶׁר** (*’āsher*), which is translated as “which” is also used, but it is in conjunction with the participle **בָּא** (*bā’*), which is translated as “going.” Thus, here you have “land” that the “which” in this clause is referring to.
3. “On account of the day **that is coming** to destroy all the Philistines” (Jeremiah 47:4). In this verse, the relative pronoun “that” is attached to the pronoun “coming,” and the “that” is clearly modifying “day,” which is clearly a situation as mentioned above. The phrase “that is coming” is written **בָּאֲתָּה** (*habbā’*), and the **בָּא** (*bā’*) is the participle “going,” and the **הָ** (*ha*) is the particle translated as “that.”

(b) The predicative use

In this use of the participle, it is making a statement about the noun being modified. Normally it is joined to the noun by some form of “to be,” such as “was,” or “is,” or “are,” although in many instances no verb is there giving the translation of “was,” “is,” or “are,” but you have to supply it as an understood aspect of the translation in order for it to make sense to English readers.

1. “For I know that he whom you bless *is* blessed” (Numbers 22:6). In this verse, the word “*is*” is added for the sentence to make sense to an English reader, but there is no form of the Hebrew verb **הָיָא** (*hāyā*), which is the Hebrew verb for “to be,” in the sentence.



2. “Behold, you *are* a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is married” (Genesis 20:3). In this verse, the word “are” is added for the English reader, but once again, there is no form of the Hebrew verb הָיָא (hāyā), which is the Hebrew verb for “to be,” in the sentence.

## 2. Participles used as Verbs

As said earlier, when used as a verb, the action represented by the participle has no limits. That is, they present a continuous action of the verb in use, whether past, present, or future, and only the context, other verbs, adverbial modifiers, or particles of speech can help determine the time frame.

### (a) Past Time

1. “Now the Lord appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, and he יָשָׁב (yōšēb) **was sitting** (יָשָׁב – yōšēb – Qal Active Participle) at the tent door in the heat of the day” (Gen. 18:1).
2. “So he returned to him, and behold, he **was standing** (נִשְׁאָב – niššāb – Niphal Participle, which here simply emphasizes “his choosing to stand”) beside his burnt offering” (Numbers 23:6).

### (b) Present Time

1. “Indeed, **He loves** (הֹבֵֿב – hōbēb – Qal Active Participle) the people” (Deuteronomy 33:3).
2. “And He said, ‘What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood **is crying** (צֹעֵֿקִים – šō ‘āqîm – Qal Active Participle) to me from the ground” (Gen. 4:10).

### (c) Future Time

1. “Behold, **I will stand** (עֹמֵֿד – ‘ōmēd – Qal Active Participle) before you there on the rock at Horeb” (Exodus 17:6).

2. “And as for you, My flock, thus says the Lord God, ‘Behold, **I will judge** (שֹׁפֵט – *šōpēṭ* – Qal Active Participle) between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats” (Ezekiel 34:17).
3. Participles used as Noun

Quite often the participle is used as a noun. For example, the participle שֹׁפֵט (*šōpēṭ* – Qal Active Participle as above in Ezekiel 34:17) may be translated as “judging.” However, it may also be used as a substantive (i.e., substitute for a noun) and be simply translated as “judge,” as in Isaiah 16:5: “A throne will even be established in lovingkindness, and **a judge** (שֹׁפֵט – *šōpēṭ* – Qal Active Participle) will sit on it in faithfulness in the tent of David; moreover, he will seek justice and be prompt in righteousness.” This is a very common use of the participle, and it may have a definite article הַשֹּׁפֵט [haššōpēṭ]- “the judge”), or it may stand alone, and it may be masculine or feminine, singular or plural. Therefore, be ready for this usage as you will see it applied many times in the Hebrew Old Testament.

### Infinitives

The infinitive is a verbal noun. On the one hand the infinitive construct is much like our infinitive and expresses “to go,” “to eat,” etc. However, the infinitive absolute may be translated as a gerund with an “-ing” attached to the end of a word.

#### 1. Infinitive Construct

##### (a) Without prefixes or suffixes

1. “...Behold, I do not know how to speak (דַּבֵּר – *dabbēr*)” (Jer. 1:6).
2. “Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man הַיּוֹת (hēyōṭ) - to be - alone; . . .’” (Gen. 2:18).

##### (b) With prepositions

1. When used with ב, the translation given may be “when,” or “while”:  
 “בְּהַיּוֹת (bihēyōṭ – *Gesenius Hebrew Grammar*, #16 f) - while he was – in Jericho, that is Joshua” (Josh. 5:13).

2. When used with כִּ (kə) the translation may be “when,” “as,” “just as,” or “as soon as”: “כִּדְבַר (kəḏabbēr) – when he had spoken - the man of God to the king” (II Kings 7:18).
3. לְ (lə) is the preposition most often prefixed to the infinitive construct, and its translation is “to”: “. . . for it is time לְדַרְשׁוֹ (līdrôš) – to seek the Lord...” (Hos. 10:12).
4. When a pronominal suffix is attached to the infinitive construct, it can function as either the subject or object of the infinitive respectively:
  - a. “...בְּשָׁכְבְּךָ (bəšokbəkā – kā being the pronominal suffix, “you”) when you sleep-she will watch over you” (Prov. 6:22).
  - b. “...לְשֹׁמְרֶיךָ (lišmorkā – kā being the pronominal suffix, “you”) – to guard you-in all your ways” (Ps. 91:11).

## 2. Infinitive Absolutes

### (a) As a gerund

“Instead, there is gaiety and gladness, killing (הָרֹג – hārōg) of cattle and slaughtering (וַשְׁחֹט – wəšāḥōṭ) of sheep...” (Is. 22:13)

### (b) For emphasis (in this usage, it stands immediately before the same finite verb of which it is an infinitive)

“And Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am about to die, but God will surely take care (פָּקֹדְךָ! פָּקֹד – pāqōd yipqōd) of you,...’” (Gen. 50:24).

### (c) For duration (in this instance, the infinitive immediately proceeds the finite verb of which it is an infinitive)

“And He said, ‘Go and tell this people; keep on listening (שְׁמַעוּ שְׁמֹעַ – šim‘û šāmôa’) but do not perceive,...’” (Is. 6:9).

### (d) As a finite verb form (in particular the imperative)

“Remember (זְכוֹר – zākôr) the Sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Ex. 20:8).

## Imperatives, Emphatic Imperatives, & Negative Prohibitions

Imperatives are simple positive commands, never prohibitions, and are always used with the second person singular or plural of a verb, and the emphatic imperative, like the *Cohortative*, has a הָ attached to the end of the imperative. In addition, as with the *Cohortative* and the *Jussive*, so too with the Imperative, the particle הָ may be attached to the end of the Imperative for emphasis, and also with the appended הָנִי. With regard to a negative prohibition, it will occur with the Hebrew particle לֹא (*lō'*), “no or not,” with a normal imperfect, or with a jussive with the particle אַל (*'al*), “not.”

### 1. Simple Imperative

“Honor (כַּבֵּד – *kabbēd*) your father and mother,…” (Deut. 5:16)

### 2. Emphatic Imperatives with הָ and הָנִי:

- a. “Arise (קוּמָה – *qûmâ* – emphatic imperative with appended הָ) Oh God, judge (שֹׁפֵטָה – *shophṭâ* – emphatic imperative with appended הָ) the earth, . . . (Psalm 82:8)
- b. “Speak now (דַּבֵּר־נָא – *dabber-nâ* – emphatic imperative with appended הָנִי) in the hearing of the people . . .” (Exodus 11:2).

### 3. Negative Prohibition

- a. “you will not listen (לֹא תִשְׁמָע – *lō' tišma'*) to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams;…” (Deut. 13:3).
- b. “Do not hide (אַל־תַּסְתֵּר – *'al-tastēr*) Your face from me,…” (Ps. 27:9).

## Section Four

### Use of Interlinear, Analytical, & Hebrew-English Lexicon

In the *Analytical Lexicon*, you will come across a number of delineations that we are now going to explore:

1. Pret. (Pf.) = Past tense (perfect)
2. Fut. (Impf.)= Imperfect tense (translated as though future)
3. Imp. (Imv.) = Imperative (i.e., a command)
4. Part. (Pt.) = Participle
  - a. Act. = Active voice (i.e., the agent is producing the action)
  - b. Pass. = Passive voice (i.e., the agent is being acted upon by someone or something else)
5. Inf. = This is equivalent to the English “to” do something, or it can also express an “-ing” meaning.
  - a. abs. = This form of the infinitive can express either emphasis or duration and is usually translated with an “-ing.”
  - b. constr. = This form is usually translated with the “to.”
6. Noun = Noun
7. Masc. = Masculine
8. Fem. = Feminine
9. Pr. = Proper (usually referring to the name of a person or place)
10. Pers. = Person (either singular or plural)
11. Constr. (cstr.) = Construct (when used with a noun it simply means the noun has been shortened)
12. Sing. = Singular
13. Pl. = Plural
14. Suff. = Suffix (i.e., an addition to a verb or noun indicating a person or persons [1<sup>st</sup> pers., 2<sup>nd</sup> pers., etc.])
15. Chald. = Chaldean (this is a reference to the Aramaic parts of the Bible, and we will treat those individually)
16. Conv. = Conversive means that the w in front of the word changes it from a fut. to a pret., or vice versa.

17. Ap./Apoc. = Apocopated means that a fut. form of the verb has been shortened.

[*KEY:* Davidson's Analytical Lexicon (Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon)]

There are also some delineations in the *Hebrew-English Lexicon* that we are going to look at that differ from the *Analytical Lexicon*:

1. For verbs, the lexical form you find in the *Hebrew-English Lexicon* is the Qal pf., 3<sup>rd</sup> masc. sing.
2. The following are some differences in the identification of verbs between the *Analytical* and the *Hebrew-English Lexicon*:
  - a. The pret. in the *Analytical* is written as the pf., in the *Hebrew-English Lexicon*. (from now on *AL* will stand for *Analytical Lexicon*, and *HEL* will stand for the *Hebrew-English Lexicon*).
  - b. In the *HEL*, Qal is the same as Kal in the *AL*.
  - c. In the *HEL*, Impf. is the same as Fut. in the *AL*.
  - d. In the *HEL*, Inv. is the same as Imp. in the *AL*.
3. In the *HEL*, the words in small, bold print immediately after the Hebrew word give the basic meaning. However, the residual meanings are written in *italics*, and they are found in particular with the different verb forms.
4. In both the *HEL* and the *AL*, if you come across abbreviations that you do not know what they mean, you may simply turn to the front of each book and find them under the section called, *Abbreviations*. And, in turn, if you do not understand the definition of the abbreviation, simply look it up in *Webster's Dictionary*.

**Section Five**  
**Practical Exegesis**

*Psalm 23:1-5*

- 1) לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר  
of David Psalm
- : אֶחְסֵר לֹא רֹעִי יְהוָה  
I will want not my shepherd The Lord
- 2) יְרַבֵּצֵנִי דֶשֶׁא בְּנְאוֹת  
He makes me lie down of grass in pastures
- : יְנַהֲלֵנִי מְנוּחֹת עַל-מַי  
He leads me of resting-places upon/by/towards waters
- 3) יְנַחֵנִי יִשׁוּבֵב נַפְשִׁי  
He guides me He restores my soul
- : שְׁמוֹ לְמַעַן בְּמַעַגְלֵי-צְדָק  
His name for the sake of in the paths of righteousness
- 4) צַלְמוֹת בְּגִיא כִּי-אֵלֶךְ גַּם  
of darkness in valley I walk - if Even
- עִמָּדִי כִּי-אַתָּה רָע לֹא-אִירָא  
with me you - for evil I will fear – not
- : יְנַחֲמֵנִי הֵמָּה וּמִשַׁעֲנֹתֶךָ שִׁבְטֶךָ  
they comfort me they and your staff your rod
- 5) צַרְרֵי נֶגֶד שִׁלְחָן לְפָנַי תַּעֲרֹךְ  
of my enemies in the presence a table before me You prepare
- : רְוִיָּה כּוֹסִי רֹאשִׁי בְּשֶׁמֶן דִּשְׁנָתְךָ  
overflows my cup my head with oil You anoint

At this point you want to look up the phrase, “He makes me lie down” in verse 2. You will in turn look this verse up in the *Interlinear Hebrew-English Bible*, and, under “He makes me lie down,” you will see the Hebrew word, **יְרַבֵּצְנִי** (*yarbîṣēnî*) You will look this word up in the *Hebrew Analytical Lexicon*, and there you will find the following entry:

**יְרַבֵּצְנִי** Hiph. fut. 3 pers. sing. masc., suff. 1 pers. sing. **רַבֵּץ**

The “Hiph.” stands for the Hiphil verb stem which is the “causative active” (p. 24). The “fut.” stands for the imperfect that is translated with a future meaning (the real implication if the action is either ongoing or not yet completed). The “3 pers. masc.” is referring to either “he, she or it” performing the action, and in this case it is referring to the “Lord” performing the action who is masculine, which is what “masc.” stands for. The “suff.” is referring to the suffix at the end of the verb, and in this case it is the suffix for the “1 pers. sing.,” that is, the first person singular suffix, “me.” The **רַבֵּץ** is referring to the root verb, **רַבֵּץ** (*rābaṣ*).

The next step, therefore, is to look up the root verb in the *Hebrew-English Lexicon*. In the *Analytical*, you will not find the root verb with the vowel pointings as I have written above. When you look up **רַבֵּץ** in the *Lexicon*, you will find it listed as I have just written it. In turn, you will see the basic meaning written in **BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS: “TO LIE DOWN, TO RECLINE.”** Because this is a Hiphil verb, you want to go to the meaning of the Hiphil stem. There you will find the proper translation of the Hiphil stem of **רַבֵּץ** (*rābaṣ*) written in italics: “to make (a flock) to lie down.”

Thus, based on the meaning of the Hiphil stem of the verb, what you have in Ps. 23:2 is a statement of God’s sovereign care of me, “His sheep” in which “He causes me to lie down” when I am not necessarily willing nor wanting to “lie down”! What a powerful statement of God’s love, care, compassion and abounding mercy for “His sheep,” and it is just as true today as it was when David penned this over three thousand years ago.



Let's say that you next want to look up the word that translates the phrase, "of deep darkness," or "shadow of death." You will follow the same procedure as above, the only difference in that this is a noun, not a verb. Thus you will find in the *Interlinear Hebrew-English Bible* the word צְלִמּוֹת (šalmāwet).

You will now once again look up this very word in the *Analytical Hebrew Lexicon*, and there you will find the following entry:

צְלִמּוֹת ׀ noun m.s., compnd. of צַל & מוֹת, see under צַלל

The ׀ indicates that the conjunction, "and," can occur with this word also (you will find this in the beginning of the *Analytical Lexicon* under the **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS** at the bottom of the page). Obviously, "noun" means noun, and "m.s." means masculine singular. The word "compnd." means compound, and it next shows the two Hebrew words that come together to make up this compound word, צַל and מוֹת. Here too, you see that this noun has as its root the Hebrew verb, צַלל. In this instance, when you go to the *Hebrew-English Lexicon*, you may look up both the noun as it is written, צְלִמּוֹת (šalmāwet), as well as the verb, צַלל (šālal). When you look up the verb, you will find that it gives you three different meanings listed by three Roman numerals: I, II, III. Roman numeral III is the one you are looking for, and its meaning is *to be shaded, dusky*. The next nine nouns are derived from this verb, with צְלִמּוֹת (šalmāwet) being the eighth noun. There you will see that the literal meaning is *shadow of death*, but that the actual poetical meaning ("poet.") is "very thick darkness." Therefore, when you look at this verse, you begin to realize that the type of "very thick darkness" David is referring to is not a literal, physical darkness, but rather, a deep, emotional "darkness" where he cannot see or feel God's presence at all, but he is having to walk by faith in trusting God and the promises of His Word explicitly in whatever difficulty he may find himself.

## Conclusion

You have now completed a foundational beginning of the study of biblical Hebrew. In order for this study to be of any assistance to you, you need to practice using it. My suggestion is that you pick out a verse at least once a week, but preferably two to three times a week to work through, and let it be a verse or verses that are of interest and significance to you as you minister to others, as well as to yourself. Otherwise, if you let this study and effort you have put forth in the beginning grasp of Hebrew lie dormant, then the following old adage will become true in your life, “if you do not use it, you will lose it!”

One very important thing to keep in mind as you continue your study of Hebrew, or any other biblical/academic discipline, is that just having the knowledge of a particular academic discipline does not make anyone a man or woman of God. That which is the foundation of one becoming a man or woman of God is the brokenness you experience over your sin, and consequently, your submission to the Lordship of Jesus in your life on a daily basis: “And He was saying to *them* all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> “For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it” (Luke 9:23-24). This is unequivocally the foundation of your growth in the Lord. Thus, as you get into an in-depth study of the Hebrew text, the Holy Spirit will bring out things to you in connection with the Hebrew verb tenses, Hebrew grammatical syntax (e.g., the emphatic nature of the infinitive absolute, etc.), the Hebrew verb roots underlying Hebrew nouns, the expanded definition of Hebrew verbs and nouns, and a plethora of other aspects of Hebrew that are not seen in the English text, or any other modern language text alone. And this is not limited to the study of Hebrew, but it includes all of your biblical/academic disciplines you have acquired, and through the “mind of Christ” operating within your life (I Corinthians 2:10-16), He will bring His Life and Truth through your study into the hearts, minds, and lives of those to whom you are preaching, teaching, and sharing the Gospel with.

One of the most significant biblical passages that deal with God's life and ministry in and through our lives to others is found in John 3:30: "He must increase, but I must decrease." In the Greek, this sentence may be read in an amplified, syntactical, and practical manner as follows: "He must continually increase, but I must continually choose being decreased." The last phrase, "but I must continually choose being decreased," is based on the Greek verb, **ἐλαττοῦσθαι** (*elattousthai*) which is a present, middle or passive, infinitive, and thus, it may be read as either middle (choosing to do it) or passive (being done to you) voice, and in this case, both are correct – that is, as believers in Jesus Christ, we must "choose" for our ψυχή (*psuchē*), or "inner man," to die to its narcissistic, self-centered desires, and choose to obey in faith and follow our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ: "And He was saying to *them* all, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever wishes to save his life (ψυχή – *psuchē*) shall lose it, but whoever loses his life (ψυχή – *psuchē*) for My sake, he is the one who will save it'" (Luke 9:23-24).

As we indeed need to continually emphasize to others the fact that we have been brought to a saving faith in Jesus by the grace of God, and that we are moment by moment, and breath by breath being kept by the grace of God (Ephesians 2:8-10), the very real danger for a believer in Jesus Christ to not walk in the manner described in Luke 9:23-24 above is that it will unequivocally lead a believer to falling into the carnal and narcissistic trap of "self-deification." This continual, carnal draw upon our minds and thinking of "self-deification" emanates from our own narcissistic, self-centered, and egotistical pursuit of glory and honor before men for the sake of our false sense of identity and worth, whereby we see ourselves as being "greater" than others:

And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest. <sup>25</sup> And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called 'Benefactors.' <sup>26</sup> "But not so with you, but let him who is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as the servant. <sup>27</sup> "For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves. (Luke 22:24-27)

What we see in the above passage is the innate desire of man and women to find their sense of worth and identity by measuring how superior they are to others in their field of endeavor, wherein they find their measure of worth and self-acceptance before others. However, Jesus is saying that such a measure of one's identity and worth is false and self-destructive, and what we should be pursuing in our mind is a sense of insignificance in our thinking with regard to how we perceive ourselves being viewed by others in their minds for the sake of our own glory and praise. Thus, what we are drawn into through our corrupt, carnal, and narcissistic natures is the desire to see ourselves in our thinking being adulated and honored by men for the sake of our glory and recognition, versus for the sake and glory of Jesus. In the above passage in Luke 22:24-27, Jesus is emphasizing the fact that He is a "waiter," not the person being at the "head table" being served, and consequently, this should be where we find our true identity as a "servant" to others, versus as a "ruler" being served by others.

On the other hand, God never rewards laziness and slovenliness, but rather we are to do our work with a 150% effort to and before the Lord, versus to and before men: "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve" (Colossians 3:23-24). And once again, we see the Greek word for "inner man," *ψυχή* (*psuchē*), being used in this passage to describe how we are to do our work. The word "heartily" above in the English translation comes from the Greek construction, *ἐκ ψυχῆς* (*ek psuchēs*), which literally means, "out of the inner man." Thus, in your academic pursuits and studies of the Biblical Languages, as well as all other academic studies, you should be giving a 150% effort as unto the Lord so that He will use what He is putting into you to feed, shepherd, and care for the "sheep" that He allows you to be the vessel through which He feeds and cares for them. One very important passage to always remember with regard to God's using you as a shepherd through which He will feed His "sheep" is found in Paul's writing to the Corinthian Church: "What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave *opportunity* to each one. <sup>6</sup> I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. <sup>7</sup> So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth" (I Corinthians 3:5-7).

May the Lord bless, strengthen, and encourage you, by the power of His indwelling Holy Spirit, to put Him first in all areas of your lives, including the disciplined and committed study of His Word, as He leads you to consistently use the Hebrew you have learned, in order that He through you will pass on to others the spiritual “gems of truth” you will gain from applying that knowledge to the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus Christ!