



VOL. 10

1989

# SEMITICS

ISSN 0256-6044

MISCELLANEA GENERALIA 7  
UNISA 1989

# SEMITIC

Volume 10



Edited by

H J Dreyer  
Professor of Semitics

University of South Africa  
Pretoria

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ISSN 0256-6044

Printed by  
V&R Printing Works, Pretoria

Published by the  
University of South Africa  
Muckleneuk, Pretoria

Edited by

H J Dreyer  
Professor of Semantics

University of South Africa  
Pretoria

**This volume of Semitics  
is dedicated to  
the memory of the late  
Adrianus van Selms**

Professor H.J. Dreyer  
Department of Semitics  
University of South Africa  
P.O. Box 392  
Pretoria  
2001  
South Africa

## **Preface**

*Semitics* is a monograph, i.e. each issue - or series of issues - is devoted to a single study or a collection of articles devoted to a single theme. In the future it will also carry book reviews.

*Semitics* is published as a sub-series of the series *Miscellanea* of the University of South Africa.

Contributions in the form of a single study or an article are invited.

All correspondence should be addressed to:

Professor H J Dreyer  
Department of Semitics  
University of South Africa  
P O Box 392  
Pretoria  
0001  
South Africa

## Contents

A composition device in the Book of Job .....	1
<i>A van Selms†</i>	
The role of selected prepositions and conjunctions in the reading of Hebrew as a foreign language .....	10
<i>Yishai Tobin &amp; Edna Aphek</i>	
Postverbal word order in Biblical Hebrew: structure and function ..	24
<i>Lars Lode</i>	
A comparative study of related laws in Babylonian and Biblical legal texts (verbal connotations) .....	40
<i>J P van der Westhuizen</i>	
Aspect and cohesion in Biblical Hebrew narratives .....	71
<i>J Junger</i>	

## A composition device in the Book of Job

A van Selms†

The composition device mentioned in the title of this paper is never a principle of order for a whole speech by Job or one of his friends, but is used only for a single passage in these speeches. One might bring it into the category of parvo-composition, to coin a new term, not of that of magno-composition. It may be described as follows: first two different phenomena are mentioned in one line or one stichos. The next lines work out the first phenomenon, and only after a few lines used for an elaboration, the second phenomenon gets its description. One might call the whole device a dichotomic elaboration of a dual theme.

A first example will make this clear. It is taken from Job 3 and follows the *Revised Standard Version*; every other translation would do just as well, as the discussion of our device does not involve detailed philological problems. In 3:3, Job says:

"Let the day perish wherein I was born,  
and the night which said, 'a man-child is conceived'."

An unwary reader might think that "day" and "night" is both used *pars pro toto* for "the twenty-four hours of a full day", and that the two hemistichs speak of one and the same day, but two different days are meant: the day of birth and the day of conception, which are separated from each other by about nine months. Job goes on, speaking of the day only - which is the day of his birth - in the next two verses:

"Let that day be darkness!  
May God above not seek it,  
nor light shine upon it.  
Let gloom and deep darkness claim it.  
Let clouds dwell upon it;  
let the blackness of the day terrify it."

So far for the day of Job's birth. After these two tristichs Job returns to the day of his conception, mentioned in the second hemistich of vs. 3:

"That night - let thick darkness seize it!  
Let it not rejoice among the days of the year,

let it not come into the number of months.

Yea, let that night be barren;

let no joyful cry be heard in it.

Let those curse it who curse the day,  
who are skilled to rouse up Leviathan.

Let the stars of its dawn be dark;

let it hope for light, but have none,

nor see the eyelids of the morning;

because it did not shut the doors of my mother's womb,

nor hid trouble from my eyes."

The first line of the last stichos makes it clear that Job in this whole passage points to the night in which he had been conceived; in the next line he returns to his birthday:

"Why did I not die at birth,  
come forth from the womb and expire?"

but this return falls outside the scheme we are studying. We note that the poet in handling this scheme, first mentioning two different things, then treating first the first-mentioned phenomenon, and afterwards elaborating on the second-mentioned one, did not consider himself bound to an equal distribution of the verses over the same number of lines: the day of his birth covers six lines, the day of conception twelve. Poetry is not arithmetic.

A second example is to be found in Job 7:1-10. The first stichos of this passage runs as follows:

"Has not a man a hard service upon earth,  
and are not his days like the days of a hireling?"

Again it looks on first sight as if Job were saying the same thing in the second hemistich as what he has said in the first. This, however, is not the case. In the first half-verse he speaks of **עָבָד**, "forced labour", as imposed by a king on his subjects, being free citizens; in the second hemistich "the days of a hireling" are mentioned. It is only the man who does not possess fields of his own that will accept the position of a hireling. As long as he is a hireling, he is not a free citizen. The expression "the days of a hireling" denotes the same as "the years of a hireling" in Isa. 16:14, where the intention is clearly "a stipulated and limited time". Whereas the first half-verse speaks of life as unrewarded toil, the second tells us that man's life does not go on

for ever, but is limited to "a hundred and twenty years" (Gen. 6:3) or to "three score and ten" (Ps. 90:10).

The first of these two different aspects of human life is elaborated upon in verses 2-5:

"Like a slave who longs for the shadow,  
and like a hireling who looks for his wages,  
so I am allotted months of emptiness,  
and nights of misery are apportioned to me  
When I lie down I say, "When shall I arise?"  
But the night is long,  
and I am full of tossing till the dawn.  
My flesh is clothed with worms and dirt;  
my skin hardens, then breaks out afresh."

Though the hireling of verse 1b is mentioned, the whole passage is an elaboration of the first hemistich of that verse: "Has not a man a hard service upon earth?" The theme of the second hemistich, that man has a limited time of life only, is elaborated upon in the next passage, verses 6-10:

"My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle  
and come to their end without hope.  
Remember that my life is a breath;  
my eye will never again see good.  
The eye of him who sees me will behold me no more;  
while thy eyes are upon me, I shall be gone.  
As the cloud fades and vanishes,  
so he who goes down to Sheol does not come up;  
he returns no more to his house,  
nor does his place know him any more."

In this case the elaborations of both themes take about the same space; the first has 9, the second 10 lines. Verses 4 and 5 are longer than the usual metre allows. It is of course arbitrary to prune these verses in order to reduce them to the usual length. The textual critic should not assume the habits of Procrustes.

The next instance will require less space. In 8:20 Bildad says:

"Behold, God will not reject a blameless man,  
nor take the hand of evildoers."

The next verse continues the first thought, namely that an integer man will not be forsaken by God:

"He will yet fill your mouth with laughter,  
and your lips with shouting",

in the supposition, for a moment only, that Job is indeed, as he maintained towards his friends, a blameless man.

Bildad returns to the "evildoers" of the second hemistich of verse 20 in verse 22:

"Those who hate you will be clothed with shame,  
and the tent of the wicked will be no more."

Here the expansions of the two assertions of verse 20 are of the same length, both one stichos.

The next example is too long to be quoted in full; it takes the whole of Chapter 14. Job repeats the two thoughts of 7:1, our second example, but in reversed sequence. This time he mentions first the fact that man has a limited span of life only, and secondly that this short life of his is far from quiet:

"Man that is born of a woman  
is few of days, and full of trouble."

In verses 2-12, he expands on the first element, the shortness of human existence:

"He comes forth like a flower, and withers;  
he flees like a shadow, and continues not."

For briefness' sake we add verse 5 only:

"Since his days are determined,  
and the number of his months is with thee,  
and thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass..."

This, and the whole passage, 14:2-12, is evidently an expansion of the expression "few of days" in verse 1.

The second thought of that verse, that life is full of trouble, is elaborated upon in verses 13-22, a passage which, in comparison with 7:2-5, brings a new element, namely that the main trouble in human life is God's attitude towards man. Verse 13

speaks of God's wrath, verse 14 of man's **עָבָד**, ("forced labour"), verses 16 and 17 complain of God's painful watch over eventual sins of man; verse 22 of bodily pain and man's mourning over himself.

Here again the two elaborations have about the same length, eleven and ten verses respectively, and both have three times a tristich. We should not attach much importance to such arithmetical considerations; our first example has shown that, and the next will show it again. In 23:14 Job asserts:

"For he (God) will complete what he appoints for me;  
and many such things are in his mind."

The first hemistich speaks of Job's personal fate, the second indicates that he is no exception: such a treatment by God befalls more men. The first, therefore, is existentialistic; it speaks of Job's own experiences and of his fear of what is surely to follow; the second shows us Job contemplating his fellow-men and drawing conclusions from his observations.

In accordance to this distinction, the next few verses (23:14-17) speak of Job's anxiety in truly existentialistic terms:

"Therefore I am terrified at his presence;  
when I consider, I am in dread of him.  
God has made my heart faint;  
the Almighty has terrified me;  
for I am hemmed in by darkness,  
and thick darkness covers my face."

After these utterances of personal emotions, emphasized by the presence of the personal pronoun "I" or "my" in every hemistich, there follows in 24:1-12 a long summary of the many injustices and miseries to be observed in human society; the first personal pronoun is conspicuously absent in those twelve verses, of which we quote a few only:

"Men remove landmarks;  
they seize flocks and pasture them.  
They drive away the ass of the fatherless;  
they take the widow's ox for a pledge."

The misery of the victims of such acts of injustice is described in verses like:

"They lie all night naked, without clothing,

and have no covering in the cold.  
they are wet with the rain of the mountains,  
and cling to the rock for want of shelter.

.....

From out of the city the dying groan,  
and the soul of the wounded cries for help;  
yet God pays no attention to their prayer."

The first elaboration, referring to Job's own calamities, takes three verses; the second, where he speaks of the human condition in general, takes twelve, again an indication that we should not stress arithmetics in poetry.

In 28:13 the Masoretic text reads:

"Man does not know the price of it (of wisdom),  
and it is not found in the land of the living."

Because it is only in verse 15ff. that the price of wisdom is elaborated upon, many translators and commentators prefer the reading of the Septuagint, which has "its way" in stead of "its price"; so, e.g., the *Revised Standard Version* and the *New English Bible*. We have here, however, again an example of a dichotomic elaboration of a dual theme, with the interesting variation of chiasm: the first theme, that of wisdom's price, is expanded upon in verses 15ff., but the second one, that of the place where wisdom might be found, is treated first, in verse 14:

"The deep says, 'it is not in me',  
and the sea says, 'it is not with me'."

The same chiastic application of our device is also found in 30:28-30. 30:28 describes in its first hemistich Job's outward appearance, while the second hemistich describes his cries of distress:

"I go about blackened, but not by the sun;  
I stand up in the assembly, and cry for help."

The next verse elaborates the second theme, that of crying:

"I am a brother of jackals,  
and a companion of ostriches."

Both jackals and ostriches utter very mournful sounds. The next verse, however, returns to the first theme, that of Job's outward appearance:

"My skin turns black and falls from me,  
and my bones burn with heat."

A nother form of chiastic appliance of our device is presented by 36:27-31. In this case, the elaborations precede the mentioning of the dual theme. In verses 27, 28 beneficial rain is described:

"For he draws up the drops of water,  
he distils his mist in rain  
which the skies pour down,  
and drop upon man abundantly."

Verses 29, 30 speak of awful lightning and thunder:

"Can anyone understand the spreading of the clouds,  
the thunderings of his pavilion?  
Behold, he scatters his lightning about him,  
and covers the roots of the sea."

In stead of in the beginning, the dual theme here is given at the end; verse 31 says:

"For by these he judges peoples;  
he gives food in abundance."

The lightning is an instrument of God's judgment, the rain ensures food in abundance for the coming year. Scholars have proposed to change "he judges" (יָדַן) into "he feeds" (יָזַן) and this proposal has found its way also into *Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament*, 1967:256, but such an alteration of the Masoretic text proves unnecessary when we realise that here again we have a dichotomic elaboration of a dual theme.

Without any form of chiasm we find the rhetoric device under discussion also in 37:6ff. First the dual theme:

"For to the snow he says, 'Fall on the earth';  
and to the shower and the rain, 'Be strong'."

There are some metrical and text-critical difficulties in this verse, but they are irrelevant for our discussion, as it is evident, that two different phenomena, snow and rain, are mentioned in this verse. The next verses deal with snow (vv. 7-10), describing how the cold makes it impossible to work on the fields, and how the broad waters are frozen fast. Rain with its beneficial effects is described in verses 11, 12. It is possible that verse 13 again formulates the dual theme, but the reading of this verse is far from certain.

The reader will notice that our last two instances have been taken from the speeches of Elihu, which are generally considered a later addition to the book of Job. The present author agrees with the rejection of Elihu's speeches as part of the original word, and it is not his intention to argue the authenticity of Chapters 32-37 in the light of the fact that our rhetoric device occurs in these chapters just as in the preceding ones. One must suppose that the author of the Elihu's speeches had read the book, as it originally was written, very carefully and one may assume that he took over the device of dichotomic elaboration of a dual theme from the poet of Job's dialogue with his friends.

We found nine examples of our literary device in the book of Job. We do not remember any instance of such a device in the other books of the Bible. It may be that our memory fails us; in instances like these, no computer or other mechanical instrument can assist us. Jer. 2:13 looks promising:

"for my people have committed two evils:  
they have forsaken me,  
the fountain of living waters,  
and hewed out cisterns for themselves,  
broken cisterns,  
that can hold no water."

Neither in the preceding, nor in the following verses we find an elaboration of this dual theme and we cannot, therefore, quote these verses as an instance of our device outside the book of Job.

Psalms 89 is a very well-composed unit, and the first line introduces a dual theme:

"I will sing of thy steadfast love, O Lord, for ever;  
with my mouth I will proclaim thy faithfulness to all generations."

There is, however, no separate elaboration of each of these two themes; on the contrary, the two elements, "steadfast love" (חֶסֶד) and "faithfulness" (אֱמוּנָה) occur together time and again in the same verses: 2, 14, 33 and 49, with the result that it

remains rather uncertain, what the precise difference between **חֶסֶד** and **אֱמוּנָה** could be - if there is indeed such a difference. One might also point to Psalm 62:11 and 12:

"Once God has spoken;  
twice have I heard this:  
that power belongs to God;  
and that to thee, O Lord, belongs steadfast love.  
For thou does requite a man according to his work."

But this is the end of the psalm; no elaboration of the two elements, power and steadfast love, is attempted. One could assume a chiasmic construction as in Job 36:27-31, where the elaborations precede the line in which the dual theme is formulated. In the refrain of this psalm, verse 1, 2 and 5, 6, the word "rock" could be connected with "power" in verse 11, and "salvation" is more or less akin to "steadfast love" in verse 12. The refrain, however, mentions in the third place the word "fortress", which is clearly related to "rock", and this makes it improbable that "salvation", in contradistinction to "rock", should be connected especially with "steadfast love". Neither can it be maintained that the first strophe, verse 3, 4, speaks especially of "power", or the second, verse 7-10, of "steadfast love".

It seems, therefore that dichotomic elaboration of a dual theme is a phenomenon to be found in the poetry of the book of Job only - again an indication of the unique character of this mighty work.

## The role of selected prepositions and conjunctions in the reading of Hebrew as a foreign language

Yishai Tobin & Edna Aphek

In this paper we will discuss how linguistic analyses of selected 'function words', i.e. prepositions and conjunctions, may be applied to improve the reading comprehension skills of readers of Hebrew as a foreign/second language. Semantically, we will show how form content analysis, a Saussurian based, functionally oriented linguistic theory developed at Columbia University can provide a single unitary meaning to account for the various polysemous contextual meanings of prepositions such as *b-* ("in, at, on, among, within, into, with, by, of, through, when, while, because, of, as") and *l-* ("to, unto, into, towards, during, for, about, according to, at, by, of, within, each, every, as, belonging to"). Syntactically-pragmatically, we will show how the preposition *'al-* ("on, upon, above, over, by, near, to, unto, towards, against, with, together with, for, on behalf of, because, on account of, concerning, about, by") has begun to replace the preposition *b-* in new expressions, (for what may be both pragmatic and orthographic reasons), to be used in new semantic fields, and has created new syntactic formulae. Stylistically, we will show how the choice of various Hebrew conjunctions (*'aval*, *'ak-*, *ûlām*, *bārām-*, *kî-im-* and *'ella-*) which can all be translated as 'but', serve as style markers for various genres of Modern Hebrew journalistic, literary and scientific-academic texts.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

There may very well be two ways of viewing theoretical linguistics *vis-a-vis* foreign language teaching in general and reading comprehension in particular. One is that each is to go its own separate way. Theoretical linguists will continue to theorize to and for each other and foreign language teachers will continue to teach second language skills ignoring work done in theoretical linguistics. The other alternative is that theory for theory's sake alone is incomplete, useless, or merely interesting, but the test for theoretical linguistics is in its application. This paper, has been written in the belief that theoretical and applied linguists should, together, find the way to utilize theory to improve the existing methods of language teaching.

In this paper we will attempt to show the efficacy of applying theoretical linguistic analyses of selected so-called 'function' words, e.g., prepositions and conjunctions, to various semantic, syntactic-pragmatic and stylistic problems they may present to readers of modern Hebrew as a foreign or second language. In general, the problems of function words has seemed to be of peripheral importance in basic reading comprehension (save for studies on the use of the 'definite article' in English, e.g., Huckin and Olsen 1981). We will specifically deal here with:

- a) the problem of the polysemy of two of the most common Hebrew prepositions *b-* ("in, at, on, among, within, into, with, by; of, through, when, because of, as", Alcalay 1965:180) and *l-* ("to, unto, into, towards, during, for, about, according to, at, by, of, with, in, within, each, every, as, belonging to", Alcalay 1965:1081). This will be accomplished by presenting an alternative linguistic analysis of these forms based on a single, unitary meaning (a *signifié*) (Cohen 1872, 1974, Tobin 1975, 1981d) which will account for all their specific contextualized lexical meanings.
- b) the syntactic-pragmatic implications of 'new' uses of the preposition *ʿal-* ("on, upon, above, over; by, near; to, unto, towards, against; with, together with; for, on behalf of; because, on account of; concerning, about; by", Alcalay 1965:1895), and
- c) the stylistic implications of the choice of one or more of the various Hebrew conjunctions *ʾavāl*, *ʾaḵ*, *ʾulām*, *bārām*, *kī-ʾim*, and *ʾella* (all of which can be translated as 'but') in textual discourse as a style marker in journalistic, literary, or scientific-academic texts.

## 2. UNITARY MEANINGS VERSUS POLYSEMY

Students studying Hebrew as a second or foreign language are very often puzzled and confused by the very many specific lexical and contextualized meanings, uses and functions the so-called Hebrew prepositions bear in relation to their English (or other languages) 'equivalent' counterparts. This is particularly true since these so-called prepositions in modern Hebrew also serve as adverbial markers (*b-* + adjective = adverb), (e.g. *b* + *ʾemet*: *b* + 'true' = 'truly', 'really', 'honestly') both on productive as well as idiomatic levels (e.g., *b-seder*: *b* + 'order' = 'o.k.');

*b-vaqqāšah*: *b* + 'request' = 'please', 'your welcome'), as what appear to be oblique case markers (accusative or instrumental case markers), e.g., *hū tippel b-gan* = 'he tended the garden', (*hū pāras bāsār b-sākīn* = 'he cut meat with a knife'), as well as spatio-temporal relation markers, (e.g., *hū b-ḥeder* = 'he's in a room', *hū yaḥzor b-šāloš* = 'he'll be back at three'). Thus, when encountering the preposition *b-* in a text, the student must define it lexically, semantically, functionally, pragmatically and

syntactically. Furthermore, being that it may also be used idiomatically, a componential kind of semantic analysis may not be of much use to him if the meaning of the expression containing the preposition form is not equal to the meanings of the sum of its parts (Frege's semantic principle).

This is also the case for the preposition *l-* which functions as a spatio-temporal relation marker (e.g., *ani nosea<sup>c</sup> l-tel aviv l-šəloša yāmim*, 'I'm going to Tel Aviv for three days'), an infinitive marker, (e.g., *ani 'ohev l-štot*, 'I like to drink'), as well as a 'dative case marker', (e.g., *hū nātan makkah l-môreh*, 'He slapped a teacher', i.e., literally, 'he gave a slap to a teacher'). The preposition *l-* also appears in many idioms, particularly spatio-temporal adverbial idioms both 'durative' and 'punctive', as does the preposition *b-*.

To add to these mainly typical linguistic decoding problems, Modern Hebrew further complicates the situation by its orthographic conventions. First, these prepositions do not appear as separate, individual words preceding the words they are related to, but are written as agglutinated forms added on to those words to form a single unit. Thus, the reader of Hebrew as a first as well as a second or foreign language has to actually fluently understand the text while he is reading it in order to determine whether the *b-* or *l-* at the beginning of a word represents 'the prepositions *b-* or *l-* (with their various multiple meanings and functions) plus something else' or, on the other hand, has he merely encountered a single word that happens to begin with the letters *b-* or *l-*. Furthermore, Modern Hebrew is written without vowels which further complicates the mastery of reading texts for both readers of Hebrew as a first and/or a foreign second language. This particular fact also makes the identification of these prepositions even more difficult particularly since the definite article *ha*, ('the') in Hebrew is assimilated into the preposition *b-* + *ha* = *ba*, *l-* + *ha* = *la*, thus, a reader of Modern Hebrew has to figure out in context while reading whether the *b-* or *l-* in word initial position is acting as a preposition, case marker, adverb marker, infinitive marker, or a mere initial letter to a word or part of an idiomatic compound, and if the first, is it 'definite' or 'indefinite'. All of this must be accomplished in devocalized texts where the crucial cue is very often missing! So, even without further elaborating here upon the problems of semantic polysemy, or morpho-syntactic multi-functionalism, or orthographic hurdles, and without further examples and contrastive data, the problems of these particular prepositions in texts should be fairly clear to the reader.

We do not feel that linguistics has all the answers to these problems related to the role of prepositions in reading Modern Hebrew, but we do feel that some of these problems may be partially eased or alleviated by providing a single meaning, a

unitary or unified meaning (a *signifié* in Saussurian terms) which could consistently account for the use of these forms every time they are used and could guide the reader. Such analyses for these prepositions (Cohen 1972, 1974) have been performed in the form content analysis school of linguistics.

Form content analysis is a Saussurian-based, functionally oriented, non-transformational non-generative linguistic theory developed in the last twenty years by Professor William Diver and his students at Columbia University. It is based on the premise that the structure of language is motivated by its function as a device of human communication. Form content analyses have been made for modern English, old English, French, German, Dutch, Spanish, Persian, Biblical Aramaic, modern Israeli Hebrew, Chinese, Latin, Greek, and other languages.<sup>1</sup> Several formal attempts have been made to apply form content analysis to foreign language teaching in general and to the problems of second language reading comprehension in particular.<sup>2</sup> Cohen (1972, 1974) postulated and validated a single, unitary meaning for each of these prepositional forms, *b-* and *l-*, which we feel can aid the foreign language learner in deciphering and decoding these forms in both spoken and written modern Hebrew discourse. The forms he postulated were CIRCUMSTANCE for the preposition *b-* and ORIENTATION for the preposition *l-*. Thus, if provided with these unitary meanings, the reader of modern Hebrew texts need not have to resort to the use of a dictionary to 'fish out' which of the various appropriate polysemous meanings or multi-functional uses he may need in a particular sentence or context whenever the agglutinated devocalized prepositional form may appear in a text. He merely has to first recognize it as a constituent and bear in mind that *b-* is signalling a circumstance he should be noting or *l-* an orientation he should be alerted to or following. Being that most students blindly grasp at the first dictionary meaning or use they encounter anyway, by having a single meaning they may learn to rely less on a chance look at a dictionary and more on perceptual cues in actual context.

- <sup>1</sup> Some of the works of Form Content Analysis include: Cohn (1972, 1974, 1975), Contini-Morava (1976), Diver (1969, 1974, 1975, 1980), García (1975, 1977, 1979), Kirsner (1969, 1977, 1979a & b), Klein (1975, 1976), Otheguy (1977), Reid (1974, 1980), Reid and Gildin (1979), Tobin (forthcoming a), Zubin (1975, 1979, 1980). For a full bibliographical list of Form Content Analysis see Diver 1980:44-45. The most detailed expositions of the basic theoretical constructs of Form Content Analysis can be found in García (1975: Chapter 2) and Kirsner (1979 b: Chapter 2) and Diver (1980).
- <sup>2</sup> Application of form content theory in conjunction with other theoretical linguistic approaches for the purposes of improving second language reading comprehension may be found in Tobin 1975, 1979, 1981 a, b, c, d, 1982 a, b, and forthcoming b, c.

### 3. SYNTACTIC-PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE PREPOSITION *ʿal*

Another frequently used function word in Modern Hebrew is the preposition *ʿal* ("on, upon, above, over; by, near; to, unto, towards, against; with, together with; for, on behalf of; because, on account of; concerning, about; by", Alcalay 1965:1895). Aphek and Kahanman (1982) have analyzed various syntactic-pragmatic aspects of the use of this form in Modern Hebrew, some of which are relevant to the reading of Hebrew as a second or foreign language.

The preposition *ʿal*, both in informal spoken and in certain written contexts, replacing some of the specific uses of the preposition *b-* we have already discussed, particularly in its adverbial, idiomatic and case marking aspects (e.g., *histakkel ʿal*, "look at", *naʿal ʾet ha-delet ʿal maftaḥ*, "lock the door with (a) key"), etc. Examples such as these are most prevalent in spoken Hebrew, but have also been culled from the Hebrew daily press (*Maʾariv* and *Yediot Aḥaronot*, the two most popular afternoon dailies) and the works of popular Israeli novelists such as Dan Ben-Amotz and Aharon Megged, as well as in the published dialogue of leading entertainment groups, in popular songs and in children's literature.

One of the explanations offered for the replacement of *b-* by *ʿal* (at least in written texts) may be connected to the agglutinative orthographic nature of the former. The preposition *ʿal*, on the other hand, always appears as a free and independent form. As far as the spoken language is concerned, the fact that it also is a closed syllable (VC) may also be significant. Furthermore, the adverbial use of *b-* (e.g. *b-emet* = "truly") may be perceived as a single lexical (idiomatic) entry as mentioned above, and can therefore collocate with another preposition such as *ʿal* giving us utterances such as: *hû lāqah ʾet ze ʿal b-emet*, "he took it at face-value", or literally: 'he took it on truly'.

The preposition *ʿal*, like the other prepositions we have discussed, is now taking on syntactic properties (oblique case marking and the creation of new syntactic structures), e.g., the literal statement *hû met ʿal kidduš ha-šem*, "he's dying for the sake of martyrdom" (in the sanctity of the Lord) superficially has now become an established new syntactically structured metaphorical idiom/*met ʿal*/ = "to be crazy about", "love", e.g., *hû met ʿal garṇim ve-qoqa-qolah*, "he loves (is crazy about) sunflower seeds and Coca-Cola", where *met* is now used as a transitive verb (Aphek and Kahanman 1982, Malisdorff 1979).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> We would like to further point out that *ʿal* also replaces other prepositions (e.g., *l-*, *bišvil*, or *avur*, 'for,') particularly in spoken Hebrew. Furthermore, it is very possible that this process will be extended to written Hebrew as well.

Or, the verb *šam*, "put", which usually collocates with the traditional accusative marker *'et*, as well as in expressions with both *'et* and *ʿal* phrases, but today in idiomatic colloquial Hebrew one can also hear (and read) *hû lô šam ʿal*, "he doesn't put store in, on" or "he doesn't give a damn". Furthermore the preposition *ʿal* in this superficially similar syntactic construction has now entered into several new semantic fields by collocating with verbs specifically having a pejorative connotation of ridicule (e.g., *məšafšef ʿal*, or *lô šam ʿal*, "not caring, not giving a damn") as well as verbs dealing with an extreme liking or desire (e.g., *dalûk ʿal* = 'charged over', *met ʿal*, *məšûgga ʿal*, "crazy about"). It seems that once this new syntactic structure was formed with one verb in the semantic field, it has and is still being extended to others within the same semantic field.

The form *ʿal* is also now being used as an intensifier or in the structural pattern of 'preposition + adjective' to describe the manner in which something is performed, (e.g., *ʿal ḥam*, "red-handed" (literally on hot)) or preposition + noun, (e.g., *ʿal ha-māqôm*, "on the spot"). All of these new syntactic and semantic uses of the preposition *ʿal* can be explained pragmatically as the creation of new idioms or expressions or verbal or adverbial phrases to fill in semantic voids in Modern Hebrew. Furthermore, *ʿal* is now being 'affixed' both as a prefix and a suffix (e.g., *ʿal-qôlî*, "super-sonic", and *maʿašāmat ʿal*, "super-power"). It is our contention that such theoretical syntactic-pragmatic analyses of 'function' words such as *ʿal* and their changing communicative role in Modern Hebrew can also serve to aid students in foreign or second language acquisition in general and reading in particular.

#### 4. FUNCTION WORDS AS STYLISTIC MARKERS

Modern Hebrew possesses various forms which can all be translated as 'but' in English, *mais* in French, *pero* in Spanish, or *aber* in German: *ʾavāl*, *'aḵ*, *'ulām*, *bərām*, whose function in an utterance is to indicate a contrast of some kind (e.g., "he studies hard, but doesn't succeed"). In addition, there are two other forms, *kî-im* and *'ella* whose meaning is something similar to 'exclusive contrast', also translated as 'but' or 'except' in English, or *sondern* in German, or *sino* in Spanish, which usually appear in negative sentences, (e.g., "I'm not going to Tel Aviv, but to Haifa"). These forms and their meanings are schematized in figure 1 (Tobin 1980).

Figure 1

Contrastiveness in Hebrew (partial view)

		but	however	indeed	'āṽāl	contrast
nevertheless	yet	but	however		'ūlām	
as soon as	yet	but	however	surely	'ak	
hardly						
		but	however	truly	ḥarām	contrast
merely	only	but	except	save	ella	exclusive
		but	except		kī'im	

All of these forms, either those translated as 'but' or 'however' or those translated as 'but', 'however', or 'except', appear to be in free variation in most utterances according to their respective meanings. We have seen, however, that the actual choice of which form from either of these two groups may very well be determined by the register or genre of the text in which it appears. Thus, we can find a skewing of the various forms in different genres indicating that they may be serving as 'style markers' in the sense outlined by Nils Enkvist (1964).

Following the Prague school we can say there are four functional categories of style: a) speech, b) publicistic or journalistic, c) scientific or academic and d) literary, poetic or artistic. Tobin (1980) examined the distribution of these six 'buts' in Modern Hebrew in all of these categories:

- a) In the category of spoken Hebrew: two anthologies of recorded conversations were examined. In over 200 pages of spoken texts we found over 440 examples of 'āṽāl, 61 examples of 'ella and only 3 examples of 'ak. In the prose passages connecting or introducing the recorded conversations there were examples of 'āṽāl, 'ak, 'ūlām and 'ella. The distribution of 'but' forms in spoken Hebrew can be seen in table 1.

**Table 1**

The distribution of 'but' forms in spoken Hebrew

<i>kî'im</i>	<i>'ella</i>	<i>bārām</i>	<i>'ulām</i>	<i>'ak</i>	<i>'āvāl</i>	Source	Conversation category
-	59	-	-	2	386	<i>Siah</i> <i>Loḥamim</i>	
1	2	1	1	1	53	<i>Yalkut</i> <i>Ha-Kzavim</i>	
1	61	1	1	3	449		TOTAL

- b) In the publicistic-journalistic genre examinations of the editorial pages and the magazine sections of one of Israel's leading dailies for a 15 week period, all of the 'but' forms appear, and it is even possible to find certain journalists favoring the use of particular forms. The forms are skewed, however, in the following way: *'āvāl*, *'ak*, and *'ella* appear the most frequent, the form *'ak*, being the most frequent in 10 of the 15 weeks examined. The form *'ulām* also appears at a rather frequent rate while the forms *bārām* and *kî'im* appear rarely, the former in editorials as opposed to magazine articles. The distribution of the various 'but' forms in journalistic or publicistic prose can be seen in table 2.

**Table 2**

Frequency and distribution of 'but' forms in publicity-(journalistic) texts

<i>kî'im</i>	<i>'ella</i>	<i>bārām</i>	<i>'ulām</i>	<i>'ak</i>	<i>'āvāl</i>	Source	Journalistic category
	13	1	12	17	28	<i>Ha-Areṣ</i> 11.1.80	
	13		14	19	27	18.1.80	
	11	1	16	42	27	25.1.80	
	26		9	58	27	8.2.80	
	28		12	49	16	15.2.80	
	22		11	74	51	19.2.80	
	6		3	32	55	22.2.80	
	33		12	38	64	7.3.80	
	24		4	29	11	14.3.80	

1	32		6	53	57	21.3.80
	26		12	44	15	28.3.80
	33		14	58	57	4.4.80
	35		6	64	23	11.4.80
	26		2	69	46	18.4.80
	31		25	64	63	28.4.80
1	359	2	158	710	560	TOTAL

- c) In the academic-scientific category in *Balshanut Shimushit*, the journal of the Israel Association for Applied Linguistics, and in the Hebrew translation of *Language and Mind* by Noam Chomsky, we can once again see all of the various 'but' forms being used. One is particularly impressed by the frequency of the specific forms 'ak and 'ulām. In this category as well, the use of the forms bārām and kī'im is rather peripheral. As in journalistic prose, certain authors may be found who have a clear preference to specific 'but' forms over others. The distribution of the various 'but' forms in scientific or academic prose can be found in table 3.

Table 3

Distribution of 'but' forms in scientific-academic texts

kī'im	'ella	bārām	'ulām	'ak	'āval	Source	Scientific academic texts
	9			11	5	<i>Balshanut Shimushit</i>	
	4		11		2	Article #1	
	15		3	10	18	Article #2	
	6		12	5		Article #3	
	2		11	7	3	Article #4	
	1		6		2	Article #5	
	1	3	1	6		Article #6	
1	1	1	10	1	2	Article #7	
3	49		42	48	63	Article #8	
4	88	4	96	88	105	Article #9	
						TOTAL	

- d) In the literary-artistic category, two novels Oz (1968) and Sened (1968) and an anthology of Israel short stories (Spicehandler 1971) were examined with regard to the distribution of the different 'but' forms. There was a very clear

skewing in favor of the forms 'āvāl, 'ak and 'ella on the part of all the authors, as well as personal preferences for particular forms in general and those used peripherally in this category such as 'ūlām and kī-'im in particular. In an examination of English prose translated into Hebrew similar skewings of the various 'but' forms were also found. The distribution of the various 'but' forms in the literary prose texts examined can be found in Table 4.

Table 4

Frequency of "but" forms in artistic (literary prose) texts

kī-'im	'ella	bərām	'ūlām	'ak	'āvāl	Source	Artistic literary category
12	12			34	93	Oz 1968	
2	54			10	118	Sened 1968	
						Spicehandler 1971	
	8			1	8	Story #1	
	18				22	Story #2	
1	8			6	2	Story #3	
				2		Story #4	
	1			77	6	Story #5	
	3			17	12	Story #6	
	24		2	23	17	Story #7	
15	128		2	156	278		TOTAL

Following the definitions of style markers established by Enkvist (1964), we can see that the 'but' forms 'āvāl and 'ella indicating 'contrast' and 'exclusive contrast' are neutral in the sense that they appear in all contexts in each of the various registers or genres or categories. We must add, however, that if they are the only forms which appear, the register may be marked for informality and be of the spoken category.

The other 'but' forms appear in all the other categories of the written language; the form 'ūlām being skewed in academic-scientific and journalistic prose as opposed to artistic and literary prose. The form 'ak appears in all the categories, marginally in spoken Hebrew, but quite frequently in all the categories of written Hebrew, particularly in literature.

The use of *kī'im* and *bārām*, on the other hand, is marginal in all the categories, with the former appearing more frequently in literature and the latter in editorials and scientific-academic prose.<sup>4</sup> Thus, we can see that the use of particular function words such as the various 'buts' in Modern Hebrew may have implications to the learning of Modern Hebrew in general and to the competence developed by students to recognize different genres, registers or styles of written prose in particular. This is also obviously related pedagogically to curriculum development, i.e. when the various function words should be taught, and in which order and by which method related to the various language skills.

## 5. CONCLUSION

In this paper we have tried to point out how linguistic or stylistic analyses of what appear to be simple 'function' words in modern Hebrew may be used to aid students semantically, syntactically, pragmatically and stylistically to reach an improved understanding of written texts in modern Hebrew. This has been done by showing:

- a) How polysemous prepositions may be simplified by providing unitary meanings for them in light of their many specific lexical, contextual meanings and functions which are particularly aggravated by the orthographic conventions of Modern Hebrew which agglutinate some of them onto other words and do not vocalize them in order to mark them as separate words or as 'definite' or 'indefinite' markers.
- b) How the orthographically non-agglutinated preposition *ʿal* has begun to replace other prepositions and the semantic and syntactic-pragmatic implications thereof, particularly in spoken Hebrew as well as journalistic prose and children's literature.
- c) How some of the various Hebrew forms meaning 'but' (in a contrastive and exclusive contrastive sense) can serve as style markers for readers of Hebrew texts in different genres, categories, and registers.

<sup>4</sup> We would like to point out that *kī'im* is particularly problematic. It is a composite of two polysemous function words *kī* ("because, that, which ...") and *'im* ("if, whether, even ..."), both of which also collocate with other forms to form diverse idiomatic expressions. Therefore, the student of Hebrew must once again determine whether he should process the forms componentially or view them as a single unit.

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# Postverbal word order in Biblical Hebrew: structure and function

## Part Two

Lars Lode

### 0. INTRODUCTION

Part One of this study was published in Semitics Vol. 9, 1984. It treats the evidence of Genesis. This second part treats the evidence in Exodus 1-19, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther.

The note on aspect verbs in 2.1.1 is new, and so is the recognition stated in 2.1.4 that the relative order of final categories is not entirely fixed.

### 1. TRENDS WITHIN THE CORPUS

The overall neutral patterns of postverbal word order in Genesis/Exodus on one side and Ezra/Nehemiah/Esther on the other are very similar. In fact, the only difference seems to be the definition of final categories, regarding vocatives, participle constructions and relative clauses.

#### 1.1 Vocatives

There seems to be a tendency in the later group of books to give postverbal vocatives the same position as nominal subjects: after pronouns and before nominal undergoers, or as final subjects. This is particularly true with the verb "remember" in expressions like "remember me, my God, ..." plus pronominal or nominal adjuncts. (Neh. 5:19, 13:14, 29, 30 6:14, no following element in 13:22).

However, in all of these texts emotions are heavily involved as the speaker is pleading for mercy, and even more in Ezra 9:6, 10 which have the vocative immediately after the verb. Further, final vocatives are found in Ezra 9:8 and Esther 7:3.

The conclusion is that vocatives in these later books have a more freely position than in Genesis/Exodus. The neutral position seems to be final after most verbs and nominal source after the verb "remember." To express strong emotions the vocative may come closer to the verb.

## 1.2 Participles

In Genesis/Exodus there seemed to be a rule that clause-level participle clauses and even predicative participles in determined phrases should be considered a Final category. In Ezra 3:10, a predicative participle in a determined undergoer phrase is followed by an adverbial phrase: "And-they-let-stand the priests clad with trumpets." This last phrase modifies the main verb, not the preceeding participle. A corresponding example of a predicative participle followed by an adverbial phrase is found in Neh. 5:1. But most dependent participle clauses still occur in Final W position. See note (2) to chapter 2 and Part One, Section 1.3.

## 1.3 Relative clauses

In Genesis/Exodus even long phrase-level relative ~~NP~~ clauses were not changing the status of a nominal phrase into the final category. In the later books there is some evidence that phrases containing relative clauses may be given final position if these clauses are rather long or if a normally following phrase may be attributed to the relative verb: In Neh. 5:19 and 6:1 an N preceeds an U (For abbreviations see section 1.5). The U contains a relative clause to which the preceeding N would have been considered an adjunct if following it. Neh. 5:19 reads: "Remember to me, my God, for good, all which I have done to this people." Esther 5:4 has a similar case: a temporal P is preceeding an N containing a relative clause to which the P might have been an adjunct. Further, in Neh. 9:32 and Esther 9:21 there are two cases where nominal U and N are given final position, apparently on account of the long relative constructions which they contain.

## 1.4 Conclusion of trends

Except for the marginal changes just mentioned, there is no difference in the neutral pattern of postverbal order of phrases. Further, the cases of rare word order in the later books have the same functions in the context as those found in Genesis and Exodus.

The evidence of the total corpus regarding phrase-level relative clauses and predicative participles may be generalized in these words: "Long constructions may be given final position to avoid ambiguity."

## 1.5 Abbreviations

The abbreviations and definitions are the same as in Part One:

Pronominal phrases are abbreviated PnP,

Ordinary Nominal Phrases are abbreviated NP,  
and Final Construction are abbreviated Fin.

The functions of NP and some Fin are abbreviated as follows:

S = Source (all active subjects)

U = Undergoer (all objects, and undergoer subjects in passive clauses)

Adv. = All adverbial NP.

Adv. are either nuclear (N) or peripheric (P).

The Nuclear categories(N) are:

B = Benefactor (malefactor)

As = Associated

X = Extent, respect

L = Locative position

Ls = Locative source

Lg = Locative goal

M = Manner

F = Function

Lx = Locative extent

Mx = Measure, degree

The peripheric categories (P) are:

Loc = Location

C = Concomitant

T = Temporal position

Some Final categories:

Ts = Temporal source

Tx = Temporal extent

Tg = Temporal goal

## 1.6 Layout

The following numbers of sections and notes correspond to those in Part One about Genesis.

## 2. THE RELATIVE ORDER OF POSTVERBAL CONSTRUCTIONS

The usual order is:

1. Pronominal phrases (PnP)
2. Ordinary nominal phrases (NP)
3. Final constructions (Fin.)

### 2.1 The relative order of co-occurring final categories.

The four positional groups are termed W, Q, Y and Z. They occur usually in this order. (Against the statement in Part One). Deviations seem not to be significant.

#### 2.1.1 The first final category (W)

The category W includes temporal source, extent and goal. As in Genesis they occur only in this order.<sup>1</sup>

Phrases containing predicative participles or relative verbal clauses may be given final position to avoid ambiguity.<sup>2</sup> See section 1.2. Further, W includes any postverbal clause-level dependent verb or verbal clause which does not belong to a later final category.<sup>3</sup>

Aspect verbs (חָיַר = "haste", אָמַר = "continue", יָחַל = "begin") are an exception. The completing infinitive functions as undergoer (extent-content), and these verbs seem to prefer the infinitive in the position of Nominal U.<sup>3</sup> (These verbs are not mentioned in Part One).

Dependent clauses may co-occur. Their relative order is as for corresponding NP.<sup>4</sup> The evidence of participles in notes (2) and (3) is redone, including Genesis.

#### 2.1.2 The second final category Q, includes all quotations.<sup>5</sup>

2.1.3 The third final category Y, includes postverbal cause, reason, purpose and result.<sup>6</sup> It is the neutral position of most vocatives<sup>7</sup> (see 1.1) and of additions to PnP and NP.<sup>8</sup> Finally, it is the position of retracted subjects.<sup>9</sup>

2.1.4 The fourth Final category Z, includes any sentence level or paragraph level conjunctive clauses introduced by לְּ, "for", or לְּ, "lest". לְּ-clauses precede לְּ-clauses. They occur usually after Y categories.<sup>10</sup>

In Exodus 13:17 the background לְּ-clause (Z) is followed by a reason לְּ-clause (Y), apparently because the reason "clause" is a long quotation sentence after which the background clause would lose its close connection with the preceding NP which it is modifying. A similar case is found in Nehemiah 6:12-13.

### 2.1.5 Conclusion

The order of final constructions is almost fixed. Long constructions may be retracted to avoid ambiguity. Such a retraction is considered neutral. The final position of subjects is always considered rare.

## 2.2

The relative position of ordinary nominal phrases and final categories. The neutral order is NP-Fin.<sup>11</sup>

## 2.3

The relative position of ordinary nominal phrases

### 2.3.1 Definitions

The necessary definitions have been given in the list of abbreviations in 1.5. Further details may be found in Part One.

### 2.3.2 The relative position of nominal Source, Undergoer and Adverbials.

Most verbs prefer the order S-U-Adv.<sup>12</sup> Verbs of expression and יָלַד, "to bear children", prefer S-B-U-other Adv.<sup>13</sup> Non-active subjects in passive clauses have the U position.<sup>14</sup> Most undergoers occur in the pattern source-position-extent-goal (= partitive-item-content-product).<sup>15</sup> The reverse (Ux-Us) is found in Esther 6:10: "Not let-fall a word from all which you said." This is the conclusion of the king's words to Haman, and is thus a usual position of rare word order.

### 2.3.3

The relative position of nuclear and periphrastic adverbial phrases N precede usually P,<sup>16</sup> and N and P precede usually Fin.<sup>17</sup>

### 2.3.4 The relative position of periphrastic adverbial phrases.

There is only one case: Ezra 8:29 has C-Loc. It reads: "Watch and keep until you-weigh before the chiefs of the priests and Levites and the chiefs of the fathers of Israel in Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the Lord." This is the theme and conclusion of the speech, and the order of phrases is possibly reversed.

### 2.3.5 The relative position of nuclear adverbial phrases (N).

#### 2.3.5.1 The clear cases of word order.

The evidence of corpus Part Two supports the evidence of Genesis.<sup>18</sup>

#### 2.3.5.2 The other cases

The evidence of corpus Part Two supports both the evidence and the considerations for Genesis.<sup>19</sup>

Some additional combinations are found: Locative extent (Lx) co-occurs several times with measure (Mx), always in that order. As-Ls, B-Lx, X-Ls, Ls-Lx, Lx-Lg occur once or a few times. Lx-Lg in Exodus 3:18 and Ezra 10:7 are both considered rare word order. Exodus 3:18 reads: "We-will-go please a way of three days in(to) the desert." This clause is the theme of the speech of Moses to Pharaoh. As L, Ls and M are usually before Lx in the entire corpus, and Lg clearly precedes M, we may conclude that the neutral pattern is Lg-Lx. Ezra 10:7 reads: "And-they-spread voice in Juda and Jerusalem to all the sons of dispersion to gather (in) Jerusalem." This is the theme of the following paragraph.

Associated and extent co-occur in Nehemiah 5:15, in the order X-As: "And-they-took from them on bread and wine after the silver." The order is probably reversed. It seems that the money was due whereas the food was not. Emotions are heavily involved.

### 2.3.5.3 Conclusion on nuclear adverbial phrases.

The neutral pattern is the following one:

- |    |                |                             |                   |
|----|----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | involved B,As  | Benefactor, Associated      | N do not co-occur |
| 2. | - X            | Extent, respect             |                   |
| 3. | locative L, Ls | Locative position or source | N do not co-occur |
| 4. | - LG           | Locative goal               |                   |
| 5. | manner M,F     | Manner, Function            | N do not co-occur |
| 6. | extent Lx      | Locative extent             |                   |
| 7. | - Mx           | Measure, degree             |                   |

## 2.4 The position of postverbal pronominal phrases

Pronominal phrases precede usually all nominal phrases categories.<sup>20</sup>

### 2.4.1 The pronoun categories

The detailed definition of the pronoun word class is given in Part One.

### 2.4.2 The groups will be restated in 2.5

### 2.4.3 Conclusion

The evidence of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther supports the claim that the adverbial words as "here, there, thus, more" are pronouns both structurally and distributionally.<sup>21, 22, 23, 24</sup>

The case in Exodus 10:10 needs a comment. It reads: "Be thus the Lord with you." It is probably a contraction of two clauses with identical verb: "Be thus, be the Lord with you."

## 2.5 The relative order of pronominal phrases

The evidence supports the pattern in Part One: 1-2-3-4-5.<sup>25</sup> The meaning of these numbers are as follows:

1. = subject pronouns
2. = suffixed undergoer marker (אֹתִי, etc.)
- 3a. = suffixed short prepositions (בִּי, בְּמוֹנִי, לִי, etc.)
- 3b. = other suffixed genuine prepositions (אֲחֵרִי, אֵלַי, אֹתִי, מִמֶּנִּי, etc.)
4. = neutral demonstratives in non-subject functions (זֶה, הוּא, בָּזֶה, etc.)
5. = adverbial demonstratives (שָׁם, מִשָּׁם, שָׁמָּה, בָּהּ, בֵּן, אֵז, עֵתָה, עוֹד, etc.)

## 2.6 Conclusion of chapter two

There is a definite preferred pattern of neutral word order, which is the same for the entire corpus of Part One and Part Two. The differences, if any, affect vocatives, as detailed in section 1.1. The cases of predicative participles and long relative clauses in 1.2, and 1.3 have been taken care of by the general principle stated in 1.3.: "Long constructions may be given final position to avoid ambiguity." Thus the system is still slightly elastic.

## 3. THE FUNCTION OF RARE POSTVERBAL WORD ORDER

As in Genesis, rare word order implies contrast: either transition or prominence, or both.

### 3.1 Transition

Rare word order may indicate transition to new paragraphs or episodes, from setting to body, to climax or conclusion. Continuation is rare.<sup>1</sup>

### 3.2 Prominence

The definitions of theme, focus and emphasis are given by Callow 1974:52. In short: Theme is what we are speaking about. Focus is highlighting a thematic item. Emphasis is related to the relation speaker-hearer: expressing emotions and unexpectedness.

#### 3.2.1 Prominence with focus value

##### 3.2.1.1 Focussed participants

Participants may be prominent as agent, theme or props. The evidence is detailed in note.<sup>2</sup>

##### 3.2.1.2 Focussed states or events

States or events may be prominent as props, theme or climax. Note that retraction of pronouns and prenormal adverbial phrases always mark the clauses as prominent.<sup>3</sup>

#### 3.2.2 Prominence with emphatic value.

Rare word order is used to express the emotions of the speaker, or to indicate unexpectedness. In a few cases the rare word order simply indicates contrast with something else.<sup>4</sup>

### 3.3 Some odd cases

As in Genesis there are some odd cases in the corpus of Part Two also. The most important ones have already been described in sections 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3. When applying the general rule of "giving long constructions final position to avoid ambiguity" the cases of 1.2 and 1.3 prove to be "neutral".

As already said in 2.3.5.2 the larger corpus supports the systematic considerations made for the relative position of N-P and for X, L, Ls and Lg before Mx.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

### 4.1 Summary

The summary of Part One is valid for Part Two as well: The Hebrew text has a fixed pattern of neutral order of postverbal elements. Any deviation from this pattern is significant. The occurrence of rare patterns of phrase order implies some kind of contrast. The contrast may be essentially in the field of prominence, or in the field of plot-related transitions. The two aspects may be involved simultaneously.

The field of prominence in question has two extremes: focus and emphasis. Focus picks out a thematic item which is kept in focus for the rest of the paragraph or the episode. Emphasis is indicating strong emotions or unexpectedness. The range of emphasis seems to be one clause or one sentence.

## 4.2 Evaluation

The total corpus comprises some of the oldest and some of the most recent books in the Old Testament. The same system is found all over, and this suggests that the system is valid for the entire OT. Most of the corpus is narrative texts. But there are many quotes, etc., containing other discourse genres, and no distinction is found: the same system is found with all verb forms.<sup>1</sup>

The function of rare postverbal word order in Hebrew is somewhat difficult to assess. First, it is only an option in all cases. There seems to be no obligation of using it in any context, either for marking transitions, or for marking participants or events as prominent. But there are contexts where it never occurs, e.g. non-climactic reactions in paragraphs.

Further, to point out its value the context must be considered in detail: Is it clause level, sentence level, paragraph level or episode level? If paragraph or episode level, does it mark props, theme or climax? Is only the prenormal phrase prominent, is only the clause prominent, or are both prominent? Is it expressing only focus, only emphasis or only transition, or are two or more of these involved? There is only one element in common: rare word order signals 'Attention'!

There are a few clues indicated in the treatment, but they are not unambiguous. An attempt has been made to consider rare word order in context in Exodus 1-15. Some of the results are amazing and should affect any commentary or translation. But it should be kept in mind that very little has been done in this field, both in Hebrew and in general linguistics. Further investigation will be welcomed.

## Bibliography

Callow, Kathleen 1974. *Discourse considerations in translating the Word of God*. Michigan: Zonderan.

For further bibliography see Part One.

## Notes to Chapter 2

<sup>1</sup> Ts-Tg occur in Exod. 18:13.14, Neh. 4:15, 8:3.18, 9:5.33, Tx-Tg: Exod. 16:35.

2 Participles or participle constructions after הָיָה, "to be", אֵין, "not-be", עוֹד, "still be", occur after S in Gen. 2:25, 3:1, 11:30, 13:6, etc. After U in Neh. 8:15; after N in Gen. 27:12,23, Neh. 8:8; after P in Neh. 13:5. They occur (in neutral position?) before Tx in Esth. 5:13, before Tg in Exod. 17:12, before manner relative clause in Esth. 2:20, before Y in Gen. 2:25, 39:23, 45:10, Ezra 3:13. It occurs before N in Neh. 5:1 (probably prenormally).

After other verbs participles occur as N after N in Gen. 21:14, 37:35, 41:22, Ezra 10:9, Neh. 8:8, 10:35, Esth. 5:13, 6:12, (all in same order as corresponding NP). Further before Tg in Ezra 9:4, before Y in Esth. 3:15, 8:14. Finally they occur in the opposite order of corresponding NP: As-M after Lx in Exod. 10:14, as M before Lg in Gen. 33:18, as U after N in Neh. 9:24, as U after P in Neh. 13:15, as M after P in Esth. 5:9.

Short non-final nominal phrases precede phrases containing long relative constructions instead of succeeding them in Neh. 5:19, 6:1, 9:32 (all N-U), Esth. 5:4 (P-N), 9:21, (Mx-M).

Clause-level relative clauses occur as U after PnP in Exod. 4:15, as N after PnP in Exod. 7:13,22, as N after S in Exod. 17:20, as N after U in Exod. 5:11, as N after N in Exod. 8:23, 13:11, Ezra 4:3, before Z in Exod. 5:13, Esth. 9:23, etc., all in normal position for NP. It occurs after NP as S after N in Neh. 2:10, as U after N in Esth. 6:2, 9:24, as U after P in Exod. 10:2, as N after P in Exod. 5:13, Esth. 9:31. This is the position W.

Infinitive absolute occurs after S in Ezra 10:1.

Prepositional clauses occur as T after N in Exod. 9:24, as Tg after N in Exod. 15:16.

Conjunctive clauses occur as U after N in Exod. 17:14, Neh. 6:1, Esth. 5:12, etc., as U before Final P in Exod. 7:5, as U before Z in Exod. 9:14-15, 18:11.

3 With Aspect verbs (הָרַץ, "haste"; אָמַן, "continue"; יָחַל, "begin") the completing construct infinitive functions as U, and these verbs seem to prefer the infinitive in the position of nomina U instead of Final. The infinitive U occurs before N in Exod. 5:7, U before P in Exod. 2:18, 2 Chr. 3:2, U-Z in Exod. 19:23, U-Tg-Z in 1 Sam. 15:35. But the reverse order is also found: P-U in 2 Chr. 29:17, and N-U in 2 Chr. 31:21. In the latter case, however, the N is modifying the following infinitive, and thus it is clearly prenornal. This is the entire evidence of the OT.

Other verbs have construct infinitives in final position as S after N in Gen. 23:8, 31:29, as N after N in Ezra 10:7, Esth. 1:7, 3:6, as U after N in Exod. 8:10,

13:5, Neh. 2:12, 4:2, Esth. 4:13, 9:13, as N after P in Exod. 12:27. Further normally before Y in Exod. 8:22, 18:2, Ezra 9:14, Esth. 4:7, 9:21-22, before Y-Z in Exod. 9:11, etc.

- 4 Dependent clauses co-occur as S-N in Gen. 29:19, Exod. 14:12, as U-P in Gen. 41:54, Exod. 7:5, 14:18, Esth. 2:20, as U-Tg in Gen. 19:22, Exod. 10:26, as N-P in Esth. 2:12, as N-Tg in Exod. 17:12, Ezra 9:4.

- 5 Quotations after B are very frequent. After other N in Exod. 19:3, Ezra 9:11, 10:12, Neh. 8:15, Esth. 6:6. After P in Exod. 6:12, 30, 13:14, 14:12, Neh. 6:7, Esth. 1:16, 7:9, after P-U in Exod. 5:6, after B-P in Exod. 4:19, 12:1, 13:8, Esther 5:6.

- 6 Nominal reason phrases occur after N in Exod. 6:9, 17:1, 18:8, Ezra 7:9, 9:13, after P in Neh. 1:6, after participle (W) in Esth. 3:15, after inf. cstr. + final U (W) in Exod. 9:11, before Z in Exod. 9:11, Ezra 7:9, 9:13, prenormal before U in Ezra 7:6.

Relative reason clause after W in Esth. 4:11.

Construct infinitive purpose clause after W in Neh. 10:35, Esth. 4:7, after nominal result in Exod. 16:8, before Z in Exod. 19:24, Neh. 12:44, Esth. 3:4.

Prepositional purpose clause after infinitive result in Exod. 8:18, after W in Ezra 9:12, before Z in Exod. 13:9.

Conjunctive  $\text{וְ}$ -clause as reason after W in Exod. 8:22, 15:23, 19:23, Ezra 3:13, 8:22, 9:6, Neh. 13:1, after infinitive purpose clause in Exod. 7:24, 12:33, Ezra 8:22, Neh. 8:12.

- 7 Vocatives occur after S in Exod. 15:16, after N in Exod. 15:11, Ezra 9:8, Esth. 7:3. Before U in Ezra 9:6, before N in Neh. 5:19, 6:14, 13:30, before reason nominal phrase in Neh. 13:29, before reason PnP in Neh. 13:14, before Z in Neh. 3:36.

- 8 Addition to clause final addition to preverbal phrases: co-ordinate phrase in Exod. 12:38, 18:6, Neh. 3:11, 13:15, 18, Esth. 4:3, predicative participle in Exod. 1:9, predicative nominal phrase in Exod. 3:7, appositions in Exod. 12:11, 13:4, 14:2, Neh. 3:1, Esth. 2:12, relative clause in Exod. 4:17, Neh. 2:7. It occurs before a quotation introduced by  $\text{לֵאמֹר}$ , "saying", in Exod. 3:16.

Additions to postverbal phrases: co-ordinated additions in Exod. 8:17, 12:30, 18:2-3, Ezra 1:5, Neh. 6:14, appositions in Exod. 1:11, 7:20, 18:25, Ezra 7:27, 8:24, 35, Neh. 4:3, 5:4, 12, 9:11, 11:3, 13:10, Esth. 1:8, 2:14, 18, 8:12, relative clauses in Exod. 1:8, 11:6.

- Sentence final additions: a relative clause in Exod. 5:21, a phrase in Exod. 12:15.
- 9 Final subject after U in Exod. 9:34, after N in Exod. 12:31, Neh. 9:4, after P in Neh. 2:12, before Z in Exod. 18:18.
  - 10 Sentence or higher level  $\bar{P}$ - or  $\bar{P}$ -clauses occur usually after W and Y, W-Y-Z in Exod. 9:11, W-Z in Exod. 5:11, 19:23, 6:1, 8:22, 9:14, 10:28, 16:3, 18:11, 19:11,23, Neh. 8:10, Esth. 9:23, 3:6, 4:13, Y-Z in Exod. 3:7, 12:33, 18:18, 19:24, Ezra 7:9, Esth. 3:4. The opposite order Z-Y is found in Exod. 13:17.
  - 11 Exodus has 148 cases of Adverbial-Final, two cases of Final-Adv.: 12:17, 15:22. Ezra has 42 against 3 (in 3:10, 7:6, 8:18), Neh. has 57-6 (in 5:1, 8:3, 10:36, 5:19, 6:14, 13:30), Esth. has 70-3 (in 1:5, 7:7, 8:8).
  - 12 After the category "most verbs" S preceeds U in 83 cases in Exodus, follows in 9:4.34, S preceeds Adv. in 235 cases, follows in 12:31. The pattern U-N is found 71 times, N-U in 8:17, 10:25, 12:22,35, 13:15, 15:8,13, 18:21, 19:7. U-N in longer patterns in 64 patterns in 64 cases, N-U in 3:22, 9:9.25.33, 12:46. The pattern U-P is found 9 times, P-U in 9:18, U-P in longer patterns 12 times., P-U in 5:6, 7:24, 8:18, 10:4, 14:30, 16:8,29.  
  
In Ezra, Neh., Esth. with two phrases S-U occurs 17 times, no reverse. S-N or P occurs 75 times, N-S in Neh. 2:12, 9:4. Longer patterns have 39 S-U, no reverse, 67 S-N, N-S in Neh. 3:19, P-S in Neh. 6:18. U-N or P alone 94 times, 14 reverse. Longer patterns have 63 U-N or P, 11 N or P-U.
  - 13 Verbs of expression and "to bear" has S-B-U-Adv. In Exodus B preceeds U in 4:28, 6:29, 18:8, no opposite. The pattern S-B-Q is found 58 times. In Ezra, Neh., Esth. B-U occurs in Esth. 4:9,12, 6:13, 9:26, no opposite. B-Q occurs 23 times.
  - 14 Non-active subject in passive clauses occurs as U-N in Exod. 14:5, Ezra 3:10, Neh. 3:38, Esth. 6:3, N-U in Exod. 15:8.
  - 15 Undergoers co-occur in the order source-item-extent-goal in Exod. 2:10,22, 5:19, 7:20, 12:39, 14:21, 15:23, 16:31, 17:7,15, Ezra 7:28, 10:1, Neh. 9:7, 13:2, Esth. 3:5, 5:9, 9:19. The reverse pattern Ux-Us in Esth. 6:10.
  - 16 Exodus has N-P alone 12 times, no reverse. N-P in longer patterns in 18 cases, P-N in 10:4, 13:21, 13:27,30, 19:11, Ezra, Neh. Esth. have 9 cases of N-P alone, reverse in Ezra 10:16, Neh. 12:43, Esth. 9:15, N-P in longer patterns 17 times, 9 reverse in Ezra 6:22, 8:1,33, Neh. 3:19, 12:44, 13:16, Esth. 5:4, 8:12, 9:13.

- 17 Exodus had N-Fin alone in 47 cases, no reverse. N-Fin in longer patterns 42 times, reverse in 5:7, 12:17, P-Fin in two cases, P-Fin in longer patterns 20 times, Pin-P in 15:22.

Ezra, Neh. Esth. have N-Fin alone in 64 cases, reverse in Ezra 3:10, Esth. 4:16. N-Fin in longer patterns in 90 cases, reverse in Neh. 5:1, 10:36, Esth. 7:7. Vocatives in Neh. 5:19, 6:14, 13:30. P-Fin alone in 4 cases, no reverse. P-Fin in longer patterns in 22 cases, reverse in Neh. 8:3, Esth. 1:5.

- 18 Exodus has B-M in 6:3, 18:19, L-M in 9:3, Ls-M in 6:26, 7:4, 11:8, 12:51, 17:1, Lg-M in 14:16,22, 15:5, reverse M-Lg in 7:17, 15:13.

Ezra, Neh., Esth. have As-Mx in Neh. 5:18, B-Ls in Esth. 4:4, B-M in Neh. 6:6,7,13, Esth. 1:20, 2:22, reverse in Neh. 9:4, B-Mx in Neh. 7:69,70, L-M in Neh. 9:11, reverse in Esth. 1:6, Ls-M in Ezra 7:7, Esth. 8:15, Lg-M in Ezra 7:7, 9:7, Neh. 9:11, Esth. 1:11, reverse in Ezra 3:1. Lg-Mx in Ezra 2:69, 8:26, Neh. 8:2, 10:35, Esth. 2:14.

- 19 Exodus has As-Lg in 8:1, 15:19, B-X in 8:8, 18:7, B-Lg in 19:20, L-F in 16:33,34, L-Lx in 10:15, Ls-Lg in 3:8,17, 12:37, 19:14, Ls-Mx in 12:19, reverse in 12:22, Lx-Mx in 9:25, 12:29, 13:2,15, M-Lx in 14:29, 15:19. Reverse patterns Lg-Ls in 19:17, Lx-Lg in 3:18, Mx-X in 11:3. Ezra, Neh., Esth. has As-L in Neh. 6:2, As-Ls in Ezra 2:11. As-Lg in Ezra 2:11, Esth. 5:12, B-X in Neh. 8:6, B-Lx in Esth. 1:20, X-Ls in Esth. 6:7, X-M in Ezra 1:6. Esth. 2:17, 8:8, 9:5, X-Mx in Ezra 8:3, Neh. 5:18, 8:18, Esth. 9:16, reverse in Neh. 6:16, L-Lx in Neh. 11:25, Esth. 3:8, 9:2, L-Mx in Neh. 13:20, Esth. 3:7, Ls-Lg in Ezra 1:11, 3:8, 7:7, Neh. 10:29, Esth. 2:13, 7:8, reverse in Neh. 13:8, Ls-Lx in Ezra 8:22, M-Lx in Neh. 12:37, M-Mx in Neh. 6:4,5, 9:28, Esth. 9:27, reverse in Esth. 9:21, no Lg-Lx, reverse in Ezra 10:7, Lx-Mx in Esth. 1:1.

- 20 In Exodus 1-19 PnP-S is found 19 times, S-PnP 8 times, in 1:17,19, 4:1,5, 5:21, 7:6, 8:20, 11:8, 13:19, 14:19, 16:29, 18:19, PnP-U is found 32 times, U-PnP in 1:7, 7:23. PnP-N/P/Fin 95 times, no reverse. PnP is found in other patterns in initial position 71 times, medially or finally 24 times: preceded by S in 3:2, 4:1,6, 6:9,26, 10:7,10, 12:13,14,25, 13:3,8, 15:19,20, 16:8,15,15,19,20, 18:17, preceded by U in 6:4, 13:19, by S-U in 13:19, by N in 7:11.

In clauses with only two postverbal phrases Ezra, Neh., Esth. have PnP-S 13 times, S-PnP 3 times, 25 PnP-U, 5 U-PnP, 67 PnP-N/P/Fin, reverse twice. S-PnP in Ezra 1:3, Esth. 8:17, 9:23, U-PnP in Ezra 10:14, Neh. 1:9, 5:7, Esth. 4:4, 5:14, N-PnP in Ezra 8:23, 9:15. In longer patterns we have S-PnP in Ezra 2:63, 6:22, Neh. 6:2, 7:65, 13:18, Esth. 6:5, 9:3, U-PnP in Neh. 4:3, PnP-U-PnP in Ezra 9:13, N-PnP in Ezra 6:21, P-S-PnP-Fin in Neh. 6:18, S-N-PnP in Ezra

10:2, U-N-PnP in Esth. 6:3, Ts-PnP-S-Tg in Neh. 8:17, V-PnP in Ezra 9:10, V-U-PnP in Ezra 9:6, PnP-V-PnP in Neh. 13:14.

21 PnP-U in Ezra 8:21, Neh. 13:9, PnP-P in Ezra 8:15,32, Neh. 2:11, 5:16, U-PnP in Neh. 1:9.

22 PnP-S in Ezra 10:16, PnP-N in Esth. 6:10. PnP-Y in Neh. 5:15.

23 PnP-Fin in Ezra 9:11.

24 PnP-U in Neh. 2:17, PnP-N in Esth. 2:14.

25 In Exodus the relative order 1-2-3-4-5 occurs 9 times in patterns with all PnP first. 2-4 and 3-5 occur with S first in 4:6, 13:3; 2-3a in 6:7,8, 12:7, 19:4; 2-4 in 11:1,1, 14:20; 1-3a occurs in 4:16, 10:7. Other mixed patterns occur in 7:11, 10:10, and 13:19.

Ezra 4:2 has 2-5; 9:11 has 5-5 (Ls-Lg); 9:13 has 3a-U-4; Neh. 13:14 has 3a-S-4.

### Notes to Chapter 3

1 New paragraphs or episodes are marked by prenatal S in Exod. 10:7, 13:19, 15:20, Neh. 6:2, by prenatal Adv. in Exod. 9:33, Neh. 2:12, 9:4, by retracted PnP in Exod. 13:19, Esth. 2:2.

Transition from setting to body is marked by prenatal S in Exod. 3:2, 12:13,14, 16:19, Esth. 6:5, by prenatal Adv. in Exod. 15:22, Ezra 8:1, 10:7, Neh. 9:4, Esth. 9:5.

Transition to paragraph or episode climax is marked by prenatal S in Exod. 4:6, 8:20, 16:15, Neh. 6:2, 13:18, by Adv. in Exod. 9:33, 19:17.

Non-climactic ending is marked by prenatal U in Ezra 9:13. Conclusions are marked by prenatal S in Exod. 6:9,26, 7:26, 13:8, 14:9, Ezra 2:63, 6:22, Neh. 7:65, Esth. 8:17, by prenatal U in Exod. 1:7, 9:34, Ezra 9:15, 10:14, Neh. 1:9, 4:3, Esth. 5:14, 6:10, by Adv. in Exod. 7:24, 12:17, 13:15, 14:30, 15:19, Ezra 7:6,10, 10:6, Neh. 5:11,19, 13:13, Esth. 8:11-12.

Continuation is marked by prenatal Adv. in Neh. 3:19.

2 Prominent agent is marked by prenatal S in Exod. 3:2, 4:6,11, 5:21, 6:9,26, 7:6, 8:20, 10:7,10, 11:8, 12:25, 13:3,8,19, 14:9, 15:19,20, 16:8,15,19,20, 18:17, Ezra 2:63, Neh. 6:2, 7:65, 13:18, Esth. 6:5, 9:23, by prenatal Adv. in Ezra 7:6, 8:18.

Participant as theme is marked by prenormal S in Neh. 6:18, Esth. 8:17, 9:3, by U in Exod. 6:4, 7:23, 9:4,34, Ezra 9:13, 10:14, Neh. 1:9, 4:3, 5:7, Esth. 4:4, 5:14, 6:3, by prenormal Adv. in Ezra 6:21, 9:15, Neh. 5:15, 9:31, 13:16, Esth. 2:2, 5:2,9, 6:3, 7:7, 8:1,4, 9:5, by vocative in Ezra 9:6,10, Neh. 5:19, 6:14, 13:14,30.

Prominent props are marked by prenormal S in Exod. 12:3, 18:19, Ezra 1:3, 6:22, by U in Exod. 13:19, by Adv. in Exod. 7:11,17, 9:9, 12:22,35,46, 13:21, 19:17, Ezra 2:61, 6:22, 7:10, 8:17,22,23,33, 10:7,16, Neh. 3:19, 4:16, 7:63, 8:17, 9:4, 12:43,44, 13:13, Esth. 1:5, 4:13, 8:11-12, 9:13,15.

- 3 Retracted pronouns mark events as thematic or climactic in Exod. 2:14, 4:6, 7:11,23, 12:14, 13:19, 15:19, 16:20,29, Ezra 2:63, 6:22, 8:23, 9:6,10,15, 10:2,14, Neh. 1:9, 4:3, 6:2,18, 7:65, 13:14,18, Esth. 4:4, 5:14, 6:3, 9:23.

Event or state is marked as theme or climax by prenormal temporal phrase in Exod. 5:6, 8:18, 9:18, 10:4, 14:27,30, 16:8,15,29, Ezra 6:22, 8:1, Neh. 4:16, 5:11, 10:36, 12:43,44, 13:16, Esth. 4:16, 5:4, 8:8, 9:13, by other prenormal Adv. in Exod. 3:18,22, 7:17, 8:17, 9:3,9,13,25, 12:35, 15:13,19, 18:21, 19:7, Ezra 3:1, 8:33, 10:7, Neh. 5:1, 6:5,16, 8:3, 13:8, Esth. 1:5, 2:2, 5:2, 8:1, 9:5,31.

Event or state is marked as props by prenormal Adv. in Ezra 8:22, Neh. 6:18, 7:63, 8:17, Esth. 5:9, 7:7, by retracted pronouns in Exod. 6:4, 13:3,19, Ezra 1:3, 6:21, 9:31, Neh. 5:7, 6:18, Esth. 8:17, 9:3.

Event is marked as climactic by prenormal U in Exod. 9:4, but the prenormal U is partitive introduced by the preposition מִן, "from", and thus the pattern still is prepositional phrase-S.

- 4 Unexpectedness is marked by prenormal S in Exod. 3:2, 4:6, 10:7, 14:9, 16:20, 18:17, Ezra 2:61,63, 6:22, Neh. 7:65, by U in Exod. 2:14, by Adv. in Exod. 15:8, Esth. 1:5.

Emotions are marked by rare word order in Exod. 4:11, 5:21, 10:10,25, 11:8, 15:8,19,22, 16:29, 19:11,17, Ezra 1:3, 3:1, 6:21,22, 7:6, 8:17,18,33, 9:6, 10:15, 10:16, Neh. 5:7,11,15,19, 6:5,14,16,18, 8:3,17, 9:4, 10:36, 12:44, 13:8,14, 16,18, Esth. 1:6, 4:13,16, 5:2,4,9, 6:10, 7:7, 8:4,8,11-12, 9:5,13,15,31.

Simple contrast is marked by prenormal S in Neh. 13:18, Esth. 6:5, by prenormal Adv. in Exod. 16:29, Ezra 8:1,22,23, Neh. 3:19, 4:16, Esth. 9:125.

#### Note to Chapter 4

- 1 For the evidence in Genesis with only two elements after the verb the total numbers of occurring patterns are as follows. (The rare patterns are placed under the neutral ones).

In clauses with consecutive imperfect verb:

PnP-S:59	PnP-U:38	PnP-Adv:50	S-U:90	S-Adv:251	U-Adv:70
S-PnP:9	U-PnP:5	Adv-PnP:2	U-S:2	Adv-S:5	Adv-U:16

After imperatives, jussive, cohortative:

PnP-S:-	PnP-U:23	PnP-Adv:10	S-U:1	S-Adv:5	U-Adv:17
S-PnP:1	U-PnP:6	Adv-PnP:-	U-S:-	Adv-S:1	Adv-U:3

After imperfect, perfect:

PnP-S:37	PnP-U:32	PnP-Adv:53	S-U: 26	S-Adv: 69	U-Adv:65
S-PnP:12	U-PnP:12	Adv-PnP:1	U-S:1	Adv-S:3	Adv-U:9

After participles and infinitives:

PnP-S:3	PnP-U:7	PnP-Adv:26	S-U:5	S-Adv:15	U-Adv:22
S-PnP:3	U-PnP:2	Adv-PnP:-	U-S:-	Adv-S:	Adv-U: 2

In only two of these pairs the frequency is equal or opposite the general pattern, but the numbers are too low to be representative.

## A comparative study of related laws in Babylonian and Biblical legal texts (verbal connotations)

J P van der Westhuizen

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the field of Semitics, scholars have for many years been concerned with the verb in all its facets as found in the Semitic languages. The result of this concern was a tremendous number of scholarly publications on this topic or in this field. Of these publications some were on the verb *per se*, others being in related fields such as syntax or clauses. The latter usually also included a subsection on the verb and its development.

From these publications a few facts are to be noted. Firstly, there are almost as many different opinions as there are publications. Secondly, the majority of these scholars commenced with a hypothetical Proto-Semitic language developed retrospectively from the known Semitic languages.<sup>1</sup> Thirdly, it would appear as if all the scholars conducted their studies in a secluded field or in a partly secluded field. By this it is suggested that they studied the forms and meanings of the verb in the limited field of different genres within the same Semitic language, and then only compared them to one another based on the meaning they have in that specific context before relating them or comparing them to the other Semitic languages.<sup>2</sup>

Bearing the foregoing in mind, another fact to be considered is that we approach the study of an solution to the Semitic verbal system from a position within a modern Western language, using the latter's terminology which is quite different from and foreign to the Semitic languages. Furthermore, terms of different connotational value are intermingled in the same language system, e.g. in Akkadian we have on the one hand a present - indicating a tense, and on the other hand a perfect - indicating an aspect. What should also be borne in mind is that a verb in any form conveys tense as well as aspect and mode.

<sup>1</sup> While there is nothing wrong with this method of approach, it must be borne in mind that this Proto-Semitic is a hypothetical language and so could the results and conclusions be drawn from it. However, should documentation of another Semitic language be discovered - as happened when the Ras-Shamra texts were discovered - this situation might change (cf. also Goshen-Gottstein 1969:77, 84).

<sup>2</sup> This also is a valid approach, but could be supplemented advantageously should the verb be studied in context in the same genres of the different Semitic languages. Von Soden (1964:437-440) also expresses a similar opinion.

In view of what has been stated above, and because this study will be mainly concerned with the verb used in the legal texts, we shall, before we commence with the actual theme of this paper, for the sake of orientation, conduct a brief survey of the opinions of some of the most prominent scholarly studies on the Semitic verbal system in Babylonian and Biblical Hebrew.

## 2. SCHOLARLY OPINIONS ON THE SEMITIC VERBAL SYSTEM

### 2.1 Akkadian

#### 2.1.1 Preterite (*iprus*) and Present (*iparras*)

##### 2.1.1.1 Ungnad

He described *iparras* as "... die Handlung, die ihren Abschluss noch nicht gefunden hat ..." (Ungnad 1903:374). (Cf. Christian 1927:239). Ungnad (1903:370) also warns against the acceptance of the theory that *iprus* expresses the common Semitic imperfect. (Cf. Christian 1927:238, 240-244).

##### 2.1.1.2 Meek

Meek considers the preterite (*iprus*) as indicating the remote past (Meek 1946:65n<sup>8</sup>). Regarding the present, he is of the opinion that in the *šumma* clauses it is used to express the desiderative or to indicate a state in the past or present (Meek 1946:65). (Cf. Brockelmann 1951:138-139 and Aro 1955: 80-81, 139-140).

This would also point to the fact that the form of the present in Babylonian is not restricted to a specific tense. Janssens, with regard to the *\*iprus*-form in Proto-Semitic, comes to the conclusion that this form "met preteritum betekenis een restant is van het oude gebruik, ..." (Janssens 1957/8:98). On the *\*iparras*-form, he concludes that it expresses "een nog niet afgesloten momentane handeling, die heden en toekomst, maar ook het verleden kan weergeven." (Janssens 1957/8:98).

##### 2.1.1.3 Kienast

Kienast (1960:160-161), who reverts to "Ursemitisch" suggests that in form *iprus* resembles the jussive of "Jungsemitisch". On the *iparras*-form he states that "Dur.-Prs. (...) dient als Präsens-Futur und zur Darstellung der Dauer oder Wiederholung in der Vergangenheit" (Kienast 1960:160). (Cf. Castellino 1962:59-62).

Haldar is, to a large extent, in support of Castellino's views and states that though *\*iprus* is best interpreted as an aspect, it does not, ... preclude its very frequent use of past time ..." (Haldar 1964:19). After introducing the terms *accompli* and

*inaccompli*, he suggests "*iprus* represents the first member of the correlation (*accompli*) and *iparras* the second member (*inaccompli*) ..." (Haldar 1964:21).

Should we have to make any conclusion at this stage, we might say that the *iparras*-form or present "tense" in Akkadian could be used to represent any of the three basic tenses, viz. past, present and future. This would imply that *iparras* as such does not seem to carry any specific reference to a tense as such, the "tense" being apparently only determined by the context in which it is used.

#### 2.1.1.4 Kurylowicz

Kurylowicz (1972:57) advocates that the "Akk. present *iparras*, *iparris*, *iparrus* is built upon the nominal stems *parras*, *parris*, *parrus* respectively, ...". On the *iprus*-form he propounds that "the old Semitic form expressing anteriority was *iaqtul* ... in Akkadian the normal preterite ... . The difference *iaqtulu* : *iaqtul* became in Akkadian subjunctive (*iaqtulu*) : preterite (*iaqtul*).". (Kurylowicz 1973:118-119).

From the foregoing discussion it is clear that there is a reasonable amount of consensus as to the meaning of the *iprus* and *iparras* forms, but not so much of a consensus concerning the origin and development of these forms. However, the question is whether origin and development do not go hand-in-hand with the meaning or connotation of the verb. At this stage no definite answer should or could be ventured, not until the form as well as examples of the application of the verbal forms have been discussed.

#### 2.1.2 The Perfect (*iptaras*)

Though we call this form (*iptaras*) a perfect, it is not the only term in use to describe it. In some of the conjugations a similar form is also termed a preterite and occasionally it is referred to as a *t*-infix form. When we refer to and discuss some scholarly works on the *iptaras* form, it will become apparent that there is quite a lack of consensus of opinion amongst scholars regarding this verbal form and its connotations.

##### 2.1.2.1 Oppenheim

Oppenheim (1933:181-185) originally held the opinion that the *t*-form basically had an intensive-habitative connotation which developed into two directions: a) perfective, and b) a means of expressing emphasis. However, Oppenheim's explanation and reasoning of this phenomenon (the *t*-form at the end of a sense-unit) seem somewhat vague and unsatisfying. In a later article Oppenheim himself indirectly admits this, stating: "Lediglich eine ... Bildungsweise, deren Charakteristikum ein nach dem ersten Radikal infigiertes *T* ist, konnte ... nicht

befriedigend erklärt werden." He now propounds, "Die perfektivierende Bedeutungsnuance des Infixes bewirkt aber, dass die wenigen *T*-Formen in den Nebensätzen (...) eine bemerkenswerte Wandlung mitmachen: die perfektivische Bedeutung wird - ... - zu einer perfektischen, geht also in eine rein temporale Sphäre über." (Oppenheim 1935:1, 20-21).

For a description of the *consecutio temporum*, G.R. Driver firstly refers to Bergsträsser and secondly to Deimel. Driver, however, refutes these explanations of *consecutio temporum* and attempts to state his case, after giving some examples, propounding that it is not so much a wish to indicate the order of events, "... as a desire to avoid monotony by a variety of form" (Driver 1936:108-111).

In response to Driver, it should be noted that in the examples quoted by him, there is in the one case two different subjects for the two different actions and in the other case only one subject for both actions. Furthermore, it is not as if there is really a variety of form, but rather the same specific order of different forms.

We subscribe to Goetze's observation that the *t*-form is very much alive in the Old Babylonian period and that its usage can not be explained as a by-product of fashion or style because it is obviously regulated by grammatical rules and reasoning. Goetze (1936:300-302) concludes that the evidence can be subsumed under three main headings:

- a) The *t*-form in the function of a tense in co-ordinated clauses.
- b) The *t*-form in the function of a relative tense in subordinated clauses.
- c) The *t*-form as an aspect.

From Goetze's study it would appear as though he based his investigation on the phenomenon of *consecutio temporum* and did so with a great deal of success. His presentation of the *t*-form is rather comprehensive in that he realizes and advocates that *iptaras* as such is not a tense, just as the concept 'perfect' is not a tense in its own right, it being an aspect.

#### 2.1.2.2 Von Soden

Von Soden (1950:385-386) advocates a view similar to that of Goetze, stating that "wir beim akkadischen Verbum zwei ganz verschiedene Arten von *t*- Infixen unterscheiden müssen, die den Verbalstamm-modifizierenden und die Tempusmodifizierenden." (Cf. Gelb 1955:110).

### 2.1.2.3 Kienast

Kienast (1960:160) states, regarding the *iprus*-form ("Ausdruck der Vergangenheit als auch Vorvergangenheit"), that "sein gebrauch wird durch das nur dem Akkadischen eigene *t*-perfekt in bestimmten Umfang eingeschränkt."

Rowton, however, has a view more in accordance with Oppenheim's as well as ours when he states: "In the active we have in the indicative: *iprus* (preterite), *iptaras* (present-perfect), *iparras* (present and future) ... *iprus*- 'he separated', *iptaras* - 'he has (now) separated', *iparras* - 'he separates, is separating, will separate'" (Rowton 1962:236, 280).

Castellino propounds that "... peculiar to Akkadian is the 'perfect', ... distinct from the 'preterite'...". He continues "... Akkadian modified its 'imperfective' into a '(present-) imperfective' and its 'perfective' into a '(past-) perfective'..." and qualifies: "... our conclusions (...) show that essentially Semitic, ... by those two tenses expressed the categories of 'aspects', ... rather than the 'Aktionsart', ..." (Castellino 1962:72-73, 143).

Haldar (1964:46), as do we, hold a similar view, viz. "... we must, ... question the existence of a perfect tense."

Von Soden (1965:104<sup>b</sup>), points out that in the oldest known Old Akkadian texts, we come across examples ..., of cases of *t*-separative as well as *t*-perfect. He also advocates that "... noch eine weitere Verwendungsweise des Perfekts ..., ... die als Futurum Exactum zur Kennzeichnung der Vorzeitigkeit, gegenüber Handlungen oder Vorgängen, die in der Zukunft liegen oder nur gewünscht oder angeordnet werden" (Von Soden 1965:109<sup>a</sup>).

Hirsch substantiates Von Soden's view and makes the following important observations: "... dass die meisten der am Ende der *šumma*-Sätze verwendeten Perfekta den harten Uebergang von den Vergangenheit, ..., zum Pr.-Futur des Hauptsatzes mildern soll. ... im Sinne eines Futurum Exactum, was ... der ... Auffassung Landsbergers als 'punktuelles Präsens' sehr nahe kommt." He finds that from here it is but a short step to consider the perfect as a suitable form in the *šumma*-sentence before the following present (Hirsch 1969:129-131).

### 2.1.2.4 Kurylowicz

Kurylowicz, on the *iptaras*-form, suggests that "... it functioned originally as a passive with relation to trans. verbs ... as a perfect with relation to intrans. verbs ... The ... extension of *iptaras* to all verbs, ..., was a consequence of the semantic change of *state resulting from previous action* to *previous action* ...". He concludes that the lowering of the status of the *t*- refers only to its function as the morpheme of the

passive of the basic form, not to its function as the morpheme of the perfect (Kurylowicz 1972:61-62).

From the foregoing study on the perfect, it may be deduced that the *t*-form has three connotations:

- i) Passive-medial-reflexive.
- ii) Emphasis - intonation.
- iii) Perfectivity.

The question is whether one of these is the original connotation, and if so which one?

This matter will be taken up again at a later stage of this discussion, where some concluding remarks will be given.

## 2.2 Hebrew

### 2.2.1 The Imperfect

#### 2.2.1.1 Ballantine

Ballantine (1885:53-55) discards the terms "past" and "present" as well as "perfect" and "imperfect", preferring "aorist" and "subsequent" as indicators of the two basic "tenses" in Biblical Hebrew.

#### 2.2.1.2 Burney

Burney (1919:209-213) suggests that *iqatul* and *iqtul* were originally one form and he concludes that the Babylonian preterite, like the Hebrew imperfect, properly denotes the *emergence* of an event into being out of a preceding condition of affairs explicit or implicit in the narrative. To him the essential idea involved in the use of the imperfect with *waw*-consecutive, is inherent in the tense itself, not in any mystic power of transformation possessed by the *waw*. He accepts Ballantine's terms "aorist" and "subsequent". Christian (1927:257-258) and Brockelmann (1951:147-148) differ from Burney on this matter.

#### 2.2.1.3 Janssens

Janssens advocates two past tenses, viz. "he has come" (a suffix conjugation), and "he wept" (a prefix conjugation), eventually limited to instances where the second form was an accompanying action in the past resulting in the phenomenon that the imperfect also attained the value of the incomplete, the durative. This made the old *jakaṭ.l(u)* superfluous (Janssens 1957/8:110-101). (Cf. Kienast 1960:162-164).

Haldar (1964:46-47) holds a similar view and propounds that *yiqtol* is the equivalent of Akkadian *iprus*: *iparras*. (Cf. Meyer 1964:123-126).

#### 2.2.1.4 Hetzron and Kustar

Hetzron distinguishes two forms, viz. *yáqtul* and *yaqtúl*, in Proto-Semitic, and after a careful and intensive study decides that Proto-Hebrew still had a prefix-perfect, stressed on the first syllable, i.e. *\*yíqtol*, and a jussive ... stressed on the last syllable, i.e. *\*yiqtól*. He is of the opinion that the prefix forms used after *waw*-conversive are not jussive or imperfect, but a survival of the old prefix-perfect (Hetzron 1969:10-18).

Kustar, on the other hand, suggests that the Hebrew verbal system is based on "Aspektus" and "Aktio" and not on "Tempus", and that the speaker distinguishes the actions according to which of the actions, ..., are to be regarded as determining and which as determined. He found that the determining actions are denoted by the *qtl*-forms, and the determined actions by the *jql*-forms (Kustar 1972:25, 55). (Cf. Frankena 1972:5).

This view of Kustar and Frankena is substantiated by the view of Silverman, viz.: "It is conceivable that the more widely studied aspects of completeness (perfect) *versus* incompleteness (imperfect) would also be indicated by the placement of the verb within the clause and not by its morphology (Silverman 1973:175). Similar views are expressed by Mettinger (1973:78) and Bobzin (1973:141).

### 2.2.2 The Perfect

#### 2.2.2.1 Ballantine

Ballantine (1885:53-55) calling the perfect an "aorist", states that, depending on the context, it can be translated by an English perfect or pluperfect, or else by a present- or future-perfect.

Christian (1927:258) suggests that the suffix form - the perfect - became the form to express the meaning of a condition or a state ("Faktumbedeutung").

G.R. Driver (1936:83) partly in support of Christian's "biliteral" scheme, concludes that *qaṭal* had become a pure tense, restricted almost entirely to past time, while *qaṭel* (an old permansive) lingered on with a force appropriate to the description of states. (Cf. Brockelmann 1951:136-148).

### 2.2.2.2 Janssens

Regarding the perfect, Janssens (1975:13-14) expresses a view similar to Brockelmann's, stating that the perfect could best be called "nominal" because it is denominal (either from an adjective or from a noun).

Haldar (1964:46-48) propounds that *paris* (Akkadian) and *qtl* are equivalent forms whilst Meyer concludes that *qaṭala* took over from narrative *yaqtulu* as well as from constative *yaqtul*, the punctual-preterital function without openly losing its character as stative (Haldar 1964:122-125).

Frankena (1972:6-10, 12-13) maintains that the perfect has the character of a condition ("toestandskarakter") and assigns to it a stative-durative kind of action ("Aktionsart").

### 2.2.2.3 Kurylowicz

Kurylowicz (1972:66) suggests that "West Semitic perfective *qaṭila* (intrans. fientive), *qaṭula* (intrans. stative) is structurally the continuation of a former stative such as Akkadian *paris*, *parus*. But ... underwent the well known change 'state' to 'past action' ... intrans. pret. *qaṭila* triggered the parallel formation of *qaṭala* belonging to trans. pres." He propounds: "In conditional clauses, expressing irrealis the distinction between *iaqtulu* and *qaṭala* corresponds to the relation past tense : pluperfect of English." (Kurylowicz 1972:66-72, 82-85).

Bobzin (1973:147-152), holding a similar view, states that the connotation of the suffix-conjugation "... ergibt sich aus der morphologischen Realisierung und der syntaktischen Position, welche zusammen das 'Tempus' System konstituieren." He also distinguishes between "Zustandsverb" and "Handlungsverb".

This concludes our study on the Hebrew perfect and imperfect, and though there are some elucidations as to the Hebrew verbal system, there are, nevertheless, many unclarified matters and facts. This being so because there is no consensus of opinion amongst scholars as to a great number of matters concerned with the verbal system. This is so due to the fact that the Proto-Semitic, taken as basis and point of departure for the research conducted in this field, is a purely hypothetical entity. Yet there are some matters and conclusions arrived at by different scholars that do reveal a certain consensus of opinion. In our concluding remarks we shall take note of this.

### 3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

#### 3.1 Introductory

If the original basic form of the verb, as used in Proto-Semitic, could be determined with absolute certainty and the later development resulting in the different Semitic verbal systems could be established, we might have been able to obtain a clearer view of the "tense" system in these Semitic languages.

#### 3.2 Scholarly views

Castellino (1962:142-143) is of the opinion that this is not possible, because after a thorough investigation into the Akkadian verbal system, with reference to verbal systems in other Semitic languages he concludes: "... almost all traces of the original make-up of the verbal system of the prehistoric stage were obliterated ... Were it not for the 'morphological' or material survival of the verbal forms *iaqtulu* and *qaṭala*, syntactically nothing would remain to testify to the derivation and original nature of the verbal system."

When we refer to Mettinger (1974:78), we see that he regards the historical development of the usage of the conjugations as very important, a minor criticism of his on the work of Michel who neglected this. Furthermore he states that "... it is the aspect theory that has been the most important feature of discussion ... during the fifties and the sixties, and that this seems to be the most promising approach for the future" (Mettinger 1974:79). This remark, made as late as 1974, shows indirectly that at that stage even he was of the opinion that the problem of the Semitic verbal system had not yet been satisfactorily solved.

Snell wrote quite a good criticism on the research done on the Semitic (Hebrew) verbal system and the results of these projects. He states, *i.a.*, that "we think we have explained a grammatical usage when we have arrived at a plausible explanation of its origins" (Snell 1974:41).

A theory that may be acceptable is that in Proto-Semitic one word form, neither purely verb, nor purely noun, but a type of verbal noun, had been employed for both these functions. Bauer, quoted by Brockelmann, had a similar view, stating that Proto-Semitic had only one verbal form, formed with a prefix, indifferent to any connotation of time or tense (Bauer 1951:136; cf. also Burney 1919:213-124).

It could, however, be that prior to this stage, referred to by Bauer, a more simple word, consisting of only the basic radicals of the word, had been used to express the predicative element of the language at that stage. This word then had a type of imperative connotation as well as a stative connotation which depended on

intonation and, perhaps a difference in vocalization, forms such as, for example, *purus* and *paris*.<sup>3</sup> Landsberger advocated similar views. He also referred to Bauer when he pointed out, with regard to *iaqtul*: *qaṭal* that "es liegt vielmehr, ..., wahrscheinlich eine alte, gemein-semitische Bildung vor (...)." Later he stated: "... dass wir einen Dualismus Fiens: Stativ (...) als uranfänglich betrachten müssen." This must be supplemented with his footnote number 1 that "... diese beiden Bedeutungen (waren) ursprünglich auf verschiedene Themen der gleichen Wurzel verteilt." (Landsberger 1926/7a:967-976).

The development of the language, accompanied by a simultaneous cultural development, from a primitive state to a more sophisticated state, had as result that these forms were extended in form and meaning by the addition of pronominal affirmatives and preformatives to cover a wider range of verbal possibilities suited to the cultural more advanced community. Castellino (1962:143) has some views on this matter and propounds that originally, *qaṭala* as a permansive come to represent the action in its complete state, that is a "perfective" or "preterite". This was responsible for the passage of *iaqtulu* into an imperfect to balance it.

Hence we see that the addition of these affirmatives and preformatives which presented forms such as, or similar to, *iprus*, *iparras* and *paris* + suffix, made the connotation of the word more specific, not only as related to the subject of the action, but also as to predication of the action or situation. In this respect Haldar quotes Landsberger who states that *paris* and *iparras* are "nach Form und Wesen identisch" (Haldar 1964:16; Christian 1927:243f; Driver 1936:80; Gelb 1955:110).

Kustar (1972:10) refers to both Bauer and Driver and states that the latter pointed out that the imperfect-form is related to the imperative and infinitive and that Bauer was of the opinion that the imperative belonged to the original stock of the languages.

Frankena is of the opinion, with regard to perfect and imperfect, that the fientic meaning of the *jaqtul*- and *jaqattal*-form and the stative meaning of the *qaṭal*-form can still be determined from the historical background of these forms (Frankena 1972:5; Kurylowicz 1972:55-61). The fact is and remains that it must be borne in mind that actually no indication of tense was expressed by these forms. To clarify we may illustrate it as follows: When the body of a dead person is found, it might be said "he was killed" or "he died" whilst it might also be said "he is dead". In the first case, a past tense is used whereas in the second case a present tense is used. Kustar (1972:24-25) also states this very clearly when, with regard to the three terms action,

<sup>3</sup> This view is substantiated to a certain extent by Goshen-Gottstein (1969:87).

tempus and aspect he states that the Hebrew verbal system is based on aspect and action ("Aspektus" and "Aktio").

At a later stage there was, according to our opinion, a split in Proto-Semitic into East-Semitic and West-Semitic, perhaps even Proto-East-Semitic and Proto-West-Semitic, and as we have seen, the former is represented by Akkadian and the latter by Hebrew, each developing on its own. Janssens (1957/8:97-101) provides us with quite a comprehensive study in this respect, in which he propounds four periods of development.

Our opinion is that in Akkadian, at a later stage of its development, there was introduced into the verbal system a form with infixed *-t-*, viz. the *iptaras* form, also called the perfect "tense". Before we are able to understand the connotation of this new form, we shall have to satisfy ourselves as to the significance of this *-t-* element.

In his thesis on the deictic elements, Christian (1924:190) also discusses the *t*-element in the Semitic verbal system, and assigns to it medial, reflexive and passive meaning. This, however, only relates to the "tense" forming element *-t-*. There is, of course, the possibility that the *t*-element originally had only one function, viz. an intensive, assigning the element of force to the connotation of the verb, which at a later stage apparently developed into two functions, viz. emphasis and indicating the perfect. Oppenheim (1933:181, 1935:4-5) also advocates a similar, plausible, view when he regards the original function of the *t*-form as an intensive-habitative which developed into a perfective connotation on the one hand and on the other hand into an expression for emphasis.

In the case of the conditional clause in the Hammurabi Code, both these connotations, emphasis and indicating the perfect, are again combined in the *t*-form, when it functions as the last one of a series of verbal expressions, the climax, and therefore emphasized, and in representing the culmination of all the previous actions it is a perfect. Landsberger's view is that the *iptaras*-form is a present (with respect to "Zeitstufe"), used in apposition with and following onto the preterite, to express time-consecutivity ("Nachzeitigkeit") (Landsberger 1926/7a:973-4). Hence it is clear that *iptaras* gives no indication of tense as such, but of an aspect, the aspect of finality and completeness, not within itself but in relation to another or a number of other tenses preceeding it or related to it. For this reason it may be used to express a past-perfect, or a present-perfect, or a future-perfect. We quote Goetze (1936:311) in this respect: "... the *t*-form appears to have a distinct place within the tense system ... Any attempt to determine this place more exactly has to take into ... consideration the relationship of the *t*-form to the other tenses."

This phenomenon of contextual influence on the verb, or *consecutio temporum*, is applicable not only to the *iptaras* form (conjugation) of the verb, but to all verbal forms (conjugations). The inherent "tense" (or actually "aspect") of each form, however, may be the primary element bearing influence on the real tense of the verb, and the *consecutio temporum* only the secondary element when a certain action or event is described. Kurylowicz is also of the same opinion and states: "Meanings of tense, etc., conveyed by translations into European languages, are secondary functions ... put to the fore only if the time-frame, etc., is already imposed by the context." (Kurylowicz 1972:90-91; cf. Castellino 1962:143).

In Hebrew (a West-Semitic language) we have a different line of development, with basically only two verbal forms, extended to four by the introduction of "waw-consecutive". However, being a Semitic language, which developed from Proto-Semitic, just as is the case with Akkadian to which it is related, it also basically has the same phenomena and features in its verbal system as Akkadian (and other Semitic languages).

Of the two Proto-Semitic preformative verbal forms, Hebrew either only retained one or combined the two to form only one - the latter suggestion perhaps the less acceptable. With the former suggestion the question is which one of the two forms was retained by Hebrew, because, apparently in form it corresponds to the *iprus*-form but in sense it is closer to the *iparras*-form. Castellino (1962:142) pleads for a retention of the *iprus*-form with the adoption of the *iparras* connotation. Should we, however, maintain the view that in Semitic the verbs express only "Aktionsart" and aspect, than we have less of a problem, because then, as we have seen, the *iprus*-form can be used in any of the three tenses, hence also in a present and future. Janssens, on the other hand, is of the opinion that the Hebrew imperfect developed from the *iparras*-form and that the form used with waw-consecutive is a development from the *iprus*-form, or a Canaanite preterite form (Janssens 1957/8:102).

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Kuster (1972:55) also emphasises the aspect category of the verbal forms but as distinguishing terms he uses, 'determining' and 'determined', the former represented by *qaṭal* and the latter by *yiqṭol*.

Whatever the case may be, the fact remains that Hebrew inherited from Proto-Semitic a system of predication which is based on Aspect and "Aktionsart", called *accompli* : *inaccompli* by some, or Perfect: Imperfect by others and yet by others Aorist : Subsequent, ect.<sup>4</sup>. Tense as such was not inherited, though perhaps the method of manipulation of these forms to form a tense in the *consecutio temporum*, that is the use in context, could have been inherited from Proto-Semitic. Furthermore, as Christian (1927:258) argues: "Bei der Aufteilung der Tempusbegriffe auf die Präfix- und Suffixbildung spielte die Unterscheidung van *iaktul* als Tat- und *katal* als Zustandsverb eine bestimmende Rolle."

Notwithstanding all the theories and solutions offered, the way by which Hebrew came to represent these aspects by the two basic forms, plus the two *waw*-consecutive forms, particularly with regard to the *iprus/yiqṭol* for the 'imperfect', is not clear.

Before passing on to the next paragraph, in which some texts are discussed, it would be appropriate to quote firstly from Bobzin (1973:141): "Die Behandlung der 'Tempora' im Hebräischen berücksichtigte bislang zu wenig den unterschied zwischen morphologischer Form und syntaktischer Funktion...". Secondly Snell (1974:41b): "The most striking suggestion is certainly Hughes - that there is no functional difference between conjugations in Hebrew and only contexts supply either time or aspect nuances."

#### 4. COMPARISON OF BABYLONION LAWS WITH BIBLICAL LAWS

(Cf. Addendum)

<u>Hammurabi Code (HC)</u>	<u>Laws of Eshnunna (LE)</u>	<u>Biblical Equivalent (Bibl. text)</u>
1. HC 14	LE 49	Dt. 24:7
P. G perf <i>šrq</i>	P. N perf (not in Nt) <i>šbt</i>	P. Niph impf (+ part) <b>נִצַּח</b>
A. N prs <i>d'k</i>	A. G prs <i>rd'</i>	A. Qal perf cons <b>נִצַּח</b>

<sup>4</sup> Ballantine (1885:53) and Burney (1919:213) express similar views.

2. HC 125

- P. G prt *ndn*  
G perf (or Gt prt) *hlq*  
A. D prs *šlm*  
G prs *r'b*

LE 36-37

- P. G prt *ndn*  
D perf *hlq*  
A. ....  
G prs *r'b*

Ex. 22:6-7

- P. Qal impf *נָתַן*  
Pu perf cons *נָתַן*  
A. Pi impf *שָׁלַם*

3a. HC 128

- P. G prt *'hz*  
G prt *škn*

LE 27

- P. G prt *'hz*  
G prt *škn*

A. Subst (*aššat*) = St (GAG 77<sup>a</sup>)

A. Subst (*aššat*) = St (GAG 77<sup>a</sup>)

b. HC.129

- P. N perf (not in Nt) *šbt*  
A. G prs *kš'*  
G prs *ndn*

LE 28

- P. N perf (not in Nt) *šbt*  
A. G prs *m't*  
G prs *bl'*

Dt. 22:22

- P. Niph impf (+ part) *מָצָא*  
A. Qal perf cons *מָצָא*

4. HC 130

- P. D prt *kpl*  
G perf (or Gt prt) *'tl*  
G perf (or Gt prt) *šbt*  
A. N prs *d'k*

LE .....

Dt. 22:25-26

- P. Qal impf *מָצָא*  
Hiph perf cons/cop *הִצִּיק*  
Qal perf cons/cop *שָׁכַב*  
A. Qal perf cons *מָצָא*

5a. HC 199

- P. D perf *hpd*  
G perf (or Gt prt) *šbr*  
A. G prs *šql*

LE 42

- P. G prt *nšk*  
G perf (or Gt prt) *nks*  
A. G prs *šql*

Ex. 21:26-27

- P. Hiph impf *נָכַח*  
Pi perf cons/cop *שָׁחַת*  
A. Pi impf *שָׁלַח*

5b. HC 200

- P. G perf (or Gt prt) *nd'*  
A. G prs *nd'*

.....

- P. Hiph impf *נָפַל*  
A. Pi impf *שָׁלַח*

6a. HC 250

- P. G prt *nkp*  
Š perf (or Št prt) *m't*  
A. *išu*

LE 53

- P. G prt *nkp*  
Š perf (or Št prt) *m't*  
A. G prs *z'z*

Ex. 21:28-29

- P. Qal impf *נָגַח*  
Qal perf cons *מָוַת*  
A. Niph impf *מָקַל*

6b. HC 251	LE 54	P. Hoph perf cons/cop עור
P. Š prt 'd'	P. Š prt 'd'	(Qal impf שָׁמַר)
(D prt šm.)	(D prt šm)	.....
(D prt snq)	.....	.....
G prt nkp	G prt nkp	Hiph perf cons/cop מוֹת
Š perf m't	Š perf (or Št prt) m't	A. Niph impf פָּקַל
A. G prs ndn	A. G prs šql	Hoph impf מוֹת
6c. HC 252	LE 55	Ex. 21:32
A. G prs ndn	P. G prt nkp	P. Qal impf נָגַח
	Š perf (or Št prt) m't	A. Qal impf נָתַן
	A. G prs šql	Qal impf פָּקַל
7a. HC 263	LE .....	Ex.22:9-11
P. D perf (or Dt prt) hlq		P. Niph impf נָגַח
A. G prs r'b		A. Pi impf שָׁלַם
7b. HC 266	LE .....	Ex. 22:12
P. N perf (or Nt prt?) bš'		P. Niph impf פָּרַף
G perf (Gt= recip) d'k		
A. D prs 'bb		A. Hiph impf בּוֹא
G prs mhr		Pi impf שָׁלַם

#### 4.1 Observations drawn from the above tabulation.

##### 4.1.1 Regarding the Protasis

###### 4.1.1.1 Laws with a single main verb

These involve cases 1, 3b, 5b, and 7a in the above table. In all these cases the Babylonian laws use a perfect form (HC 4 cases, and LE 2 cases), whereas the Biblical laws use an imperfect (or PC) form in all four corresponding cases.

###### 4.1.1.2 Laws with more than one verb

###### a) Instances of two verbs in both Babylonian and Biblical laws.

We have three such cases, viz. 2, 5a and 6a in our tabulation. All these cases have the final verb in the perfect form (HC as well as LE). Furthermore, we have in all

three an initial verb in the preterite form. In all three case where we do have a Biblical equivalent, we have an imperfect (or PC) form followed by *waw* + perfect in each instance. According to the current concept of scholars in Semitics this *waw* + perfect can be nothing else than a perfect consecutive which has the same connotation as the preceding imperfect. In these Biblical laws both verbs in the protasis have the same object (i.e. *t*-form parallels *waw* + perfect).

b) Instances of two verbs in the Babylonian and one verb in the Biblical laws.

These concern 6c and 7b in our table. In the former preterite *nkp* (LE) has as equivalent in the Biblical text a Qal imperfect of נָגַח. In the latter the perfect of *bš'* (HC) has as Biblical equivalent a Niph<sup>c</sup>al imperfect (or PC) of טָרַף.

4.1.1.3 *Instances where we have more than two verbs in both the Babylonian and the Biblical laws.*

a) Firstly, we shall attend to case 4 in our table. Here we have no corresponding law in LE. In the HC we have the following sequence in verbal forms: preterite, perfect, perfect. This is due to the fact that we have two different subjects - preterite + perfect for the one (the man) and perfect only for the other (they). The corresponding Biblical law has only one subject and the sequence of the verbal forms is imperfect, *waw* + perfect, *waw* + perfect (i.e. *t*-form parallels *waw* + pf.).

b) Secondly, we refer to case 6b in our table. In the HC we have five verbal forms, the sequence being four preterites and one perfect. Here we have three subjects: the district (first preterite), the owner (second and third preterite), the ox (fourth preterite and perfect). In the LE we have four verbs of the sequence: three preterites and one perfect. As in the HC, we here also have three subjects: the district (first preterite), the owner (second preterite) and the ox (third preterite and perfect). The actual matter that concerns this law (HC and LE) is the ox that gored and caused the death of a person, hence the sequence preterite + perfect. All the other preterites describe the different situations and circumstances that lead up to this final situation. In the Biblical equivalent of this law, we have only three verbal forms following the sequence *waw* + perfect, imperfect, *waw* + perfect. But here we have only two subjects: the owner (first *waw* + perfect and imperfect) and the ox (second *waw* + perfect, i.e. the last verb in the sequence). Based on the syntax, it appears that we are justified in regarding both the verbs *waw* + perfect as being perfect-copulative (i.e. *t*-form parallels *waw* + perfect). We observe that where the perfect form is the only verb in the Babylonian law, the corresponding Biblical law uses a verb in the imperfect form. In those laws where we have two verbs in the Babylonian as well as in the Biblical laws, the preterite form (first verb) in the former, parallels an imperfect (or PC) form in the latter (three cases). In two cases

where we have two verbs in the Babylonian, we have only one in the Biblical which is in the imperfect (or PC) form. In the one instance where we have three verbs in the Babylonian as well as in the Biblical, the preterite form (first verb) in the former parallels an imperfect (or PC) form in the latter and both the perfect forms (verb in second and third position) in the former are equated by verbs in the perfect-consecutive (verbs in second and third position) in the latter.

Referring to the case where we have more than three verbs in the Babylonian law, the situation seems quite complicated, particularly so because we have only three verbs in the Biblical equivalent.

Taking first the verb(s) applicable to the supervision of the ox by its owner: the Babylonian uses a preterite form of *šrm* (and *šrq*) which equals a verb in the imperfect form of *שָׁמַר* in the Biblical equivalent of this law.

Secondly, we look at the other verbs in the protases of these laws: the initial preterite form of the Babylonian (*'d'*) is paralleled by a perfect copulative (*עוֹד*) in the Biblical equivalent. The perfect form of the Babylonian (the last verb in this sequence) also has a perfect-copulative as equivalent in the corresponding Biblical law. Thus it would appear as if the protasis with a single main clause prefers a verb in the perfect form in the Babylonian laws whereas the Biblical laws prefer a verb in the imperfect (or PC) form. In those protases where we have more than one main clause, the Babylonian laws have preference for the sequence: one or more preterites followed by a final verb in the perfect form. The biblical laws on the other hand show preference for the sequence: imperfect (or PC) form followed by one or more verbs in the *waw* + perfect form.

#### 4.1.2 Regarding the Apodosis

When we look at the apodoses and note the forms of the verbs used, we see that the Babylonian laws show preference for the present form of the verb, of which *ad loc* the most acceptable translation is a future tense. The Biblical texts, on the other hand, use either an imperfect (or PC) form (which in appearance resemble the form used in the protasis) or a perfect-consecutive. The intended connotation of both these forms in the apodosis appears to be a future tense.

### 5. CONCLUSIONS

#### 5.1 General remarks

As already indicated, there is a very close correspondence between certain of the Biblical and Babylonian laws in the HC and LE. This could suggest that there must

have been some type of "Vorlage" or basic corpus that served as a common basis to both these legal *corpi*. However, since there are also some differences we would be correct in concluding that the Biblical and Babylonian laws are not merely translations of each other.

From these facts it may be deduced that most probably each of these civilisations used their own language-mould and convention in which they casted their law codes. This is the format in which we have these codes at our disposal today.

## 5.2 "Tense" Connotations.

Apparently, so it would seem, the verbal forms as such, in Babylonian (Akkadian) as well as in Biblical Hebrew, originally had no "tense" connotation *per se*.<sup>5</sup> "Tense" and *consecutio temporum* could only be assigned to and determined from the verbs as they appear in context according to the syntactical value attributed to them.<sup>6</sup> In Biblical Hebrew, however, this is even less conspicuous than in Babylonian because we find imperfect, perfect-consecutive and perfect-copulative forms in the protasis as well as in the apodosis of the same law. In those instances where we have an imperfect form followed by a perfect-consecutive, we could perhaps regard it as a case of *consecutio temporum*. However, in those cases where there is an imperfect form of the verb in the protasis followed by an imperfect form in the apodosis which is normally considered to be in a subsequent "tense", one can hardly detect any form of *consecutio temporum*. This problem could be solved if the seemingly same verbal form represented two different verbal connotations. In this case the one connotation would fall in the same category as the Babylonian preterite (*iprus*), and the other in the same category as the Babylonian present (*iparras*). This idea finds support in Hetzron's view of an *iprús* and *iprus* form or a *yáqtul* and *yaqtúl* form (Hetzron 1969:1-5, 10-18). A similar view is expressed by Kienast (above) and Haldar (above). If we accept the views of these prominent scholars (which are essentially similar), we may regard the verbal form used in the protasis of the Biblical laws as a development of a *yíqtol\** (prefix-perfect) form and that used in the apodosis as a development of a *yíqtól\** (jussive-imperfect) form (cf. Rössler 1961:445-451).

Considering the *-t-* (*iptaras*) form used in the Babylonian laws, for which we retain the unhappy term "perfect", we shall have to distinguish between two types of *t*-infixes. There is the "Verbalstamm-modifizierenden *t*" and the "Tempus-modifizierenden *t*" (cf. Von Soden 1950). Perhaps the former should rather be regarded as "Aktions-modifizierendes *t*" and the latter as "Aspekt-modifizierendes *t*"

<sup>5</sup> Cf. our discussion above.

<sup>6</sup> This matter is treated above.

(cf. Kustar 1972).<sup>7</sup> This would suggest that what we have termed "perfect" could perhaps rather be called a *t*-preterite, that is still a preterite, but one with a nuance of otherness incorporated in it so as to distinguish it from those preterites preceding it in the same sequence of verbs in the protasis (cf. Von Soden 1965). This otherness is the additional function of this preterite in forming a link between the protasis and the apodosis (cf. Goetze 1936; Hirsch 1969).

In Biblical Hebrew, if we maintain our view of a *yíqtol*\* form as well as a *yíqtól*\* form, as substantiated, though on different grounds, by Hetzron, Kienast, Haldar and Rössler, then we have the same situation in both Biblical and Babylonian legal texts of the type we have discussed in this investigation. This entails that we have in the protasis a prefix-perfect (*\*yíqtol*), followed by a *waw*-perfect (*wāqatal*) in a non-initial position, and in the apodosis we have a jussive-imperfect (*\*yíqtól*), in some cases followed by a *waw*-perfect (*wāqatal*) in a second main clause of the apodosis.<sup>8</sup> The actual connotation of the *waw*-perfect (*wāqatal*), so it would seem, can only be determined from the form and connotation of the verb in the main clause that precedes it and on which it is dependent. From this a *consecutio temporum* (if we may call it that) can be determined (cf. Driver 1969:50, and Rozén 1969:214, 230).

### 5.3 Final remarks

The possibility that originally the Proto-Semitic verb (and hence the verb in Babylonian (Akkadian) and Biblical Hebrew) may not have represented a tense *per se*, has been recognised by some prominent scholars in the field of Semitics.<sup>9</sup> It is for this reason that we should be hesitant to assign a tense connotation to the different forms of the verb employed in the Babylonian and Biblical laws we have investigated in this study.

A grammatical development in the use and connotation of the verbal forms in both Babylonian (Akkadian) and in Biblical Hebrew seems obvious. This development appears to be in respect of the *consecutio temporum* rather than in the verb *per se*. Furthermore, it appears that the older literatures, both Babylonian and Biblical (Hebrew), assigned connotations to the verbal forms, different from those of their

<sup>7</sup> The view regarding two types of a *-t-* element, could be supported by the fact that though we have a Nt preterite (perfect), we have no evidence as yet of a Nt preterite (*ittapras*). In fact, we have no proof of a Nt form in any conjugation. (cf. Goshen-Gottstein 1969:83, 86 as well as Meek 1946:65n<sup>8</sup>).

<sup>8</sup> A case of interest is Dt 33:17: "... וְקַרְנֵי רֹאשׁ קַרְנָיו בָּהֶם עֲשִׂים יִנְנָה ... "And the horns of a wild ox are his horns, and with them he shall gore the people ...". Though we have the vocalization יִנְנָה - Pi in BHS, it could just as well be יִנְנָה - Qal, because the situation involved does not really require a Pi.

<sup>9</sup> We have discussed this phenomenon above. Cf. Maloney 1982:214-217, 232, 237, 245, 298, 306f.

later literatures. Naturally they could originally also have been different forms with a, superficially, similar external appearance.

These facts might serve as inspiration, and perhaps justification, to undertake a study that would lead to a reassessment of the verb and its connotations in the literatures of different periods, Babylonian as well as Biblical.

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# ADDENDUM I

## Texts and translations

### Hammurabi Code

#### §14

*šum-ma a-wi-lum*

*DUMU a-wi-lim*

*ši-iḫ-ra-am iš-ta-ri-iq*

*id-da-ak*

If a man kidnaps the infant (son)  
of a (free) man, he shall be put to  
death.

#### § 125

*šum-ma a-wi-lum mi-im-ma-šu a-*

*na ma-ša-ru-tim id-di-in-ma a-šar*

*id-di-nu ù lu i-na pi-il-ši-im it-ti mi-*

*im-me-e be-el E iḫ-ta-li-iq be-el E*

*ša i-gu-ma mi-im-ma ša a-na ma-*

*ša-ru-tim id-di-nu-šum-ma ú-ḫal-li-*

*qú ú-ša-lam-ma a-na be-el NIG.GA*

*i-ri-a-ab be-el E mi-im-ma-šu ḫal-*

*qá-am iš-te-ne-i-ma it-ti šar-ra- qá-*

*ni-šu i-li-qí*

If a man was seized in (possession  
of) a stolen slave, a stolen slave  
woman, slave shall drive slave,  
slave woman (shall drive) slave  
woman

### Laws of Esnunna

#### Section 49

*šum-ma awilum i-na wardim*

*šar-qi-im amtīm ša-ri-iq-tim*

*it-ta-aš-ba-at wardum wardam*

*amtum amtam i-re-ed-de*

If a man was seized in (possession  
of) a stolen slave, a stolen slave  
woman, slave shall drive slave,  
slave woman (shall drive) slave  
woman

#### Section 36/37:

*šum-ma awilum bu-še-šu a-na na-*

*ap-tà-ri a-na ma-ša-ar-tim id-di-in-*

*ma bitum la pa-li-iš si-ip-pu la ḫa-*

*li-iš a-ap-tum la na-às-ḫa-at bu-še-e*

*ma-ša-ar-tim ša id-di-nu-šum uḫ-*

*ta-li-iq bu-še-e-šu i-ri-a-ab šum-ma*

*bit awilim lu-uq-qú-ut it-ti ma-ša-*

*ar-tim ša id-di-nu-šum ḫu-lu-uq be-*

*el bitim ḫa-li-iq be-el bitim i-na bit*

*<sup>D</sup>Tišpak ni-iš ilim (DINGIR) i-za-*

*kar-šum it-ti bu-še-e-ka bu-šu-ia*

*ḫal-qí i-wi-tam ù ša-ar-tam la e-pu-*

*šu i-za-kar-šum-ma mi-im-ma e-li-*

*šu ú-ul i-šu*

If a man has given anything belonging to him for safekeeping and something belonging to him together with something belonging to the owner of the house has then been lost (from) where he has given (it), whether through breaking in or climbing (into the house), the owner of the house, who has been careless and has lost anything that he has given to him for safe custody, shall make (it) good and replace (it) to the owner of the property; the owner of the house shall continue to search for anything belonging to him that is lost and shall take (it) from him who has stolen it.

§ 128

*šum-ma a-wi-lum aš-ša-tam i-ḫu-  
uz-ma ri-ik-sa-ti-ša la iš-ku-un SAL  
ši-i ú-ul aš-ša-at*

If a man gave his goods to?/for? a *napṭarum* for a deposit, and - the house not having been broken into, the threshold not having been scraped off, the window not having been torn out - he caused the goods of the deposit, which he had given to him, to be lost, he shall replace his goods. If the house of the man was plundered, (and) with the goods of the deposit(or?), which he had given to him, loss of the owner of the house was incurred - the owner of the house shall in the house of Tispak swear to him by god: "Together with thy goods my goods were lost, I have not done evil and fraud." He shall swear to him, and he shall have nothing upon him.

Section 27/28

*šum-ma awilum marat awilim ba-  
lum ša-al a-bi-ša ù um-mi-ša i-ḫu-  
si-ma ù kir-ra-am ù ri-ik- <sa> -tim  
a-na a-bi-ša ù um-mi-ša  
la iš[-ku-u]n u-mi šattim ištiat (MU  
1.KAM) i-na bitī-šu li-ši-im-ma ú-ul  
aššat (DAM) šum-ma x ri-ik-sa-tim  
ù kir-ra-am a-na a-bi-ša ú um-mi-  
ša iš-ku-un-ma i-ḫu-us-si aššat u-  
um i-na su-un awilim iṣ-ša-ab-ba-tu  
i-ma-at ú-ul i-ba-al-lu-uṭ*

§ 129

*šum-ma aš-ša-at a-wi-lim it-ti zi-ka-ri-īm ša-ni-im i-na i-tu-lim it-ta-aš-bat i-ka-sú-šu-nu-ti-ma a-na me-e i-na-ad-du-ú- šu-nu-ti šum-ma be-el aš-ša-tim aš-ša-sú ú-ba-la-aṭ ú šar-ru-um ERU(M)-sú ú-ba-la-aṭ*

If a man has taken a (woman to) wife and has not drawn up a contract for her, that woman is not a wife.

If a married lady is caught lying with another man, they shall bind them and cast them into the water; if her husband wishes to let his wife live, then the king shall let his servant live.

§ 130

*šum-ma a-wi-lum aš-ša-at a-wi-lim ša zi-ka-ra-am la i-du-ú-ma i-na E a-bi-ša wa-aš-ba-at ú-kab-bíl-ši-ma i-na su-ni-ša it-ta-ti-il-ma iṣ-ša-ab-tu-šu a-wi-lum šu-ú id-da-ak SAL ši-i ú-ta-aš-šar*

If a man took a man's daughter without asking her father and?/or? her mother, and also did not fix marriage feast and?/or? contract for her father and?/or? her mother - should she (even) dwell in his house the days of one year (she is) not a wife.

If, however, he fixed contract and?/or? marriage feast for her father and?/or? her mother and took her, (she is) a wife. The day she will be seized in the lap of a man, he?/she? shall die, he?/she? shall not live.

If a man has stopped the cries of(?) a married lady, who has not known a man and is dwelling in her father's house, and has then lain in her bosom and they catch him, that man shall be put to death; that woman then goes free.

§ 199

šum-ma i-in ERU(M) a-wi-lim úh-tap-pt-id ú GIR.PAD(DU) ERU(M) a-wi-lim iš-te-bi-ir mi-ši-il ŠAM-šu i-ša-qal

§ 200

šum-ma a-wi-lum ši-in-ni a-wi-lim me-iḫ-ri-šu it-ta-di ši-in-na-šu i-na-ad-dú-ù

If a man puts out the eye of a (free) man's slave or breaks the bone of a (free) man's slave, he shall pay half his price.

If a man knocks out the tooth of a (free) man equal (in rank) to him(self), they shall knock out his tooth.

Section 42

šum-ma awilum ap-pé awilim iš-šu-uk-ma it-ta-ki-ls 1 ma-na kaspam išaqqal inum 1 ma-na šinnum 1/2 ma-na uz-nu 1/2 ma-na me-ḫe-eš le-tim 10 šiqil kaspam išaqqal

If a man bit the nose of a man and severed (it) - he shall weigh out 1 mina silver. An eye - 1 mina; a tooth - 1/2 mina; an ear - 1/2 mina. A slap in the face - he shall weigh out 10 shekels silver.

§ 250

*šum-ma GUD sú-qá-am i-na a-la-  
ki-šu a-wi-lam ik-ki-ip-ma uš-ta-mi-  
it di-nu-um šu-ú ru-gu-um-ma-am  
ú-ul i-šu*

§ 251

*šum-ma GUD a-wi-lim na-ak-ka-  
pí-ma ki-ma na-ak-ka-pu-ú ba-ab-  
ta-šu ú-še-di-šum-ma qar-ni-šu la ú-  
šar-ri-im GUD-šu la ú-sa-an-ni-iq-  
ma GUD šu-ú DUMU a-wi-lim ik-  
ki-ip-ma uš-[ta]-mi-it 1/2*

*[MA].NA KU.BABBAR i-[na]-ad-  
di-in*

§ 252

*šum-ma ERU(M) a-wi-lim 1/3  
MA.NA KU.BABBAR i-na-ad-di-in*

If an ox as it passes along a street  
has gored a man and causes his  
death, that case affords no cause  
of action.

If a man's ox is wont to gore and  
his district has notified him that (it  
is) wont to gore and he has not  
screened its horns (or) has not tied  
(it) up and that ox has gored the  
son of a (free) man and so has  
caused (his) death, he shall give  
1/2 maneh of silver.

If (the victim is) the slave of a  
(free) man, he shall give 1/3  
maneh of silver.

Section 53:

*šum-ma alpum alpam ik-ki-im-ma  
uš-ta-mi-it ši-im alpim ba-al-tí ù šir  
alpim mi-tim be-el alpim ki-la-la-an  
i-zu-uz-zu*

Section 54:

*šum-ma alpum nakkapi<sup>Pi</sup>-ma ba-  
ab-tum a-na be-li-šu [ú]-še-di-ma  
alap-šu la ú-ši-ir-ma awilam ik-ki-  
im-ma uš-ta-mi-it be-el alpim 2/3  
ma-na kaspam išaqqal*

Section 55:

*šum-ma wardam ik-ki-im-ma uš-ta-  
mi-it 15 šiqil kaspam ma uš-ta-mi-ti  
15 šiqil kaspam išaqqal*

If an ox gored an ox and caused  
(it) to die, both ox owners shall  
divide the price of the live ox and  
the carcass of the dead ox.

If an ox (was) a gorer and the  
ward (authorities) have made (it)  
made known to its owner, but he  
did not guard his ox and it gored a  
man and caused (him) to die, the  
owner of the ox shall weigh out  
2/3 mina silver.

If it gored a slave and caused  
(him) to die, he shall weigh out 15  
shekels silver

§ 263

šum-ma [GUD] ù lu [UDU] ša in-  
na-ad-nu-šum uḫ-ta-al-li-[iq] GUD  
ki-ma [GUD] UDU ki-ma [UDU]  
a-na be-li-]šu i-ri-a-[ab]

266

šum-ma i-na TUR li-pl-it DINGIR  
it-tab-ši ù lu UR.MAḪ id-du-uk  
SIBA ma-ḫar DINGIR ú-ub-ba-  
am-ma mi-qi-it-ti TUR be-el TUR i-  
maḫ-ḫar-šu

If he has then lost an ox or a sheep  
which has been given to him (to  
tend), he shall replace ox by ox  
(or) sheep by sheep to its owner.

If the finger of a god touches or a  
lion kills (a beast) in the fold, the  
herdsman may purge (himself)  
before a god and the mischief in  
the fold shall fall on the owner of  
the fold.

## ADDENDUM II

### Biblical Texts

Dt. 24:7

כִּי־יִמָּצֵא אִישׁ וְגֵב נָפֶשׁ<sup>7</sup>

מֵאֶחָיו מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהִתְעַמְרִי־בּוֹ וּמָכְרוֹ וּמָתָהוּ וְהָיָה וּבָעֵרָתָה  
הָרָע מִקִּרְבְּךָ<sup>d</sup>:

7 If a man is found stealing one of his brethren, the people of Israel, and if he  
treats him as a slave or sells him, then that thief shall die; so you shall purge the evil  
from the midst of you.

Ex. 22:6 and 7

<sup>6</sup> כִּי־יִתֵּן אִישׁ אֶל־רֵעֵהוּ כֶּסֶף א֥וֹ כְּלִים  
לְשֹׁמֵר וְנִגְבִּי מִבֵּית הָאִישׁ אִם־יִמָּצָא הַנֶּגֶב יִשְׁלַם שְׁנַיִם: <sup>7</sup> אִם־לֹא  
יִמָּצָא הַנֶּגֶב וְנִקְרַב בְּעַל־הַבַּיִת אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים אִם־לֹא שָׁלַח יָדוֹ  
בְּמִלְאֶכֶת רֵעֵהוּ:

6 If a man delivers to his neighbour money or goods to keep, and it is stolen out of the man's house, then, if the thief is found, he shall pay double. 7 If the thief is not found, the owner of the house shall come near to God, to show whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbour's goods.

Dt. 22:22

<sup>22</sup> כִּי־יִמָּצָא אִישׁ שֹׁכֵב אִתָּהּ אִשְׁתּוֹ בְּעֵלְתִּי־בַעַל וּמָתוּ נַם־שְׁנֵיהֶם  
הָאִישׁ הַשֹּׁכֵב עִם־הָאִשָּׁה וְהָאִשָּׁה וּבָעֵרָתָּ הָרָעִי מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל: <sup>25</sup>

22 If a man is found lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall purge the evil from Israel.

Dt. 22:25-26

<sup>25</sup> וְאִם־בִּשְׂדֵה וְיִמָּצָא הָאִישׁ אֶת־הַנְּעוּרָה הַמְּאֻרָשֶׁת  
וְהַחֲזִיקָהּ הָאִישׁ וְשָׁכַב עִמָּהּ וּמָתָה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־שָׁכַב עִמָּהּ לְבָדּוֹ:  
<sup>26</sup> וְלַנְּעוּרָה לֹא־תַעֲשֶׂה דָבָר אֵין לַנְּעוּרָה תַּשָּׂא מוֹת כִּי כַּאֲשֶׁר יָקוּם  
אִישׁ עַל־רֵעֵהוּ וּרְצָחוֹ נָפֶשׁ בֶּן הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה:

25 But if in the open country a man meets a young woman who is betrothed, and the man seizes her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die. 26 But to the young woman you shall do nothing; in the young woman there is no offence punishable by death, for this case is like that of a man attacking and murdering his neighbour.

Ex. 21:26-27

26 וְכִי־יִכֶּה אִישׁ אֶת־עֵין עַבְדּוֹ אוֹ־

27 אֶת־עֵין אִמּוֹתוֹ וְשִׁחְתָּהּ לַחֲפָשִׁי יִשְׁלַחְנוּ תַּחַת עֵינוֹ: 27 וְאִם־

שֶׁן עַבְדּוֹ אוֹ־שֶׁן אִמּוֹתוֹ יִפְּלֵל לַחֲפָשִׁי יִשְׁלַחְנוּ תַּחַת שֶׁנוֹ: 28

26 When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free for the eye's sake.

27 If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free for the tooth's sake.

Ex. 21:28-29

28 וְכִי־יִנָּח שׁוֹר אֶת־אִישׁ אוֹ אֶת־אִשָּׁה וּמָת סָקוֹל יִסְקַל הַשּׁוֹר

29 וְלֹא יֵאָכַל אֶת־בָּשָׂרוֹ וּבָעַל הַשּׁוֹר נָקִי: 29 וְאִם שׁוֹר נִנָּח הוּא מִתָּמַל

שְׁלֹשָׁם וְהוּעַד בְּבָעָלָיו וְלֹא יִשְׁמְרֵנִי וְהָמִית אִישׁ אוֹ אִשָּׁה הַשּׁוֹר

30 יִסְקַל וְגַם־בָּעָלָיו יוּמָת:

Ex. 21:32

32 אִם־עֶבֶד יִנָּח הַשּׁוֹר אוֹ אִמָּה כֶּסֶף וְשְׁלֹשִׁים שֶׁקֶלִים

33 יִתֵּן לֵאדֹנָיו וְהַשּׁוֹר יִסְקַל: 33

28 When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be clear. 29 But if the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not kept it in, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death. 32 If the ox gores a slave, male or female, the owner shall give to their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

Ex. 22:9-12

9 כִּי־יִתֵּן אִישׁ אֶל־רֵעֵהוּ חֲמֹר אוֹ־שׁוֹר אוֹ־שֶׂה וְקִלְט־בְּהֶמְתָּה לְשֹׁמֵר  
וּמֵת אוֹ־נֹשֶׁבֶר אוֹ־נֹשֶׁבֶת אֵין רֹאֶה: 10 שְׁבַעַת יִהְיֶה תִּהְיֶה בֵּין שְׁנֵיהֶם  
אִם־לֹא שָׁלַח יָדוֹ בְּמִלְאֶכֶת רֵעֵהוּ וְלָקַח בְּעָלָיו וְלֹא־יִשְׁלַם: 11 וְאִם־  
נָגַב יִנָּגַב מֵעַמּוֹ יִשְׁלַם לְבַעְלָיו: 12 אִם־טָרַף יִטָּרַף יִבְאַהֲרֵי עֵרֶב  
הַטָּרְפָּה לֹא־יִשְׁלַם: 13

9 If a man delivers to his neighbour an ass or an ox or a sheep or any beast to keep, and it dies or is hurt or is driven away, without any one seeing it, 10 an oath by the LORD shall be between them both to see whether he has not put his hand to his neighbour's property; and the owner shall accept the oath, and he shall not make restitution. 11 But if it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to its owner. 12 If it is torn by beasts, let him bring it as evidence; he shall not make restitution for what has been torn.

# Aspect and cohesion in Biblical Hebrew narratives<sup>1</sup>

J Junger

## 0. INTRODUCTION

The study of biblical texts is interesting from many points of view: historical, legal, poetical, philosophical and literary. In this article we shall look at one of the literary styles, viz narratives. More specifically at the interplay between the form of the verbs and the conjunctive particle *waw* as they are used to establish cohesion in stories, and to create the vividness and rhythm specific to the narrative style.

Cohension in biblical texts has been studied, for example, by Givon (1983). Givon describes the way cohesion is created by focusing on the participants, i.e. by the use of the pronominal system. Another stylistic device in Biblical Hebrew is word order. Its use in narratives has been described, among others, by Lode (1984). The stylistic devices we shall be looking at in this article are, on the one hand, the use of the aspectual forms of the verb, and on the other the use of the *waw*, a conjunctive prefix. This prefix, typical to Biblical Hebrew only and not found in later stages of Hebrew, has been described, among others, by Young (1953) and Loprieno (1980). Its function in narratives too has been discussed, for example, by Longacre (1979) and Pedersen (1968). We hope that this paper will contribute in creating a more unified picture of the connection between the aspectual form of the verbs and the *waw*. We shall also try to demonstrate how in their use they complement each other in creating the rhythm and vividness of the narratives.

The paper will proceed as follows: in sections one and two we shall look at the system of verbal aspect in Biblical Hebrew, and at the *waw*-conversive; in section three four stories will be analysed, focusing on the form of the verbs, and on the interplay between the verb form and the use of the *waw* conversive, so as to create a certain stylistic effect. We shall try to demonstrate that this stylistic effect is double:

- a. the use of the *waw*-conversive creates cohesion, foregrounds the verbs and enables the use of the imperfect aspect;

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<sup>1</sup> I wish to express my gratitude to M. Dale-Kinkade, S.C. Dik, E. Garcia and H.J. Hospers, for their helpful remarks on an earlier version of this paper. The responsibility for its contents is, of course, solely mine.

- b. the use of the imperfect aspect renders the stories more vivid and brings the reader as it were "into the story" by giving a perspective form "inside the story".

In addition, we shall also show that the change from one aspect to another is not arbitrary, but serves to delineate the internal structure of the stories.

## 1. THE TENSE/ASPECT SYSTEM IN BIBLICAL HEBREW

Hebrew belongs to the Middle Semitic, or Canaanite branch of the Semitic languages. The term 'Biblical Hebrew' or 'Ancient Hebrew' refers to the language of the Old Testament. Although the language of the Old Testament is highly uniform (except for some sound changes), there is a discernible progress in it. Two periods can be distinguished: the first one till 160 B.C., and the second one after it. The first period lasted some 600 years ( $\pm 700$  B.C. - 160 B.C.). It includes

- a. the prose and historical writings (a large part of the Pentateuch, of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings);
- b. poetical writings: Psalms and Proverbs;
- c. earlier prophets: Amos, Hoshea, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Obadiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah.

In the second period some influence of Aramaic is discernible. Writings from this period include:

- a. certain parts of the Pentateuch and Joshua, Ruth, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles, Esther;
- b. prophets: Haggai, Zechariah, Trito-Isaiah, Malachi, Joel, Jonah, Daniel;
- c. poetic pieces: large parts of Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, and most of the Psalms.

The two periods, however, do not differ in the basic structure of the language, but more in vocabulary. The narratives that we shall be looking at are from the first period. We shall compare them with other styles, prophetic and poetic, which are partly from the second period. However, as the difference between the periods is not syntactic or structural, this does not invalidate the comparison.

According to various studies of Biblical Hebrew, like Gesenius (1910), Driver (1879), the verbal system is formally not divided according to time reference, as in the Indo-European languages, for example. In Biblical Hebrew, we do not have three (inflectional) forms of the verb referring to past, present and future time.

There are two inflectional forms, which according to these studies denote aspect: perfect and imperfect.

Both have a complete inflectional paradigm for number, person and gender. This is illustrated below with the root *qtl*, "slay", in the *Qal* pattern:

(1) Perfect

	Singular		Plural	
	masculine	feminine	masculine	feminine
1 p.	קָטַלְתִּי	קָטַלְתְּ	קָטַלְנוּ	קָטַלְנָה
2 p.	קָטַלְתָּ	קָטַלְתְּ	קָטַלְתֶּם	קָטַלְתֶּן
3 p.	קָטַל	קָטְלָה	קָטְלוּ	קָטְלָוּ

(2) Imperfect

	Singular		Plural	
	masculine	feminine	masculine	feminine
1 p.	אֶקְטַל	אֶקְטְלִי	נִקְטַל	נִקְטְלִי
2 p.	תִּקְטַל	תִּקְטְלִי	תִּקְטְלוּ	תִּקְטְלָנָה
3 p.	יִקְטַל	יִקְטְלָה	יִקְטְלוּ	יִקְטְלָוּ

These two paradigms are used in Modern Hebrew as the past and future tense respectively. In Biblical Hebrew (henceforth BH), however, there is clear evidence that they were not used as tenses. Time reference in BH was established by a time expression. The perfect and imperfect could be both used for referring to events, actions or states in either the past, the present or the future.

Before demonstrating this point, it is useful to state clearly that the term 'aspect' is not used in the same way as it is in Comrie (1976), and following him, in many contemporary studies. Comrie (1976) distinguishes between the "perfective" and the "imperfective" aspects. By the perfective he means looking at an action, event or state as one unit, as one point on the time axis. The imperfective, on the other hand, means looking at an action, event or state as having a certain duration, as a line on the time axis. Schematically, Comrie makes the following distinction

imperfective

perfective

In real time the two can overlap (though not always), and the difference between the aspects in fact reflects our perspective from the duration point of view. This distinction is most clearly demonstrated by the fact that to an imperfect expression we can add the phrase "while...", whereas to a perfect one we cannot.

"Aspect" in this paper is used in a somewhat different way. It refers to an action, event or state, not as being a point on the time axis, or having a certain duration, but as being completed or uncompleted. The perfect use here (following the traditional studies of Biblical Hebrew) designates an action, event or state which is regarded by the writer as completed, whereas the imperfect designates an action, event or state which is regarded by the writer as still in process, or as about to occur. As we shall see in Section 3, the use of the perfect and imperfect in the stories justifies this view of aspect rather than the aspectual distinction made by Comrie.

### 1.1 The perfect

Aspect, both perfect and imperfect, have as primary function to represent the speaker's view on the event, action or state referred to.

The perfect is used to express actions, events and states which the speaker wishes to represent as completed, whether belonging to the past, the present or the future time.

#### 1.1.1 Past time

The perfect in past time can have the following functions:

1.1.1.1 To express actions, states or events completed in the past, corresponding to the perfect proper in Latin and English. For example:

(3) מִי הִגִּיד לָךְ (Gen. 3:11)

"Who told thee?"

1.1.1.2 As simple *tempus historicum*, corresponding to the Greek *aorist*, for narrating events in the past. For example:

(4) אִישׁ הָיָה בְּאֶרֶץ-עוּז (Job 1:1)

'(a) man was in-land-of Uz'

"There was a man in the land of Uz..."

**1.1.1.3** For expressing that an action in the past was already completed when another action took place, i.e. pluperfect. As such the perfect is frequent in relative and causal clauses when the main clause constrains the time reference to past. For example:

(5) וְשָׁמוּאֵל מֵת וַיִּסְפְּרוּ לוֹ כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל

'and-Samuel died and-impf.-mourn-they to-him all Israel ...

(1 Sam. 28:3) וְשָׁאוּל הֵסִיר הָאֲבוֹת וְאֶת-הַיִּדְּעָנִים מִהָאָרֶץ

'and Saul pf.-remove-he the-spirits and-acc the wizards from the-country.'

"Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him ... And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land."

## 1.1.2 Present time

In constructions referring to events, actions or states in the present time, the perfect has the following uses:

**1.1.2.1** To express, that although an event, action or state has been completed in the past, it still extends its influence into the present. This is similar to the so-called "current relevance" in the use of the present perfect in English. In BH we find this in particular with intransitive verbs, or verbs expressing states of the mind. In the following example a discussion is reported as it is taking place:

(6) אֲמַנְם יָדַעְתִּי כִּי-כֵן וְמַה-יִּצְדֵּק אָנוּשׁ עִם-אֵל (Job 9:2)

'and-yet pf.-knew-I that-so and-what impf.-right man with God ...'

"I know it is so of truth: but how should a man be just with God?"

**1.1.2.2** In direct narration to express actions which are only in the process of being accomplished, where the speaker wants to express his certainty about accomplishing them by representing them as if they are accomplished.

(7) וְאִם לֹא תִשְׁמָעוּ אֶת-הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה בִּי נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי (Jer. 22:5)

'and-if not impf.-listen-ye acc the-words the-these so pf.-swear-I ...'

'But if ye will not hear these words, I swear by myself...'

**1.1.2.3** To express facts which have formerly taken place, but are still of constant recurrence, and hence matters of common experience (Greek *gnomic aorist*). For example:

(8) וַיִּבְטְחוּ בָּהּ יוֹדְעֵי שְׁמָהּ בִּי לֹא-עֹוֶבֶת דְּרָשִׁיהּ יְהוָה (Ps. 9:11)

'and-impf.-trust-they in-you knowing name-yours for not desert seekers-yours,  
Lord'

"And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee, for Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee"

### 1.1.3 Future time

The perfect is used in constructions referring to the future when the speaker intends to express assurance, and therefore represents the event in question as if already accomplished.

The most frequent use (though not only) of the perfect as such is the so-called *perfectum profeticum*, i.e. in prophecies. For example:

(9) (Numb. 17:27) הִנֵּנוּ גִּוְעִנִּי אֲבִדְנוּ כָּלֵנוּ אֲבִדְנוּ

'behold pf.-die-we pf.-lost-we we-all pf.-lost-we'

"Behold we die, we perish, we all perish"

1.1.3.1 To express actions or facts which are meant to be indicated in the future in a completed state.

(10) (Gen. 43:14) בְּאִשֶּׁר שָׁכַלְתִּי שָׁכַלְתִּי

'and-if pf.-bereaved-I pf.-bereaved-I'

"If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved"

### 1.1.4 Modus-possibility

The perfect can also be used with a modal function, to express that actions which are not accomplished, are nevertheless possible. In this use, it corresponds to the imperfect or the pluperfect subjunctive in Latin. For example:

(11) (Gen. 31:42) לֹאִי אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי ... כִּי עַתָּה רִיקָם שְׁלַחְתָּנִי

'if-not God-of my-father ... then now empty pf.-send-you-me'

"except the God of my father (had been with me),... surely thou hadst sent me away now empty"

## 1.2 The Imperfect

The imperfect is in general used to represent actions, events or states which are regarded by the speaker at any moment as still continuing, in the process of accomplishment or as just taking place. Like the perfect, the imperfect too can be used in constructions whose time reference is past, present or future.

### 1.2.1 Past time

The imperfect in past time can express duration. For example:

- (12) (Gen. 2:6) וַיֵּרָא מִן־הָאָרֶץ

'and-mist impf.-rise-he from the-earth'

"But there went up a mist from the earth ..."

The imperfect in a past time construction can be used also to express iterativeness, i.e. repetition at fixed intervals or occasionally.

- (13) (Job 1:5) וַהֲשִׁימִים בַּבֶּקֶר וַהֲעֵלָה עֹלֹת ... פָּכַח יַעֲשֶׂה אִיּוֹב בַּל־הַיּוֹמִים  
and-pf.-rise-he in-the-morning and-pf.-sacrifice-he sacrifices ... so impf.-do Job  
all the-days

"and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings ... Thus did Job continually"

### 1.2.2 Present time

The imperfect in constructions with a reference to present time has the following functions:

#### 1.2.2.1 To express longer or shorter duration

- (14) (Gen. 37:15) מַה־תִּבְקֹשׁ

'what impf.-request-you'

"What seekest thou?",

and also to express general truths, particularly in the Books of Job and Proverbs.

- (15) (Prov. 15:20) בֶּן־חָכָם יַשְׁמַח־אָב

'son wise impf.-make-glad-he father'

"A wise son maketh glad a father".

#### 1.2.2.2 To express actions which may be repeated at any time, including present, or are costumarily repeated on a given occasion.

- (16) (Gen. 6:21) וְאַתָּה קַח־לָּהּ מִכָּל־מַאֲכָל אֲשֶׁר יֹאכֵל

'and-you take for-you from-all food that impf.-is-eaten...'

"And taketh thou unto thee of all food that is eaten"

### 1.2.3 Future time

The imperfect in constructions referring to future time, has the following functions:

**1.2.3.1** To express actions which are about to take place, as well as iterativeness or duration in the future.

- (17) (Exod. 4:1) וְהֵן לֹא-יִאֱמִינוּ לִי וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ בְקוֹלִי

'for not impf.-believe-they me and-not impf.-listen-they to-me'

"But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice".

### 1.2.4 Modal use - conditional

The imperfect can also have a modal function, namely expressing actions which are willed, or are in some other way conditional.

In the following example the imperfect is used to express will instead of order:

- (18) (Gen. 1:9) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יִקּוּי הַמַּיִם

'and-impf.-say God impf.-be-gathered the-water'

"And God said, Let the waters be gathered together..."

The imperfect can also express expectation:

- (19) (Prov. 16:10) קֶסֶם עַל-שִׁפְתֵי-מֶלֶךְ בְּמִשְׁפָּט לֹא יִמְעַל-פִּיו

'wonder on lips-of king in-justice not impf.-betray mouth-his'

"A divine sentence is on the lips of the king; his mouth transgresseth not in judgement"

In the negative sense, the imperfect can express actions, events or states which cannot or should not happen:

- (20) (Gen. 32:13) אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִסְפָּר מֵרַב

'that not impf.-be-counted from-many'

"... which cannot be numbered for multitude"

The imperfect can also be used in conditional clauses, corresponding to the Latin present or imperfect conjunctive.

- (21) (Ps. 23:4) גַּם כִּי-אֵלֶךְ ... לֹא-אִירָא רָע

'even that impf.-walk-I ... not impf.-fear-I evil'

"Yea, thou I walk (...) I will fear no evil"

This short survey was intended as general background information about the various temporal contexts in which the two verb forms can occur. It seems to us to support the view that these verb forms do not express tense. If we consider these, and other instances, the choice of the verb form indeed seems to be based on expressing the subjective attitude of the writer ('speaker') as to the completed or uncompleted nature of the action or state referred to.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. THE WAW-CONVERSIVE (CONSECUTIVE)

Conjunction in Hebrew (Biblical Post-biblical and Modern) can be expressed in several ways. The most common one is by means of the particle *waw*, 'and', which is written as the consonant **ו**. It is always a prefix, and can occur in several phonological variants: *wa*, *wə*, and *u* depending on the word to which it is prefixed.

In studies of Biblical Hebrew (for example Nakarai (1951), Gesenius (1910)), a distinction is usually made between two conjunctives, both consisting of the particle *waw*, 'and':

- a. the 'weak *waw*';
- b. the 'strong *waw*'.

Whereas the conjunctive 'weak-*waw*' is typical to many Semitic languages, the conversive-*waw* is found only in some of them, such as Ugaritic, Phoenician and Moabite (Nakarai 1951). In Biblical Hebrew it is said to be distinguishable from the plain conjunction by the following features:

- a. it precedes only verbs
- b. the verb prefixed with a *waw*-conversive gets an emphatic intonation on the last syllable (of course except for monosyllabic words).<sup>3</sup>

(22) וְשָׁמְרָהּ 'waw-pf.-guarded' vs. וְשָׁמְרָהּ 'and-pf.-guarded'

<sup>2</sup> In Section 3 we will return to the two verbs forms, and we will see that in a whole narrative they can also have another function: making the structure explicit. The textual effect is achieved, however, not by the use of one or another aspect in the isolated sentences, but by going forward and backward between the forms. We do not think that the fact that these verbal forms are used in narrative for a stylistic effect which is not always connected to aspect (though as we shall see the use of the imperfect certainly is), is a good enough reason to reject the analysis which sees them as expressing aspect, as suggested for example by E. Garcia (personal communication).

<sup>3</sup> This strong intonation can be established on the basis of various super-segmental signs which are part of the traditional written Bible, and which indicate the way the text should be read out aloud. One could, of course, argue also that these are no more than indications for a ritual chanting, and do not necessarily indicate the intonation of the spoken Biblical Hebrew.

'sometimes there is a vowel change in the verb which is prefixed by the *waw*-conversive'

(23) אָמַר 'impf.-say' - וְאָמַר 'waw-impf.-say'

In either of the studies mentioned above, is there independent evidence for postulating the existence of two, or more, independent *waw*'s. We get the impression from Gesenius and other studies of the *waw* that the authors called the *waw* in *waw* + verb, where the verb is conjoined to a previous sentence whose verb has the opposite aspect, *waw*-conversive. All the other occurrences of the prefix *waw*, whether *wā* or *ū* (before verbal or nominal constituents) are simply called 'weak *waw*'. If the distinction rests only on this reasoning, it is circular. Moreover, in the present study of narratives we found no independent argument(s) for supporting the distinction. However, since there might be other reasons, which are out of our present focus, and hence have eluded us, for keeping to the distinction between two *waw*'s, we do not wish here to go as far as rejecting it totally.

According to both Young (1953) and Loprieno (1980), the origin of the *waw* is from a Semitic conjunctive *w*, and it is similar to the conjunctive *iw* in Late Egyptian. Young (1953) calls both the *waw* and the *iw* sentence adverbials. They have a similar function: joining a sentence to the previous sentence. According to Young (1953:250),

"The *wa* modifies the clause to make it subordinate to the preceding clause. [...] It is a striking peculiarity of Hebrew that the conjunction 'and' prefixed to a verbal form, frequently alters its meaning and often has a form different from the preceding verb with which it is co-ordinated."

Loprieno (1980) also points out that the *waw* in Biblical Hebrew is parallel to the prefix *iw* in Late Egyptian, both in its syntactic and semantic features and in its function of connecting between sentences in narratives. They are also parallel in being specific to more or less the same period of development in the two languages, and having disappeared later.

The function of this *waw* is to connect the verb to which it is prefixed, to the previous verb. Often this previous verb is of the inverse aspect, and it is this verb which defines the domain of the action, event or state in question. The scope of the verb prefixed by the *waw* is restricted to the same domain. Hence, we usually get strings of the following type:

a. verb-impf. ... *waw* + verb-pf. ... *waw* + verb-pf. ...

or

b. verb-pf. ... *waw* + verb-impf. ... *waw* + verb-impf. ...

This is illustrated below, in (24) with a string of type (a) and in (25) with a string of type (b), both referring to actions in the future time:

- (24) כִּי הִמְלִיט אֶמְלִיט אֶל-אֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים וְנוֹאֵשׁ מִמֶּנִּי שָׂאוּל לְבַקְשֵׁנִי  
(1 Sam 27:1)

'for escaping impf.-escape-I to land-of Philistines and-pf.-despair-he from-me Saul to-search me ...'

"I speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more ..."

- (25) (2 Sam. 13:16-17) וְלֹא אָבָה לְשָׁמַע לָהּ וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-נָעֲרוֹ מִשְׁרָתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר  
'and-not pf.-want-he to-listen to-her: and-impf.-call-he acc boy-his servant-his and-impf.-say-he'

"But he would not hearken unto her. Then he called his servant that ministered unto him and said ..."

The contextual scope of the verbs prefixed with the *waw*-conversive is restricted to the scope of the first verb in the string, which has no *waw*.<sup>4</sup> That is, the time and place to which the whole string refers is established by the first verb; the ones following it and prefixed with the *waw*-conversive are interpreted as referring to the same time and place. This feature of the *waw* is interpreted by Young (1953), for example, literally. According to Young, it is the *waw* which causes the change of aspect reference of the verb to which it is prefixed.

We think, however, that it is not the *waw* itself that causes the inversion of aspect, but rather allows us to see the *waw* + verb as one unit, and allows us to see this one unit as having the opposite aspect than the verb alone. In other words, due to the *waw*-conversive the meaning of the *waw* + verb is not the sum of the meaning of its parts (i.e. 'and' + verb) but gets a partly novel meaning. After all, we can also find sequels of the type verb-pf. ... *waw*-pf. ... *waw*-pf. ..., where there is no inversion. We do not think that the *waw* in these cases is another *waw*. Therefore, we do not think the *waw* actually brings about an inversion of the aspect, but as stated already, it creates a new unit, connected to the previous verb and within the aspectual domain defined by that verb.

As we shall see in the next section, this allows for a certain stylistic effect in narratives. The *waw*-conversive establishes not only a chronological, but also a logical connection. This is illustrated in the following passage:

<sup>4</sup> The only exception is when a whole narrative is started by וַיְהִי. This, however, is usually used as an opening formula, as we shall see in Section 3. Therefore it is not really an exception.

(26) וַיָּבֹא אַחָאָב אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ סָר וְזַעַף עַל-הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאלִי  
וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא-אֶתֶּן לָךְ אֶת-נַחֲלַת אֲבוֹתַי

'and-impf.-come Ahab to house-his heavy and displeased on the-thing that pf.-  
speak-he to-him Naboth the-Jezreelite and-impf.-say-he not impf.-give to-you  
acc inheritance-of my fathers...'

וַתָּבֹא אֵלָיו אִיזֶבֶל אִשְׁתּוֹ

'and-impf.-come-she to-him Jezebel wife-his...'

וַתִּכְתֹּב סְפָרִים בְּשֵׁם אַחָאָב

'and-impf.-write-she letters in-name-of Ahab'

וְהוֹצִיאוּהוּ וּסְקָלוּהוּ וַיָּמָת

'and-take-out-him and-stone-him and-impf.-die-he' (1 Kings 21:4, 5, 8, 10)

"And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word  
which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give  
thee the inheritance of my fathers...

But Jezebel his wife came to him...

So she wrote letters in Ahab's name.

And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die..."

Note that in these examples the *waw* expresses logical and not chronological connection. This is probably why the translator used instead of "and", conjunctives like "for", "so" and "that". This way the meaning is translated accurately, but the use of the different conjunctives diminishes the cohesion which the original text precisely has, due to the unity of form resulting from the repetition of the *waw*. Another, even more important effect which is lost is the focus on the verbs. We shall return to this point in Section 3.

In the narratives we investigated, the most frequent combination with the *waw*-conversive is with verbs in the imperfect.

According to Gesenius (1910:\$111) some of the functions of the imperfect with the *waw*-conversive (in his terms the "imperfect consecutive") are: (we quote here only those functions relevant to narratives, keeping Gesenius' terminology)

1. to express actions, events or states, which are to be regarded as the temporal or logical sequel of actions, events, or states mentioned immediately before.

As such the imperfect consecutive is used most frequently as the narrative tense.

2. to represent chronological succession and actions of events, or logical sequence of what preceded.
3. regarding time range, the imperfect consecutive can represent all varieties of tense and mood which the imperfect alone does (i.e. past, present or future); the precise range of time to which the imperfect consecutive refers must be inferred from that of the preceding verb.

Like the imperfect consecutive, the perfect consecutive too (i.e. *waw* + verb-pf.) is used to express actions, events or states which are to be attached to the domain of the preceding verb, as its temporal or logical sequence. The perfect consecutive, too, can have all the ranges of time reference as the perfect alone. Some of the functions of the perfect consecutive (again from Gesenius 1910:§112) are:

1. to continue the period of time expressed by the preceding verb, whether past, present or future;
2. to express certainty about the occurrence of a future event, mainly in prophetic texts;
3. to introduce a command, a wish, a frequently repeated action or after a statement of condition or reason.

(For a more detailed discussion of the occurrences and functions of the imperfect consecutive and of the perfect consecutive, the interested reader is referred to Gesenius 1910:326-339).

The two consecutive aspects, however, are not equivalent in their use. In a comparison of texts representing four different types of styles, the following distribution was found (the texts are more or less of equal length):

## 2.1 Prophetic style: Amos 3 and 4 and Jeremiah 33:

perfect	<i>waw</i> + perfect	imperfect	<i>waw</i> + imperfect <sup>5</sup>
52	11	44	4

<sup>5</sup> In studies of Biblical Hebrew, there is a further distinction of verb forms into cohortative and jussive. These are, however, emphatic forms of the imperfect; the cohortative is 1st person singular and plural, and the jussive 2nd and 3rd person singular and plural, with the addition of the ending *ā, nā* or placing before the verb the particle *'al*. For example (i) *אֲנִי-אֹמֵר* (Job 16:6), "Though I speak"; (ii) *יֹשֶׁב-נָא עִבְדִּי* (Gen. 44:33), "Let thy servant sit". In this counting the jussive and the cohortative are counted as imperfect.

Typical of prophetic style is the abundance of adjectives and nouns, i.e. of descriptions; the ratio description: action is the opposite to narratives.

## 2.2 Legal style: Leviticus 5 and 12:

perfect	waw + perfect	imperfect	waw-imperfect
19	51	36	3

Typical to this style is the use of hypothetical situations, i.e. of conditions.

## 2.3 Literary/poetic: Psalms 3, 4, 6 and 10; Proverbs 24 and 15; Job 19:

perfect	waw + perfect	imperfect	waw-imperfect
69	2	124	14

## 2.4 Narrative style: Job 1, 2 Samuel 13, 1 Kings 21:

perfect	waw + perfect	imperfect	waw-imperfect
69	19	44	149

Typical to this style is a high frequency of verbs, i.e. much action and few and short descriptive parts.

If we sum up the verb form distribution in the four styles, by representing it as a decreasing hierarchy of frequency 4 -> 1, we get the following picture:

(27) Proportionate frequency of aspects:

style	form			
	perfect	waw + perfect	imperfect	waw + imperfect
narrative	3	1	2	4
prophetic	4	2	3	1
legal	2	4	3	1
literary/ poetic	3	1	4	2

In the next section we will go into the use of the *waw* + imperfect in narratives as well as other features of this style.

## 3. THE STRUCTURE OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVES

In this section we will look at the structure of narratives in the Bible, in particular at the way cohesion is expressed.

The analysis is based on reading through numerous narrative texts. The richest inventory of stories is in Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings. Three texts have been analysed closely: 1 Kings 21, Job 1, and 2 Samuel 13. The last text consists of two separate stories, the second one being a 'follow up' of the first; the texts are provided with a linguistic and literary translation (the King James Version) in the appendix.

By a detailed analysis of these stories we will try to answer the following questions:

1. How is the *waw*-conversive used?
2. What is the principle which governs the change from one aspect to the other?
3. Why is the *waw* + imperfect the most frequently used form?

In the biblical narratives we can find the following four finite verb forms, alternating with each other:<sup>6</sup>

- a. the perfect: שִׁלַּחְתִּי 'sent': pf. 1 p.sg.m.
- b. the imperfect: אֶשְׁלַח 'send': impf. 1 p.sg.m.
- c. the perfect with *waw*: וַאֲמַר 'say': pf. 3 p.sg.m.
- d. the imperfect with *waw*: וַיֹּאמֶר 'say': impf. 3 p.sg.m.

The starting hypotheses are:

1. the distribution of these four verb forms is not arbitrary;
2. the alternation between the forms is used for structuring the story, and as such also for establishing cohesion.
3. the use of the *waw* conversive enhances the use of the imperfect aspect.

The use of aspectual distinctions for discourse purposes has been noted already, for instance by Diver (1969) and Hopper (1982).

Diver (1969) looks at the use of various inflectional forms of the verb in Homer's Iliad, and claims that their use is governed by the principle of 'relevance'. Accordingly, the distribution of the various forms is according to the following hierarchy (in descending order):

more central (most relevant)	aorist active
less central (more relevant)	aorist middle

<sup>6</sup> The *waw*-pf. and *waw*-impf. are, of course, syntactically not different than the pf. or impf. alone. I have listed them here as independent forms, because from the textual viewpoint they are used as such.

less peripheral (less relevant) : imperfect active

more peripheral (least relevant) : imperfect middle

Thus, according to Diver, morpho-syntactic inflectional forms are used in Homer's Iliad according to a textual principle.

Hopper (1982) claims that in Malayan narratives, perfective aspect is used for foregrounding and for presenting events in a chronological sequence. In Russian too, perfective can be used for 'foregrounded' event lines, and the imperfective for 'backgrounded' scene settings and descriptions. The perfective presents events as sequenced, and the imperfective gives the effect of randomly distributed events, or at any rate events whose order of occurrence is of no importance.

Our analysis of Biblical Hebrew narratives also pointed to the possibility that the underlying principles in the variation of the verb form is a device for structuring the narratives.

First, let us look at how the explicit cohesion marker, the *waw*-conversive, is used in the narratives.

### 3.1 The *waw*-conversive

As already mentioned in the previous section, this *waw* is simply a conjunction. The traditional term 'conversive' may be misleading if we interpret it as though the *waw* brings about the change in the aspect of the verb. In our view the effect of this *waw* is to form a new unit with the verb to which it is attached, and that new unit as a whole is interpreted as the sequel of the previous verb. When the previous verb has the opposite aspect of the verb following the *waw*, then the whole unit takes over that aspect too. In this sense, the new unit has the opposite aspect of that of its verb, and the *waw* can be called 'conversive'.

#### 3.1.1 The *waw*-conversive in opening formulas

The *waw*-conversive prefixed to the copula  $\text{וַיְהִי}$ , "be", either in the perfect or in the imperfect, often has the fixed formula function of signalling the beginning of a new narrative, or beginning a new passage (turn of the plot) in a narrative. Thus we get  $\text{וַיְהִי}$ , '*waw*-impf.-be', or  $\text{וַיְהִי}$ , '*waw*+pf.-be', usually translated as "and it came to pass", or  $\text{וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם}$  translated as "now it fell upon a day". The *waw* itself is translated as "and", but the whole expression can be translated only as a paraphrase. This *waw* + impf. - be is a set formula. It may occur at the beginning of a narrative, as in the story of Amnon and Tamar (2 Sam. 13):

(28)

$\text{וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי כֵן}$

"and it came to pass after this...",

but it can also occur in the middle of a story in order to signal the beginning of a new turn in the plot, when the whole story is divided into sub-stories as it were, as in the case of Job 1:6:

(29) וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים

"now there was a day when the sons of God came..."

Here וַיְהִי marks in the middle of the story, the beginning of the embedded story: the conversation between God and Satan. When we return to the main plot, we get again:

(30) ... וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם וַיִּבְנִי וַיִּבְנִי וַיִּבְנִי אֲכָלִים (Job 1:13)

"and there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating..."

Note that opening a story or a section in a story is not the only context in which וַיְהִי occurs. We find it also twice in Job 1:3, and in 2 Samuel 13:36, where it does not have such an opening function.

### 3.1.2 The *waw*-conversive as cohesion marker

The *waw* conversive's primary task is connecting a list of actions, events or states. Hence, a list of events or actions where the verbs are prefixed with *waw* form a close unit, whereas that without a *waw* is more like a list. We can see this by comparing the following two passages:

(31) וַיָּקָם אִיּוֹב וַיִּקְרַע אֶת-מְעָלוֹ וַיִּגַּז אֶת-רֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּפֹּל אֶרֶצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ וַיֹּאמֶר  
(Job 1:20)

'and-impf.-rise Job and-impf.-tear-he acc mantel-his and-impf.-shave-he acc head-his and-impf.-fall-he to-the-ground and-impf.-bow-he and-impf.-say-he ...'

"Then Job arose, and rent his mantle and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worship. And said..."

(32)	וְאֵל-תִּתָּאוּ לְהִיּוֹת אַתֶּם	אֶל-תִּקְנֵא בְּאַנְשֵׁי רָעָה
	וְעַמִּל שְׁפָתֵיהֶם תִּדְבַּרְנָה	כִּי-שֹׁד יִהְיֶה לָבָם
	וּבְתִבּוּנָה יִתְפַּנְּנוּ	בְּחִכְמָה יִבְנֶה בֵּית
	כָּל-הוֹן יִקָּר וְנָעִים	וּבְרַעַת חֲדָרִים יִמְלֹאוּ
(Prov. 24:1-5)	וְאִישׁ-דַּעַת מֵאֲמִץ-בָּח	נִכְר-חֲכָם בַּעֲזוֹ

'not impf.-envy-you in-people-of evil and-not impf.-wish-you to-be with-them: for destruction impf.-contemplate heart-theirs and-evil lips-theirs impf.-talk; in-wisdom impf.-build house and-in-understanding impf.-establish and-in-knowledge rooms impf.-fill all riches dear and-pleasant; clever in-courage and-man-of knowledge increases strength'

"Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them. For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief. Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established. And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches. A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength."

Proverbs 24:1-5 has one subject matter: advice how to be a good man, but it lacks the cohesion of Job 1:20.

This applies not only to *waw* + impf., but also to *waw* + pf. Compare the following two passages:

(33) ואם כל-עדת ישראל ישגו ונעלם דבר מעיני הקהל ועשו אחת מפל-מצות יהוה אשר לא-תעשינה ואשמו ונודעה החטאת אשר חטאו עליה והקריבו הקהל פר בן-בקר לחטאת והביאו אותו לפני אהל מועד ומסכו זקני העדה את-ידיהם על-ראש הפר לפני יהוה ושחט את-הפר לפני יהוה והביא הכהן המשיח מדם הפר אל-אהל מועד ומביל הכהן אצבעו מן-הדם והוא שבע פעמים לפני יהוה את פני הפרכת (Lev. 4:13-17)

'and-if all people-of Israel impf.-err-they and-pf.-hidden this form-eyes-of the-assembly and-pf.-do one of-all commandments-of the Lord that not impf.-done and-pf.-be-quilty-they: and-pf.-get-known the-sin that pf.-sin-they it and-pf.-offer the-assembly young bull for-sin and-pf.-bring-they before the-tabernacle: and-pf.-lay elders-of the-assembly acc hands-theirs on head-of the bull before the-Lord and-pf.-kill-they acc the-bull before the-Lord: and-pf.-bring the-priest anointed from-blood-of the-bull to tabernacle: and-pf.-dip the-priest finger-his in the-blood and-sprinkle seven times before the-Lord acc the-vail'

"And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which should not be

done, and are guilty; When the sin, which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation; And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the Lord: and the bullock shall be killed before the Lord; And the priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation: And the priest shall dip his finger in some of the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before the Lord, even before the vail."

(34)

לְמִנְצֵחַ לְבְנֵי-קֹרַח מִזְמוֹר

רָצִיתָ יְהוָה אֶרְצָה	שָׁבַת שָׁבוֹת יַעֲקֹב
נָשָׂאתָ עֵוֹן עַמֶּךָ	כָּסִיתָ כָּל-חַטָּאתָם סֵלָה
אִסַּפְתָּ כָּל-עֲבָרְתָהּ	הִשְׁיבוֹת מַחֲרוֹן אַפֶּךָ
שׁוּבֵנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ	וְהִפַּר בַּעֲסֶךָ עֲפָנוּ
הִלְעוּלָם תִּאֲנֶנָּה-בָנוּ	תִּמְשָׁךְ אַפֶּךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר
הֲלֹא-אַתָּה תִּשׁוּב תַּחֲיֵנוּ	וְעַמֶּךָ יִשְׁמְחוּ-בָּךְ
הֲרֹאנוּ יְהוָה חֲסִדֶּךָ	וַיִּשְׁעָה תַּתֵּן-לָנוּ

(Ps. 85:1-8)

'to-the-chief to-sons-of-Korah song: pf.-want-you Lord your-land pf.-return-you return-of Jacob: pf.-carry-you sin-of people-yours pf.-cover-you all sins-theirs, lo: pf.-gather-you all wrath-yours pf.-return from-anger-yours: return-us Lord-of being-salvation-ours and-break anger-yours with-us: for-ever impf.-reject-you us impf.-turn-away-you anger-yours to-generation and-generation: for you impf.-return-you enliven-us and-people-yours impf.-merry-they in-you: show-us Lord mercy-yours and-salvation-yours impf.-give-you to-us'

"To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah. Lord, thou hast been favourable unto thy land: thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob. Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Selah. Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger. Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease. Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? Wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations? Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee? Shew us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation."

Note that the formal cohesion in the first passage is much stronger than in the second one. The constant recurrence of *waw* + pf. gives to (33) a formal cohesion.

The connectedness in the passage from Psalms is more based on the content. The difference is, of course, due to the vastly different aims of the passages: the first one is legal and the second one poetic.

The use of the *waw*-conversive gives to the first passage coherence, which is, however, practically impossible to translate. The *waw*-conversive establishes in this example not a chronological sequence, but a logical one: all the actions listed are a result of the act of punishing.

To sum up: the *waw*-conversive is a textual device which establishes chronological or logical sequence between a list of actions, events or states. In this function it also has the effect of 'reversing' the aspect of the verb to which it is prefixed. Thus we get the following picture of the aspectual system of BH:

(35)

	Isolated predicate	Text
Perfect aspect	Perf pred V	Perf pred V <i>waw</i> + Imperf pred V
Imperfect aspect	Imperf pred V	Imperf pred V <i>waw</i> + Perf perf C

### 3.1.3 The *waw*-conversive in the narratives

In narratives the *waw*-conversive has two effects:

- creating cohesion
- delineating the main line of the story

Creating cohesion, is of course, what conjunctives always do. In this respect the *waw* in our stories is not so much peculiar in its function, as in its distribution: prefixed mainly to verbs. It would have been equally possible to conjoin the sentences by prefixing the *waw* to the nouns or the pronouns.

Consider the following example, in (36a) the original text, and in (36b) the same text, rewritten so that the *waw*-conjunctive is prefixed to nouns:

(36a) וַיֹּאמְרוּ רַע וְשֵׁמוֹ יוֹנָדָב בֶּן-שִׁמְעָה ... וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מִדּוּעַ אַתָּה בָּבָה  
 בֶּן-הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֲמֹנִן אֶת-תָּמָר אַחֹת אֲבִשָּׁלָם אָחִי אֲנִי אֶהְיֶה וַיֹּאמֶר  
 לוֹ יְהוֹנָדָב שָׁכַב עַל-מִשְׁכַּבְּךָ וְהִתְחַל וּבֹא אֲבִיךָ לְרֹאוֹתְךָ וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו ...

'and-to-Amnon friend and-name-his Jonadab ben Shimeah ...  
and-impf.-say-he to-him why you so sad son-of the king..  
and-impf.-say-he to-him Amnon acc Tamar sister-of Absalom I love  
and-impf.-say-he to-him Jonadab lie on bed-yours and-pretend-be-ill  
and-pf.-come father-yours to-see-you and-pf.-say-you to-him...'

(36b) וַיֹּנָדֵב אָמֵר לוֹ מִדּוּעַ אַתָּה כָּכָה דָל בֶּן-הַמֶּלֶךְ ... אֲמָנוֹן אָמֵר  
לוֹ אֶת-תָּמָר אַחֹת אֲבִישָׁלוֹם אָחִי אֲנִי אוֹהֵב וַיֹּנָדֵב אָמֵר לוֹ שָׁכֵב  
עַל-מִשְׁכְּבֶךָ וְהִתְחַל וְאִם בּוֹא אֲבִיךָ לְרְאוֹתָךְ תֹּאמַר אֵלָיו

'and-Jonadab pf.-say-he to-him why you so sad son-of the-king  
and-Amnon pf.-say-he to-him acc Tamar sister-of Absalom I love  
and-Jonadab pf.-say-he to-him lie on bed-yours and-pretend-to-be-ill  
and-with coming-of father-yours to-see-you impf.-say-you to-him.'

Note that the content remains the same, despite the change in the place of the *waw*, and with it a change in the aspect of some of the verbs. The reason for conjoining the sentences nevertheless by means of the verb has another function: foregrounding the verbs which form the main plot. We shall demonstrate this shortly. Note also that the *waw* can precede verbs both in the perfect and in the imperfect. The reason for using mainly the imperfect is also a stylistic one: the perspective on the events and the place of the reader. To this point we shall return in Section 3.3.

Prefexing the *waw* consistently to the verb has the effect of focusing our attention to the verbs, that is, foregrounding them. By focusing the attention of the reader on the verbs, the actions get foregrounded. This gives the story much more vividness than should the focus be on the participants (see comparison of 36a, b), and a faster rhythm. In addition, this also has the effect of underlining the main events: the verbs (actions) form the skeleton of the stories, and this is why they are foregrounded. Longacre (1979) and Pedersen (1968) also noted that the backbone of narrative discourse is carried by clauses with consecutive verbs; the clauses with other verb forms are circumstantial on paragraph level. We can see this, for example, when there is some sort of insertion in the main line of the story, like a quotation, a remark, or some background information. These are in another aspect, and we are led back to the main line by the use of the *waw* again.

Consider the following example:

- (37) וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ אֶל-אִיזָבֵל לֵאמֹר סֵקֶל נָבוֹת וַיָּמָת וַיְהִי פֶשַׁע אִיזָבֵל בִּי-סֵקֶל  
נָבוֹת וַיָּמָת וַתֹּאמֶר אִיזָבֵל אֶל-אֲחָאָב קוּם רֵשׁ אֶת-בָּרֶם נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאֵלִי  
אֲשֶׁר מֵאֵן לָתֵת-לָּךְ בְּכֶסֶף

(1 Kings 21:14-16)

'and-impf.send-they to Jezebel to-say pf.-is-stoned Naboth and-impf.-die-he  
and-impf.-be on-hearing Jezebel that pf.-is-stoned Naboth and-impf.-die-he  
and-impf.-say Jezebel to Ahab go inherit acc vineyard-of Naboth the-Jezebelite  
that pf.-refuse-he to-give to-you for-money'

"Then they sent to Jezebel saying, Naboth is stoned and is dead. And it came  
to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned and was dead, that  
Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the  
Jezreelite which he refused to give thee for money."

All the verbs which do not carry the main plot are undelined; we see that they are  
either quotations or background information, and we are returned to the main line  
of the story by the use of *waw* + impf. again.

Another example is in the story of Job: the return from the conversation between  
God and Satan to Job.

- (38) וַיַּעַן הַשָּׂטָן אֶת-יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר הַחֲנֹם יֵרָא אִיּוֹב אֱלֹהִים הֲלֹא-אֵת שִׁבְתָּ  
בְּעָדוֹ ... מַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו בְּרִכָּת וּמִקְנֵהוּ פָּרִין ... וְאוֹלָם  
שָׁלַח-נָא יָדְךָ וְגַע בְּכָל-אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ אִם-לֹא עַל-פְּנֵיךָ יִבְרַכְךָ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-הַשָּׂטָן

(Job 1:9-12).

'and-impf.-answer Satan acc the Lord and-impf.-say-he for-nough pf.-fear Job  
God: for you pf.-guard-you him ... acts-of hands-his pf.-bless-you and-  
possessions-his pf.-grow-it ... but send ... and-touch ... if not on face-yours  
impf.-curse-he -you and-impf.-say God to the-Satan ...

"Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?  
Hast not thou made a hedge about him, ... thou hast blessed the work of his  
hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand  
now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the  
Lord said unto Satan ..."

Here too, the underlined verbs, which are not prefixed with *waw* are quotations.

### 3.2 Alternation of the verb forms

One of the functions of changing the aspect of the verb has been demonstrated already in the previous section: making an explicit distinction between those actions and events which form the main line of the plot versus those which are quotations, remarks or background information. Change of the aspect can have another function too: making explicit turns in the plot. We can see this, for example, in the story of Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings 21). The story starts with king Ahab's offer to Naboth the Jezeelite to buy his vineyard. Naboth refuses to sell it, and the king returns to his place angry. His wife, Jezebel, on hearing what happened, sent orders to kill Naboth on a false accusation, so that Ahab can get the vineyard. The story can be divided into the following sections:

1. the conversation between Naboth and Ahab;
2. the conversation between Ahab and Jezebel;
3. Jezebel's letter;
4. Naboth's trial and death;
5. Ahab gets Naboth's vineyard;
6. The prophet Elijah's words to Ahab.

Consider the use of the aspects in section 1, and the transition from section 1 to section 2: (The arrows indicate the line of the plot.)

(39) וַיָּבֹא אֲחָאָב אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ סָר וּזְעֵף עַל-הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאֵלִי  
וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא-אֶתֶּן לָךְ אֶת-נַחֲלַת אֲבוֹתַי

| 'and-impf.-come Ahab to house-his heavy and displeased on the-thing that

| pf.-say-he to-him Naboth the-Jezeelite

| and-impf.-say

| not impf.-give-I to-you acc inheritance-of my-fathers

| and-impf.-lie-he on bed-his

| and-impf.-turn-away-he acc face-his

| and-not pf.-ate-he bread

| and-impf.-come-she to-him Jezebel wife-his ...'

These two verses illustrate the following points about changes of aspect:

1. the change of aspect used to designate the new turn in the plot, from the perfect אָכַל, "ate", to the *waw* + imperfect וַיָּבֹא, "and-impf.-come."
2. the change of aspect to distinguish between the main plot, verbs in the imperfect with *waw*, versus quotations or other background information, verbs in the perfect.
3. use of the *waw* conversive to foreground the verbs that form the main plot.

This use of change in the verb form to designate turns in the plot can be found also in the story of Amnon and Tamar (2 Sam. 13). This text in fact consists of two stories, or rather it is a story consisting of two acts. The first one tells about Amnon, one of the sons of king David, who fell in love with his half-sister Tamar. On a friend's advice he pretends to be ill, and asks for Tamar to be sent to him in order to cook for him. When this happens, he rapes Tamar, and then gets to dislike her, and send her away. The king, and Absalom, Tamar's brother, hear about it, and get furious. Two years later, during a feast, Absalom orders his servants to kill Amnon out of revenge. He then flees to Geshur, and returns three years later. The plot of these two stories can be divided into the following sections:

#### Part 1

1. setting the scene and background: Amnon's love of Tamar;
2. Amnon's talk with Jonadab, and Jonadab's advice;
3. Amnon meets the king and asks for Tamar;
4. Tamar is sent to Amnon and bakes the cakes for him; Amnon rapes her and sends her away;
5. Tamar's mourning and meeting with Absalom;
6. epilogue: the story gets known, the king is angry and Absalom hates Amnon.

#### Part 2

1. opening: two years later Absalom's sheep are sheared;
2. Absalom organizes a feast and invites all his brothers;
3. on Absalom's order Amnon is killed, and the king's sons flee;
4. a rumour on the incident reaches the king saying that all his sons were killed; this turns out to be false, and they return to the palace;
5. epilogue: Absalom flees to Geshur, and returns three years later.

Two examples of change of aspect to denote a turn in the plot are: (The broken line indicates the end of a section.)

1. the transition from section 2 to section 3 (vv. 5-6):

- (40) תָּבֹא נָא תָמָר אֲחוֹתִי...לִמְעַן אֲשֶׁר אֶרְאֶהּ...וְאֵכְלָתִי מִיָּדָהּ  
 'let-come (juss) Tamar sister-my so-that impf.-see-I  
 and-pf.-eat-I from-hand-hers'

וַיִּשְׁכַּב אֲמֹנֹן וַיִּתְחַל

'and-impf.-lay Amnon and-impf.-pretend-be-ill-he.'

"...let my sister Tamar come, ... that I may see it and eat it at her hand. So Amnon lay down and made himself sick".

2. The transition from section 4 to section 5 (vv 18-19):

- (41) וַיֵּצֵא אוֹתָהּ מִשְׁעֶרְתּוֹ חֹזֵץ וַנְּעַל הַדֶּלֶת אַחֲרֶיהָ  
 'and-impf.-send-out-he her servant-his out and-pf.-lock-he the-door behind-her'

וַתִּקַּח תָּמָר אֶפְרָ עַל-רֹאשָׁהּ

'and-impf.-take Tamar ashes on head-hers'

"Then his servant brought her out and bolted the door after her.

And Tamar put ashes on her head ..."

Turns in the plot are not always marked by change of aspect; sometimes the formula וַיְהִי, "and it came to pass", is used to begin a new section in the story. In the story of Job (Job 1) all three sections begin with this formula.

### 3.3 Use of the imperfect

We have seen at the beginning of this section that typical to narrative style (compared to others) is a very high frequency of the imperfect or *waw* + imperfect. The interesting question in this respect is why and whether this use of the imperfect is in any way connected to the function of this aspect in general, namely for describing an action, event or state as still in occurrence or about to occur. We see the following:

- a. the use of the imperfect is consistent with its general aspectual use for expressing an action, event or state as still in progress or about to occur;

- b. the use of the *waw*-conversive is connected with the use of the imperfect aspect, in that it allows the use of the imperfect, and we could not replace all the *waw* + imperfect by verbs in the imperfect or *waw* + perfect.

Let us now look at how this is manifested in the four narratives which have been analysed.

### 3.4 The four stories

#### 3.4.1 Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings 21)

'Naboth's vineyard' tells the story of Naboth the Jezreelite, who had a vineyard in Samaria, near the palace of Ahab, king of Israel. Ahab wanted to buy it from Naboth, or give him another vineyard for it, but Naboth refused. Seeing Ahab's distress at it, Jezebel, his wife, wrote to the elders of Naboth's town, ordering them to accuse Naboth of cursing God and the king and to get witnesses who would falsely testify it; then, to condemn Naboth to death. This they indeed did. When Ahab heard that Naboth died, and he inherited the vineyard, he went to see it. God sent the prophet Elijah to reproach him for Naboth's murder and prophecy his and Jezebel's downfall.

The structure of the story is simple and straightforward. The plot can be divided into the following sections:

1. the conversation between Naboth and Ahab;
2. the conversation between Ahab and Jezebel;
3. Jezebel's letter;
4. Naboth's trial and death;
5. Ahab gets Naboth's vineyard;
6. The prophet Elijah's words to Ahab.

There are to 'embedded' sub-sections:

- a. in section 2, a report of the conversation between Ahab and Naboth;
- b. in section, 3, Jezebel's detailed order to the elders in Naboth's town.

When we look now at the formal structure of the story, as reflected in the form of the verbs, we get the following schematic representation:

(42) 1 Kings 21

Verb from	Story
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waw-impf.	וַיְהִי...כִּרְסָה הָיָה לְנָבוֹת, 'and it came to pass ... Naboth had a vineyard'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּדְבֵר אַחָב, 'and Ahab said'
impf...waw-impf.	תֵּן-לִי...וְאֶתְּנָה לָךְ, 'give me ... and I'll give you'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר נָבוֹת, 'and Naboth said'...
waw-impf.	וַיָּבֹא אַחָב, 'and Ahab came'...
pf.	דִּבֶּר נָבוֹת, 'said Naboth'...
impf.	לֹא-אֶתֵּן, 'I shall not give'...
waw-impf.	וַיִּשְׁכַּב, 'and Ahab lay down'...
waw-impf.	וַיִּסַּב אֶת-פָּנָיו, 'and he turned his face'...
pf.	וְלֹא-אָכַל, 'and he did not eat'
-----	
waw-impf.	וַתָּבֹא יֵזֶבֶל, 'and Jezebel came'...
waw-impf.	וַתֹּדְבֵר, 'and she said'...
waw-impf.	וַיֹּדְבֵר אֵלֶיהָ, 'and he said to her'...
impf.	כִּי-אֲדַבֵּר אֶל-נָבוֹת, 'for I spoke to Naboth'
waw-impf.	וַאֲמַר תֵּן-לִי, 'and I said, give me'...
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא-אֶתֵּן, 'and he said, I shall not give'
-----	
waw-impf.	וַתֹּאמֶר יֵזֶבֶל, 'and Jezebel said'...
impf...imp...imp.	תָּעִשָׂה ... קוּם אֲכַל ... וְיִטֵּב, 'you do... get up...eat...be merry
(= imperative)	
impf.	אֲנִי אֶתֵּן לָךְ אֶת-כִּרְסָה נָבוֹת, 'I will give you Naboth's vineyard'
waw-impf.	וַתִּכְתֹּב סְפָרִים...וַתַּחֲתֶם...וַתִּשְׁלַח, 'and-she wrote letters ... and sealed ... and sent ...'
waw-impf.	וַתִּכְתֹּב בַּסְּפָרִים, 'and she wrote in the letters'
waw-imp.	וַהֲשִׁיבוּ אֶת-נָבוֹת, 'and place Naboth'
waw-impf.	וַיַּעֲרֶהוּ, 'and make him swear'
pf.	בֵּרַכְתָּ, 'you cursed'
waw-imp.	וַהֲצִיאֵהוּ, 'and get him out'
waw-imp.	וַסִּקְלֵהוּ, 'and stone him'...
waw-impf.	וַיָּמָת, 'that he may die'
-----	
waw-impf.	וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אַנְשֵׁי עִירוֹ, 'and his townsmen did...'
pf.	קָרָאוּ צוּם, 'called a fast'...
waw-pf.	וַהֲשִׁיבוּ אֶת-נָבוֹת, 'and put Naboth'
waw-impf.	וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׁנֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים, 'and the two men came'
waw-impf.	וַיִּשְׁבּוּ וַיִּשְׁבַּעוּ, 'and sat... and swore'...

pf.	ברך נבות, 'Naboth cursed...'
waw-impf.	וּצָאָהוּ, 'and they took him out'
waw-impf.	וַיִּסְקְלוּהוּ, 'and stoned him'
waw-impf.	וַיָּמָת, 'and he died'
waw-impf.	וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ אֶל-אִיזָבֵל, 'and they sent to Jezebel'
pf. waw-impf.	סָקַל נָבוֹת וַיָּמָת, 'Naboth had been stoned and died'
-----	
waw-impf.	וַיְהִי כַשְׁמַע אִיזָבֵל כִּי-סָקַל נָבוֹת וַיָּמָת, 'and when Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned'
waw-impf.	וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל-אָחָב, 'and she said to Ahab'
imp...imp.	קוּם רֵשׁ אֶת-כַּרְם נָבוֹת, 'go... inherit Naboth's vineyard'
waw-impf...inf.	וַיֵּקֶם אָחָב לָרֶגֶת, 'and Ahab went to ...'
-----	
waw-impf.	וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֶל-אֵלִיהוּ, 'and God spoke to Elijah...'
imp...waw-perf.	קוּם רֵד ... וְדַבַּרְתָּ אֵלָיו, 'go down and speak to Ahab...'
pf...pf.	הֲרַצְחָתָּ וְגַם-יָרַשְׁתָּ, 'hast thou killed and inherited...'
-----	
waw-pf	וְדַבַּרְתָּ...לְאָמָר, 'and say to him?'
pf.	בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר לִקְקוּ הַכְּלָבִים, 'in the place where the dogs licked...'
impf...	יִלְקוּ, 'there will they lick...'

Let us now look at the overlap between the content and the formal structure of the story.

We notice the following:

1. וַיְהִי, "and it came to pass", begins the story. It further marks the opening of two of the six sections: sections five and six. Sections two, three and four are not separated from the preceding sections by means of this opening formula.
2. Of all the verbs in the story about 55% (38 out of 60) are prefixed with *waw*. Of these only two are perfect, and four imperative; the rest are all imperfect. About 46% of the verbs (25 out of 60) are not prefixed by *waw*; the majority of these are in the perfect.
4. The transfer between the sections is either by change of aspect: from section 1 to 2, from 2 to 3 and from 5 to 6, or by the opening formula וַיְהִי, "and it came to pass": section 4 to 5. The transition from section 3 to 4 is not formal, but very clear content-wise in that we simply get another setting: Naboth's town and trial.

5. Content-wise the verbs which are *waw* + impf. express the action, carry the main plot of the story. Those which have no *waw* express quotations (Ahab's conversations with Naboth and Ahab's conversation with Jezebel, and God's word to Elijah) or back-ground information (Jezebel's letter to the elders of Naboth's town and their letter to Jezebel).

### 3.4.2 The story of Job (Job 1)

The book of Job is one of the three primarily philosophical books of the Bible (together with Psalms and Ecclesiastes). It is a meditation on good and evil, and on the justice of God's actions. Job, a reputedly just and God-fearing man is tested by God. He undergoes much suffering, and in a series of conversations with three friends, despite various temptations keeps his faith in God and in the ultimate justice of His way. Chapter One of the book, together with part of Chapter Two form in fact the whole plot; the rest of the book is not narrative but philosophical.

The content of the story in this chapter can be divided into the following sections:

- section 1: background description of Job and his household;
- section 2: the discussion between God and the Satan;
- section 3: the destruction of Job's properties and the death of his children.

If we try to delineate the story based on the verb forms, we get the following schematic representation:

#### (43) Job 1 (text 2)

Verb form	Story
pf.	אִישׁ הָיָה בְּאֶרֶץ-עוּז אִיּוֹב שְׁמוֹ, 'There was a man in the country of Uz, called Job'
<i>waw</i> -pf.	וְהָיָה הָאִישׁ הַהוּא, 'and that man was...'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיּוֹלְדוּ לוֹ, 'and there were born unto him...'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיְהִי סִקְנָהוּ, 'and his possessions were...'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיְהִי הָאִישׁ הַהוּא גָּדוֹל, 'and that man was great'
<i>waw</i> -pf.	וַיֵּלְכוּ בָנָיו, 'and his sons went'
<i>waw</i> -pf.	וַעֲשׂוּ מִשְׁתֶּה, 'and made a feast'
<i>waw</i> -pf.	וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ וַיִּקְרְאוּ לְשְׁלֹשׁת אֲחֵיהֶם, 'and they sent and call their three sisters'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיְהִי כִּי הִקִּיפוּ יְמֵי הַמִּשְׁתֶּה, 'and when the days of the feast were gone out ...'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיִּשְׁלַח אִיּוֹב, 'and Job sent...'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיִּקְדְּשֵׁם, 'and sanctified them'

waw-pf.	והשכים בבקר והעלה עלות
pf.	‘and he got up early in the morning and offered offerings’
pf.	כִּי אָמַר ‘for he said’
impf.	אִילָּךְ חָטְאוּ בְנֵי וּבְרַכּוּ ‘perhaps my sons sinned and cursed’
impf.	בְּכֹה יַעֲשֶׂה אִיּוֹב כָּל-הַיָּמִים ‘so did Job all the days’
<hr/>	
waw-impf.	וַיִּהְיֶה הַיּוֹם ‘Now it fell upon a day...’
waw-impf.	וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים ‘and the sons of God came’
waw-impf.	וַיָּבֹא גַם-הַשָּׁטָן ‘and the Satan came too’
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-הַשָּׁטָן ‘and the Lord said to Satan’
waw-impf.	וַיַּעַן הַשָּׁטָן ‘then Satan answered’
gerund	מִשׁוֹם וּמִהֲתִלֵּךְ ‘from going to and fro’
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה ‘and the Lord said’
pf.	הֲשִׁמַּתְךָ לִּי עֶבְדִּי ‘hast thou considered My servant’
waw-impf.	וַיַּעַן הַשָּׁטָן וַיֹּאמֶר ‘then Satan answered and said’
benoni	הֲחִנֵּם יִרְאֵה אִיּוֹב אֱלֹהִים ‘doth Job fear God for nought?’
pf.pf.pf.	הֲלֹא-אַתָּה שָׂכַתָּ... בְּרִכְתָּ... פְּרִץ ‘Hast Thou not made a hedge... blessed... and his possessions are increased...’
cohortative..impf.	וְנָתַתְּ יָדְךָ וְאִלֵּם ‘but put forth thy hand and touch...’
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-הַשָּׁטָן ‘and the Lord said unto Satan’
impf.	כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-לִי בְיָדְךָ רַק אֵלַי אֶל-תִּשְׁלַח יָדְךָ ‘all that he hath is in thy power only upon himself put not forth thy hand’
waw-impf.	וַיֵּצֵא הַשָּׁטָן ‘and Satan went forth...’
<hr/>	
waw-impf.	וַיִּהְיֶה הַיּוֹם וּבְנֵיו וּבְנֹתָיו אֹכְלִים ‘and it fell on a day when his sons and his daughters were eating...’
pf.	וּמַלְאָךְ בָּא אֶל-אִיּוֹב ‘and a messenger came to Job’
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר ‘and said...’
pf.	הַבָּקָר הָיוּ חֹרְשׁוֹת ‘the oxen were plowing’
pf.	וְהָאֲתֹנֹת רְעוּת ‘and the asses were feeding’
waw-impf.	וְהַסַּבְאִים שָׂבָּא וְתָקְחָם ‘and the Sabeans made a raid and took them...’
pf.	וְאֵת-הַנְּעָרִים הָכּוּ ‘they have slain the servants’
waw-impf.	וְאֲנִי רֹקֵם ‘and I only am escaped’
benoni	עוֹד זֶה מְדַבֵּר זֶה בָּא ‘while he was yet speaking there came’

waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר, 'and said'
pf.	אֵשׁ אֱלֹהִים נָפְלָה, 'fire of God fell...'
waw-impf.	וַתִּבְעַר, 'and had burned...'
waw-impf.	וַתֹּאכְלֵם, 'and consumed them...'
waw-impf.	וְאִנִּי רֶק-אֲנִי, 'and I only am escaped'
benoni	כֹּה עוֹד זֶה מְדַבֵּר זֶה בָּא, 'while he was yet speaking there came'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר, 'and said'
pf.	כַּשְׂדִּים שָׂמוּ, 'the Chaldeans set themselves...'
waw-impf.	וַיִּפְשְׁמוּ, 'and attacked...'
waw-impf.	וַיִּקְחוּם, 'and have taken them away...'
pf.	וְאֵת-הַנְּעָרִים הָכּוּ, 'and slain the servants'
waw-impf.	וְאִנִּי רֶק-אֲנִי, 'and I only am escaped'
benoni	כֹּה עוֹד זֶה מְדַבֵּר זֶה בָּא, 'while he was yet speaking there came'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר, 'and said'
pf.	וְהִנֵּה רוּחַ גָּדוֹלָה בָּאָה, 'there came a great wind'
waw-impf.	וַיִּנֶּעַ, 'and smote...'
waw-impf.	וַיִּפֹּל, 'and the house fell...'
waw-impf.	וַיָּמוּתוּ, 'and they died...'
waw-impf.	וְאִנִּי רֶק-אֲנִי, 'and I only am escaped'
waw-impf.	וַיָּקָם אִיּוֹב, 'then Job rose'
waw-impf.	וַיִּקְרַע אֶת-מְעִילוֹ, 'and rent his mantle'
waw-impf.	וַיִּגַּז אֶת-רֹאשׁוֹ, 'and shaved his head'
waw-impf.	וַיִּפֹּל אֶרֶצָה, 'and fell down upon the ground'
waw-impf.	וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה, 'and worshipped'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר, 'and he said'
pf.	עָרַם יָצֵתִי, 'naked came I out...'
pf.	בְּכָל-זֹאת לֹא-חָטָא אִיּוֹב, 'for all this Job sinned not'
pf.	וְלֹא-נָתַן תְּפִלָּה לָאֱלֹהִים, 'nor cursed God'

The structure of this story is more complex than that of text 1, but very clear, nevertheless. There are three clear sections, and in section three, four embedded stories. All the transitions between the sections, as well as between the embedded stories, are very clearly marked.

Regarding the use of the waw-conversive and the use of the aspects, we note the following:

1. sections two and three begin with the starting formula וַיְהִי.

stories. All the transitions between the sections, as well as between the embedded stories, are very clearly marked.

Regarding the use of the *waw*-conversive and the use of the aspects, we note the following:

1. sections two and three begin with the starting formula וַיְהִי.
2. The turns in the plot overlap with changes of aspect.
  - a. when we turn from the description of Job to the plot - the feast of his children, there is a change from *waw* + impf. to pf.
  - b. when we return from the feast to Job's offering, there is a change from the pf. back to *waw* + impf. Then follows a quotation of Job's words in the pf. The last sentence of the section, which sums it up, is also in the pf.
  - c. In section two, the conversation between God and Satan is again in the impf., except for the quotations, both God's and of Satan's words which are in the pf.
  - d. The three embedded stories in section three follow also a strict pattern in the use of the aspects: each messenger is announced in the *benoni* form, which is more nominal than verbal, and is used also as present tense.<sup>7</sup> Then, the verbs relating the events which happened are in the impf. with *waw*, except the last one, which is in the pf.

This gives the effect of summing up the events. Then we return to the main plot by the messenger's words וְאִמָּלְטָה רַק-אֲנִי ..., "and I only am escaped", again in the impf. with *waw*. So, the attention is focused on the line forming the succession of events by the use of the *waw* + impf.

<sup>7</sup> The *benoni* form is according to some grammarians of Biblical Hebrew, and also Modern Hebrew, more a nominal than a verbal form. Thus like nouns and adjectives, it inflects only for number and gender, not for person, like the perfect and imperfect. Also it can be negated both by the particles לֹא typical for verbs, and by the particle אֵין, used only for nouns. In Biblical Hebrew it is negated mostly by אֵין. At the same time, there are examples where the *benoni* is used as a verb denoting a state. For example, in the following verse from Amos 4:1, the *benoni* forms refer to actions:

(i) שִׁמְעוּ הָרֹבֵד הַזֶּה פְּרוֹת הַפֶּשֶׁן אֲשֶׁר בְּהַר שִׁמְרוֹן ...  
הַעֲשִׂקוֹת רַלִּים הַרְצוֹת אֲבִיוֹנִים הָאֲמָרָה לְאֲרִיָּהֶם  
'...that on-mountain-of Somron that-opress (ben.) poor that-crush (ben.) needy that-say (ben.) to-their-masters...'  
"...that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters..."

Such occurrences of the *benoni* are also counted in the group of verbs called 'other'.

follow the verbs prefixed with the *waw*-conversive (see schema (43)), we get the list of the most important events and actions, which form the mainline of the narrative.

### 3.4.3 The story of Amnon and Tamar (2 Samuel 13)

This is the longest of the three narratives checked. In fact it consists of two stories. The first part tells about Amnon, one of the sons of king David, who fell in love with his half-sister Tamar. On a friend's advice he pretends to be ill, and asks for Tamar to be sent to him in order to make some cakes for him. When this happens, he rapes Tamar, and then gets to dislike her, and sends her away. The king, and Absalom, Tamar's brother, hear about it, and get furious. Two years later, during a feast, Absalom orders his servants to kill Amnon out of revenge. He then flees to Geshur, and returns three years later. The plot of these two stories can be divided into the following sections:

#### Part 1

1. setting the scene and background: Amnon's love of Tamar;
2. Amnon's talk with Jonadab, and Jonadab's advice;
3. Amnon meets the king and asks for Tamar;
4. Tamar is sent to Amnon and bakes the cakes for him; Amnon rapes her and sends her away;
5. Tamar's mourning and meeting with Absalom;
6. epilogue: the story gets known, the king is angry and Absalom gets to hate Amnon.

#### Part 2

1. opening: two years later Absalom's sheep are sheared.
2. Absalom organizes a feast and invites all his brothers.
3. on Absalom's order Amnon is killed, and the king's sons flee;
4. a rumour reaches the king of the incident saying that all his sons were killed; this turns out to be false, and they all return to the palace and mourn for Amnon;
5. epilogue: Absalom flees to Geshur, and returns three years later.

In this story too, as in the previous two, the *waw*-conversive and the change of aspects are used in structuring the story: the *waw*-conversive to delineate the backbone of the story. Hence, the great majority of the verbs are of the form *waw* + *impf.*: of a total of 105 verbs, 75 have the *waw* prefix, of which 72 are *waw* +

impf. and 3 are *waw* + pf., and 30 verbs have no prefix. Those without a *waw* are background information, remarks or reporting someone's words.

Let us look at the verbs in the story in detail:

(44) 2 Samuel 13:

Verb form	Story
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי-כֵן, 'and it came to pass afterwards...'
(pf)	וּלְאַבְשָׁלוֹם אַחֹת יָפָה, 'and Absalom had a fair sister'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיֹּאהֲבֶהָ אֲמֹנֹן, 'and Amnon loved her'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיִּצַר לְאֲמֹנֹן, 'and Amnon was distressed'
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<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ, 'and Jonadab said to him ...'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֲמֹנֹן, 'and Amnon said to him
benoni	אֶת-תָּמָר אֲנִי אֹהֵב, 'Tamar I love...'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יְהוֹנָדָב, 'and Jonadab said to him...'
impf.	שָׁכֵב עַל-מִשְׁכְּבְּךָ, 'lay down on thy bed'
<i>waw</i> -pf.	וּבָא אָבִיךָ, 'and your father came'
<i>waw</i> -pf.	וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו, 'and tell him'
impf.	תָּבֵא נָא תָמָר, 'let Tamar come'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַתַּכְרִינִי לֶחֶם וְעִשְׂתָּהּ, 'and make cakes'
<i>waw</i> -pf.	אֲשֶׁר אֶרְאֶה וְאֶכְלֵתִי, 'that I may see and eat...'
-----	
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיִּשְׁכַּב אֲמֹנֹן, 'and Amnon lay down...'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיִּתְחַל, 'and pretended to be ill...'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיָּבֹא הַמֶּלֶךְ, 'and the king came'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר אֲמֹנֹן אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ, 'and Amnon said to the king'
impf.	תָּבֹא-נָא תָמָר, 'let Tamar come'
<i>we</i> -impf.	וּתִלְבֹּךְ וְאֶכְלֶה, 'and bake and I will eat'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד אֶל-תָּמָר, 'and David sent to Tamar'
impf.	לֵאמֹר לֵךְ, 'Saying, go to..'
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<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַתֵּלֶךְ תָּמָר בֵּית אֲמֹנֹן, 'and Tamar went to Amnon'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַתִּקַּח אֶת-הַבֶּצֶק, 'and took the dough'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַתִּלְוֶשׁ וַתִּבְּאֶה אֶת-הַכֵּלִים, 'and kneaded and baked the cakes'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַתִּקַּח וַתִּפְּסֶה אֶת-הַכֵּלִים, 'and took...and poured the cakes...'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיִּמָּאֵן לֶאֱכֹל, 'and (Amnon) refused to eat'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר אֲמֹנֹן, 'and Amnon said'
impf.	הוֹצִיאוּ כָל-אִישׁ, 'let every man go out'
<i>waw</i> -impf.	וַיִּצְאוּ כָל-אִישׁ, 'and every man left'

waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר אֲמֹנֹן אֶל-תָּמָר 'and Amnon said to Tamar'
imp.	הָבִיאי הַבֵּרִיָּה 'bring the cakes'
wə-impf.	וְאֹכְרָה מִדֶּךָ 'and I'll eat from your hands'
waw-impf.	וַתִּקַּח תָּמָר אֶת-הַלֶּבְבֹת 'and Tamar took the cakes'
waw-impf.	וַתָּבֵא לְאֲמֹנֹן 'and brought them to Amnon'
waw-impf.	וַתֵּשֶׁב אֵלָיו 'and went to him'
waw-impf.	וַיִּחְזַק-בָּהּ 'and he held her'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ 'and said to her'
imp.	בֹּאִי שִׁכְבִּי 'come... lay'
waw-impf.	וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ 'and she said to him'
impf.	אַל-תַּעֲנֵנִי 'do not force me'
impf.	כִּי לֹא-עָשָׂה כֵן 'for it is not done'
pf.	וְהוּא אָבָה לִשְׁמֹעַ בְּקוֹלָהּ 'and he would not listen unto her voice'
waw-impf.	וַיַּעֲנֶהּ 'and raped her'
waw-impf.	וַיִּשְׁנֶאֱהָ אֲמֹנֹן 'and Amnon hated her'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר-לָהּ 'and said to her'
imp.	קוּמִי לֵךְ 'get up and go'
waw-impf.	וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ 'and she said to him'
pf.	אֲשֶׁר-עָשִׂיתָ עִמָּי לְשַׁלְּחַנִּי 'that you did to me to send me away...'
waw-impf.	וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-נָעֲרוֹ 'and he called his servant'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר 'and said'
imp.	שְׁלַח־נָא 'get out'
waw-impf.	וַיִּצֵא אוֹתָהּ מִשְׁרָתוֹ 'and his servant sent her out'
wə-pf.	וַיִּנְעֵל הַדֶּלֶת אַחֲרֶיהָ 'and locked the door behind her'
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waw-impf.	וַתִּקַּח תָּמָר אֶפְרָ 'and Tamar put ashes...'
waw-impf..wə-pf.	וַתֵּלֶךְ הַלֹּךְ וּזְעָקָה 'and went about crying'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ אַבְשָׁלוֹם 'and Absalom said to her'
waw-impf.	וַתֵּשֶׁב, מֵרַ וּשְׁמָמָה בֵּית אַבְשָׁלוֹם 'and Tamar sat desolate in Absalom's house'
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pf.	וַהֲמִלֵּךְ דָּוִד שָׁמַע 'and king David heard'
waw-impf.	וַיֵּחָר לוֹ מְאֹד 'and he was very angry'
pf.	וְאֲבִשָׁלוֹם לֹא-דִבֶּר אִתּוֹ 'and Absalom did not talk with Amnon'
pf.	כִּי-שָׂנָא אַבְשָׁלוֹם אֶת-אֲמֹנֹן 'for Absalom hated Amnon'
waw-impf.	וַיְהִי לִשְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים 'and it came to pass after two years'

waw-impf.	וּיקְרָא אֶבְשָׁלוֹם לְכָל-בְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ, 'and Absalom invited all the king's sons'
waw-impf.	וַיָּבֹא אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ, 'and he came to the king'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר, 'and he said'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ, 'and the king said'
waw-impf.	וַיִּפְרֹץ-בּוֹ, 'and (Absalom) beseeched him'
wa-pf.	וְלֹא-אָבָה לָלֶכֶת וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ, 'and (the king) didn't want to go and blessed him'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר אֶבְשָׁלוֹם, 'and Absalom said'
impf.	יֵלֶךְ-נָא אֲמֹנֹן אִחִי, 'let my brother Amnon come'
waw-impf.	וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת-אֲמֹנֹן, 'and (the king) sent Amnon'
-----	
waw-impf.	וַיִּצַּו אֶבְשָׁלוֹם אֶת-נָעָרָיו, 'and Absalom commanded his servants'
impf.	רְאוּ הִנּוּ אֶת-אֲמֹנֹן, 'see that...and kill Amnon'
waw-impf.	וַיַּעֲשׂוּ נָעָרֵי אֶבְשָׁלוֹם לְאֲמֹנֹן, 'and Absalom's servants did to Amnon'
pf.	כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֶבְשָׁלוֹם, 'as Absalom commanded'
waw-impf.	וַיָּקָמוּ כָל-בְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ, 'and all the king's sons got up'
waw-impf.	וַיִּנָּסוּ, 'and fled'
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waw-impf.	וַיְהִי הֵמָּה בַּדֶּרֶךְ, 'and they were on the way'
pf.	וְהַשְׁמָעָה בָּאָה אֶל-דָּוִד, 'and the rumour reached David'
pf.	וַיַּהַר אֶבְשָׁלוֹם אֶת-כָּל-בְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ, 'Absalom killed all the king's sons'
waw-impf.	וַיָּקָם הַמֶּלֶךְ, 'and the king got up'
waw-impf.	וַיִּקְרַע אֶת-בְּגָדָיו, 'and rent his clothes'
waw-impf.	וַיִּשְׁכַּב אֶרֶצָה, 'and lay on the earth'
waw-impf.	וַיַּעַן יֹנָדָב, 'and Jonadab answered'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר, 'and said'
pf.	אֲמֹנֹן לָבֹד מֵת, 'Amnon alone is dead'
waw-impf.	וַיִּבְרַח אֶבְשָׁלוֹם, 'and Absalom fled'
waw-impf.	וַיֵּשָׂא הַנֶּעֶר הַצֶּפֶה אֶת-עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא, 'and the guard looked and saw'
benoni	וְהָנָה עִם-רַב הַלָּכִים, 'and many people come'
waw-impf.	וַיֹּאמֶר יֹנָדָב אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ, 'and Jonadab said to the king'
pf.	הִנֵּה בְנֵי-הַמֶּלֶךְ בָּאוּ, 'behold the king's sons are coming'
waw-impf.	וַיְהִי כִּכְלָתוֹ לִדְבַר, 'and as he finished talking'
benoni	וְהָנָה בְנֵי-הַמֶּלֶךְ בָּאוּ, 'and the king's sons came'

waw-impf.	וישאו קולם ויבכו 'and they cried'
pf.	וכל-עבדיו בכו 'and the king and all his slaves cried too'
<hr/>	
pf.	ברח 'and Absalom fled'
waw-impf.	וילך נשור 'and went to Geshur'
waw-impf.	ויהי-שם שלש שנים 'and was there three years'
waw-impf.	ותכל דוד המלך 'and king David missed'
pf.	כי-נחם על-אמנון כי-מת 'for he was comforted regarding Amnon's death'.

## Part 1

The story begins with the standard formula: "וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי-כֵן" 'and it came to pass after this...' Then in the first sentence of the background, the copula verb, which should be הָיָה, is omitted.

(45) וַלְאִבְשָׁלוֹם בֶּן-דָּוִד אָחוֹת יְפָה וְשֵׁמָּה תָמָר (2 Sam. 13:1)

'and-to-Absalom son of David (was) sister beautiful and-name-hers Tamar'

"that Absalom the son of David had a fair sister whose name was Tamar"

This is quite common in Biblical Hebrew and in Modern Hebrew (though only in the present tense).

Then we get a description of Amnon's state, in verbs in the impf. with waw. The rest of this section consists of verbs of the form waw + impf., except when reporting Jonadab's words to Amnon (v. 5), then we get the impf. alone (תָּבֵא, "will come", and אֲרֹא, "will see"). The section is ended by a verb in a different form: the imperative, with the king's words:

(46) לְכִי נָא בֵּית אֲמֹנֹן אַחִיךָ וַעֲשֵׂי-לוֹ הַבֶּרֶךְ (v. 7)

'go now to-house-of Amnon brother-yours and-bake him cakes'

"Go now to thy brother Amnon's house and dress him meat'.

Section two, Tamar's visit to Amnon starts again with waw + impf., waw-וַתֵּלֶךְ, "and went", followed by a series of verbs of the same form, describing Tamar's actions. Again the only exception is formed by reporting Tamar's words to Amnon:

(47) אֶל-אָחִי אֶל-תַּעֲנֵנִי כִּי לֹא-יַעֲשֶׂה כֵן בִּישְׂרָאֵל אֶל-תַּעֲשֶׂה אֶת-הַנְּבִלָה הַזֹּאת

וְאֲנִי אֵנָּה אֹלִיךָ אֶת-חֲרָפְתִּי וְאַתָּה תִּהְיֶה בְּאֶחָד הַנְּבִלִים בִּישְׂרָאֵל וְעָתָה דְּבַר-נָא

אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי לֹא יִמְנַעֲנִי מִפָּנָי (vv 12-13)

"Nay my brother, do not force me; for no such thing ought to be done in Israel; do not thou this folly. And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go? , and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee".

We then return to the main line of events in section five, i.e. Amnon's acts, Tamar's distress and her meeting with her brother Absalom, all are related by verbs in the form *waw* + impf. Only section six, the epilogue which sums up the events, deviates; almost all the verbs here are in the pf.

(48) וְהַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד שָׁמַע אֶת כָּל-הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיֵּחָר לוֹ מְאֹד וְלֹא-דִבֶּר אֲבִשָׁלוֹם  
עִם-אֲמִנֹן לְמַרְעֵ וְעַד-טוֹב בִּי-שָׁנָא אֲבִשָׁלוֹם אֶת-אֲמִנֹן עַל-דִּבְרֵ אֲשֶׁר עָנָה  
אֶת הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲתָו (vv. 21-22)

"But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth. And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad: for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar."

## Part 2

This part is started by the standard opening וַיְהִי

Then the whole of section one, Absalom's invitation of the king and of his brothers to the sheep shearing feast, is related by verbs in the form *waw* + impf. The only exceptions are the reported words of the king and Absalom (in vv 24-25). The same holds true for sections two and three: the killing of Amnon, and the fleeing of the king's sons, and king David's reaction to the rumour that all of them were killed.

Actually, there is no formal mark for distinguishing between the sections, because they follow each other in the developing of the main line of the narrative. The only deviations from the form *waw* + impf. into pf. are the sentences reported in the way they were said to David (v. 30) and Jonadab's words to David (v. 32). The only change of aspect is at the beginning of section four, Absalom's escape.

(49) וְאַבְשָׁלוֹם בָּרַח וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-תַּלְמִי בֶן-עֲמִיחֹד מֶלֶךְ גִּשּׁוּר (v. 37)

"But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai the son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur".

Also the last sentence, which sums up the story includes a verb in the pf.

(50) וַתָּכַל דָּוִד הַמֶּלֶךְ לְצֵאת אֶל-אֲבִשָׁלוֹם בִּי-נַחֵם עַל-אֲמִנֹן בִּי-מָת

(v. 39)

"And the soul of king David longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead".

In this story too, the *waw* + verb versus pf. or impf. forms without the *waw* is used for marking the main line of events, i.e. 'foregrounding', as separated from quotations, reports of events, or background information.

On the other hand, unlike in the previous two stories, here the alternation between the two aspects, or between a verb prefixed with *waw* or without such a prefix, is not used for formally underlining turns in the plot.

The other two devices used in this story are: the opening formula **וַיְהִי**, and the use of the pf. as concluding or summing up in the last sentence of both parts one and two.

#### 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the following can be said about the formal structuring of biblical narratives by means of the form of the verb:

- 4.1 The analysis of concrete narratives supports the hypotheses formulated at the beginning of section three regarding the non-arbitrary distribution of the possible verb forms.
- 4.2 The changes of aspects have the following functions:
  - 4.2.1 to distinguish those parts of the story which do not form the main line, i.e. quotations and background informations or remarks, from the main line of the plot. The verbs forming the main line of the plot are prefixed with *waw*, and in most cases are imperfect. Those verbs which do not designate the actual plot have no *waw* prefix; they are also usually in the perfect.
  - 4.2.2 To make turns in the plot explicit. In such cases mostly a section ends with a verb in the perfect, and the new section starts with *waw* + impf. This function is, however, secondary. Beginning of new turns in the plot are also marked by the use of the opening formula **וַיְהִי**.
- 4.3 The *waw*-conversive has the following functions:
  - 4.3.1 It is used to underline those verbs which form, as it were, the backbone of the narrative. It is practically enough to read only the verbs prefixed by the *waw*-conversive to get a pretty accurate idea of the whole story, of all the events and actions which took place (see (42), (43) and (44)).

This device is also very useful in guiding the attention of the reader back to the main line after interjected parts.

The primarily textual function of the *waw*-conversive in strings of verbs is also supported by the fact that such long strings of verbs, where the first one is unprefixes and the following ones have a *waw* occur mainly in narratives. In books like Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Songs of Songs, Proverbs, or Leviticus its occurrence is much rarer, and then too, usually in short strings only. Of this we have seen only two examples: Proverbs (example 24), and Psalms (examples 34), but more could be found.

4.3.2. It forms with the verb to which it is prefixed a new unit that connects up with the previous verbs. Thus, once the setting of the story is established, the writer can keep using the imperfect. Since the stories are told after they have happened, their setting is in the perfect:

(51)a (1 Kings 21:1) כָּרַם הָיָה לְנָבוֹת

"a-vineyard was to-Naboth"

(51)b (Job 1:1) אִישׁ הָיָה בְּאֶרֶץ-עוּז

"(a) man was in-land-of Uz",

Or in the past time:

(50)c (2 Sam. 13:1) וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי-כֵן

"And-it-came-to-pass after this"

The writer tells the story in retrospective, from an 'outside perspective'. However, as the imperfect aspect designates events, actions or states which are still in progress, using this aspect in telling the story creates for the reader a 'perspective from the inside', i.e. places the reader into the story. This renders the narratives much more vivid than if they were told by verbs in the perfect, or if the conjunction would be established via the nouns. The cohesion and sequence would have been content-wise the same, compare (36a) to (36b), or the narratives to Leviticus 4 (example 34). The text in Leviticus, which consists of *waw* + pf. forms also one coherent unit, but has a less vivid, more stiff and formal tone.

4.3.3 The *waw* attached to the verb focuses the attention of the reader on the verb. This is achieved by the cumulative effect of attaching the *waw* to the majority of the verbs. In this way we get a very clear picture of the backbone of the story. But in addition, foregrounding the actions in the

plot creates a fast rhythm, certainly faster than if the focus was on other elements of the story.

As for the function of the perfect and imperfect aspects, we have seen that in the narratives it is consistent with the general function of expressing completedness of the action, event or state referred to. Unlike in Hopper (1982), it is not claimed here that the imperfect aspect has the value 'foreground', or that the perfect aspect has the value 'background'. Rather, that their general function is used here in the narratives for achieving a certain stylistic effect. The effect of foregrounding and backgrounding itself is achieved by a complementary use of the two other devices: changes of aspect and use of the *waw* conversive. The foregrounded or backgrounded parts in the stories themselves do not necessarily indicate completedness or uncompletedness of the actions or events, for at the time of telling it the whole story has occurred already: they are used to achieve vividness.

## APPENDIX

Follow the three texts which have been analysed. The original Hebrew is first translated literally so as to allow the reader to see the construction, and then followed by the King James translation. This is done verse for verse in order to enable the reader to compare the structure of the original Hebrew with that of the translation.

### 1. TEXT 1: 1 KINGS 21

1. וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה כָּרַם הָיָה לְנָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵלִי אֲשֶׁר בְּיִזְרְעֵאל אֵצֶל  
הַיֵּבֶל אֲחָאָב מֶלֶךְ שָׁמְרוֹן

'waw-impf.-be after the-things the-these vineyard was to-Naboth the-Jezreelite that in Jezreel near palace-of Ahab king-of Samaria'

"And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria."

2. וַיֹּדֶבֶר אֲחָאָב אֶל-נָבוֹת לֵאמֹר תֵּנֶה-לִּי אֶת-בְּרִמָּה וַיְהִי-לִּי לְגֶן-יֶרֶק כִּי הוּא  
קָרוֹב אֵצֶל בֵּיתִי וְאֶתְנָה לָּהּ תַּחְתָּיו כָּרֶם טוֹב מִסֻּבִּי אִם טוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ  
אֶתְנָה-לָּהּ כֶּסֶף מַחִיר זֶה

'waw-impf.-say Ahab to Naboth saying give to-me acc vineyard-yours waw-impf.-be-it to-me garden-of herbs for it near to house-mine waw-impf.-give-I to-you for-it vineyard better if pleases you impf.-give-I to-you money for-it'

"And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money."

3. וַיֹּאמֶר נָבוֹת אֶל-אֲחָאָב חֲלִילָה לִּי מִיהוָה מִתַּתִּי אֶת-נַחֲלַת אֲבוֹתַי לָּךְ  
'waw-impf.-say Naboth to Ahab forbid to-me from-God giving acc inheritance-of fathers-mine to-you'

"And Naboth said to Ahab, The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee".

4. וַיָּבֹא אֲחָאָב אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ סָר וְזָעַף עַל-הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵלִי  
וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא-אֶתֵּן לָּךְ אֶת-נַחֲלַת אֲבוֹתַי וַיִּשְׁכַּב עַל-מִטָּתוֹ וַיִּסַּב אֶת-פָּנָיו  
וְלֹא-אָכַל לֶחֶם

'waw-impf.-come Ahab to house-his heavy and displeased for the-thing which pf.-speak-he to-him Naboth the Jezreelite waw-impf.-say-he not impf.-give-I to-you acc. inheritance-of fathers-mine waw-impf.-lay-he on bed-his waw-impf.-turn-he acc. face-his and-not pf.-eat-he bread.'

"And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread."

5. וַתָּבֹא אֵלָיו אִיזֶבֶל אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתִּדְבֹר אֵלָיו מִה־זֶּה רוּחָהּ סָרָה וְאֵינָהּ  
אֹכֶל לֶחֶם

'waw-impf.-come-she to-him Jezebel wife-his waw-impf.-speak-she to him why spirit-yours sullen and-not-you eat bread.'

"But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?"

6. וַיִּדְבֹר אֵלָיָהּ כִּי-אֲדַבֵּר אֶל-נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאלִי וְאָמַר לוֹ תִּנֶּנּה-לִּי אֶת-בְּרִמְהָ בְּכֶסֶף  
אוֹ אִם-חֶפֶץ אַתָּה אֶתְנֶנָּה-לָּהּ כָּרֶם תַּחֲתָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא-אֶתֶּן לָּהּ אֶת-בְּרִמִּי

'waw-impf.-say-he to-her for impf.-speak-I to Naboth the Jezreelite waw-impf.-say-I to-him give to-me acc vineyard-yours for-money or if want you impf.-give-I to-you vineyard for-it waw-impf.-say-he not impf.-give-I to-you acc vineyard-mine.'

"And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it; and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard".

7. וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אִיזֶבֶל אִשְׁתּוֹ אַתָּה עֲתָה תַעֲשֶׂה מְלוּכָה עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל קוּם  
אֲכַל-לֶחֶם וְיִטֵּב לָּךְ אֲנִי אֶתֶּן לָּךְ אֶת-כָּרֶם נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאלִי

'waw-impf.-say-she to-him Jezebel wife-his you now be king in Israel get-up eat bread and-be-merry impf.-give-I to-you acc vineyard-of Naboth the-Jezreelite.'

"And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

8. וַתִּבְתֵּן סָפְרִים בְּשֵׁם אֲחָאב וַתַּחֲתֵם בְּחַתְמוֹ וַתִּשְׁלַח הַסָּפְרִים אֶל-הַיִּזְקִנִּים

וְאֵל-הַחֲרִים אֲשֶׁר בָּעִירוֹ הַיֹּשְׁבִים אֶת-נָבוֹת

'waw-impf.-write-she letters in-name-of Ahab waw-impf.-seal-she with-seal-his  
'waw-impf.-send-she the-letters to the-elders and-to the-nobles that in-city-his  
that-dwel with Naboth'

"So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth."

9. וַתִּכְתֹּב בַּסִּפְרִים לֵאמֹר קְרְאוּ-צוֹם וְהוֹשִׁיבוּ אֶת-נָבוֹת בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם

'waw-impf.-write-she in-the-letters saying call fast and-seat acc Naboth at-head-of the-people'

"And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people."

10. וְהוֹשִׁיבוּ שְׁנַיִם אַנְשִׁים בְּנֵי-בְלִיעֵל נִגְדּוֹ וַיַּעֲדֵהוּ לֵאמֹר בִּרְכַּת אֱלֹהִים  
וּמֶלֶךְ וְהוֹצִיאֵהוּ וּסְקֻלּוֹ וַיָּמָת

'and-seat two people base against-him wə-impf.-swear-they-against-him saying  
pf.-cursed-you God and king and-carry-out-him and-stone-him wə-impf.-die-  
he'

"And set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bare witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die."

11. וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אַנְשֵׁי עִירוֹ הַזִּקְנִים וְהַחֲרִים אֲשֶׁר הַיֹּשְׁבִים בָּעִירוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁלְחָה  
אֵלֵיהֶם אִיזָבֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּתוּב בַּסִּפְרִים אֲשֶׁר שָׁלְחָה אֵלֵיהֶם

'waw-impf.-do men-of city-his the-elders and-the-nobles that-dwel in-city-his  
as pf.-send-she to-them Jezebel as written in-the-letters that pf.-send-she to-  
them'

"And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them."

12. קְרְאוּ צוֹם וְהוֹשִׁיבוּ אֶת-נָבוֹת בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם

'pf.-call-they fast wə-pf.-seat-they acc Naboth at-head-of the-people'

"They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people".

13. וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׁנֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים בְּנֵי-בְלִיעֵל וַיֵּשְׁבוּ נִגְדּוֹ וַיַּעֲדֵהוּ אַנְשֵׁי הַבְּלִיעֵל

אֶת-נָבוֹת נִגַּד הָעָם לֵאמֹר בֵּרַךְ נָבוֹת אֱלֹהִים וּמִלֵּךְ וַיֵּצְאוּהוּ מִחוּץ לָעִיר  
וַיִּסְקְלוּהוּ בִּאֲבָנִים וַיָּמָת

'waw-impf.-come two the-men the-base waw-impf.-sit-they against-him waw-impf.-swear they-against-him men-of the-base acc Naboth against the-people saying pf.-curse Naboth God and-king waw-impf.-carry-they-him outside the-town waw-impf.-stone-they-him with-stones waw-impf.-die-he'

"And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died".

14. וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ אֶל-אִיזָבֵל לֵאמֹר סָקֵל נָבוֹת וַיָּמָת

'waw-impf.-send-they to Jezebel saying pf.-is-stoned Naboth waw-impf.-die-he'

"Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead".

15. וַיְהִי כַשְׁמֵעַ אִיזָבֵל בִּי-סָקֵל נָבוֹת וַיָּמָת וַתֹּאמֶר אִיזָבֵל אֶל-אֲחָאָב קוּם רֵשׁ  
אֶת-בָּרֶם נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאלִי אֲשֶׁר מֵאֵן לָתֵת-לָהּ בְּכֶסֶף כִּי אֵין נָבוֹת חַי בִּי-מָת

'waw-impf.-be as-heard Jezebel that pf.-is-stoned Naboth waw-impf.-die-he waw-impf.-say Jezebel to Ahab get-up inherit acc vineyard-of Naboth the-Jezreelite that pf.-refuse-he to-give to-you for-money for not Naboth live for pf.-die-he'

"And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead".

16. וַיְהִי כַשְׁמֵעַ אֲחָאָב כִּי מָת נָבוֹת וַיָּקָם אֲחָאָב לָרֶדֶת אֶל-בָּרֶם נָבוֹת  
הַיִּזְרְעֵאלִי לְרִשְׁתּוֹ

'waw-impf.-be on-hearing Ahab that pf.-die Naboth waw-impf.-arise Ahab to-go-down to vineyard-of Naboth the-Jezreelite to-inherit-it'

"And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard-of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it."

17. וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֶל-אֱלִיָּהוּ הַתִּשְׁבִּי לֵאמֹר

'waw-impf.-be word-of the Lord to Elijah the-Tishbite saying'

"And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying".

18. קום רד לקראת אחאב מלך-ישראל אשר בשמרון הנה בכרם נבوت אשר-יִרְדֵּשׁ  
שם לרשתו

'rise go-down before Ahab king-of Israel that in-Samaria behold in-vineyard of Naboth that pf.-go-down-he there to-inherit'

"Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it".

19. ודברת אליו לאמר כה אמר יהוה הרצחת וגם-ירשת ודברת אליו לאמר  
כה אמר יהוה במקום אשר לקקו הכלבים את-דם נבوت ילקו הכלבים  
את-דמך גם-אתה

'waw-pf.-speak-you to-him saying thus pf.-say the Lord pf.-kill-you and-also pf.-inherit-you waw pf.-speak-you to-him saying in-the-place where pf.-lick the-dogs acc blood-of Naboth impf.-lick the dogs acc blood-yours too you'

"And thou shalt speak unto him saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine".

20. ... (Elijah's prophecy)

## 2. TEXT 2: JOB 1

1. איש היה בארץ-עוץ איוב שמו והיה האיש ההוא תם וישר וירא אלהים  
וסר מע

'man pf.-be-he in-land-of Uz Job name-his w-pf.-be the-man the that whole-hearted and-honest and-fearing God and-avoiding evil'

"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job: and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil."

2. ויולדו לו שבעה בנים ושלוש בנות  
'waw-impf.-were-born to-him seven sons and-three daughters'

"And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters."

3. והי מקנהו שבעת אלפי-צאן ושלושת אלפי גמלים וחמש מאות צמֶד-בקר  
וחמש מאות אתונות ועבדה רבה מאד והי האיש ההוא גדול מכל-בני-קדם

'waw-impf.-be sheep-his seven thousand and-three thousand camels and five hundred yoke-of oxen and-five hundred mules and-slaves many very waw-impf.-be the-man the-that great from-all men of east'

"His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east".

4. וְהָלְכוּ בָנָיו וַעֲשׂוּ מִשְׁתֶּה בֵּית אִישׁ יוֹמוֹ וְשָׁלְחוּ וַקְרָאוּ לְשִׁלֶּשֶׁת אַחֵיהֶם  
לֵאכֹל וּלְשָׁתוֹת עִמָּהֶם

'wə-pf.-go sons-his wə-pf.-make-feast-they house-of day-his wə-pf.-send-they wə-pf.-call-they to-three sisters-theirs to-eat and-to-drink with-them'

"And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them."

5. וַיְהִי כִּי הִקִּיפוּ יְמֵי הַמִּשְׁתֶּה וַיִּשְׁלַח אִיּוֹב וַיְקַדֵּשׁם וְהַשִּׁפִּים פָּקַד וַהֲעֵלָה  
עֲלוֹת מִסְפָּר כָּל־סֵם כִּי אָמַר אִיּוֹב אוֹלֵי חַטָּאוֹ בָּנִי וּבִרְכוּ אֱלֹהִים פִּלְבָּבְכֶם כִּכָּה  
יַעֲשֶׂה אִיּוֹב כָּל-הַיָּמִים

'waw-impf.-be that pf.-last days-of the-feast waw-impf.-send Job waw-impf.-sanctify-he-them wə-pf.-rise-up-he in-the-morning wə-pf.-offer-he sacrifices number-of all-of-them for pf.-say Job perhaps pf.-sin sons-mine and pf.-curse-they God in-heart-theirs so impf.-do Job all the-days'

"And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually".

6. וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים לְהִתִּיצֵב עַל-יְהוָה וַיָּבֹא גַם-הַשָּׁטָן בְּתוֹכָם  
'waw-impf.-be the-day waw-impf.-come sons-of God to-present before the-Lord waw-impf.-come-he also the-Satan among-them'

"Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them".

7. וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-הַשָּׁטָן מֵאֵין תָּבֹא וַיַּעַן הַשָּׁטָן אֶת-יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר מָשׁוּם  
בָּאָרֶץ וּמִהַתְּהַלֵּךְ בָּהּ

'waw-impf.-say the Lord to the-Satan from-where impf.-come-you waw-impf.-answer Satan acc the Lord from-wandering in-land and-walking in-it'

"And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it".

8. וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-הַשָּׁטָן הֲשִׁמָּה לְבָבְךָ עַל-עַבְדִּי אִיּוֹב כִּי אֵין בְּמַהוּ בְּאֶרֶץ  
אִישׁ תָּם וְיָשָׁר יִירָא אֱלֹהִים וְסָר מִרָע

'waw-impf.-say God to the-Satan pf.-notice-you on-servant-mine Job for there-is-none like-him in-the-land man whole-hearted and-honest fearing God and-avoiding evil'

"And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil?"

9. וַיַּעַן הַשָּׁטָן אֶת-יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר הַחֲנָם יִירָא אִיּוֹב אֱלֹהִים  
'waw-impf.-answer Satan acc the Lord waw-impf.-say-he for-nothing fear Job God'

"Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?"

10. הֲלֹא-אֵת שְׂכָתְךָ בָּעָדוֹ וּבְעַד-בֵּיתוֹ וּבְעַד כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ מִסָּבִיב מַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו  
בְּרִכָּת וּמִקְנֵהוּ פָּרִץ בְּאֶרֶץ

'for you pf.-protect-you him and house-his and all that is to-him around act-of hands-his pf.-bless-you and-possession-his pf.-increase-it in-the-land'

"Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land."

11. וְאִלֵּים שְׁלַח-נָא יָדְךָ וְגַע בְּכָל-אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ אִם-לֹא עַל-פָּנֶיךָ יִבְרָכְךָ  
'but send hand-yours and-touch what is his if not to face-yours impf.-blaspheme-he-you'

"But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face."

12. וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-הַשָּׁטָן הִנֵּה כָל-אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ בְּיָדְךָ רַק אֵלַיו אֶל-תִּשְׁלַח יָדְךָ  
וַיֵּצֵא הַשָּׁטָן מִעַם פְּנֵי יְהוָה

'waw-impf.-say the Lord to Satan here all that-is to-him in-hands-yours only to-him not send hand-yours waw-impf.-leave Satan from face-of the Lord'

"And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord."

13. וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם וּבָנָיו וּבָנֹתָיו אֹכְלִים וְשׂוֹתִים יַיִן בְּבֵית אֲחִיהֶם הַבְּכוֹר  
'waw-impf.-be the-day and-sons-his and-daughters-his eat and-drink wine in-house-of brother-theirs the-eldest'

"And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:"

14. וּמַלְאָךְ בָּא אֶל-אִיּוֹב וַיֹּאמֶר הַבָּקָר הָיוּ חֹרְשׁוֹת וְהָאֲתֹנֹת רְעוֹת עַל-יְדֵיהֶם  
'and-messenger pf.-come-he to Job waw-impf.-say-he the-oxen were plowing and-the-asses were grazing beside them'

"And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them":

15. וַתִּפֹּל שָׁבָא וַתִּקַּחֶם וְאֶת-הַנְּעָרִים הָבּוּ לָפִי-חֶרֶב וְאִמְלָטָה רַק-אֲנִי לְבַדִּי  
לְחַגִּיד לָךְ

'waw-impf.-fall Sabeans waw-impf.-take-they-them and-acc the-servants pf.-kill-they with sword waw-impf.-escape-I only I alone to-tell to-you'

"and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."

16. עוֹד זֶה מְדַבֵּר וְזֶה בָּא וַיֹּאמֶר אֵשׁ אֱלֹהִים נָפְלָה מִן-הַשָּׁמַיִם וַתִּבְעַר בַּצֹּאן  
וּבַנְּעָרִים וַתֹּאכְלֵם וְאִמְלָטָה רַק-אֲנִי לְבַדִּי לְחַגִּיד לָךְ

'while this was talking and-this comes waw-impf.-say-he fire-of God pf.-fell-she from the-heaven waw-impf.-burn-she in the-sheep and-in-the-servants waw-impf.-eat-she-them waw-impf.-escape-I only I alone to-tell to-you'

"While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said. The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."

17. עוֹד זֶה מְדַבֵּר וְזֶה בָּא וַיֹּאמֶר בְּשָׂדִים שָׂמוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה רָאשִׁים וַיִּפְּשְׂמוּ  
עַל-הַגְּמָלִים וַיִּקְחוּם וְאֶת-הַנְּעָרִים הָבּוּ לָפִי-חֶרֶב וְאִמְלָטָה רַק-אֲנִי לְבַדִּי  
לְחַגִּיד לָךְ

'while this was speaking and-this comes waw-impf.-say-he Chaldeans pf.-put-they three bands waw-impf.-raid-they on the-camels waw-impf.-take-they-

them and-acc the-servants pf.-kill-they with sword waw-impf.-escape-I only I alone to tell you'

"While he was yet speaking there came also another and said, Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."

18. עַד זֶה מְדַבֵּר וְזֶה בָּא וַיֹּאמֶר בְּנִיָּה וּבְנוֹתֶיהָ אֹכְלִים וְשׂוֹתִים יֵין בְּבֵית  
אֲחֵיהֶם הַבְּכוֹר

'while this was speaking and-this comes waw-impf.-say-he sons-yours and-daughters-yours eat and-drink wine in-house-of brother-theirs the-eldest'

"While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house":

19. וְהִנֵּה רֵיחַ גְּדוֹלָה בָּאָה מִמֶּעַבַּר הַמִּדְבָּר וַיָּנֶעַ בְּאַרְבַּע פְּנוֹת הַבַּיִת וַיִּפֹּל  
עַל-הַנְּעָרִים וַיָּמוּתוּ וַאֲמָלְכָהּ רַק-אֲנִי לְבַדִּי לְהַגִּיד לָךְ

'and-lo wind big pf.-come-she from the-desert waw-impf.-smite-he in-four corners-of the-house waw-impf.-fall-he on the-boys waw-impf.-die-they waw-impf.-escape-I only I alone to-tell to-you'

"And behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."

20. וַיָּקָם אִיּוֹב וַיִּקְרַע אֶת-מְעָלוֹ וַיִּגְזֹ אֶת-רֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּפֹּל אֶרֶצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ  
'waw-impf.-rise Job waw-impf.-tear-he acc mantle-his waw-impf.-shave-he acc head-his waw-impf.-fell-he to-the-ground waw-impf.-worship-he'

"Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,"

21. וַיֹּאמֶר עָרִם יָצָאתִי מִבֶּטֶן אִמִּי וְעָרִם אָשׁוּב שָׁמָּה יְהוָה נָתַן וַיְהוּה לָקַח  
יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבָרָךְ

'waw-impf.-say-he naked pf.-come-out-I from-womb-of mother-mine and-naked impf.-return-I there the Lord pf.-give-he and-the Lord pf.-take-he let-be name-of the Lord blessed'

"And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

22. כָּבֹל-וְאֵת לֹא-חָטָא אִיּוֹב וְלֹא-נָתַן תְּפִלָּה לְאֱלֹהִים

'in-all this not pf.-sin Job and-not pf-give-he curse to-God'

"In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."

3. TEXT 3: 2 SAMUEL 13

1. וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי-כֵן וּלְאַבְשָׁלוֹם בֶּן-דָּוִד אָחוֹת יָפָה וְשִׁמְהָ תָמָר וַיֵּאֱהָבָהּ אֲמֹנֹן בֶּן-דָּוִד

'waw-impf.-be afterwards and-to-Absalom son-of David sister beautiful and-name-hers Tamar waw-impf.-love-her Amnon son-of David.'

"And it came to pass after this, that Absalom the son of David had a fair sister, whose name was Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her."

2. וַיֵּצֵר לְאֲמֹנֹן לְהַתְחַלּוֹת בְּעַבְדּוֹ תָמָר אָחוֹתוֹ כִּי בְתוּלָה הִיא וַיִּפְלֵא בְעֵינָיו

אֲמֹנֹן לַעֲשׂוֹת לָהּ מְאוֹמָה

'waw-impf.-sorry-it to-Amnon to-get-sick for Tamar sister-his for virgin she waw-impf.-hard-it in-eyes-of Amnon to-do to-her anything'

"And Amnon was so vexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin; and Amnon thought it hard for him to do any thing to her."

3. וּלְאֲמֹנֹן רֵעַ וְשֵׁמוֹ יוֹנָדָב בֶּן-שִׁמְעָה אָחִי דָּוִד וַיִּוָּנֶדֶב אִישׁ חָכָם מְאֹד

'and-to-Amnon friend and-name-his Jonadab son-of Shimeah brother-of David and-Jonadab man clever very'

"But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother: and Jonadab was a very subtil man."

4. וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מְדוּעַ אַתָּה כָּכָה דָּל בֶּן-הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּבֹקֶר בְּבֹקֶר הַלּוֹא תֵנִיד לִי

וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֲמֹנֹן אֶת-תָּמָר אָחוֹת אֲבִשָׁלֹם אָחִי אֲנִי אֹהֵב

'waw-impf.-say-he to-him why you so lean son-of the-king in-the-morning in-the-morning for impf.-say-you to-me waw-impf.-say-he to-him acc Tamar sister-of Absalom brother-mine I love'

"And he said unto him: 'Why art thou, being the king's son, lean from day to day? wilt thou not tell me? And Amnon said unto him, I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister."

5. וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יְהוֹנָדָב שָׁכַב עַל-מִשְׁכַּבָּהּ וַהֲתַחַל וּבָא אָבִיהָ לְרְאוֹתָהּ וְאַמְרָתָּ אֵלָיו

תָּבֹא נָא תָמָר אָחוֹתִי וְתִבְרַנִּי לֶחֶם וְעִשְׂתָּהּ לְעֵינַי אֶת-הַבְּרִיָּה לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר

אֶרְאֶה וְאֶבְלֹתִי מִיָּדָה

'waw-impf.-say-he to-him Jonadab lay on bed-yours and-feign-to-be-ill waw-pf.-come your-father to-see-you wə-pf.-say-you to-him let-come Tamar sister-mine wə-impf.-give-she-me bread waw-pf.-make-she before-my-eyes acc the-dressing so-that impf.-see-I waw-pf.-eat-I from-hand-hers'

"And Jonadab said unto him, Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyself sick: and when thy father cometh to see thee, say unto him: I pray thee, let my sister Tamar come, and give me meat, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it at her hand."

6. וַיִּשְׁכַּב אֲמֹנֹן וַיִּתְחַל וַיֵּבֵא הַמֶּלֶךְ לְרֹאשׁוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲמֹנֹן אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ תָּבוֹא-נָא  
תָּמָר אַחֲתִי וְתִלְבֵּב לְעֵינַי שְׁתֵּי לֶכְבֹּת וְאִבְרָה מִדָּה

'waw-impf.-lay Amnon waw-impf.-feign-to-be-ill-he waw-impf.-come the-king to-see-him waw-impf.-say Amnon to the-king let-come Tamar sister-mine and-let-bake-she before-my-eyes two cakes wə-impf.-eat-I from-hand-hers'

"So Amnon lay down, and made himself sick: and when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come, and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand."

7. וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד אֶל-תָּמָר הַבִּיתָה לֵאמֹר לְכִי נָא בֵּית אֲמֹנֹן אַחִיךָ וַעֲשֵׂי-לוֹ  
הַבָּרִיה

'waw-impf.-send David to-Tamar to-home saying go house-of Amnon brother-yours and make for-him the-cakes'

"Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him meat"

8. וְתִלָּךְ תָּמָר בֵּית אֲמֹנֹן אַחִיךָ וְהוּא שָׁכַב וְתִקַּח אֶת-הַפֶּצֶק וְתִלְוֶשׁ וְתִלְבֵּב  
לְעֵינָיו וְתַבְשֵׁל אֶת-הַלֶּכְבֹּת

'waw-impf.-go Tamar house-of Amnon brother-hers and-he laying waw-impf.-take-she acc the-dough waw-impf.-knead-she waw-impf.-make-she before-eyes-his waw-impf.-cook-she acc the-cakes'

"So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he was laid down. And she took flour, and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes."

9. וְתִקַּח אֶת-הַמִּשְׁרָת וְתַצֵּק לִפְנֵי וַיִּמָּאן לֶאֱכֹל וַיֹּאמֶר אֲמֹנֹן הוֹצִיאוּ  
כָּל-אִישׁ מִעָלָיו וַיֵּצְאוּ כָּל-אִישׁ מִעָלָיו

'waw-impf.-take-she acc the-pan waw-impf.-pour-she before-him waw-impf.-refuse-he to-eat waw-impf.-say Amnon get-out all man from-me waw-impf.-leave all man from-him'

"And she took a pan, and poured them out before him; but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, Have out all men from me. And they went out every man from him."

10. וַיֹּאמֶר אֲמֹנֹן אֶל-תָּמָר הַבִּי־אֵי הַבֶּרֶךְ הַחֹדֶר וְאִבָּרָה מִדָּוָה וְתִקַּח תָּמָר  
אֶת-הַלֶּבְבֹת אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂתָא וְתָבֵא לְאֲמֹנֹן אֶחֱיהָ הַחֹדֶרָה

'waw-impf.-say Amnon to-Tamar bring the-cakes the-room waw-impf.-eat-I from-hand-yours waw-impf.-take Tamar acc the-cakes that pf.-make-she waw-impf.-bring-she to-Amnon brother-hers to-the room'

"And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother."

11. וַתֵּנֶשׂ אֵלָיו לֶאֱכֹל וַיַּחֲזֶק-בָּהּ וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ בּוֹאִי שִׁכְבִּי עִמִּי אֲחוֹתִי  
'waw-impf.-bring-she to-him to-eat waw-impf.-hold-he her waw-impf.-say-he to-her come lie with-me sister-mine'

"And when she had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, Come lie with me, my sister."

12. וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֶל-אָחִי אֶל-תַּעֲנֵנִי כִּי לֹא-יַעֲשֶׂה בִּן בִּישְׂרָאֵל אֶל-תַּעֲשֶׂה  
אֶת-הַנְּבִלָה הַזֹּאת

'waw-impf.-say-she to-him no brother-mine do-not force-me for not impf.-is-done so in-Israel do not impf.-do-you acc the-folly the-this'

"And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not force me; for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this folly."

13. וְאֲנִי אֲנִי אֹלֵיךְ אֶת-חֲרַפְתִּי וְאַתָּה תִּהְיֶה כְּאַחַד הַנְּבִלִים בִּישְׂרָאֵל וְעַתָּה  
דַּבֵּר-נָא אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי לֹא יִמְנַעֲנִי מִמֶּךָ

'and-I where impf.-take-I acc shame-mine and-you impf.-be-you as-one-of the-fools in Israel and-now speak please to the-king for not impf.-withhold-he-me from-you'

"And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go? and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee."

14. וְלֹא אָבָה לִשְׁמָעַ בְּקוֹלָהּ וַיַּחֲזֹק מִמֶּנָּה וַיַּעֲנֶה וַיִּשְׁבֹּב אֶתָּה  
'and-not pf.-want--he to-listen to-voice-hers waw-impf.-stronger-he from-her  
waw-impf.-force-he-her waw-impf.-lay-he her'

"Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice; but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her."

15. וַיִּשְׁנֶאֱחָ אֲמֹנֹן שִׁנְאָה גְדוֹלָה מְאֹד כִּי גְדוֹלָה הַשִּׁנְאָה אֲשֶׁר שִׁנְאָה מֵאֲהָבָה  
אֲשֶׁר אֲהָבָה וַיֹּאמֶר-לָהּ אֲמֹנֹן קוּמִי לְכִי  
'waw-impf.-hate-her Amnon hatred big very for bigger the-hatred that pf.-  
hate-he-her from-the-love that pf.-love-he-her waw-impf.-say-he to-her  
Amnon get-up go-away'

"Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone."

16. וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֵל-אוֹדֹת הָרָעָה הַגְּדוֹלָה הַזֹּאת מֵאֲחֶרֶת אֲשֶׁר-עָשִׂיתָ עִמִּי לְשַׁלְּחָנִי  
וְלֹא אָבָה לִשְׁמָעַ לָהּ  
'waw-impf.-say-she to-him about the-evil the-big the-this form-other that pf.-  
do-you with-me to-send-away-me and-not pf.-want-he to-listen to-her'

"And she said unto him: There is no cause: this evil in sending me away is greater than the other that thou didst unto me. But he would not hearken unto her."

17. וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-נַעֲרֹ מִשְׁרָתּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלַח-נָא אֶת-זֹאת מֵעָלַי הַחוּצָה וְנָעַל  
הַדֶּלֶת אַחֲרָיָהּ  
'waw-impf.-call-he acc boy-his servant-his waw-impf.-say-he send-away acc this  
from-me out and-lock the-door behind-her'

"Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this woman out from me, and bolt the door after her."

18. וְעָלֶיהָ כִּתְנֵת פָּסִים כִּי בֵן תִּלְבָּשׁוּן בָּנוֹת-הַמֶּלֶךְ הַבְּתוּלוֹת מַעֲלִים וַיֵּצֵא  
אוֹתָהּ מִשְׁרָתּוֹ הַחוּץ וְנָעַל הַדֶּלֶת אַחֲרָיָהּ  
'and-on-her robe coloured for so impf.-wear daughters-of the-king the-virgins  
robes waw-impf.-bring-out-he her servant-his w-pf.-lock-he the-door behind-  
her.'

"And she had a garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins apparelled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her."

19. וַתִּקַּח תָּמָר אֶפֶר עַל-רֹאשָׁהּ וּכְתַנֵּת הַפָּסִים אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיהָ קָרְעָה וַתִּשֶׂם יָדָהּ  
עַל-רֹאשָׁהּ וַתִּלְךָ הָלוֹךְ וּוֹעֲקָה

'waw-impf.-take Tamar ashes on head-hers and-robe the-coloured that on-her pf.-tear-she waw-impf.-put-she hand-hers on head-hers waw-impf.-go-she going wə-pf.-cry-she'

"And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that was on her; and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying."

20. וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ אֲבִשָׁלוֹם אָחִיהָ הָאֲמִינֹן אָחִיךָ הֲיָה עִמָּךְ וַעֲתָה אָחוֹתִי  
הַחֲרִישִׁי אָחִיךָ הוּא אֶל-תְּשִׁיתִי אֶת-לִבִּי לְדַבֵּר הֲזֶה וַתֵּשֶׁב תָּמָר וְשִׁמְמָה בֵּית  
אֲבִשָׁלוֹם אָחִיהָ

'waw-impf.-say-he to-her Absalom brother-hers Amnon brother-yours pf.-be-he with-you and-now sister-mine be-silent brother-yours you not disturb acc heart-yours to-the-thing the-this waw-impf.-stay Tamar desolate house-of Absalom brother-hers'

"And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother; regard not this thing. So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house."

21. וַהֲמַלֵּךְ דָּוִד שָׁמַע אֶת כָּל-הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיַּחַר לוֹ מְאֹד  
'and-the-king David pf.-hear-he acc all the-things the-these waw-impf.-anger to-him very'

"But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth."

22. וְלֹא-דִבֶּר אֲבִשָׁלוֹם עִם-אֲמִנֹן לְמַרְעֵ וְעַד-טוֹב כִּי-שָׁנָא אֲבִשָׁלוֹם אֶת-אֲמִנֹן  
עַל-דִּבְרֵי אֲשֶׁר עָנָה אֶת תָּמָר אָחוֹתוֹ

'and-not pf.-talk Absalom with-Amnon from-bad and-to good for pf.-hate Absalom acc Amnon for thing that pf.-force-he acc Tamar sister-his'

"And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad: for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar."

23. וַיְהִי לִשְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים וַיְהִיו גִּזְזִים לְאֲבִשָׁלוֹם בְּבַעַל חֲצוֹר אֲשֶׁר עִם-אֶפְרָיִם  
וַיִּקְרָא אֲבִשָׁלוֹם לְכָל-בְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ

'waw-impf.-be after-two-years waw-impf.-be sheepshearers to-Absalom in-Baal-hazor that in Ephraim waw-impf.-call Absalom to-all sons-of the-king'

"And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom had sheepshearers in Baal-hazor, which is beside Ephraim: and Absalom invited all the king's sons."

24. וַיָּבֹא אֲבִשָּׁלוֹם אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה-נָא גִזְזִים לְעִבְדְּךָ יְלָךְ-נָא הַמֶּלֶךְ  
וַעֲבָדְיוֹ עִם-עִבְדְּךָ

'waw-impf.-come Absalom to the-king waw-impf.-say-he here sheepshearers to-servant-yours let-go the-king and-servants-his with servant-yours'

"And Absalom came to the king, and said, Behold now, thy servant hath sheepshearers; let the king, I beseech thee, and his servants go with thy servant."

25. וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל-אֲבִשָּׁלוֹם אֶל-בְּנֵי אֶל-נָא נֵלֶךְ כָּלְנֵנוּ וְלֹא נִכְבֶּד עָלֶיךָ  
וַיִּפְרֹץ-בּוֹ וְלֹא-אָבָה לָלֶכֶת וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ

'waw-impf.-say the-king to Absalom no son-mine no let-impf.-go-we all-of-us and-not burden on-you waw-impf.-beseech-he him and-not pf.-want-he to-go waw-impf.-bless-he-him'

"And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee. And he pressed him: howbeit he would not go, but blessed him."

26. וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִשָּׁלוֹם וְלֹא יְלָךְ-נָא אֶתְּנֵנוּ אִמְנוֹן אַחִי וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ לָמָּה  
יְלָךְ עִמָּךְ

'waw-impf.-say Absalom and-not let-go-he with-us Amnon brother-mine waw-impf.-say-he to-him the-king why impf.-go-he with-you'

"Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said unto him, Why should he go with thee?"

27. וַיִּפְרֹץ-בּוֹ אֲבִשָּׁלוֹם וַיִּשְׁלַח אֹתוֹ אֶת-אִמְנוֹן וְאֵת כָּל-בְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ

'waw-impf.-beseech-he him Absalom waw-impf.-send-he with-him acc Amnon and-acc all sons-of the-king'

"But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him."

28. וַיֵּצֵאוּ אֲבִשָּׁלוֹם אֶת-נַעֲרָיו לְאִמֶּר רְאוּ-נָא כְּטוֹב לֵב-אִמְנוֹן בֵּינִי וְאִמְרָתִי

אֲלֵיכֶם הִבּוֹ אֶת-אֲמֹנֹן וְהִמָּתֵם אִתּוֹ אֶל-תִּירָאֵי הַלֹּא בִּי אֲנֹכִי צִוִּיתִי  
אֶתְכֶם חֲזָקוּ וְהָיוּ לְבָנֵי-חַיִּל

'waw-impf.-order Absalom acc servants-his saying see that merry heart-of Amnon with-wine and-pf.-say-I to-you hit acc Amnon waw-pf.-kill-ye him not impf.-fear-ye for I pf.-order-I ye be-strong waw-pf.-be-courageous'

"Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be valiant."

29. וַיַּעֲשׂוּ נַעֲרֵי אֲבִשָּׁלוֹם לְאֲמֹנֹן כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֲבִשָּׁלוֹם וַיִּקְמוּ כָּל-בְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ  
וַיִּרְכְּבוּ אִישׁ עַל-פָּרְדּוֹ וַיָּגִסוּ

'waw-impf.-do servants-of Absalom to-Amnon as pf.-order Absalom waw-impf.-get-up all sons-of the-king waw-impf.-ride-they each on mule-his waw-impf.-flee-they'

"And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose, and every man gat him up upon his mule, and fled."

30. וַיְהִי הַמָּחָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ וְהַשְׁמָעָה בָּאָה אֶל-דָּוִד לֵאמֹר הִכָּה אֲבִשָּׁלוֹם אֶת-כָּל-בְּנֵי  
הַמֶּלֶךְ וְלֹא-נֹתַר מֵהֶם אֶחָד

'waw-impf.-be they on-the-way and-the rumour pf.-come-she to David saying pf.-kill Absalom acc all sons-of the-king and-not pf.-remain-he from-them one'

"And it came to pass, while they were in the way, that tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left."

31. וַיָּקָם הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּקְרַע אֶת-בְּגָדָיו וַיִּשְׁכַּב אֶרֶצָה וְכָל-עַבְדָּיו נִצְבִּים קִרְעֵי  
בְּגָדִים

'waw-impf.-rise the-king waw-impf.-tear-he acc clothes-his waw-impf.-lay he on-ground and-all servants-his stand torn-of clothes'

"Then the king arose, and tare his garments, and lay on the earth; and all his servants stood by with their clothes rent."

32. וַיַּעַן יֹנָדָב בֶּן-שִׁמְעֵה אֶחֱי-דָוִד וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-יֹאמֵר אֲדֹנִי אֵת כָּל-הַנְּעָרִים  
בְּנֵי-הַמֶּלֶךְ הִמִּיתוּ כִּי-אֲמֹנֹן לָבְדּוּ מֵת בִּי-עַל-פִּי אֲבִשָּׁלוֹם הִיָּתָה שׁוֹמֵה

מִיּוֹם עָנְתוֹ אֶת תָּמָר אָחִיתוֹ

'waw-impf.-say Jonadab son-of Shimeah brother-of David waw-impf.-say-he not let-say my-lord acc all the-boys sons-of the-king pf.-kill-they for Amnon alone pf.-die-he for with Absalom pf.-be hatred from-day his-force-of acc Tamar sister-his:'

"And Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose that they have slain all the young men the king's sons; for Amnon only is dead: for by the appointment of Absalom this hath been determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar."

33. וְעַתָּה אֶל-יְשָׁם אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל-לִבּוֹ דִּבֶּר לֵאמֹר כָּל-בְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ מָתוּ  
כִּי-אִם-אֲמַנּוֹן לְבָדוֹ מָתָּה

'and-now not let-put my-lord the-king acc heart-his saying all sons-of the-king pf.-die-they for Amnon alone pf.-die-he'

"Now therefore let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's sons are dead: for Amnon only is dead."

34. וַיִּבְרַח אֲבִישָׁלוֹם וַיֵּשָׂא הַנֶּעֱר הַצִּפֹּה אֶת-עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וַהֲנִה עִם-רַב הַלָּכִים  
מִדֶּרֶךְ אַחֲרָיו מֵצַד הַהָר

'waw-impf.-flee Absalom waw-impf.-lift the-servant the-watch eyes-his waw-impf.-see-he and-lo people many going from-road behind-him from-side-of the-mountain'

"But Absalom fled. And the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came much people by the way of the hill side behind him."

35. וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹנָדָב אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ הִנֵּה בְנֵי-הַמֶּלֶךְ בָּאוּ בְּדִבְרִי עֲבָדְךָ כֵּן הָיָה  
'waw-impf.-say Jonadab to the-king behold sons-of the-king pf.-come-they as-word-of servant-yours so pf.-be'

"And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king's sons come: as thy servant said, so it is."

36. וַיְהִי כַּכֵּלְתוֹ לְדַבֵּר וַהֲנִה בְנֵי-הַמֶּלֶךְ בָּאוּ וַיִּשְׂאוּ קוֹלָם וַיִּבְכּוּ וְגַם-הַמֶּלֶךְ  
וְכָל-עַבְדָּיו בָּכוּ בְּכִי גָדוֹל מְאֹד

'waw-impf.-be as-finish-he to-talk and-here sons-of the-king pf.-come-they waw-impf.-raise-they voice-theirs waw-impf.-cry-they and-too the-king and-all servants-his pf.-cry-they cry big very'

"And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that, behold, the king's sons came, and lifted up their voice and wept: and the king also and all his servants wept very sore."

37. וַאֲבִשְׁלוֹם בָּרַח וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-תַּלְמִי בֶן-עַמִּיחֻד מֶלֶךְ גִּשְׁשֻׁר וַיִּתְאַבֵּל עַל-בְּנוֹ  
כָּל-הַיָּמִים

'and-Absalom pf.-flee-he waw-impf.-go-he to Talmai son-of Ammihud king-of Geshur waw-impf.-mourn-he for son-his all the-days'

"But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai, the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day."

38. וַאֲבִשְׁלוֹם בָּרַח וַיֵּלֶךְ גִּשְׁשֻׁר וַיְהִי-שָׁם שְׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים  
'and-Absalom pf.-flee-he waw-impf.-go-he to-Geshur waw-impf.-be-he there three years'

"So Absalom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three years."

39. וַתִּבֶּל דָּוִד הַמֶּלֶךְ לָצֵאת אֶל-אֲבִשְׁלוֹם בֶּן-נָחֻם עַל-אֲמֹנוֹן בֶּן-מֵת  
'waw-impf.-long David the-king to-go to Absalom for pf.-comfort-he on-Amnon for pf.-die-he'

"And the soul of king David longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead."

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