

[P. 27, EX. 1]

בְּתוֹךְ הַגֵּן

בְּתוֹךְ

בְּתוֹךְ, "in the midst of," consists of

- the preposition בְּ, "in"
- the noun תּוֹךְ, "midst, middle"

GRAMMAR

בְּתוֹךְ is a *compound preposition*. This term refers to prepositions which are formed by the joining of:

- (a) one or more prepositions to a noun; e.g.,

עַל-דֵּבַר (עַל + דֵּבַר)
on account of
(lit., concerning the matter of)

מִלְּפָנַי (מִן + לְ + פָּנַי)
from
(lit., from to the face of)

- (b) two prepositions; e.g.,

מֵאֵת (מִן + אֵת)

from
(lit., from with)

MORPHOLOGY

Why does תָּוֹךְ become תּוֹךְ when בְּ is prefixed to it?

In Hebrew, a preposition and its object are considered to be one accentual unit; taken together, they have only one primary accent, which falls on the object. Consider the following prepositional phrases, each of which has one primary accent:

עַל-דִּבְרֵי אִשְׁתִּי

on account of my wife
(Gen 20:11)

לְפָנַי פְּרַעֲהַ

before Pharaoh
(Exod 4:21)

בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר

in the midst of the city
(Gen 18:24)

When a noun (e.g., דִּבְרֵי, פְּנִים, תָּוֹךְ) becomes part of a compound preposition, the noun loses its primary accent. Sometimes this causes the noun's vowels to shorten or reduce (e.g., תּוֹךְ, פְּנִי, דִּבְרֵי).

When a word containing גִּיּוֹ loses its accent, the גִּיּוֹ becomes גִּי . E.g.,

מִוֵּת	→	מות
אִוֵּן	→	און
תִּוֵּד	→	תוד

הַגֵּן

הַגֵּן consists of

- the definite article (הַ)
- the noun גֵּן, "garden"

GRAMMAR

הַגֵּן is the object of the preposition in the prepositional phrase בְּתוֹךְ הַגֵּן .

MORPHOLOGY

The Daghesh in the Gimel of גֵּן is a Lene when the word stands by itself and is not preceded by a vowel. (When Gimel [or any other *begadkephat* letter] is preceded by a vowel, however, it does not take Daghesh Lene; cf., e.g., בְּגֵן הָאֵלֹהִים in Ezek 31:9, where the Gimel is preceded by a Vocal Shewa.) The Daghesh in the Gimel of הַגֵּן is not

Daghesh Lene, however; rather, it is the Daghesth Forte of the article.

MORPHOLOGY

Why does the Pathach of אֶרֶץ change to Qamets when the definite article is prefixed? That is, why does הַ + אֶרֶץ → הָאֶרֶץ?

אֶרֶץ is one of several nouns which undergo a vowel change in their first syllable when the definite article is prefixed to them. Other examples are the following:

אֶרֶץ + הַ	→	הָאֶרֶץ
הַר + הַ	→	הַהַר
עַם + הַ	→	הָעַם

The vowel changes here are not predictable and must therefore be memorized.

Final Translation

in the midst of the garden