

BBH Workbook p. 37 #9
(Ps 118:24)

זֶה־הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יְהוָה

זֶה

זֶה, “this,” is a demonstrative; its gender is masculine and its number is singular.

GRAMMAR

We need to keep reading to discover whether the demonstrative זֶה is functioning as an adjective or a pronoun in this sentence.

הַיּוֹם

הַיּוֹם, “the day,” consists of

- the definite article (הַ)
- the noun יוֹם, “day”

זֶה־הַיּוֹם

The relationship between זֶה and הַיּוֹם is the same as the relationship between אֱלֹהִים and הַדְּבָרִים in BBH Workbook p. 37 #3 (Bible Translation list): זֶה precedes הַיּוֹם and they agree in

- gender (masc.), and
- number (sing.),

but not

- definiteness (הַיּוֹם has the article, while זֶה does not).

Therefore, זֶה here is functioning as a pronoun. זֶה-הַיּוֹם may accordingly be translated as “this is the day.”

TRANSLATION

In order to indicate that a pronoun (demonstrative or otherwise) is the predicate of a noun, English joins the pronoun and the noun with a form of the linking verb “to be.” For example,

This *is* the day

Here the demonstrative pronoun “this” is the predicate of the (articular) noun “the day.”

Hebrew, on the other hand, expresses such a relationship by placing the pronoun in apposition to (i.e., next to) the noun of which it is the predicate. For example,

זֶה־הַיּוֹם

Here the demonstrative pronoun **זֶה** is the predicate of the (articular) noun **הַיּוֹם**.

When translating a phrase such as **זֶה־הַיּוֹם**, therefore, we must supply a form of the verb “to be,” namely *is* (or *was*, if the context indicates that the past is in view).

עֲשָׂה יְהוָה

עֲשָׂה is a verb form which means “he (has) made.” **יְהוָה** is usually translated “the Lord.” **עֲשָׂה יְהוָה** is therefore “the Lord made” or “the Lord has made.”

Excursus: Syntax

Notice that the structure of the sentence **זֶה־הַיּוֹם עֲשָׂה יְהוָה**, namely

demonstrative—predicate—verb—subject,

is almost exactly the same as that of the sentence **אֱלֹהֵי הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר מֹשֶׁה** (BBH Workbook p. 37 #3 [Bible Translation list]), whose structure is

demonstrative—predicate—relative pronoun—verb—subject.

The only difference between the structures of the two sentences is that the latter contains the relative pronoun אשר.

GRAMMAR

Both English and Hebrew can in many situations leave out a relative pronoun, with no change in meaning. Specifically, the relative pronoun may be left out when it is in the objective case. Thus, in English we see the following:

NASB • the people whom you have brought up from the land of Egypt

NIV • the people you brought up out of Egypt

(Exod 33:1)

NASB • all the wells which his father's servants had dug

NIV • all the wells that his father's servants had dug

• all the wells his father's servants had dug

(Gen 26:15)

NASB • all **that** he did and the cities
which he built

NIV • all he did and the cities he built

(1 Kgs 15:23)

As we can see from the previous examples, English does not usually require that a relative pronoun be present when the pronoun is in the objective case. Whether or not to include the pronoun in such situations is often simply a matter of style.

Like English, Hebrew may omit the relative pronoun on occasion. For example:

עֲצָמוֹת דָּכִיִּת the bones (that/which) you broke
(Ps 51:10)

Final Translation

This is the day the Lord (has) made.

or

This is the day that the Lord (has) made.

or

This is the day which the Lord (has) made.