

BBH Workbook p. 47 #1

(Ex 32:2)

בְּנֵיכֶם וּבְנֹתֵיכֶם

בְּנֵיכֶם

בְּנֵיכֶם, "your sons," is formed in the following manner:

- (1) The masculine noun בֶּן, "son," is made plural by the addition of the ending יָם, yielding בְּנִים, "sons."
- (2) The pronominal suffix יְכֶם, "your (mp.)," is added to בְּנִים. First בְּנִים drops its יָם ending, and then יְכֶם is added to what remains, yielding *בְּנִיכֶם.
- (3) The Qamets under the Bet of *בְּנִיכֶם reduces to (Vocal) Shewa because it is now in an open propretonic syllable:

בְּ|נִי|כֶם

MORPHOLOGY

יְכֶם is a second person masculine plural suffix which occurs principally on plural nouns (as well as certain prepositions).

Note that singular nouns may take both singular and plural suffixes:

שִׁפְחָתִי my maidservant (Gen 30:18)
singular noun שִׁפְחָה with 1cs suffix

מֶלֶכֵּנוּ our king (1 Sam 8:20)
singular noun מֶלֶךְ with 1cp suffix

Plural nouns may also take both singular and plural suffixes:

אֶחָיו his brothers (Jer 35:3)
plural noun אֶחָים with 3ms suffix

מֶלְכֵינוּ our kings (Ezra 9:7)
plural noun מְלָכִים with 1cp suffix

וּבְנֹתֵיכֶם

וּבְנֹתֵיכֶם, “your daughters,” is formed in the following manner:

- (1) The feminine noun בַּת, “daughter,” has an irregular plural form, בָּנוֹת, “daughters.” (Notice that this form differs from the corresponding masculine plural noun בָּנִים, “sons,” only with respect to its ending.)
- (2) The pronominal suffix יְכֶם, “your (mp.),” is added directly to בָּנוֹת, yielding *בָּנוֹתֵיכֶם.

- (3) The Qamets under the Bet of *בְּנוֹתֵיכֶם reduces to (Vocal) Shewa because it is now in an open distant syllable:

בְּנוֹתֵיכֶם

- (4) The Holem Waw of בְּנוֹתֵיכֶם is written defectively as Holem: בְּנוֹתֵיכֶם.
- (5) The conjunction Waw is added to בְּנוֹתֵיכֶם. Because the conjunction precedes the bilabial consonant Bet, it is written as Shureq, and because the Bet is now preceded by the vowel Shureq, it loses its Dagshesh Lene: וּבְנוֹתֵיכֶם.

Final Translation

your sons and your daughters