

BBH Workbook p. 61 #9

בַּמִּלְחָמָה הִיא שְׁלַח הַזָּקֵן הַחָכֵם
אֶת-אָבִיהוּ וְאֶת-בָּנָיו אֶל-הָעָרִים הַקְּטָנוֹת

בַּמִּלְחָמָה

בַּמִּלְחָמָה, “in (the) battle,” consists of the following three elements:

- the preposition בְּ, “in, at”
- the definite article (the He of which has been replaced by the Bet of the preposition בְּ and the Pathach and Daghash of which are present)
- the feminine noun מִלְחָמָה, “war, battle”

MORPHOLOGY

When one of Hebrew’s inseparable prefixes (בְּ, כִּ, or לְ) is joined to a word which begins with the definite article, the consonant of the inseparable preposition replaces the He of the article. Thus,

לְ + הַסּוּסִים → לְסוּסִים for the horses
(1 Kgs 5:8 [4:28])

כִּי + הָאָרֶץ → כִּאֲרֶץ like the ground

(Isa 51:23)

בְּ + הָעָרִים → בְּעָרִים

in the cities

(Gen 41:35)

בְּ + הַמִּלְחָמָה → בַּמִּלְחָמָה

in the battle

(Deut 20:5)

הַהִיא

הַהִיא, "that," consists of

- the definite article
- the fs demonstrative adjective הִיא, "that"

MORPHOLOGY

The He of הִיא has rejected the Daghesh of the article, but the Pathach of the article has not lengthened in compensation. Such rejection of a Daghesh Forte without resultant lengthening of the preceding vowel is called *virtual doubling*.

GRAMMAR

הַהִיא follows בַּמִּלְחָמָה and agrees with מִלְחָמָה in gender (fem.), number (sing.), and definiteness (both have the

article). The demonstrative **הַיֵּא** is therefore functioning as an adjective.

Summary: **בַּמִּלְחָמָה הַהִיא**

This prepositional phrase may be translated as follows:

“in that war,” or

“in that battle.”

שָׁלַח

The verb **שָׁלַח** is the Qal Perfect 3ms of **שָׁלַח**. (Recall that *3ms* is shorthand for *third-person masculine singular*.)

We are informed upon consulting the list of verbs at the top of BBH Workbook p. 60 that **שָׁלַח** may be translated “(he) sent.”

TRANSLATION

The “he” of “(he) sent” is in parentheses because we will need to include it in our translation only if the Hebrew sentence we are dealing with does not explicitly state the subject of **שָׁלַח**.

תִּזְקֵן, “the old man,” consists of

- the definite article
- the ms adjective תִּזְקֵן, “old”

GRAMMAR

תִּזְקֵן here is **substantival**. תִּזְקֵן does not modify a noun, but rather is functioning itself as a noun.

תִּזְקֵן cannot be **attributive** here because

it neither follows nor modifies another noun (as it does, for example, in the phrase תִּזְקֵן תְּנַבִּיאַ, “the old prophet” [1 Kgs 13:25]).

תִּזְקֵן cannot be **predicative** here because

- (a) it has the definite article (a predicate adjective must be anarthrous), and
- (b) it does not modify another noun.

Because תִּזְקֵן here is a substantival adjective, we will refer to it in the discussion which follows as a noun (in view of its function as such).

הַחֶכֶם, “wise,” consists of

- the definite article
- the ms adjective חֶכֶם, “wise”

GRAMMAR

חֶכֶם here is functioning attributively. We know this because חֶכֶם

- directly follows a noun, הַזָּקֵן, “the old man,” and
- agrees with the noun it follows in gender (both are masc.), number (both are sing.), and definiteness (both have the article).

הַחֶכֶם הַזָּקֵן means “the wise old man.”

Excursus: Syntax

A common word order in Hebrew is *Verb-Subject-Object* (abbreviated VSO). English, by contrast, commonly employs the order *Subject-Verb-Object* (SVO).

Consider, for example, the Hebrew text of the beginning of Num 14:39 and a typical English translation of it:

VSO	אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים	מֹשֶׁה	וַיְדַבֵּר
	OBJ.	SUBJ.	VERB
SVO	Moses	spoke	the words
	SUBJ.	VERB	OBJ.

In Hebrew, a verb often (especially in prose) precedes its subject. In English, on the other hand, a subject usually precedes its verb. Compare the following Hebrew clauses and their English translations:

וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה	Moses spoke	(Num 14:39)
בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים	God created	(Gen 1:1)
וַיָּרֵץ הָעֶבֶד	the servant ran	(Gen 24:17)

Summary: בַּמִּלְחָמָה הָהִיא שָׁלַח הַזָּקֵן הַחָכָם

The subject of שָׁלַח is הַזָּקֵן הַחָכָם, “the wise old man.”

GRAMMAR

As we would expect, the subject הַזָּקֵן הַחָכָם and its verb שָׁלַח agree in person, number, and gender (both are 3ms).

בַּמִּלְחָמָה הָהִיא שָׁלַח הַזָּקֵן הַחָכָם translates as follows:

“In that battle (or, war) the wise old man sent.”

GRAMMAR

English “send” and Hebrew שִׁלַּח are *transitive* verbs; that is, they are capable of taking direct objects.

את

The definite direct object marker את־ indicates that what follows it (namely, אֲבִיהוּ) is the direct object of שִׁלַּח.

MORPHOLOGY

The form את־ (pointed את when not attached to another word by means of a Maqqef) may be either

- (a) the definite direct object marker, or
- (b) the preposition “with.”

For example,

(A) DEFINITE DIRECT OBJECT MARKER

את־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאת־הָאָרֶץ (God created) the heavens
and the earth (Gen 1:1)

את־נִינְוֵה (he built) Nineveh
(Gen 10:11)

(B) PREPOSITION “WITH”

את־הָאֶבֶן וְאת־הָעֵץ with stone and with wood

(Jer 3:9)

את יַעֲקֹב with Jacob (Exod 1:1)

Context indicates when אֶת/אֵת is the definite direct object marker and when it is the preposition “with.”

When the definite direct object marker and the preposition “with” appear with pronominal suffixes, their forms are distinct. For example,

(A) DEFINITE DIRECT OBJECT MARKER

אֹתוֹ (you shall serve) him (Deut 10:20)

(B) PREPOSITION “WITH”

אִתּוֹ (the guests who were) with him
(1 Kgs 1:41)

אָבִיהוּ

אָבִיהוּ, “his father,” consists of

- the noun אָב, “father”
- the 3ms pronominal suffix הוּ, “his”

GRAMMAR

Hebrew has several 3ms pronominal suffixes: e.g.,

הוּ ׁו יו יו

Which one of these is used with any given noun depends on whether the noun ends in a vowel or a consonant and whether the noun is singular or plural. Sometimes, either of a few different 3ms pronominal suffixes might be used on a certain noun without difference in meaning. For example,

אָבִיהוּ	his father	(Judg 14:10)
אָביו	his father	(1 Sam 14:27)

ואת־בניו

ואת־ consists of

- the conjunction Waw
- the definite direct object marker את־ (context indicates that this is not the preposition “with”)

בניו, “his sons,” consists of

- בני־, the (irregular) plural form of the masculine noun בן, “son”
- the 3ms pronominal suffix יו, “his”

When the pronominal suffix יָיִ is added to בְּנֵי, the יִם ending is replaced by יָיִ.

GRAMMAR

יָיִ, "his," is a third-person masculine **singular** suffix that is attached to **plural** nouns. That is, the suffix refers to one person or thing but the nouns to which it attaches (e.g., בְּנֵי) refer to more than one person or thing.

Summary: בַּמִּלְחָמָה הָיָא שְׁלַח הַזֶּקֶן הַחָכָם אֶת־אָבִיהוּ וְאֶת־בָּנָיו

In that battle (or, war), the wise old man sent his father and his sons.

GRAMMAR

Hebrew usually marks definite direct objects with אֶת־/אֵת. English uses word order, rather than a particle, to mark its direct objects. A direct object in English normally follows the verb of which it is the object.

Consider the following sentences:

- (1) The old man sent his father and his sons.
- (2) His father and his sons sent the old man.

The noun phrase “the old man” is, in terms of its form, the same in sentences (1) and (2), yet it functions as the subject of “sent” in sentence (1) and the object of “sent” in sentence (2). Word order indicates function.

Similarly, the noun phrase “his father and his sons” is formally the same in both sentences, yet it functions as the object of “sent” in sentence (1) and the subject of “sent” in sentence (2). Again, word order indicates function.

Because Hebrew marks its definite direct objects by means of the particle **אֶת/את**, its word order is a bit more flexible than that of English. Consider the following examples, which both have the same basic meaning:

VSO **שֶׁלַח הַזֶּקֶן הַחָכָם אֶת־אָבִיהוּ וְאֶת־בָּנָיו**

SVO **אֶת־אָבִיהוּ וְאֶת־בָּנָיו שֶׁלַח הַזֶּקֶן הַחָכָם**

The wise old man sent his father and his sons.



The preposition **אֶל** means “to” or “toward.”

הָעָרִים

הָעָרִים, "the cities," consists of

- the definite article
- עָרִים, the (irregular) plural of the feminine noun עִיר, "city"

MORPHOLOGY

Before הָ and unaccented עָ or הָ, the definite article is spelled הֶ. Hence הָעָרִים and, earlier in our sentence, הֶחָכְם.

הַקְּטָנוֹת

הַקְּטָנוֹת, "small," consists of

- the definite article
- קְטָנוֹת, the feminine plural form of the adjective קָטָן, "small"

MORPHOLOGY

Most plural nouns ending in וֹת are feminine, though some are masculine. Similarly, most plural nouns ending in יִם are masculine, though some are feminine.

Every adjective ending in םוֹת is feminine plural, however, and every adjective ending in םוֹי is masculine plural.

MORPHOLOGY

The addition of the inflectional endings םוֹה (fs), םוֹי (mp), and םוֹת (fp) to קִטָּוֶן results in the following forms:

קִטְּנָה	(fs)
קִטְּנִים	(mp)
קִטְּנוֹת	(fp)

The appearance of these forms is due to the following changes which occur when the inflectional endings are added:

- (1) The Qamets under the Qof reduces to (Vocal) Shewa. This is an instance of propretonic reduction: another syllable has been added to קִטָּוֶן, and now the vowel in the first syllable (קִ), an open propretonic, reduces.

קִטָּוֶן → קִטְּנָוֶן

- (2) The Nun of קִטָּוֶן is doubled.

קִטְּנָוֶן

- (3) The Qamets under the Tet shortens to Pathach because it is now in a closed unaccented syllable.

קִטְנוֹת

הַקִּטְנוֹת agrees with הָעָרִים in gender (both are fem.), number (both are pl.), and definiteness (both have the article). קִטְנוֹת is therefore modifying עָרִים attributively.

Summary: אֶל-הָעָרִים הַקִּטְנוֹת

to the small cities

Final Translation

In that battle (or, war) the wise old man sent his father and his sons to the small cities.