

BBH Workbook p. 77 #12
(Gen 6:8)

וְנֹחַ מָצָא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה

וְנֹחַ

וְנֹחַ consists of

- the conjunction Waw
- the proper noun נֹחַ, "Noah"

TRANSLATION

Although the conjunction Waw may often be translated "and," in the present context (Gen 6:8) it is best rendered "but." This translation is appropriate because the statement made in Gen 6:8 *contrasts* with the preceding context.

מָצָא

מָצָא, "(he) found," is the Qal Perfect 3ms of מָצָא.

MORPHOLOGY

The Pathach stem vowel present in the 3ms forms of Qal Perfect strong verbs (e.g., מִלֵּךְ, כָּתַב, מִשַּׁל) lengthens to Qamets in the 3ms forms of Qal Perfect III-א verbs (e.g., מִצָּא, חָטָא, נִשָּׂא) because the Alef at the end of these forms is quiescent.

חֵן

The masculine noun חֵן, “favor, grace,” is the direct object of מִצָּא.

Summary: וְנֹחַ מִצָּא חֵן

But Noah found favor.

בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה

בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה, “in the eyes of the Lord,” consists of

- the preposition בְּ
- עֵינֵי, the construct form of the dual noun עֵינַיִם, “eyes”
- the proper noun יְהוָה

MORPHOLOGY

When a noun ending in םִי or םִי־ enters the construct state, the םִי or םִי־ ending is replaced by םִי. E.g.,

ABSOLUTE		CONSTRUCT
מְלָכִים	→	מְלָכֵי
יָדַיִם	→	יָדַי
מַיִם	→	מַי
עֵינָיִם	→	עֵינַי

GRAMMAR

Because the absolute (i.e., final) noun of the construct chain יהוה עֵינַי is definite, the entire chain is definite: “*the* eyes of Yahweh.”

IDIOM

The idiom **PN** חֵן בְּעֵינַי מֵצָא (where **PN** stands for “name of a person”) is common in the Hebrew Bible. E.g.,

יַעֲמֹד־נָא דָוִד לְפָנַי Let David now stand before me
כִּי־מֵצָא חֵן בְּעֵינַי for he has found favor in my eyes.
(1 Sam 16:22)

אִם־מֵצָאתִי חֵן If I have found favor

בְּעֵינֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ

in the eyes of the king

(Est 5:8)

וַיִּמְצָא הַדָּד חֵן
בְּעֵינֵי פַרְעֹה מְאֹד

Now Hadad found great favor
in the eyes of Pharaoh.

(1 Kgs 11:19)

Final Translation

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.