

## BBH Workbook p. 84 #7

(Gen 41:57)

וְכָל־הָאָרֶץ בָּאוּ מִצְרַיִם לְשֹׁבֵר  
אֶל־יוֹסֵף כִּי־חָזַק הָרָעַב בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ

### וְכָל־הָאָרֶץ

---

וְכָל־, “and all,” consists of

- the conjunction Waw
- the adjective כָּל־ (also spelled כל), “all”

הָאָרֶץ, “the land” or “the earth,” consists of

- the conjunction Waw
- the feminine noun אָרֶץ, “earth”

#### MORPHOLOGY

אָרֶץ is one of several nouns which undergo a vowel change in their first syllable (or only syllable if they are monosyllabic) when the definite article is prefixed to them.

Other examples are the following:

הַ + גֵּן	→	הַגֵּן
הַ + תֵּר	→	הַתֵּר
הַ + עַם	→	הָעַם

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



בָּאוּ, “(they) came,” is the Qal Perfect 3cp of באו. The subject of בָּאוּ in Gen 41:57 is כָּל-הָאָרֶץ.

#### GRAMMAR

The adjective כָּל- and the noun הָאָרֶץ are both *grammatically singular* but together they form a *notional plural*. Therefore כָּל-הָאָרֶץ may take the plural verb בָּאוּ.

#### MORPHOLOGY

Note that the vowels in the Qal Perfect 3cp of Biconsonantal verbs (Qamets and Shureq) are the same as those in the Qal Perfect 3cp of III-ה verbs. The position of the accent differs, however: in Biconsonantal verbs the accent is on the penult, whereas in III-ה verbs the accent is on the ultima. Consider the following examples:

BICONSONANTAL		III-ה	
ROOT	3CP	ROOT	3CP
קָוָם	קָמוּ	שָׁתָה	שָׁתוּ

שִׁים	שָׁמוֹ	בָּנָה	בָּנוּ
בּוֹא	בָּאוּ	גָּלָה	גָּלוּ

## מִצְרַיִם

---

מִצְרַיִם, “to Egypt,” consists of

- the proper noun מִצְרַיִם, “Egypt”
- the directional (or “locative”) suffix הָ

### MORPHOLOGY

The directional ending הָ is never accented. Thus,

מִצְרַיִם + הָ	→	מִצְרַיִם
הַבַּיִת + הָ	→	הַבַּיִת
נֶשֶׁם + הָ	→	נֶשֶׁם

### GRAMMAR

Note that מִצְרַיִם is equivalent in meaning to אֶל-מִצְרַיִם (the latter occurs, for example, in Jer 26:22).

## Summary: וְכָל-הָאָרֶץ בָּאוּ מִצְרַיִם

---

*And all the land (or, earth) came to Egypt.*

## לְשַׁבֵּר

---

A footnote indicates that the verb form לְשַׁבֵּר may be translated “to buy grain.”

### TRANSLATION

Note that whereas English requires a **verb** and a **noun** to express the thought “to buy grain,” Hebrew has a verb לְשַׁבֵּר which can express the entire idea.

While לְשַׁבֵּר need not take an object (it does not, for example, in Gen 41:57), it may. For example,

וַיֵּרְדוּ . . . לְשַׁבֵּר בָּרָה	They went down . . . to buy grain. (Gen 42:3)
-----------------------------------	---

## אֶל-יֹסֵף

---

אֶל-יֹסֵף, “to Joseph,” consists of

- the preposition אֶל, “to”
- the proper noun יֹסֵף, “Joseph”

## TRANSLATION

The dictates of good English style might incline us in our translation of מִצְרַיִם לְשֹׁבֵר אֶל-יוֹסֵף to place the phrase “to Joseph” right after “to Egypt” (that is, before “to buy grain”). The sense is this:

*All the earth came to Egypt, [and, more specifically, they came] to Joseph, to buy grain.*

## כִּי

---

כִּי has a number of functions and possible translation values; here it is a conjunction equivalent to English “for” or “because.”

## GRAMMAR

Remember that the English word “for” is (a) sometimes a conjunction meaning “because” or “since,” and (b) sometimes a preposition:

### (a) “FOR” AS CONJUNCTION

**for** we are brothers

(Gen 13:8)

for I have spoken

(Ezek 28:10)

for the people will not eat until he comes

(1 Sam 9:13)

(b) "FOR" AS PREPOSITION

the Lord is a refuge for the oppressed

(Ps 9:9 [10])

an ordinance for you and your children

(Exod 12:24)

that they might be . . . for renown, for praise, and  
for glory

(Jer 13:11)

Note that in the examples under (a) above the Hebrew word behind each "for" is כִּי, whereas in the examples under (b) the Hebrew word behind each "for" is לְ.

## חֲזַק הָרָעֵב

---

חֲזַק, "(it) was strong" or "(it) was severe," is the Qal Perfect 3ms of חָזַק.

The subject of חֹזֶק is הַרְעָב, “the famine,” which consists of

- the definite article
- the masculine noun רָעַב, “famine”

## בְּכֹל-הָאָרֶץ

---

The prepositional phrase בְּכֹל-הָאָרֶץ, “in all the land” or “in all the earth,” consists of

- the preposition בְּ, “in”
- the adjective כָּל־ (also spelled כָּל), “all”
- the articular noun הָאָרֶץ, “the land (or, earth)”

### MORPHOLOGY

אָרֶץ is one of several nouns which undergo a vowel change in their first syllable (or only syllable if they are monosyllabic) when the definite article is prefixed to them.

Other examples are the following:

הַיָּם	→	הַיָּם
הַיָּם + הַיָּם	→	הַיָּם
הַיָּם + הַיָּם	→	הַיָּם

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

## Final Translation

---

*And all the land (or, earth) came to Egypt, to Joseph, to buy grain, for the famine was severe in all the land (or, earth).*