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Introduction

הִנֵּה is a text and workbook which offers an innovative curriculum that balances two major demands of an introductory language program: the presentation of the most frequently occurring lexical and grammatical examples, and the sequencing of the material in a way that allows for easier teaching and learning. The הִנֵּה approach creates, encourages and ensures a *rigorous*, but non-intimidating and meaningful learning experience. To that end, students are provided with what is deemed necessary information for the introductory stage, postponing minute linguistic details for later, should they wish to continue beyond this level. Attention is given to presentation of the *broad* picture of how Biblical Hebrew behaves, as well as to imparting the most efficient and effective skills and tools that will allow students to access much of the biblical text early on.

Competence is expected regarding the most frequently occurring vocabulary[1] and the understanding of basic grammatical rules. Proficiency is gradually built through the wide exposure to, and translation exercises of, a large number of actual biblical verses, prose, and poetry. All of the above is supported with a Tool Box containing: frequently occurring vocabulary lists in different categories (nouns, prepositions etc.); frequently occurring verb lists organized by form and stems, with color coding instructions for easier recognition of root groups; a variety of paradigms; and different parsing charts. This Tool Box, together with a lexicon for the less common vocabulary, serves as a scaffolding to support the students on their way to more independent reading and better appreciation of authentic biblical texts.

The הִנֵּה program opens with a presentation of the verbless clause and the basics of pronominal suffixes, gender, number, prepositions, the construct chain, *etc*. The presentation of the verb, a major player in the biblical text, is delayed, until all the basics, not conditioned by it, are learned. By the time the verb is presented, important vocabulary

[1] *e.g.* about 100 nouns and 50 *qal* verbs in Vol. I, as well as about 120 verbs of the remaining stems in Vol. II.

and basic grammar have already become familiar, allowing for the demonstration of the verb within richer and more interesting passages.

Throughout the הִנֵּה program, common vocabulary and basic grammar are presented and experienced as exercises through actual biblical passages. Throughout the program, and as much as such a graded curriculum allows, I have attempted to include passages from formative narrative and poetic texts that are level-appropriate, as well as meaningful, for each grammatical subject presented. Students find encouragement at every stage through being able to read and understand the original Hebrew text; something they may have only encountered through reading the Hebrew Bible in English translation, their general exposure to English literature, or while listening to the weekly Torah portion, reading the prayer book and singing the liturgy.

There is no perfect translation for any literary text, certainly not for a text so richly layered and theologically loaded as the Hebrew Bible: an important objective of this course is to shake students from their confidence in only one favored translation by offering selections from among several of those currently available. The translations provided, are meant to show the many styles and different possible interpretations of the biblical text. My hope is that by the end of the course, students will have acquired enough basic skills so they can begin independent critical examination and evaluation of biblical translations.

A considerable part of the הִנֵּה program is dedicated to the *qal* stem[2]. Much of what is thoroughly learned through the *qal*, is transferable to the other stems[3], thus allowing for their faster and easier learning.

The most unique feature of the הִנֵּה program is the way the biblical verb, its tenses and moods, are imparted. The prefix form[4] is the first verb form to be presented through

[2] Vol. I: Lessons 26-46, Vol. Bet: Lessons 1-10
[3] Vol. II, Lessons 11-23
[4] Imperfect, יקטל

examples, with its wide array of possible translations into English tenses. Students' attention is then drawn to the clear-cut cases of the prefix preceded by the **ו past** [5]; only then, less common tenses and moods in the prefix form (not preceded by the **ו past**), are more thoroughly discussed, with their varied possible interpretations. Students are offered a simplified model for interpreting the prefix form, while always considering context. The suffix form and other verb forms are presented in a similar fashion.

Grammar is certainly important in learning a new language, and this program revolves mostly around grammar rules. Still, the importance of retaining a child-like openness to a language cannot be stressed enough. At every stage, even beyond the introductory level, much insight can be drawn from the context. Therefore, students are encouraged to integrate the results of their lexical and grammatical findings with information extracted from context in order to reach a sound understanding.

It is recommended that teaching and learning proceed at a fairly fast pace, not aiming at *perfect* competence and proficiency at every stage. Progressing at a pace of 'three steps forward and one step back' is recommended, as every additional step allows for the reading of more complex passages, practicing the current as well as reinforcing subjects previously learned. This way, both new beginners as well as students with some familiarity with Classical or Modern Hebrew will maintain their interest and find challenges throughout the course.

The development of the הִנֵּה program through the last 14 years is derived in large part from my experience as a teacher of Modern Hebrew and program developer ; my study of language acquisition and learning ; as well as my work as a literary translator[6]. Insights from these experiences have contributed to my choices of objectives, approaches, priorities, and methodologies.

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[5] **ו past** is a new term coined here, to avoid the confusing array of commonly used terminology such as: ו' ההפוך, consecutive, conversive, reversing, *etc.*

[6] Nine books translated from the Modern Arabic literature into Hebrew

A few of my articles[7] explain the rationale behind the הִנֵּה program, which has been successfully tested in both academic and non-academic settings.

Students and instructors will find working with הִנֵּה efficient, effective, and rewarding. הִנֵּה offers a solid first round of Biblical Hebrew learning spiral. Students who complete only this introductory course will find that much of the biblical text, prose and poetry, has already opened up to them. The fewer who chose to continue their study, will be able to do so on a wide lexical and grammatical basis which will facilitate their delving into deeper linguistically oriented deliberation.

Rahel Halabe
Jerusalem, September 2011

[7] *http://www.hebrew-with-halabe.com/about/articles-presentations/*

Introduction to the Second Revised Edition

Since its first publication in 2011, הִנֵּה has proved its effectiveness for a wide range of students. Hopefully, this new edition will make students' journey towards independent reading of the Hebrew Bible even better and smoother.

This second edition provides some improvements and fine-tuning, as follows:

- Errors found are corrected.
- Lesson 3 is now divided into three lessons (new Lessons 2, 4 & 5) for better pacing. The subsequent lessons are now renumbered accordingly.
- Presentation of some grammatical subjects is modified to improve clarity, with the addition and reorganization of a few subjects.
- Biblical verses used in some examples and exercises are replaced with more suitable ones.
- Different translations are provided for some verses.
- Warm Up Conversations (in the first half of Volume I) are meant to be read aloud. Suggested in-class activities in which student may create their own similar conversations are *optional*, and now, clearly marked as such.
- A flowchart (Tool 7a), is added to help distinguish between descriptive and predicate adjectives.

I would like to thank instructors and reviewers, as well as my students, who drew my attention to areas that required improvement. Special thanks to Ruth Precker who continued to point to big and small issues for reconsideration, based on her students' experience with the first edition of הִנֵּה. I would also like to thank Ryan Blackwelder who engaged in helpful grammatical and pedagogical discussions stemming from the use of this textbook, while teaching with me.

Acknowledgements

Much of the merit of the הִנֵּה program comes from the insight I obtained from the many students who offered me their feedback, correcting, suggesting, and expressing their enjoyment as well as their difficulties, as they studied with this system during its development.

I am grateful to instructors, who have taught with the program and gave me their feedback. I especially wish to thank Rabbi Dr. Robert Daum from the University of British Columbia, who was the first to experiment with הִנֵּה while still in its draft form, offering me his encouragement as well as good advice. I owe many thanks to Ruth Precker from the University of North Texas. Ruth has not only delivered her students' helpful response to the program, but has spent much time discussing in depth with me many pedagogical and methodological issues involved in the writing and teaching of this textbook. She has been tireless in proofreading the text and its many Tools and has always given me her sincere, objective opinion, so needed for this complex work.

The English text of this book was edited by Claudia Goldman (Volume I) and Susan J. Katz (Volumes I & II). Both did not limit their work to careful copy editing, and provided invaluable advice from both the learner's and experienced user's perspective, and for that, I am grateful.

I wish to thank Cynthia Ramsay, owner and publisher of the Jewish Independent in Vancouver, who gave the text its final touch, by dedicating many hours of very careful proofreading of the English text.

Lesson 8 שִׁעוּר שְׁמִינִי

Subjects Covered:

8.1 The Adjective
8.2 The Descriptive Adjective
8.3 Noun/Descriptive Adjective Agreement in Gender
8.4 Noun/Descriptive Adjective Agreement in Number
8.5 Very - מְאֹד
8.6 Frequently Occurring Adjectives
8.7 Noun/Descriptive Adjective Agreement in Definiteness
8.8 Adjectives Ending with י[ִ]
8.9 The Adjective as a Noun

Introduced: Tool No. 7 - Frequently Occurring Adjectives List

8.1 The Adjective

Generally speaking, ***adjectives*** *(e.g.* good, weak, big*) in both Hebrew and English may act in two different ways:*

- ***Descriptive Adjective*** [1] *- describes a noun or a proper name of* <u>*any role*</u> *in the clause. It answers the questions* which, what, what kind*:*

The <u>little</u> child played.
She reads <u>good</u> books.
They lived in a <u>beautiful</u> home.

- ***Predicate Adjective*** *- gives the main information about the* <u>*subject*</u>*:*

Shlomo is <u>wise</u>.
These cities are <u>rich</u>.

In this Lesson you will learn about the Hebrew ***descriptive adjective****.*
The ***predicate adjective*** *will be introduced in Lesson 10.*

---

[1] *A* ***descriptive adjective*** *is also called an* ***attributive adjective****.*

8.2 The Descriptive Adjectives

- *A **descriptive adjective**, in both Hebrew and English, describes a noun or a proper name. For example:*

a good place	מָקוֹם טוֹב
good Noah	נֹחַ הַטּוֹב

- *However, unlike in English, the Hebrew **descriptive adjective** follows the noun or proper name it describes. Thus:*

a good tree	עֵץ טוֹב
a good fruit	פְּרִי טוֹב
a good name	שֵׁם טוֹב
a good heart	לֵב טוֹב
a good man	אִישׁ טוֹב
a good thing *or* a good word	דָּבָר טוֹב

- *The **descriptive adjective** may describe a noun or proper name in any role in a clause. The **descriptive adjective** answers the questions* which, what, what kind *about the noun or proper name it describes. For example:*

A big tree grows in the garden.	- 'tree' *is the subject*
I saw a big tree.	- 'tree' *is the direct object*

- *A noun or proper name together with its **descriptive adjective** creates a phrase (not a clause).*

- *The **descriptive adjective** agrees with the noun or proper name it describes in all of gender (8.3), number (8.4) and definiteness (8.7).*

A Simple Conversation - Greetings

Now you can greet your classmates with:

Good morning	בֹּקֶר טוֹב
Good evening	עֶרֶב טוֹב
Joyous holiday	חַג שָׂמֵחַ

8.3 Noun / Descriptive Adjective Agreement in Gender

*The **descriptive adjective** agrees in gender with the noun it describes.*

- *When the noun is **masculine**, so is its adjective:*

a good man	אִישׁ טוֹב
a great prophet	נָבִיא גָּדוֹל
a new altar	מִזְבֵּחַ חָדָשׁ

*When the noun is **feminine**, so is its adjective. This adjective always has a feminine ending:* ה[ָ] *(or less commonlly,* ת[ָ][ְ] *or* ית[ַ]*).*

a good woman	אִשָּׁה טוֹבָה
a great prophetess	נְבִיאָה גְּדוֹלָה
a blessed land	אֶרֶץ בְּרוּכָה
but	
another year	שָׁנָה אַחֶרֶת

Examples

[KJ] a mighty God and terrible [OJPS] a God great and awful [EF] a God great and awe-inspiring [RA] a great and fearsome god (Deuteronomy 7:21)	אֵל גָּדוֹל וְנוֹרָא (דברים ז, כא)	1
and the LORD rooted them out of their land... and cast them into another land...(Deuteronomy 29:27)	וַיִּתְּשֵׁם ה׳ מֵעַל אַדְמָתָם ... וַיַּשְׁלִכֵם אֶל אֶרֶץ אַחֶרֶת... (דברים כט, כז)	
and they offered strange fire before the LORD (Leviticus 10:1)	וַיַּקְרִבוּ לִפְנֵי ה׳ אֵשׁ זָרָה (ויקרא י, א)	2
a wise woman (IISamuel 20:16)	אִשָּׁה חֲכָמָה (שמואל ב׳ כ, טז)	3

8.4 Noun/Descriptive Adjective Agreement in Number

*The **descriptive adjective** agrees in number with the noun it describes;*

When the noun is singular, so is the adjective.
When the noun is plural, so is the adjective.

- ים[̣] *ending <u>always</u> indicates the <u>masculine</u> plural*
- וֹת[ ] *ending <u>always</u> indicates the <u>feminine</u> plural* [2]

<u>Read aloud</u> the singular and plural of each phrase below.
*Note that the endings of the plural nouns and the endings of the plural **adjectives** describing them are <u>not necessarily</u> the same.*

Adjectives Modifying Masculine Nouns

wise lads	נְעָרִ**ים** חֲכָמִ**ים**
great nations	גּוֹיִ**ים** גְּדוֹלִ**ים**
new altars	מִזְבְּחוֹ**ת** חֲדָשִׁ**ים**
blessed fathers	אָבוֹ**ת** בְּרוּכִ**ים**

a wise lad	נַעַר חָכָם
a great nation	גּוֹי גָּדוֹל
a new altar	מִזְבֵּחַ חָדָשׁ
a blessed father	אָב בָּרוּךְ

Adjectives Modifying Feminine Nouns

wise girls	נְעָרוֹ**ת** חֲכָמוֹ**ת**
large lands	אֲרָצוֹ**ת** גְּדוֹלוֹ**ת**
good women	נָשִׁ**ים** טוֹבוֹ**ת**
blessed years	שָׁנִ**ים** בְּרוּכוֹ**ת**

a wise girl	נַעֲרָה חֲכָמָ**ה**
a large land	אֶרֶץ גְּדוֹלָ**ה**
a good woman	אִשָּׁ**ה** טוֹבָ**ה**
a blessed year	שָׁנָ**ה** בְּרוּכָ**ה**

[2] *This is different from the plural ending of the **nouns** (Lessons 4&5) in which:*
ים[̣] *ending <u>usually</u> (not always!) indicates the **<u>masculine</u> plural.***
וֹת[ ] *ending <u>usually</u> (not always!) indicates the **<u>feminine</u> plural.***