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A SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE

HEBREW TENSES

BY

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TO MY PUPILS

חרבה חוה לאמורتي מרבות ומחיirydmaי המה

ומחלמתי יהר מבויה

חוה

מירית לאמור

חוה

חוה

חוה
PREFACE.

The present volume is an attempt to give an account of the nature and use of the Tenses in Hebrew in a form suitable for those who have but recently begun the study of the language, and who have not attained to such proficiency as will enable them to use with advantage Professor Driver's indispensable book. I have commonly found in teaching, that a student's chief difficulty in the Hebrew verbs is to grasp the meaning which they conveyed to the minds of the Hebrews themselves; that is to say, there is a tendency to assign as equivalents to each of the Hebrew Tenses a certain number of Latin or English forms by which that particular Tense may commonly be translated. The result is a failure to perceive many of those fine shades of meaning, which give such life and vigour to the language of the Old Testament.

The difficulty in the use of the Hebrew verbs lies solely in the point of view, so absolutely different from our own, from which the Hebrews regarded an action; the time, which with us is the first consideration, as the very word 'tense' shews, being to them a matter of
secondary importance. It is, therefore, essential that a student should clearly grasp, not so much the Latin or English forms which may be used in translating each of the Hebrew Tenses, but rather the aspect of each action, as it presented itself to a Hebrew's mind.

To deal adequately, however, with such a subject is beyond the limits of a grammar intended for the use of students, and yet no real progress can be made in Hebrew until it is mastered.

In treating of a subject so wide, in which the natural divisions are few, and often slightly marked, it is not easy to make a selection, and one is sorely tempted to multiply examples at the expense of brevity. I trust that the illustrations which are printed under the several headings will be sufficient for learners, but, lest I may be thought too dogmatic in my statements or in my omissions, I have dealt with some of the vexed questions in additional notes.

My heartiest thanks are due to my friend Mr F. C. Burkitt for kindly reading through the greater part of my notes in manuscript, and for many valuable suggestions. It is, however, only fair to him to say that he is in no wise responsible for any of the opinions here set forth.

ROBERT H. KENNETT.

Queens' College,

January 16, 1901.
A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE
HEBREW TENSES.

The name 'tenses' as applied to Hebrew verbs is misleading. The so-called Hebrew 'tenses' do not express the *time* but merely the *state* of an action. Indeed were it not for the confusion that would arise through the application of the term 'state' to both nouns and verbs, 'states' would be a far better designation than 'tenses.' It must always be borne in mind that it is impossible to translate a Hebrew verb into English without employing a limitation (viz. of time) which is entirely absent in the Hebrew. The ancient Hebrews never thought of an action as past, present, or future, but simply as *perfect*, i.e. complete, or *imperfect*, i.e. as in course of development. When we say that a certain Hebrew tense corresponds to a Perfect, Pluperfect, or Future in English, we do not mean that the Hebrews thought of it as Perfect, Pluperfect, or Future, but merely that it must be so translated in English. The *time* of an action the Hebrews did not attempt to express by any verbal form.
THE PERFECT.

The fundamental idea denoted by the Perfect is that of a completed act; and this idea underlies all its various uses. Thus the Perfect is used to describe the following classes of actions:

I. Actions completed at a definite moment in the past: e.g.

בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמְשֹׁן אֶת הָעָרֶץ

God created the heavens and the earth (Gen. i. 1)

כָּמֹס שֶׁאַל הָלְבָנָה

Water he asked, milk she gave (Judges v. 25)

II. Actions completed in the past of which the effect remains: e.g.

הָשִׂישָׂה לֹא יִמִּינוֹ וְהָרְגוּ קָרִישו

His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory (Ps. xcviii. 1)

שָׂרְרֵי שֶׁאַר לֹא מַאֲר

Shaddai has brought sore trouble upon me (Ruth i. 20)

III. Actions completed in the immediate past, in which case the Perfect passes over into the meaning of the Present: e.g.

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוֹה

Thus saith Jehovah (passim)
I lift up my hand to Jehovah God most high (Gen. xiv. 22)

and similarly,

I know, I remember.

N.B. The Perfect of so-called ‘stative’ verbs is naturally used to express a state complete in the present: e.g.

I am small, I love, I hate.

Jehovah’s hand is not too short to save, nor His ear too dull to hear (Isaiah lix. 1)

IV. Actions completed in the future, which in Latin would be expressed by the Future Perfect or Subjunctive Perfect: e.g.

But if I say thus to the youth......, go, for Jehovah will have sent thee away (1 Sam. xx. 22)

I will not have thee stop driving unless I tell thee (shall have told thee) (2 Kings iv. 24)

Let them seek thy master, lest the wind of Jehovah may have taken him up (2 Kings ii. 16)

1—2
V. Actions completed before some definite point of time in the past, which in Latin would be expressed by the Pluperfect: e.g.

תסבת ביה והשבה ובקללתאקה חישר עשה

And He desisted on the seventh day from all His work which He had done (Gen. ii. 2)

לחקה אתכתפיים

Now Rachel had taken the teraphim (Gen. xxxi. 34)

לשמת אנה שמשחא אחרה עינה לאמחל

By the mere hearing of the ear had I heard of Thee, but now my own eye has seen Thee (Job xlii. 5)

N.B. It must not however be forgotten that, although the Perfect may frequently be translated by our Pluperfect, yet the Pluperfect idea is foreign to Hebrew thought. A Hebrew merely stated the completion of an action, and left the time of its completion to be inferred from the context. Thus in the first of the three examples given above the verb חישר merely states the completion of the act of doing. It is obvious from the context that this act of doing was completed before God desisted from the work of creation. So likewise in the second illustration it is merely stated that Rachel took the teraphim, the context making it sufficiently clear that she took them before her father began to look for them.

VI. Actions of which the time is quite indefinite, the completion of the single act alone being regarded:\  e.g.

---

\(^1\) This is the so-called Perfect of Experience: it scarcely occurs in ordinary prose.
Grass withers, flower fades, when Jehovah's wind has blown upon it (Isaiah xl. 7)

He breaks into houses in the dark (Job xxiv. 16)

VII. Actions the sphere of which belongs to the future, the certainty with which they are regarded being thus expressed: e.g.

Naomi is selling (has determined to sell)......the plot of land (Ruth iv. 3)

The whole field I give thee (Gen. xxiii. 11)

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1 This Perfect of Certainty is frequent in the writings of the Prophets, and is therefore sometimes called the Prophetic Perfect. Examples of its use are: בָּשָׁלֵם נַעֲמָה וְכַלְכָּל. For your sake will I send to Babylon (Isaiah xliii. 14); בָּלַע מַמְּחָה לַעֲצָה. He will annihilate death for ever (Isaiah xxv. 8).

In an interrogative sentence the Perfect of Certainty acquires a meaning resembling that of the Deliberative Subjunctive in Greek: e.g. ἀναθέματι ἡμῶν Αμ I to leave my fatness? (Judges ix. 9); and, somewhat similarly, עבורך אמי How long refusest thou? (Ex. x. 3). This latter use of the Perfect, however, is rare, and some of the instances which may be assigned to it are capable of a different explanation: thus in the quotation from Exodus x. 3 the Perfect ניאָסְכַּנָּ may be explained on the analogy of 'stative' verbs (see above, § III, note) or even as a Future Perfect.
N.B. It must be remembered that, as there is no time in the Hebrew tenses, the Perfect may refer to the future equally well as to the past. It is incorrect to say that the Hebrew said 'I have done' when he meant 'I will do': in reality he merely described the completion of the act of doing without specifying the time. But as there is no more emphatic way of predicting an event still future than by describing its result (see, for example, Isaiah xiii., where the certainty of the fall of Babylon is brought out by the description of its future desolation), so an event which is obviously future, when described as completed, is impressed upon the hearer's mind as certain.

VIII. Hypothetical actions, completed
   (a) at or before some definite time in the past: e.g.

   If ye had saved them alive, I would not have slain you
   (I would not slay you)¹ (Judges viii. 19)

   If we had not delayed, we might by this time have
   returned twice over² (Gen. xliii. 10)

¹ The use of the Perfect יבּנה in the apodosis to express an action still future may be explained on the analogy of the Perfect of Certainty.
² The use of the Perfect in the apodosis of this sentence does not materially differ from its use in the protasis. Thus the Perfect יבּנה expresses the hypothetical completion of the act of return at some moment in the past in consequence of a previous hypothetical action.

To this heading may be assigned such a sentence as Genesis xxii. 7 Who would have said to Abraham (sc. if he had known the circumstances), Sarah is to suckle children?
(b) in the past, but with effect continuing into the present: e.g.

If I have done this (the guilt of which still continues)......
then let an enemy persecute my soul (Ps. vii. 4, 6)

(c) in the future: e.g.

If it be Jehovah that has stirred thee up against me,
let him smell an offering (1 Sam. xxvi. 19)

(d) at some indefinite time or times, i.e. when the verb in the *apodosis* expresses what is habitual: e.g.

And whenever I think (sc. of the injustice in the world),
I am panic-stricken (Job xxi. 6)

1 Point thus.
IX. Actions the completion of which is desired\(^1\),

(a) in the past: e.g.

\[
\text{לֹא רָאָתָה בְּאֶרֶץ מַעֲרֵי}
\]

*Would that we had died in the land of Egypt!* (i.e. If we had died in the land of Egypt, it had been well with us)

(Numbers xiv. 2)

(b) in the present: e.g.

\[
\text{לָא יִדְוָא}
\]

*O that I knew!* (i.e. Who will give—O that one would give—the state described by the word יִדְוָא) (Job xxiii. 3)

(c) in the future: e.g.

\[
\text{לָא קָרַע יְהוָּה}
\]

*O that thou wouldest rend the heavens!* (Isaiah lxiii. 19)

X. The Perfect is also frequently used in sentences which western idiom puts into a hypothetical form, but which, technically, are scarcely hypothetical in Hebrew. In such sentences the division into *protasis* and *apodosis* is misleading: they are in reality coordinate clauses, and the graphic Hebrew idiom with its absolute method of expression, that disdains saving clauses and particles,

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\(^1\) This must not be understood as implying a belief in the so-called 'Precative' Perfect, the existence of which in Hebrew is extremely doubtful. The Perfect, though it may express confident expectation, does not of itself express a wish. The illustrations given above under (a) and (c) are in reality merely the *protases* of hypothetical sentences of which the *apodoses* are suppressed.
introduces what is in reality only hypothetical or possible as though it were fact or certainty. Illustrations are

\[ נְתַּאָה נִשָּׁה יְסָרָה לֶחֶם \]

*If one has found a wife, one has found a good thing*  
(Prov. xviii. 22)

[In this sentence the two clauses are coordinate. The Hebrew, so to speak, paints a picture of the finding of a wife as an accomplished fact, and likewise the finding of a good thing as parallel to it, the *time* being quite indefinite.]

\[ רָבָר עַלְלוֹת נְתַּאָה \]

*If one were to attempt to speak to thee, wouldest thou be wearied? (Anglice would it be too much for thee?)*  
(Job iv. 2)

\[ נִשָּׁה יְרֵד (יִתְחִסּ) בֵּשׂ ѧם רֵדֵה \]

*When their cord (tent-peg) is plucked up in them, do they not die?*  
(Job iv. 21)

---

1 Similar sentences, viz. hypothetical in English but not in Hebrew, are found even where there is no verb in the first clause: e.g.  
\[ לֹא נֵדַע אַמַּה יָדְרֵהָ בַּשַּׁמְיֹה Then if not (i.e. assuming that the refusal to accept a present is unalterable), let there be given to thy servant a load, etc. (2 Kings v. 17), cf. 2 Kings x. 15; and similarly with the Participle: e.g.  
Supposing that Jehovah be even now making windows in the heavens, can such a thing come to pass? (2 Kings vii. 2).  
2 In this instance the interrogative particle, although placed at the head of the sentence, really belongs to the second verb, or perhaps it would be more true to say that the interrogative particle belongs to the whole sense conveyed by the two closely coordinated clauses.
THE IMPERFECT.

The Imperfect in its fundamental meaning denotes actions as incomplete, i.e. as in process of development. It does not express the mere continuance of an action, which would be expressed by the Participle, but the development of it from its beginning towards its completion. Whereas the Perfect, so to speak, paints a single picture of an action as completed, the Imperfect paints a series of pictures. Thus in the words לְּפִלְּלָה בֵּבָל we have a picture of the fall of Babylon as an accomplished fact, without any specification of the time; in פִּלְלָה בֵּבָל, on the other hand, we have, as it were, a cinematographic representation of the fall of Babylon, stopping short however of the complete end. In the Imperfect, as in the Perfect, there is no definition of time: the time of an action denoted by it can only be inferred from the context.

I. The Imperfect is accordingly used to denote actions regarded as in process of development,

(a) in the past: e.g.

רֶהֶבֶת פִּלְלָה עוֹשֶׁה And the house began to fill (and kept filling) with smoke (Isaiah vi. 4)

בַּבָּל פְּרָז מֵאָרֶזֶת הָשָּׁהְתָה הָאָרֶזֶת And in all the land of Egypt the land began to be destroyed (implying that the destruction went on from one stage to another) (Exodus viii. 20)

Similarly the Imperfect is commonly used after נַע ‘then’ and לְכַל ‘not yet,’ since both words call attention to the origin and
(b) in the present: e.g.

גֵּמֶה לָלְלָיו-שַׁמֶּרֶת

The evening shadows are beginning to lengthen (Jerem. vi. 4)

(כ) in the future: e.g.

יְהוָה בַּמְּשָׁפְסָה יִבָּא

Jehovah will enter into judgment (Isaiah iii. 14)

אִזְכַּרְכַּרְכַּרְכַּרְכַּרְכַּרְכַּר

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened (Isaiah xxxv. 5)

N.B. Since in the case of actions still future their development rather than their completion is usually contemplated, the Imperfect is naturally used to denote such actions; but if the completion of a future act is contemplated, the Perfect is used. It must be clearly understood that the Imperfect conveys no idea of time,

devlopment of the action following: e.g. יֵשֶׁר חֲנִיתַה Then Moses began to sing (Exodus xv. 1); יְבָא בָּא בָּא בָּא בָּא בָּא Before she travailed (she had not yet begun to travail) she brought forth (Isaiah lxvi. 7).

1 Here belongs such an expression as יָמַּעְּרֵנַּעַרִּי I see him but not now (Num. xxiv. 17). In this case יָמַּעְּרֵנַּעַרִּי is not a simple Present, which is never expressed by the Imperfect but by the Participle. The Imperfect here conveys the idea, in a graphic manner, of the vision flashing upon the seer and becoming more and more vivid. This explanation seems preferable to that which would make יָמַּעְּרֵנַּעַרִּי a simple Future.
and is used in expressing future actions only because such actions for the most part present themselves to our minds as in process of development rather than as complete. That this is the case is clear from the fact that, when it is necessary to emphasize the completion of a future action, the Perfect is used.

II. Since there is no idea of time in the Hebrew tenses, which have regard merely to the state of an action, whether from a past, present, or future standpoint, the Imperfect, which, as we have seen, is used to denote actions still future from some standpoint in the present, is naturally used to denote those actions also which may be regarded as future from some standpoint in the past. Accordingly the Future Participle of the Latin with the past tense of the verb 'to be' is expressed in Hebrew by the Imperfect: e.g.

Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he was to die (2 Kings xiii. 14)

And he took his eldest son who was to reign (Anglice would have reigned) after him (2 Kings iii. 27)

Were we to know that he would say, etc.? (Gen. xliii. 7)

Was Abner to die (i.e. Who would have said that Abner would die) like a knave? (2 Sam. iii. 33)
Why could I not have died (more literally 'Why was I not in the condition of being about to die') _from the womb_? (Job iii. 11)

N.B. In the above examples, although English idiom requires a variety of renderings, the fundamental meaning of the Imperfect is never set aside. Thus, to refer again to our previous illustration of its meaning in connexion with the first of the four passages quoted above, נַעֲלוּ֣וּת is, so to speak, a cinematographic representation of Elisha's death, stopping short however of the complete end. Since the narrator has made it clear that at the time of his writing Elisha is dead, and he yet represents the act of dying as in process of development rather than as complete, his readers at once understand that the standpoint from which this representation begins is some point of time before Elisha's death.

III. The fundamental meaning of the Imperfect being development, by a slight extension of its original scope it is used to denote actions which progress from stage to stage, but do not once for all attain to completion, hence repeated or customary acts, whether

(a) in the past: e.g.

יָנָֽשְׁר לְעַלָּֽהּ מַדְּרָֽשְׁר

And a mist used to go up from the earth (Gen. ii. 6)

וֹטְשֵׁש הָֽקֶֽבֶֽעַ הַחַֽרְמֶֽאֲוָֽל

Now Moses used to take the tent (Ex. xxxiii. 7)
(b) or in the present: e.g.

In grassy pastures He makes me lie (Ps. xxiii. 2)

Those who plough unprofitableness and sow trouble reap it
(i.e. what they have sown) (Job iv. 8)

(c) or in the future: e.g.

Sabbath by sabbath shall all flesh come to worship
(Isaiah lxvi. 23)

The work of their hands my chosen ones shall (habitually)
enjoy to the full (Isaiah lxv. 22)

IV. Closely connected with those uses of the Imperfect
given under the preceding sections is the potential or
permissive sense which it appears sometimes to convey.
It would, perhaps, be incorrect to say that the Imperfect
in itself possesses a potential or permissive sense; the fact
rather is that certain actions which we in English distinctly
state to be practicable or permissible, and the reverse,
the Hebrew represents merely as likely to take place or
customary, and the reverse. Thus in a sentence referring
to past time we read,
And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel......were sacrificing sheep and oxen which could not be counted nor numbered for multitude (1 Kings viii. 5)

[In this instance, whereas the English idiom states the impossibility of counting the sacrifices, the Hebrew merely affirms that such a counting was not to take place.]

Similarly we find,

השמים והשמים לא יכללו
The heavens, yea the heavens of heavens, cannot contain Thee
(1 Kings viii. 27)

[In this sentence the words לא יכללו do not state the impossibility of the heavens containing God (which would be expressed by לא יכללו), but merely the fact that they do not habitually, and there is no likelihood that they will, contain Him.]

So likewise

לא ירעשה
It ought not so to be done (Gen. xxix. 26)

[In this sentence the Hebrew merely states that a certain thing is contrary to custom, and therefore, since among the Hebrews law and custom are almost identical, contrary to law or right.]

V. The Imperfect, since it expresses what is customary, may be used to express some attribute or customary action qualifying
(a) a noun: e.g.

 מי אתה והירה צאקהimporte barcode היצים blamed ביתו

Who art thou that thou shouldst have been afraid of a mortal man that dies, or of a human being that is made (like) grass? (Isaiah li. 12)

בכלה תעהה ביל

As a bride who adorns herself with her (bridal) attire (Isaiah lxii. 10)

(b) a verb, whether it be

(α) a Perfect: e.g.

ราชיתו מעולות אחוריו מתחמק

I have long been silent, holding my peace, refraining myself (Isaiah xlii. 14)

את נפשות אתה אנข้อ אוחר תלב

Thou hast forsaken me.....going backward (Jerem. xv. 6)

(β) an Imperfect with Waw consecutive: e.g.

יינהו רוח בבל איש ישנה עולם ישפלו

And David went forth whithersoever Saul used to send him, doing prudently (1 Sam. xviii. 5)

יינהו משיחת תפוחנה פלשהים שלישה ראשית

ריאהי אחר יlongleftrightarrow

And the raiders went out from the camp of the Philistines in three companies, the one company turning, etc.

(1 Sam. xiii. 17)¹

¹ In the last two illustrations it is possible that in each case the pointing should be איל; but this would not affect the explanation of the Imperfect, which in any case merely qualifies and describes the action of the main verb.
THE IMPERFECT.

(γ) an Imperfect referring to future time: e.g.

If thou wilt walk before me......keeping my statutes and my ordinances (1 Kings ix. 4)

I will again shepherd thy flock, keeping guard (Gen. xxx. 31)

[In this sentence is used to qualify the previous and , being in close connexion, are construed .]

(δ) or a Participle: e.g.

Ho! you who are early in the morning, following after strong drink (Isaiah v. 11)

He raises up from the ground the poor, lifting up the needy from the ash heap (1 Sam. ii. 8)

VI. Since the action contemplated as future frequently depends upon the will of the speaker, the Imperfect is naturally often used in commands: e.g.

That which thy lips utter thou shalt keep and do (Deut. xxiii. 24)

1 The third person is constantly used in Hebrew as in Syriac to qualify a noun in the vocative.

K.
VII. The Imperfect is used to express actions which in Latin would be expressed by the Subjunctive mood\(^1\), when the idea is the development of the action, both

(a) in the future: e.g.

\[
\text{ירְבֵּ֣י שָׁניּ
}
\]

Sing many songs that thou mayest be remembered

(Isaiah xxiii. 16)

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\(^1\) In such sentences as הָעָֽכַּבִּים יִֽאֵֽנִי יִֽכְּ לֶֽאֵל֓ח Who am I, that I should go? (Ex. iii. 11), מְנוֹתָּ֨הְּ יִֽאֵֽנִי יִֽכְּ לֶֽאֵל֓ח What is man that thou art mindful of him? (Ps. viii. 5) the Imperfect does not, strictly speaking, correspond to a Subjunctive for יִֽכְּ is not a final particle. The exact structure of the sentence is easily seen, if for the interrogative pronoun a definite predicate be substituted; thus, I am honoured, for I shall go; Man is great, for thou art mindful of him. That this is the true explanation is shewn by such sentences as 1 Kings xviii. 9, 2 Kings v. 7, where יִֽכְּ is followed by a Participle, and 2 Sam. vii. 18, where it is followed by a Perfect. Similarly in the sentence הָעָֽכַּבִּים יִֽאֵֽנִי יִֽכְּ לֶֽאֵל֓ח God is not a man that He should lie (Num. xxiii. 19), the Imperfect does not represent a Subjunctive. The exact meaning of the sentence is, It is not the case that God is a man and so vont to lie. A similar use of the Imperfect, but without the conjunction, occurs in נָּגַּם יִֽאֵֽנִי יִֽכְּ לֶֽאֵל֓ח Jehovah is my shepherd, therefore shall I lack nothing (Ps. xxiii. 1). So also נָּגַּם יִֽאֵֽנִי יִֽכְּ לֶֽאֵל֓ח (Ps. lv. 13) means It is not the case that my enemy has done great things against me and I shall therefore hide myself from him. This construction however is rare, and in the last example the sense would be expressed in prose by נָּגַּם יִֽכְּ followed by the Perfect; cf. 1 Sam. xiii. 13. The chief objection to the explanation here given is that it involves a simple Imperfect with weak Waw. But this construction though not common certainly occurs in the Hebrew Bible; see below, Exceptions to the rule of Waw Consecutive.
And now lest he put forth his hand, etc. (Gen. iii. 22) and

(b) in the past: e.g.

In order that a later generation, children (yet) to be born, might know (Ps lxxviii. 6)

Lest thou shoulddest say, Behold I knew them (Isaiah xlviii. 7)

[In this latter case (b) the Infinitive is more usual.]

N.B. The Imperfect in the sense of a Subjunctive sometimes follows another tense, whether Perfect or Imperfect, without any subordinating particle: e.g. Jehovah was pleased for His righteousness’ sake to make a tórah great and glorious (Isaiah xlii. 21): They shall not call thee again [i.e. thou shalt not enjoy again—literally, thou shalt not add—the state which may be described by the words נקרא] (Isaiah xlvii. 1).

VIII. The Imperfect is naturally used in hypothetical sentences, when the idea to be expressed is that of an incomplete action:

(a) with a hypothetical particle: e.g.

If thou wilt not go with me, I will not go (Judges iv. 8)
[This use is identical with that by which the Imperfect expresses a simple Future.]

(b) without a hypothetical particle: e.g.

Lo, if you see somebody raving, why should you bring him to me? (1 Sam. xxi. 15)

If only one man sin, wilt thou be angry with the whole congregation? (Num. xvi. 22)

And lo, if we go, what shall we take to the man? (1 Sam. ix. 7)

N.B. This use of the Imperfect is analogous to that of the Perfect described in § x. In this case the first clause is not subordinate but coordinate.

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1 Here belong such sentences as Ps. cxlvii. 4 a.
THE COHORTATIVE, JUSSIVE, AND IMPERATIVE.

In addition to the ordinary form of the Imperfect two modifications of it are commonly found in Hebrew, known severally as the Cohortative and the Jussive. As the names imply, both these modifications are used to denote actions as willed or intended. The Cohortative is confined almost exclusively to the first person, singular and plural, while the Jussive is scarcely ever found except in the second and third persons, singular and plural. These two forms of the Imperfect are therefore supplementary to one another.

The Cohortative is easily recognised by the ending ה (e.g. הָלסקל, הָלסקנ, which become in pause הָלסקלָא, הָלסקנָא), except in ה verbs, in which forms that are obviously used in the sense of the Cohortative have nevertheless the pointing of the ordinary Imperfect.

1 This ה appears to be identical in origin with the an of the Arabic Energetic. It is possible that in several of the cases in which we find the so-called 'epenthetic nun' before suffixes we have actually the Cohortative in its old form. See, for example, 2 Kings vi. 28, 29, where חָלַקְטֵנוּ is equivalent to חָלַקְטֵנוּ, whereas on the other hand חָלַקְטֵנוּ (v. 29) is equivalent to חָלַקְטֵנוּ. Ordinarily, however, the Cohortative with suffixes is identical in form with the Imperfect.

2 The only exceptions are חָלַקְטֵנוּ (Isaiah xli. 23) and חָלַקְטֵנוּ (Ps. cxix. 117). It is, however, doubtful whether with so few examples we are justified in assuming that ה verbs could take the ending ה in the Cohortative. In both words quoted above the ending ה may have been
The Jussive is in the majority of instances identical in form with the Imperfect, and differs from it only in two cases, (a) when the vowel before the last radical of the Imperfect is essentially long (as in the Hiph'il of the strong verbs, and in the Kal, Niph'al, and Hiph'il of י"ע verbs), in which case the Jussive appears with the corresponding tone-long or heightened vowel, (b) when the Imperfect ends in י (i.e. in forms derived from the so-called י' verbs), in which case the corresponding Jussive form drops the final י.

Both the Cohortative and Jussive denote actions as willed by the speaker.

I. Thus the Cohortative expresses a desire,

(a) when the gratification of the desire is in the power of the speaker or speakers: e.g.

יאפBindings

I will turn aside (Ex. iii. 3)

adopted by the punctuators simply for the purpose of securing assonance with the preceding Cohortatives. That the Masoretes did not scruple arbitrarily to alter the pronunciation for the sake of assonance is clear from such passages as 1 Kings xvii. 14, where ילבת is so pointed for the sake of assonance with יעמך: cf. ינוראנו (2 Sam. iii. 25) altered in ק'ר into ינניאכ for assonance with the preceding יכינ. At the same time it is not impossible that all Cohortatives from י' verbs should be pointed with קamesh, an obsolete form having been ignored by the later tradition.

1 This is always the case when the Jussive has suffixes attached to it.

There are two exceptions according to the Masoretic pointing, viz. י' (Deut. xxxii. 7) and ימעי (Isaiah xxxv. 4). It is difficult however in the face of the frequent glaring inconsistencies in the Masoretic pointing to attach much importance to these exceptions. Probably the words should be pointed ימעי and ימעי.
The Cohortative, Jussive, and Imperative.

(a) The lad and I will go (Gen. xxii. 5)

(b) when it depends upon the permission or will of another: e.g.

If I have found favour in thy sight, let me slip away
(1 Sam. xx. 29)

O Jehovah! let us not perish for the life of this man
(Jonah i. 14)

(c) when the speaker desires that others should act with himself: e.g.

Let us go down (Gen. xi. 7)

Come, let us shout for joy to Jehovah (Ps. xcv. 1)

II. Similarly the Jussive expresses a desire when the gratification of it is

(a) in the speaker's own power, i.e. a command: e.g.

Let there be light (Gen. i. 3)

Let no one leave of it till the morning (Ex. xvi. 19)
(b) dependent upon the will of others: e.g.

Let Pharaoh select a man (Gen. xli. 33)

Long live King Solomon (1 Kings i. 39)

III. It will thus be seen that the Jussive resembles the Imperative in meaning, and practically supplies it with the third person which is lacking. This being the case, it is not surprising that the second person of the Jussive is very rare except with the negative לֹא, that is, as a rule, it only takes the place of the Imperative when the latter on account of the negative cannot be used.

There are therefore in Hebrew three verbal forms expressing desire (each possessing various modifications of intensity), viz. (1) the Cohortative, belonging chiefly to the first person; (2) the Imperative, belonging to the second person; (3) the Jussive, belonging chiefly to the second and third persons. These three verbal forms are so exactly similar in meaning, that in treating of their idiomatic use it will be convenient to take them together.

IV. We have already noticed the decided preference shewn by the Hebrew for coordination rather than subordination. In many cases where the English idiom

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1 According to the Masoretic pointing לֹא (1 Sam. x. 8) is a Jussive used in a positive command, but probably the form should be pointed as an Imperfect. See below.

2 But also to the second person, e.g. הָאַשְׁנָה (Job xi. 17), and to the third, e.g. הָאַשְׁנָה, הָאַשְׁנָה (Isaiah v. 19).

3 But also to the first, e.g. בָּתָקַנְי (Deut. x. 2), הָאַשְׁנָה (Isaiah xli. 23 K'thîb).
would subordinate a clause, the Hebrew simply coupled together by \textit{waw} two or more coordinate clauses, and looked to the result of the whole. Thus, for example, the two coordinate clauses \textit{לֹּא בָנוּ אֶחָד יְשֵׁב} (Isaiah lxxv. 22) mean, ‘It will not be the case that, when they shall build, another shall inhabit’; in other words the \textit{לֹּא} at the head of the sentence negatives \textit{the result expressed by the two coordinate clauses בָנוּ אֶחָד יְשֵׁב}.

When therefore a certain desired result is expressed in Hebrew by two coordinate tenses (Cohortative, Imperative, or Jussive), coupled together by simple \textit{waw}, the sense will be that which is obtained in English by subordinating a clause.

The following are illustrations of this idiom:

(a) two Cohortatives: e.g.

\textit{לֹּא בָנוּ אֶחָד יְשֵׁב} \textit{רָצֵּחַ יָדָיוֹ חַיִּים}

\textit{Let me run, that I may take tidings to the king}

(2 Sam. xviii. 19)

[In this sentence both verbs are coordinate, the end chiefly desired being expressed by the latter verb\textsuperscript{1}. It happens that in this particular case English colloquial

\textsuperscript{1} It may indeed be stated as a general rule that, when two parallel clauses occur, the emphasis is on the second; so that in an English rendering of two such \textit{indicative} clauses the first may frequently be subordinated by some such word as ‘whereas’ or ‘although’: e.g. \textit{וְגְזֵזָה רֵאִיתָהּ נָאֵזָה אֶחָד יְשַׁבֶּרֶת יְשֵׁבֶּרֶת מַעַר} (Job viii. 7) \textit{And it shall come to pass that, though thy beginning were small, thy latter end shall become very great}; cf. S. Matt. xi. 25, Rom. vi. 17, I S. Pet. iv. 6.]
idiom allows of a literal translation, ‘Let me run and take’ etc. Perhaps the rendering which would best bring out the exact meaning of the Hebrew sentence would be ‘Let me by running take’ etc.]

(b) an Imperative followed by a Cohortative: e.g.

לְבָּהֵל עָלָי אִמְצַה אֲחָרִים נִלְעַחַת הַשְּׁמוֹן

Come to me, that I may give thy flesh to the birds of the air (1 Sam. xvii. 44)

(c) a Jussive followed by a Cohortative: e.g.

והַכַּרְבֵּא וֹהַבֵּנָא עָצֵת קָרָה שֵׁרוֹעֵי לֹא בְּרֵעַ אֲנָבֵה

And let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know (Isaiah v. 19)

(d) a Cohortative followed by an Imperative: e.g.

לָבַי אַיְשֵׁנֶךָ נָא עָצֵת הוּלָמִים אֵרַחְפִּישָׁה

Come, let me advise thee, that thou mayest save thy life (1 Kings i. 12)

(e) a Cohortative followed by a Jussive: e.g.

לָבַי נְעֶלָה אֲלָרַה יְהוָה וּנַעֲרֹת מְרְכְּבִים

Come and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah......that He may teach us of His ways (Isaiah ii. 3)

(f) two Imperatives: e.g.

נָא אִשֵּׁה וּתְהִי

Do this, that ye may live (Gen. xlii. 18)
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(g) an Imperative followed by a Jussive: e.g.

ָשָׁמָהוּ וַתִּבְקַשְׁנֵן נְפָשָׁתָם

*Hear, that your soul may live* (Isaiah lv. 3)

(h) two Jussives: e.g.

לְבַשְׁנֵנִי וְבַקְשֵׁנִי אֲתָאתֵנוּ אַחַדַּבְּנֵי

*Let them go, that they may seek thy master* (2 Kings ii. 16)

V. A somewhat similar use of the Cohortative and the Jussive is sometimes found,

(a) after a question implying a wish: e.g.

לַאֲשַׁר פֶּתָא נְבֵי לֵיהוֹה עָנָא וּנְבֵרֵשׁ הָאָאתִיתוֹ

*Is there not here another prophet of Jehovah's* (implying 'I wish there were here another prophet'), *that we may inquire of him?* (1 Kings xxii. 7)

מְיֹתָה אַתָּאֵיתֵנוּ נִיעָל

*Who will entice Ahab (= I want someone to entice Ahab) that he may go up?* (1 Kings xxii. 20)

(b) after a statement of which the logical sequence is the expression of a wish: e.g.

נְבֵיָא הָבָּעָל אֵרָבֵעֶל מְאָואָה וּהָמָשׁוֹת אֶתָאֵיתֵנוּ נְפָשׁוֹ לְעָפוֹ נֶפֶשׁ

*But the prophets of Baal are four hundred and fifty men; and so let them give, etc.* (1 Kings xviii. 22, 23)
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[In this sentence the statement of the numerical superiority of the prophets of Baal suggests the wish that they may prove by a sign their spiritual superiority.]

Perhaps he will be enticed, so that we may prevail over him (Jerem. xx. 10)

Perhaps he is asleep so that he must be awoke (1 Kings xviii. 27)

(c) after a direct negative, when the logical sequence of the corresponding positive statement would be the expression of a wish: e.g.

And there are no counsellors so that, when I ask them, they may answer (Isaiah xli. 28)

[The exact force of this sentence may be seen by changing the negative into a positive statement, viz. 'There are counsellors, and so I will ask them.' See above, § iv., and also on the Imperfect § vii., footnote.]

Thou wilt not have me give sacrifice' (Ps. li. 18)

1 Occasionally in such sentences the conjunction is omitted: e.g. There is no arbiter between us, to lay his hand upon us both (Job ix. 33); but perhaps in this case we should point אל after the analogy of Num. xxii. 29, Job xvi. 4. Cf. the omission of the conjunction before an Imperfect denoting the result of a statement, e.g. אל י驻村 דותי (Ps. xxiii. 1).
N.B. When in sentences similar to those that are treated of in § iv. it is necessary to negative the second verb, the Hebrew does not use the Cohortative or Jussive with מָלַא, but the simple Imperfect with מָלַא. In other words it states the negative consequence of the desire expressed in the first clause, rather that the negative purpose: e.g. מָלַא יְלַעֲכֶה מַגִּישׁ Go down, that the rain may not stop thee (literally and the rain will not stop thee) (1 Kings xviii. 44): מָלַא מַנְעָה Go not up......that ye may not be smitten (literally and ye will not be smitten) (Num. xiv. 42). When מָלַא is found followed by a Jussive, it negatives a distinct desire co-coordinate with the former one or synonymous with it: e.g. מָלַא לֶכֶם נוּר נִזְזִירֵהוּ מָלַא קְרִים Plough up for yourselves ploughland, and scatter not your seed among thorns (Jeremiah iv. 3): מָלַא חֶנֵּשָׁה יְרָחַ בַּלַּעַשׁ מָלַא מְעָה Stretch not out thine hand against the lad, and do not unto him anything (Gen. xxii. 12): מָלַא חֶרְזֵה מָלַא מָכַה Be not afraid, and be not terrified because of them (Deut. xxxi. 6).

1 There are some instances in which according to the Masoretic pointing the Jussive stands after מָלַא, but as they are very few in number, and as two of them, viz. 1 Sam. xiv. 36, 2 Sam. xvii. 12, involve the additional peculiarity of the first person plural Jussive, it is probable that in every case the pointing of the Imperfect should be adopted.
ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THE COHORTATIVE AND THE JUSSIVE.

I. In some of the examples given under § IV. the sense would not be very different if a hypothetical form were adopted: e.g. יָשֵׁר יְהוָה Do this, that ye may live does not greatly differ in meaning from the sentence expressed hypothetically, If ye do this, ye shall live; and sentences of this type frequently occur in Hebrew where a hypothetical form may be adopted in an English translation. At the same time such a sentence does not, as a rule, denote a mere hypothesis, but there is the actual expression of a wish, whether real, as in the sentence יָשֵׁר יְהוָה, or ironical, as in יָשֵׁר יְהוָה Take ye counsel, that it may come to nought! (Isaiah viii. 10).

There are however some passages in which two Jussives or Cohortatives appear to express a mere hypothesis. Of these the stock illustration is יָשֵׁר יָשֵׁר יְהוָה יִלְיֹה יָלָל (Ps. civ. 20), which seems to mean When thou makest darkness, night comes on. Other examples are,

אֲלָּי לַיְשֵׁשׁ יְהוָה יִמְצָא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל

If Jehovah will not help thee, whence am I to help thee?

(2 Kings vi. 27)

אֲלַּי יְהוָה כִּי אֲנִפֵּשׁ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הָנֵי

I will thank Thee, O Jehovah, that, though Thou mayest have been angry with me, when Thine anger turneth away, then Thou comfortest me (Isaiah xii. 1)
When He smites, He binds us up (Hosea vi. 1)

There are several other passages which might be quoted under this head, but either they are such as may be explained as having an ironical sense, or they may be considered as Imperfects, according to the use of the Imperfect described in § viii. (b). It is therefore necessary to inquire whether the passages just quoted are rightly understood as hypothetical. As to Isaiah xii. 1 it must be confessed that the text as it stands is awkward. A simple correction would be to insert a waw before ישל, pointing both it and the waw of the following verb as Waw Consecutive, in which case the sentence would mean I will thank Thee, O Jehovah, that though Thou hast been angry with me (literally 'that Thou hast been angry with me, and,' see remarks on Coordination, § iv. preceding,) Thine anger is turned away, and Thou hast comforted me. The text of Hosea is far from certain, and it is possible that in vi. 1 we should read היושב. The interpretation of 2 Kings vi. 27 depends upon the punctuation of the passage, and by disregarding the Masoretic tradition we may translate, Nay! let Jehovah save thee; whence am I to save thee? There remains Ps. civ. 20, and here we are at once struck by the fact that, according to the vowel points, יהושע is the second person of the Jussive, which, with the exception of some doubtful instances, is only used after הנה, the Imperative taking its place. Moreover, as Professor Driver

1 At the same time it must be admitted that the use of הנה without a verb is not common, though it occurs in Gen. xxxiii. 10, 2 Sam. xiii. 25, 2 Kings iii. 13, Ruth i. 13. In the present instance moreover there is no verb which is naturally supplied by the context. We should expect to find הנה אָלָּם Titans cry not unto me. Perhaps the real solution of the difficulty is to read הנה וּנַסְתָּם unto her, Let Jehovah save thee, etc.
has pointed out, the tenses employed in other verses of the same psalm, e.g. v. 17, are *Imperfects*, as is clear from their *Indicative* force. It seems therefore not improbable that we should point חלנה, and correct יְלַחֲנָה into יִלַחֳנָה or יִלָחֲנָה.

In any case considering the small number of instances in which, according to the Masoretic text, it is necessary to understand two Jussives as expressing a mere hypothesis, and having regard to the uncertainty as to the text in some of these instances, it will be safest to consider this usage of the Jussive as not proven.

II. There are a few instances in which the Jussive with simple *waw* appears to be used in order to express a purpose after a Perfect referring to past time. It may be that the original force of the Jussive was forgotten and that it had crystallized into a *final* sense, or that, as the Imperfect might be used to express an action future from some standpoint in the past, so the Jussive could be used to express a wish from a standpoint in the past.

The number of passages however in which this is apparently the case is very small, and in some of them we may point the verb with *waw* Consecutive. Thus, to consider some of the passages quoted by Professor Driver in this connexion, in 1 Kings xiii. 33 it is possible to point, with the Septuagint, יִלָחֳנָה. So also in 2 Kings xix. 25 יִלַחֳנָה (with *waw* Consecutive) is more natural after the Perfect יִלַחֳנָה I have brought it about. Similarly in Isaiah xxv. 9 we may point יִלָחֳנָה and He has saved us. In Ps. xlix. 10 the Jussive יִלָחֳנָה does not seem to carry on the sense expressed by any Perfect, and the text of this psalm is not above suspicion. In Ps. lxxxi. 16 the psalmist is expressing a hope for the future\(^1\), so that there is

1 Perhaps in v. 14 of this psalm we ought to point יְלַחֲנָה, i.e. as an Imperative. יִלַחֳנָה followed by an Imperative occurs in Gen. xxiii. 13, and
nothing anomalous in the use of the Jussive. In 2 Chron. xxiv. 11 the Imperfect sense is more natural than the Jussive, though such a construction would not have been employed in the Hebrew of the golden age. The remaining passages quoted by Professor Driver are Lam. i. 19 and 2 Chron. xxiii. 19. In the latter passage the use of ל shews that we have an Imperfect (see note to the sections treating of the final sense of the Cohortative and Jussive), and Lam. i. 19 is hardly sufficient in itself to establish a meaning of the Jussive which seems opposed to its fundamental sense. Perhaps, if the text be correct we may understand והבחנה as an Imperfect according to the usage of the Imperfect described in § II.¹ In Isaiah xli. 26 הִעִרָא וְלָבַר may be translated that we may recognize and that we may say: i.e. the sentence is virtually a conditional one, 'if there is any one who has declared these events beforehand, we for our part are ready to say' etc.

III. There are some instances in which Cohortatives and Jussives are used apparently with the sense of simple Imperfects, e.g. והחבר (Jeremiah iv. 19 לְקָנָה), והעבירה it is to be noticed that vv. 5, 14 end with the unusual expression לְלַחֵם ול in each case an Imperative. Probably we should point ל in each case, attaching the word to the following verse, and reading אַל for אָל in v. 11.

¹ Cf. טַעַנְיָנָה 1 Sam. xii. 3. In this passage however the text is very uncertain (see LXX), and the pointing לַעֲנָיָנָה would certainly be possible. The Masoretes however seem to have considered that an Imperfect or Jussive with weak waw might represent a purpose after a Perfect. The Targum paraphrase of Jeremiah v. 28 seems to imply a translation 'They have not judged......in order that they may prosper.' It is noteworthy that in 2 Chron. xxiii. 19, though לַזַּע is Imperfect, the Chronicler has used after a past tense the same construction as would be used after a present or future.
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(ib. 21), יַפְנוּ (Ps. lxxxviii. 16), הָלְלָנָא (Joel ii. 20), רָחֵל (Job xxiii. 9), קָנָה (ib. 11), etc. Assuming that the text is correct in such places, the only possible explanation appears to be that the Cohortative and Jussive forms have lost their meaning, and are merely used poetically. In the case of the latest portions of the Old Testament there would not be a great difficulty in adopting this explanation, for some of the latest psalms are remarkable for their use of archaic endings which have entirely lost their significance, but it is difficult to suppose that this could have been the case in the time of the prophet Jeremiah. Upon the whole, considering the paucity of instances in which it is necessary to suppose that these forms have lost their meaning, and the unsatisfactory state of the text of the Old Testament, it is at least not improbable that the text is in error, especially as the apparent deviations from the rule occur sporadically and cannot be shewn to belong to the idiosyncrasy of any particular author. A study of the spelling of the Masoretic text leads one to the conviction that in a great number of cases final vowels were still in use which were not commonly represented by vowel letters. Thus when the suffix of the 3rd person sing. masc. is represented by a ו, it is natural to suppose that it was intended originally that it should be pronounced with a final vowel; cf. forms like רָ֣בָּם, יָלְדָּה. This supposition is greatly confirmed by an examination of the pointing of הנה behold. Leaving out of account doubtful cases there are about twenty passages in which הנה is immediately followed by a predicate other than a finite verb. On the other hand there are some ten passages in which הנה is followed by a pronoun of the third person singular or plural. הנה occurs

1 That the Masoretes were uncertain whether the spelling with נ in such cases was a justifiable variation of the spelling with י is seen from the fact that in some places, e.g. Gen. xlix. 11, a ק"רִי is added.
three times, ḫו דה once (in K’thībh), טב ת גי thirty-seven times. ḫו never occurs. The form נ is never used except where the nominative is actually expressed, and י נ is never found followed by a plural participle or adjective without a nominative. In the light of these facts we can hardly doubt that in many cases חנה was meant to be pronounced חנה or, if feminine, חנה. It is at least remarkable that while the Masoretic text gives us חנה חנה חנה (2 Sam. i. 18) we never find חנה חנה חנה but always חנה חנה חנה. Similarly, as Professor Driver has shewn in his Commentary on Deuteronomy, pp. 78, 79, it is probable that these was originally intended to be pronounced with a final vowel viz. חנה. On the other hand the so-called wāw and yōdḥ compaginis, if, as seems most probable, they are in reality merely case-endings that have lost their meaning, may possibly represent final vowels which were commonly pronounced though, being short, they were not commonly written. If this supposition be correct the fact that they occur most frequently in the latest portions of the Old Testament is readily explained by the late origin of the scriptio plena.

Moreover it must be remembered that the grammar of the Old Testament is practically the same throughout, a fact which is very significant when we remember that the literature of the Old Testament extends over a period of scarcely less than a thousand years. In such a space of time the grammar would inevitably become modified, especially when from the almost vowelless character of the writing, modification would be in many cases imperceptibly introduced. Sometimes indeed we have words which point to grammatical forms different from those in use left through a misconception of their meaning; e.g. נקמיה Judges v. 7, נב and נב Jeremiah ii. 20 (cf. iii. 4,
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5), מיכה iv. 13, when the 2nd person singular feminine Perfect is intended, and the yôdhan has probably been allowed to remain, because it was mistaken in each case for the ending of the 1st person singular. So also in 1 Sam. xxi. 14 and ב 2 Sam. xiv. 6 we have probably an archaic form of the Piel Imperfect in u which has elsewhere been changed into נ, but has been allowed to remain here, because it was supposed to be the suffix of the 3rd person masculine singular. This same form of the Piel occurs on the Moabite Stone, viz. נלי line 5, and.getLine 6.

Furthermore it must be remembered that the received Masoretic text seems to have been made up from a considerable number of manuscripts of various dates, and therefore of different modes of spelling, and that the vowels were not added till Hebrew had ceased to be a spoken language, and its place had been taken by Aramaic even in the Schools. In the latter language also there were considerable variations in spelling: e.g. in the Biblical Aramaic it is scarcely possible to decide as to the relative values of hirek and sere. Under these circumstances the wonder is, not that there should be so many anomalies in the pointing of the Hebrew Bible, but that there should be so few.

These considerations may help us on the one hand to understand why in several instances we find forms pointed as Jussives when the grammar requires Imperfects, e.g. קנה 1 Sam. xiv. 36, which as the ה before it shews must be an Imperfect and should be pointed נישא (compare the precisely similar sentence 1 Kings xviii. 5 where the Imperfect is actually found נלוה נכרה, הוה Job xxiii. 9, which should be pointed הוה (cf. הוה at the end of the same verse); and on the other hand we need not be surprised if a Cohortative is occasionally accidentally written for an Imperfect, especially when we
find that the text of the passage in which it occurs exhibits signs of corruption.

Although we may freely acknowledge the enormous debt which we owe to the Masoretes, we may fairly hesitate to accept them as our guides in all matters of grammar. Seeing that in the overwhelming majority of cases, grammatical forms have a definite and easily recognized meaning, in the few instances where we find apparently a departure from the usual significance, it is at least as natural to suppose a corruption in the text, as it is to assume that a grammatical form, which ninety-nine times out of a hundred has a definite meaning, should the hundredth time lose this meaning altogether.
SEQUENCE OF TENSES.

THE IMPERFECT WITH WĀW CONSECUTIVE.

I. We have seen that the Hebrew tenses convey no idea of time, but express merely the state of an action, and also that there is a marked preference for coordinate rather than subordinate clauses. It might therefore happen that we should occasionally be in doubt as to the time to be assigned to each of a number of actions—that is to say whether such actions should be understood as taking place simultaneously or successively—were it not that by an idiom peculiar to itself the Hebrew makes this perfectly clear. Thus in describing a series of actions in the past the Hebrew represents each successive action after the first as arising out of, or at least following upon, the one preceding. Thus in such a sentence as 'The Aramaeans went out on forays and took captive etc,' it is clear that the second action is developed after, even if it is not the direct consequence of, the former action. Now the tense which expresses development is the Imperfect. It is therefore quite natural that the second action should be expressed by the Imperfect. In the case of the first action, however, it is unnecessary to represent it as developed out of some other action, for no such action is mentioned; and as a past action is usually thought of as
complete (unless it be necessary to dwell upon its several stages), it is naturally represented by a Perfect. We have therefore a Perfect \( \text{Perfect} \) (expressing the completion of the act of going out) and an Imperfect \( \text{Imperfect} \) (expressing the development of the act of taking captive) coupled together by ‘and’.

But though the Imperfect \( \text{Imperfect} \) in any case represents the act of taking captive as in course of development, we require to know definitely that it is developed out of, or at least in connexion with, the act of going out; and this is accomplished by means of a more emphatic form of the conjunction ‘and.’ This conjunction which originally had the form \( \text{wa} \) is found in such cases in its original form somewhat intensified by the doubling of the preformative letter of the Imperfect, e.g. \( \text{Imperfect} \). This emphatic form of the conjunction serves to denote the close connexion between the word with which it is combined and the previous clause; and since the Imperfect expresses development, the natural inference is that the action denoted by the Imperfect is developed

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1 That the original form of the conjunction was \( \text{wa} \) is proved not only by the comparison of Arabic and Syriac, but also from the Hebrew itself. Thus when two or more words are in close connexion, more especially when they fall into pairs, if the second word be accented on the first syllable, the conjunction is pointed 1. See for example the eight words falling into four pairs in Gen. viii. 22, viz. \( \text{words} \).

The doubling of the preformative letter of the Imperfect arises probably merely through the desire to keep the syllable \( \text{wa} \) clear and distinct. It may be compared with the doubling of the \( \text{in} \) in \( \text{original form} \), which before a guttural, especially when a \( \text{hātēf} \) vowel follows, appears in its original form \( \text{original form} \).
out of, or after, the action denoted by the Perfect. This emphatic conjunction wāw is called Wāw Consecutive.

The old name 'Wāw Conversive,' which is a translation of the Hebrew וַֽאֲוַּאִ֛֝וּה, arose from the idea that the two tenses were respectively Past and Future, and that the 'Wāw Conversive' converted the one into the other; but it must be clearly understood that in this idiom the original meaning of the tense is not in any way changed by the wāw, which simply serves to connect it as closely as possible with the previous clause.

This emphatic syllable prefixed to the Imperfect has a tendency to modify the word by drawing back the tone. This can however take place only when the penultimate syllable is open, and the word is out of pause. Thus we find רָ֫בָּא, רָ֫בָּא, but from לַ֣ל, we get בָּא, from הָאָ֥מֶר, from הָאָ֥מֶר, from הָאָ֥מֶר, from הָאָ֥מֶר, from הָאָ֥מֶר, from מְשָה הָ֥מֶר. The tendency of this drawing back of the accent was to make the Imperfect in such cases resemble the Jussive, and accordingly in nearly all cases where the Jussive can be distinguished in form from the ordinary Imperfect we find the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive assimilated to the form of the Jussive. It is probable indeed that the verbal form in such cases was actually regarded as the Jussive, and hence by a mistaken analogy the Cohortative was frequently used with Wāw Consecutive in the first person.

1 The tone can never be drawn farther back than the last syllable but one. Words like רָ֫בָּא are not real exceptions, for the sh'wā should by analogy be silent.

2 The dāghēsh is always omitted with yōd when it is followed by a sh'wā.
We see therefore that in describing a series of actions in the past the Hebrew expresses the first action by the Perfect, since it is thought of as complete, and each subsequent action by the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive; the emphatic form of the conjunction and the tense denoting development together signifying that such action is developed out of the one preceding: e.g.

Now the Aramaeans went out on forays, and took captive from the land of Israel a little maid, and she became the servant of (lit. was before) Naaman's wife (2 Kings v. 2)

Pharaoh, king of Egypt, came up and took Gezer, and burnt it with fire (1 Kings ix. 16)

N.B. Since Hebrew for the most part uses coordination rather than subordination, and the best Hebrew style consists of short clauses coupled together by \( \text{and} \), the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive is naturally the tense most commonly employed in describing a series of actions.

\(^1\) It may perhaps be well to draw attention to the fact that the Hebrew relates a history in the exact order of each action, and never puts into a subordinate clause any portion of the main narrative. This will be abundantly impressed upon the mind of anyone who attempts to translate the Acts of the Apostles into Hebrew. Thus, for example, in Acts xiv. 19 a Hebrew would never have expressed in a subordinate clause so important a fact as the stoning of S. Paul. The verse in Hebrew would rather run thus, 'And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, \text{and} they persuaded the people, \text{and} they stoned Paul, \text{and} drew him out of the city, for they supposed, etc.'
in the past. It is however essential that the verb should
stand at the head of the 'consecutive' clause, for in a less
emphatic position the idea that the action of the Imper-
fect is developed out of that of the preceding clause is
overlooked. Accordingly in a negative sentence, since
the negative must always stand before the verb, the
construction with Wāw Consecutive is impossible. Thus
we find

And Laban searched all the tent, but did not find (them)
( Gen. xxxi. 34)

and likewise

And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house, and Abram
(for his part) he (Pharaoh) treated well on her account
( Gen. xii. 15, 16)

[In this sentence it is desirable to contrast Abram
with Sarai, and for this reason לָא-בָּרָם is put first in the
second clause, thereby making the construction with
Wāw Consecutive impossible in that clause.]

II. Although according to its precise meaning the
Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive expresses direct se-
quence in time, it has nevertheless become so common in
Hebrew, that it is sometimes used in a clause referring to
past time (provided that such a clause has the verb at its

1 i.e. the distant past, or the past continuing into the present. It is
however rarely used after a Future Perfect or after a Prophetic Perfect.
head, and is connected with a previous clause by the
conjunction 'and'), even though the action of the second
clause does not follow upon one expressed by the first:
e.g.

אַשְּאָה לְפָנֵי אֲשֶׁר יִשָּׂתְךָ אִישׁ

I am a widow, and my husband died (2 Sam. xiv. 5)

N.B. In sentences of this kind, which are not very
common\(^1\), the Imperfect with Waw Consecutive is used
somewhat loosely, to denote an idea which is parallel, not
subsequent, to that of the preceding clause, but which is
naturally placed second in a narrative. It must not
however be supposed that the Imperfect with Waw
Consecutive can ever express a real Pluperfect\(^2\). When
it is necessary to interrupt the main narrative by some
explanatory clause, this usually has the subject at its
head, so that the close connexion of the verb with the
preceding clause is impossible. Such explanatory or, as
they are generally called, circumstantial clauses are very
common. An example is found in 2 Sam. xviii. 18, viz.

Now Absalom had taken and set
up for himself etc. In this instance the Hebrew merely
states that Absalom did take etc., and from the absence
of the consecutive tense makes it clear that the taking

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\(^1\) The more usual form of the sentence quoted above would be as
follows: אַשְּאָה לְפָנֵי אֲשֶׁר יִשָּׂתְךָ אִישׁ

\(^2\) The passages where this is apparently the case may be explained
either by the fact that large portions of the Old Testament are a
compilation of documents originally quite distinct, as for example
Gen. xii. 1 (see A. V.), or by confusions in the text as in Isaiah
xxviii. 21, 22.
was not subsequent to the events just recorded. On the other hand \( נבּאָלֵּאָל יָהָנָה \) would mean \textit{And Absalom took etc.} after the events just recorded.

III. We have seen that the Imperfect with \( 	ext{Waw} \) Consecutive denotes the development of an action in close connexion with a preceding clause. It is not therefore surprising that we should find it even after a clause which does not contain a verb, as, for example, a mark of time: e.g.

\begin{center}
\textit{And at the time of her death they spoke} (1 Sam. iv. 20)
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\textit{In the year that King Uzziah died I saw} (Isaiah vi. 1)
\end{center}

N.B. Constructions of this kind may be explained thus. The Hebrew as a rule shuns long sentences, preferring to present to the hearer one by one ideas which in English are naturally combined into one sentence. Thus in the example just given the words \( בּשָׁנַת מַוָּה יֵשֶׁר וְאָרֵיָה \) suggest one idea, viz. that of the time, while the following Imperfect with \( 	ext{Waw} \) Consecutive suggests another idea, viz. that of an action connected with the former idea and indeed developed out of it. It is impossible, as has been already pointed out, to translate Hebrew into English without employing limitations foreign to the former language; but we may perhaps paraphrase the above sentence thus: “Think of an

\footnote{See on the Perfect, § V, note. It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that the Hebrew did not think of an action as a Pluperfect.}
occasion in the year of King Uzziah's death, and then imagine me beginning to see."

IV. Similarly the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive may stand after a *casus pendens*: e.g.

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And it came to pass, that all whosoever had known him previously saw, and behold, etc. (1 Sam. x. 11)
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And it came to pass, that all, whosoever came to the place where Asahel fell down and died, stood still (2 Sam. ii. 23)
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N.B. In the two last instances the Imperfects with Wāw Consecutive, וַיְהַלְךָ and וַיְהַלְךָ, follow upon the *casus pendentes*. The וַיְהַלְךָ at the beginning of these sentences is merely used to connect them with what precedes. This indeed is true of all those sentences beginning with וַיְהַלְךָ, in which an adverbial clause intervenes between the וַיְהַלְךָ and the following Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive. וַיְהַלְךָ is never followed immediately by another Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive, though it may be followed by a clause in which the nominative stands first, as is the case when it is desired to link with a preceding clause either some description introductory to the subsequent narrative, as in Gen. xi. 1, 1 Sam. i. 2, or two simultaneous actions
(according to the idiom described below in Exceptions to
the Rule of Wāw Consecutive, § III.), as in 2 Kings ii. 11,
2 Kings xx. 4. With the exception of some passages in
which יָּלְדָּה is obviously followed by its nominative, it
would perhaps be correct to say that in all cases יָּלְדָּה is
a mere link to the preceding sentence, and all that follows
it is in apposition to it.

V. Hitherto we have described the Imperfect with
Wāw Consecutive as the sequence of a completed act or
state. There are some passages in which it appears to
follow a present, or even a future. A careful examination
of such passages, however, will shew that the original
meaning is never lost. Thus for example we find,

יָּלְדָּה מִרְבָּא שְׁאָול עֵל

Jehovah bringeth down to Sheōl and then bringeth up
(1 Sam. ii. 6)

כָּנָה מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה סְבֹּיב לְאָרוּעִי וְהָלֵּךְ

The Angel of Jehovah encampeth round about those that
fear Him, and delivereth them (Psalm xxxiv. 8)

As is the case in רָאָה יָּלְדָּה (Gen. i. 3). It is however difficult to
resist the conviction that the Masoretes have sometimes joined with
יָּלְדָּה a word which really stands at the head of a sentence that contains
no verb. Thus, for example, in Gen. xxv. 20, although קָסָם is con-
nected by the accents with יָּלְדָּה, the sentence should probably be trans-
lated, 'And it came to pass, Isaac was 40 years old when he married, etc.,'
not 'And Isaac became 40 years old, etc.' Compare Gen. xi. 1 where the
following nominative is feminine, and 1 Sam. i. 2 where it is plural.
SEQUENCE OF TENSES.

N.B. It must be borne in mind that in such sentences the Participle is not a real present. The poet does not mean to state that at the moment at which he is speaking Jehovah is bringing down to Sheol, nor yet that the Angel of Jehovah is actually encamping. Just as the Participle may be used with the definite Article simply to qualify a noun without any thought of the time of the action denoted by it (e.g. יָרָה נַחֲלָה Joshua v. 4), so here the Particiles state predicatively distinguishing acts of Jehovah or His Angel, of which the time is not specified, but which assuredly go on to completion. There is therefore nothing anomalous in the fact that the sequence of such acts is represented by the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive. In the first illustration given above it must not be supposed that the two clauses יָרָה נַחֲלָה and מַחַר יָשָׁב יָשָׁב are synonymous parallels. The two Particiles merely state coordinately the fact that Jehovah is One to Whom may be assigned the actions both of putting to death and also of preserving alive. On the other hand the second clause מַחַר יָשָׁב states that after bringing down to Sheol Jehovah goes on to bring up again. Similarly in the second illustration, if the first verb should not be pointed יָרָה as the Perfect, the sense is that the Angel is one who encamps and the effect of this encampment when completed is the deliverance of those who fear Jehovah.

1 Such instances of the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive after a Participle as יָרָה נַחֲלָה (2 Sam. xix. 2) may be explained on the analogy of 2 Sam. xiv. 5, quoted above, § II. Translate The king is weeping, and has put on mourning (lit. has made himself a mourner), cf. Jeremiah vi. 13, 14.
VI. The Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive is occasionally found in sentences which English idiom puts into a conditional form, in which case it represents the effect of a certain condition. There is not however in the Hebrew any division of the sentence into protasis and apodosis. The Perfect in the first clause is used according to the usages described above (see on the Perfect, §§ vi., ix. and x.), and the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive merely expresses its consequence. Examples are,

When he has blown upon them, they wither (Isaiah xl. 24)

When pride has come, humiliation comes (Prov. xi. 2)

For when thou hast wielded thy hatchet on it, thou hast profaned it (Exodus xx. 25)

If only thou hadst hearkened to my commandments, thy prosperity had been like a river (Isaiah xlviii. 18)

[In this case לְאָנָה is not the apodosis, but the completion of the first condition specified in the protasis. The real apodosis of the sentence is suppressed, but it may be supplied somewhat as follows: “If thou hadst hearkened to my commandments and as a consequence thy prosperity had been like a river etc., then it would have been well.”]
VII. Similarly the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive may be used to express the result of an interrogative clause, such result being introduced in English by ‘so that’: e.g.

Why didst thou say to me, She is my sister, so that I took her? (Gen. xii. 19)

Why hast Thou made me Thy target, so that I have become, etc.? (Job vii. 20)

[In these examples theḥālāt asks the reason of the series of actions, expressed by the Perfect and the following Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive. Thus we may paraphrase the passage from Gen. xii. 19 as follows: “Why was it the case that thou saidst to me, She is my sister, and I consequently took her?”]

VIII. Occasionally the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive is found in passages which cannot well be classed under any of the above heads, where, however, the meaning is clear. It must be remembered that, although the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive originally merely denoted an action as following upon another completed action, it has from its frequent use in narrative come itself to denote the completion of each successive act. Accordingly we sometimes find it used, especially in passages of a later date, to express the completion of an act following upon an incomplete act. Thus, for example, we find
For now it cometh unto thee, and thou art overcome; it reacheth unto thee and thou art panic-stricken
(Job iv. 5)

[The sentence means that, while the coming is not yet complete, Job's panic is complete. This construction is not however common. The ordinary prose idiom would be as follows: ]

IX. One other illustration will suffice to shew the sense acquired by the Imperfect with Waw Consecutive. In Ps. cxliv. 3 there is an echo of Ps. viii. 5, in a somewhat altered form, viz.

What is man, that Thou shouldest have known him, or the son of mortal man, that Thou shouldest have taken account of him?

[In the above sentence the force of the Imperfect with Waw Consecutive may be seen by substituting some definite predicate for the interrogative הָלָּפ: e.g. Man is (great), and so Thou hast known him, and the son of mortal man is honourable, and so Thou hast taken account of him.

It must not however be supposed that the וּנְאָשֵׁר and וּנְאָשֵׁר of this verse are exactly synonymous with the  

1 For this use of the Imperfect see above on the Imperfect, § I, b.
The latter phrases denote *habitual* acts: by the former the psalmist means to express the completion of the acts יִדְיָ֖ו and מַשְׁיָרָֽו. The ordinary way of expressing this however would be by יִכְּב followed by the Perfect.]

1 It is not altogether unnecessary to protest against the assumption that parallel passages which convey the same general sense are of necessity exactly synonymous. The general sense expressed by συνεσταυρώθη (Rom. vi. 6) is, with the difference of the person, the same as that expressed by συνεσταύρωμαι (Gal. ii. 20), but no one supposes that an Aorist is synonymous with a Perfect. May we not plead that the same precision which is employed in translating the text of the Greek Testament should be likewise employed in translating the Hebrew Bible?
THE PERFECT WITH WAW CONSECUTIVE.

We have seen that, although past actions are usually conceived as complete, and future actions as incomplete, it may nevertheless be desirable for the sake of greater vividness or emphasis to paint each detail of the former, or to represent the completion of the latter. We have an instance of the former idiom in Isaiah vi. 4, where the Imperfect יָאָלַי brings vividly before our mind the whole process of the filling of the temple, and of the latter idiom in יָאָלַי הָמוֹת לֶכֶת (Isaiah xxv. 8), where the representation of the annihilation of death as accomplished implies in the most emphatic manner the certainty of this annihilation.

We have seen that in describing a series of past actions the Hebrew represents each successive action as developed out of the one before it, the attention of the hearer having been directed to the past by a Perfect or by some mark of time.

It now remains for us to consider the method employed by the Hebrew in representing a series of actions in the future. We will take as an example the sentence, *He will put forth his hand and will take, etc.* The first verb of this sentence, being a simple Future (whereof the action is conceived as incomplete), will naturally be expressed in Hebrew by the Imperfect יָאָלַי. The
second verb, however, is also a simple Future, and we might therefore expect that it would be expressed likewise by the Imperfect הָכָּל. But in a sentence consisting of two similar tenses coupled together by and ו, there would be nothing to denote that the second action was conceived as the consequence of the first. The two actions might in fact be parallel or simultaneous. But in the case of two successive future actions however uncertain the first may be, the latter is, generally speaking, certain relatively to the first. Thus in the sentence which we have taken for an illustration, though the putting forth of the hand may be uncertain, yet, assuming that the hand will be put forth, the taking of the fruit may be regarded as a certain consequence. But we have seen that, when it is desired to express the certainty of a future action, the Perfect is used: accordingly in the instance before us he will take will naturally be expressed by the Perfect הָכָּל, and the fact that this Perfect of Certainty is immediately connected with the preceding clause by the conjunction ו implies that the action of taking is regarded as certain in relation to the action of putting forth the hand.

The sentence will therefore run הָכָּל יְרוּשָׁלָיִם.

N.B. It will be observed that in this construction the conjunction has its ordinary form. It is however by no means certain that originally Wāw Consecutive assumed different forms with the Perfect and with the Imperfect. We have seen that the original form of the conjunction

1 As for example in the sentence הָכָּל יְרוּשָׁלָיִם וְסִבָּתָה וְהָרָה לַשון אֲלֵךָ Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall shout for joy (Isaiah xxxv. 6).
was *wa*, the doubling of the preformative letter of the Imperfect being probably merely euphonic and analogous to the doubling of the ב in הָרָע. Although it is obvious that there must always have been some means of distinguishing between the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive and with the ordinary weak wāw, it is nevertheless open to question whether such a doubling existed in primitive Hebrew: it may possibly have arisen unconsciously from an effort to keep the syllable *wa* clear and distinct. In the case of the Perfect, on the other hand, though it is probable that the conjunction was originally pronounced with the same vowel, the first consonant was not doubled and the *wa* was therefore reduced to ʼ. It is somewhat difficult to find a reason for this anomaly. It may be that, since all Imperfects (from whatever root they may be derived, or to whatever conjugation they may belong) begin in the several persons with the same consonants, the emphatic form of Wāw with the Imperfect tended to crystallise into ʼ, whereas before the various consonants with which the Perfect may begin, such crystallisation was less likely to take place, and the conjunction being usually two places from the tone was accordingly pointed in the ordinary way.

One other peculiarity of this Perfect of Certainty with

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1 In the eight words quoted above from Gen. viii. 22 רִיצֵל is not less closely connected with נַר than בַּל with בַּל, the shēwā in the former word being due merely to the distance from the tone. But in the spoken language the difference in the pronunciation of the syllable *wa*, if it existed at all, must have been very slight.

Occasionally before a monosyllabic Perfect the Wāw Consecutive is pointed ʼ, as for example in יִרְפ (Gen. iii. 22), but this pointing is not uniform.
Wāw or, as it is usually called, the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive, is the shifting of the tone. Whereas Wāw Consecutive with the Imperfect tends to draw the tone back to the penultimate, with the Perfect, on the other hand, it tends to throw it forward from the penultimate to the final syllable, e.g. יִתְנֵל, יְתַנֵל. But it is doubtful whether this shifting of the tone is primitive, for just as we can only explain the first קַמְע in the word יְתַנֵל by postulating an earlier form יְתַנֵל (a supposition which is confirmed by the pausal form יְתַנָל), so the pointing יְתַנֵל can only be explained on the supposition that, when the short vowel of the first syllable of the Perfect was heightened into קַמְע, the accent was on the second syllable, to which indeed it returns in pause.

We have seen that there is a close affinity between the so-called Perfect of Certainty and this Perfect with Wāw Consecutive. As in the case of the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive, so in this idiom also the Perfect must stand at the head of its clause, for if the emphasis\(^1\) be on any other word, even the negative, the intimate connexion of the act represented as complete with that represented as incomplete is overlooked\(^2\).

I. In representing a series of future actions, therefore, the Hebrew, after directing his hearer's attention to the

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1 The first word of a sentence is always the most emphatic.
2 It is most important to bear in mind that both in the case of the Perfect and of the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive there is no change whatever in the essential meaning of the tense. The emphatic Wāw is merely a strong conjunction shewing that the subsequent action is most intimately connected with the preceding.
future by the use of the Imperfect, expresses each successive action by the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive: e.g.

\[ \text{To me he will come out, and will stand and call} \]

(2 Kings v. 11)

\[ \text{I will go forth, and become a spirit of lying} \]

(1 Kings xxii. 22)

II. It is not however necessary that Wāw Consecutive with the Perfect should actually be preceded by an Imperfect. It may be used where there is an idea of an incomplete or future action, even though that idea is not expressed by an Imperfect. Thus it is found,

(a) after a Participle: e.g.

\[ \text{Lo, Jehovah rideth on a swift cloud, and will come to Egypt} \]

(Isaiah xix. 1)

\[ \text{Lo, I will rain food for you from the heavens; and the people shall go forth and gather} \]

(Ex. xvi. 4)

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1 The emphatic position of ' to me' shews Naaman's sense of his own importance. In consequence of this, however, the verb loses somewhat of its emphasis. But as Naaman wishes to put emphasis on the verb also (contrasting his own expectation that the prophet would come out with the actual fact of his staying indoors), the lost emphasis is more than restored by the use of the Infinitive Absolute.
(b) after a mark of time: e.g.

At even ye shall know (Ex. xvi. 6)

In the day of your eating of it your eyes will be opened

(Gen. iii. 5)

(c) after a Prophetic Perfect: e.g.

Therefore shall the appetite of Sheol be increased (lit. shall Sheol increase her appetite), and she shall open wide her mouth (Isaiah v. 14)

For your sake I will send to Babylon and bring down, etc.

(Isaiah xliii. 14)

(d) after a statement referring to the present or to the immediate past, the consequence of which is future: e.g.

This has touched thy lips, and so thy guilt shall be removed

(Isaiah vi. 7)

There is no religion in this place, and so they will kill me

(Gen. xx. 11)

1 In the Masoretic text this word is pointed as a Piel, but the Kal is more natural in the sense which the word evidently has here.
(e) after a casus pendens: e.g.

Whosoever speaketh unto thee, thou shalt bring him to me

(2 Sam. xiv. 10)

For every boot of noisily tramping warrior and garment rolled (? defiled) in blood shall become a bonfire (Isaiah ix. 4)

III. Similarly when a series of actions is desired, each successive action after the first is expressed by the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive.

Thus we find it,

(a) after an Imperfect expressing a command: e.g.

An altar of earth shalt thou make unto me, and thou shalt sacrifice thereon (Ex. xx. 24)

Neither shalt thou swear falsely by My name, and so profane the name of thy God (Lev. xix. 12)

(b) after a Jussive: e.g.

Let there be lights......and let them be signs (Gen. i. 14)
THE PERFECT WITH WĀW CONSECUTIVE.

May El Shaddai give you favour before the man, and may he set free your brother (Gen. xliii. 14).

(c) after a Cohortative: e.g.

Let us make a covenant......and let it be a witness (Gen. xxxi. 44)

(d) after an Imperative: e.g.

All the living things......take out with thee, and let them swarm (Gen. viii. 17)

(e) after an Infinitive Absolute with the sense of an Imperative: e.g.

Go and wash seven times in the Jordan (2 Kings v. 10)
Go to the house of the Rechabites, and speak with them

(Jeremiah xxxv. 2)

N.B. Although it is frequently impossible in an English translation to distinguish between a Perfect with Wāw Consecutive and a Cohortative, Jussive, or Imperative with simple wāw, when a Cohortative, Jussive, or Imperative has preceded, there is nevertheless a shade of difference in the Hebrew which must not be ignored. We have seen that, when two parallel clauses, each expressing a desire, are coupled together by simple wāw, it is the end chiefly desired which is expressed by the latter verb, and a final particle may therefore be used in translating it: e.g. שמייא וחיה נפשכם Hear, that your soul may live (Isaiah Iv. 3). On the other hand the construction of the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive represents each of the successive actions as willed in turn by the speaker, and expresses a series of directions or a series of actions each of which is more or less desired. שמייא וחיה נפשכם would mean, to adopt a paraphrase, ‘I desire that first you should hear and afterwards your soul should live.’ These two constructions are both found in 2 Kings v. 10, quoted above, and the sentence is a good illustration of the difference in their meanings. The passage runs, הלוח הזה שבעים פעמים בחרך וشبه ביצרא לא ומאחר which may be translated, Go and wash (a series of directions) seven times in the Jordan, that thy flesh may be restored, and thou mayest be clean (the end chiefly desired).

The Perfect with Wāw Consecutive never expresses
the purpose of the preceding action. Thus, for example, in 1 Kings xvii. 12 the verbs merely express the series of actions which the widow has resolved upon and the subsequent starvation which she considers inevitable. The “that I may go” and “that we may eat” of the English version are quite wrong.

IV. The Perfect with Wāw Consecutive is likewise used after an Imperfect when the latter possesses a frequentative sense, not only

(a) in the future: e.g.

All flesh shall come (month by month and week by week) to worship before me....and they shall go forth
(Isaiah lxvi. 23, 24)

and

(b) in the present: e.g.

Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife (Gen. ii. 24)

As the sweet juice is found in the cluster, and one says,
Destroy it not (Isaiah lxv. 8)
The use of the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive in such cases, which is extremely common, seems somewhat inconsistent with the explanation given above which connects the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive with the Perfect of Certainty. Logically there seems to be no reason why the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive should not have been used in such cases. The probable explanation is that, as the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive became stereotyped as the sequence of a Perfect or Perfect idea, so the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive became stereotyped as the sequence of an Imperfect; and since in all cases where the Imperfect refers to the present or the future the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive is the natural sequence, it has come to be used in the past also.]

N.B. For the use of the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive after an Infinitive Absolute see below.

V. The Perfect with Wāw Consecutive is likewise used in the *apodosis* of conditional sentences: e.g.

*If our youngest brother be with us, we will go down*  
(Gen. xlv. 26)
THE PERFECT WITH WĂW CONSECUTIVE.

If thou wilt go with me, I will go (Judges iv. 8)

If he said (whenever he said) thus, The spotted shall be thy wages, then all the sheep would bear spotted (Gen. xxxi. 8)

And if we tarry (shall have tarried) here, we shall die (2 Kings vii. 4)

As soon as I have lain down, I say When shall I arise? (Job vii. 4)

N.B. The use of wăw in the apodosis of a conditional sentence is strange to our way of thinking, but it is not confined to the case of Wăw Consecutive with the Perfect. Thus we find If (thou goest) to the left hand, I will go to the right; and if (thou goest) to the right hand, I will go to the left (Gen. xiii. 9). The explanation seems to be that does not subordinate a clause in Hebrew in the way that if subordinates one in English. Compare the use of to express utrum...an. Wăw is also found after other particles such as יָּכָה, e.g. Deut. xxi. 18, 19.

1 is commonly used as a temporal particle before a Perfect when the time of the action is indefinite, cf. Ps. lxxviii. 34 Whenever He had slain them, they would seek Him.
VI. The Perfect with Waw Consecutive is also found in many sentences which must be put into a hypothetical form in English, but which are not strictly hypothetical in Hebrew: e.g.


And if they overdrive them one day, all the sheep will die
(Gen. xxxiii. 13)


And if harm befall him on the journey on which ye go, ye will bring down my gray hairs in sorrow to Sheol
(Gen. xlii. 38)

[In the above sentences what is possible or probable is stated as certain together with its result.]

VII. Sometimes in sentences similar to those described in the foregoing section it may be necessary to translate the Perfect with Waw Consecutive as an interrogative. Such sentences however are not, strictly speaking, interrogative. They are rather statements which are sarcastically assumed to be the thought of the persons addressed: e.g.

It may be laid down as a definite rule that whenever the interrogative י is omitted in a sentence which is apparently interrogative there is always a touch of irony. A good illustration of this idiom is found in Isaiah i. 18, viz.


Come and let us argue, Jehovah keeps saying; if your sins be as crimson, are they to be white as snow? The word ה let us argue shews that the sentence is virtually interrogative, for there is no argument in the promise which the English version understands here,
If he has given forth upon usury and has taken increase, shall he live? (Ezek. xviii. 13)

We may paraphrase the above sentence thus: “A man may have given forth upon usury and taken increase, and yet, according to your notions of fairness, he is to live!”

There are many servants now-a-days that break away from their several masters, and so I forsooth am to take my bread, etc. (1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11)

N.B. Similar sentences are found where owing to the presence of the negative the Imperfect is used instead of the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive: e.g. לא נ oxyb לחרתבש מחרים לא נינים לא יסקלום Lo! we are to sacrifice that which is an abomination to the Egyptians before their eyes, and they will not stone us! (Ex. viii. 22.)

and which moreover is unsuitable to the context. We may paraphrase the sentence thus: “You seem to imagine that, even when your sins are as glaring as crimson, you have but to come to the sanctuary and hold a sacrificial feast, and they will be as white as snow!”
ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE PERFECT WITH WĀW CONSECUTIVE.

There are some instances in which the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive appears after an Infinitive Absolute to express an action simultaneous with that of the Infinitive: e.g. הָלַכְתָּם נַפְסֵי כוֹלָהּ going on and trumpeting as they went (Joshua vi. 13), הָלַכְתָּם נַפְסֵי כוֹלָהּ and she went away, crying aloud as she went (2 Sam. xiii. 19). This construction however is not very certain, for, although there is nothing intrinsically improbable in this use of the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive, further proof of it is desiderated. It is noteworthy that according to the Masoretic text there are four variations of the common idiom by which two or more Infinitives Absolute coupled by wāw express simultaneous actions qualifying the main action of the sentence. Thus we have

(1) the Infinitive Absolute followed by the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive, as in Joshua vi. 13, 2 Sam. xiii. 19, quoted above,

(2) the Infinitive Absolute followed by the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive, as in 1 Sam. xix. 23, 2 Sam. xvi. 13,

(3) the Infinitive Absolute followed by the Participle, as in Gen. xxvi. 13, 2 Sam. xvi. 5, Jerem. xli. 6,

(4) the Infinitive Absolute followed by an Adjective, as in Judges iv. 24, 1 Sam. xiv. 19, 2 Sam. v. 10, 1 Chron. xi. 9.
It must however be confessed that in the existing condition of the Masoretic text it is difficult to feel convinced that all these variations actually existed, since in some instances it is possible to restore the ordinary idiom by merely altering the points, and in others there is some doubt as to the correctness of the consonantal text. Thus in examining the passages referred to above we find that doubt is thrown on הָנְאָה (Joshua vi. 13) by the occurrence of the normal הָנְאָה in v. 9, while the K’tibh in the latter part of the verse implies the work of a 'sleepy scribe.' Again in בַּשַּׁלְכָּל (2 Sam. xvi. 13) it is remarkable that we have a variation from the בַּשַּׁלְכָּל in v. 5 of the same chapter, and moreover the presence of הָנְאָה (Perf. with Waw Consec.) in the same verse seems to imply some confusion in the text. Again גֵּל (Gen. xxvi. 13) might be pointed גֵּל (compare 2 Sam. v. 10), גֵּל (Judges iv. 24) גֵּל (1 Sam. xiv. 19) גֵּל (compare בַּשַּׁלְכָּל Num. xxiii. 25, גְּל Ruth ii. 16), whereas גֵּל (2 Sam. v. 10, 1 Chron. xi. 9) has the proper form of the Infinitive Absolute.

It will thus be seen that variation 1 rests on the solitary evidence of הָנְאָה (2 Sam. xiii. 19), unless הָנְאָה (1 Sam. vi. 12) was intended by the author to be read הָנְאָה; variation 2 depends on הָנְאָה (1 Sam. xix. 23); variation 3 on הָנְאָה (2 Sam. xvi. 5), whereas variation 4 has no certain proof. In 1 Sam. xix. 23 it would be possible to connect the הָנְאָה with the preceding verb on the analogy of 2 Sam. iii. 24 (where however see LXX), translating 'and he went right on, and he prophesied.' This division is actually implied by the accents in Joshua vi. 13, but the analogy of other passages is against it.
On the other hand in 2 Sam. xii. 16 the accentuation of נַסְתָּר, which connects it with נַסְתָּר and separates it from the following סְנָר, is probably correct. The Infinitive Absolute in this verse is to be understood on the analogy of מְלַחְמָם (Gen. xix. 9), i.e. as giving emphasis to the preceding finite verb. Translate, 'And David sought God on the child's behalf; and David actually fasted (an extraordinary act seeing that the child was still alive), and he would go in and pass the night lying on the ground.'

In view of the circumstances considered above, although we are scarcely justified in arbitrarily altering the text, we may refuse to admit the above variations among the recognised rules of Hebrew Syntax unless further proof be forthcoming.

It is hardly necessary to say that those cases in which the Participle of חָלַל is followed by another Participle or by an adjective, which is virtually equivalent to the Participle of a stative verb, as in Ex. xix. 19, 1 Sam. ii. 26, 2 Sam. xv. 12, Jonah i. 11, 13 etc., present no difficulty and require no comment.
EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE OF WĀW CONSECUTIVE.

It is evident from the foregoing pages that the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive may be used in every place where the simple Imperfect might have stood if the conjunction ‘and’ had been absent; and that, conversely, the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive takes under similar circumstances the place of a simple Perfect. It must be borne in mind, that, with the exceptions given below, whenever it is necessary to connect two clauses by means of the conjunction ‘and,’ the verb in the second clause must have Wāw Consecutive.

I. Wāw Consecutive is not used when the second clause is only explanatory of, or synonymous with, the first clause: e.g.

And I am old and gray-headed (1 Sam. xii. 2)

Children have I reared and brought up (Isaiah i. 2)

Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall shout for joy (Isaiah xxxv. 6)
For though thou shouldest scour with soda, and take thee much soap, thy guilt would be indelible before me

(Jerem. ii. 22)

N.B. This use of weak wāw, as it is called, to couple two similar tenses is not common, and, especially in the case of the Perfect, it has evidently been avoided even where it might have been employed. Thus, for example, although we cannot say that הֵשָּׁב (Joshua xxii. 3) or הָשָׁבָה (1 Kings iii. 11) violates any of the principles which have been explained above, since between the negation of a fact and the affirmation of what is contrasted with it there is no actual sequence, yet the presence of weak wāw in these instances strikes the reader as unusual. In fact as a rule the common idiom either discards wāw altogether after a negative sentence, using instead יִשָּׁב or יָשָׁב, or, if it keeps the wāw, places some word other than the verb at the head of the second clause, or even, though less logically, uses the Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive as in יָשָׁב (Gen. xl. 23), יָשָׁב (Judges i. 21) etc.

On the other hand there appears to have been less objection to the use of the Imperfect with weak wāw; perhaps because the Imperfect in most cases exactly resembles the Jussive and Cohortative, and, as we have already seen, the Jussive and Cohortative with weak wāw can frequently be used where the Perfect with Wāw Consecutive might stand, although the two idioms are
not quite synonymous\(^1\). Thus we find הֶלְכָּב (Deut. x. 2) where the parallel passage Ex. xxxiv. 1 has יִלְכָּב, הַלְכִּב (1 Sam. xii. 3), הלְכָּב (1 Kings xii. 9), whereas in a very similar sentence (Num. xxii. 8) the Perfect with Waw Consecutive יְלֹכַב occurs. It is not however impossible that such forms are in many cases to be regarded as Jussives, or, which in the above instances would be preferable, pointed as Cohortatives\(^2\).

In the later Hebrew, perhaps under the influence of Aramaic dialects, the use of Waw Consecutive was gradually discontinued: in the earlier books however it is possible that in several instances where weak waw appears to be combined with a Perfect, an Infinitive Absolute was intended by the writer: e.g. נֶשֶׂת (2 Kings xxiii. 4), נֶשֶׂת (ib. 5), נֶשֶׂת (ib. 8), נֶשֶׂת (ib. 10). On the other hand we must remember how easy it would be for a scribe *accidentally* to leave out a יְדָה or in the old character to confuse הֵדוּ and יְדָה. Moreover in documents of quite early date there are many passages which are late interpolations. Is it possible to believe that Genesis xv. 6 was written before the Exile?

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1 See above on the Perfect with Waw Consecutive, § III, note.
2 See above, Additional Notes to the Cohortative and Jussive, § III. The strongest argument against considering such forms as יְדָה as Jussive is the extreme rarity of the Jussive in the first person. On the other hand the scriptio plena of the hirek is not a fatal objection, for in Aramaic both waw and יְדָה are used as *matres lectionis* of short as well as long vowels, and there are several instances of similar spelling in the Hebrew Bible. See, for example, מִלּוֹכַי, מִלּוֹכַי (K'thîb, Judges ix. 8), מִלּוֹכַי (ib. 12), probably representing respectively the old pronunciation of the Imperative m'lîkha, m'lîkhî, מִלּוֹכַי (Ps. exv. 7) from מִלּוֹכַי, מִלּוֹכַי (Isaiah l. 11) = יְדָה, etc.
II. Wāw Consecutive is not used when some word in the second clause has to be emphasized in order that it may be contrasted with something in the first clause. In such a case the emphatic word stands first and the verb not being at the head of the clause is not 'consecutive.' Thus we find,

And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house, and Abram he (Pharaoh) treated kindly on her account (Gen. xii. 15, 16)

And Lot went out to the entrance, but the door he shut after him (Gen. xix. 6)

N.B. In sentences of this sort the time can only be inferred from the context and the action may belong to some earlier occasion, i.e. it may correspond to an English Pluperfect. In the latter case however the Nominative is generally, though not always, placed at the head of the clause: e.g. Now it was Rachel who had taken the images (Gen. xxxi. 34). On the other hand we find And him she had borne (Should we not read he had begotten?) after Absalom (1 Kings i. 6).

III. Wāw Consecutive is naturally not used when it is necessary to emphasize the simultaneity of two actions or states, in which case two parallel clauses in which the Nominative stands first are coupled together by simple

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1 Occasionally however when the clause contains a word, other than the verb, which must stand first, the Nominative is omitted: e.g.
Exceptions to the Rule of Wāw Consecutive. 73

wāw. This construction is found not only with the Perfect but also with the Imperfect and the Participle, and even when one clause does not contain a verb: e.g.

As the sun rose upon the earth, Lot came to Zoar (Gen. xix. 23)

As they were going up the ascent to the city, they met some damsels (1 Sam. ix. 11)

Lo, while thou art there speaking with the king, I will come in after thee (1 Kings i. 14)

If it is necessary to connect two such clauses with what precedes, this is done by placing before them נְכַנֵּה, if the reference is to the past, וּכְּהָי, if the reference is to the future: e.g.

And it came to pass that, as they were going along and talking, lo, there was a chariot of fire (2 Kings ii. 11)

And it will come to pass, I shall no sooner go away from thee than the Spirit of Jehovah will carry thee off (1 Kings xviii. 12)

They had not yet gone to bed, and (Anglice when) the men of the city beset the house (Gen. xix. 4).

1 The use of נְכַנָּה in the second clause is merely for the sake of making this clause begin with the Nominative, as is usual in this idiom. In such a case there is no emphasis on the pronoun.
THE PARTICIPLE.

The Participle like the other verbal forms is altogether timeless. It is in fact a noun agent, and indeed the most usual form in which the noun agent occurs. Thus we not only find many common nouns which exist in Hebrew only in a participial form, e.g. מַשְׁלֹה, אָוֶֽב, סַנְוַֽב, וָאֶֽב etc., but in the case of stative verbs the participle is usually identical with the adjective, e.g. נָלֵא, etc.

Now although a noun agent is in most languages generally used to denote some permanent occupation or characteristic, it is manifest that this is not always the case. A man, for example, may be called a regicide, though the murder of kings does not constitute his chief occupation. In such a case the noun agent 'regicide' is merely used to denote that the man so described is distinguished from other men by the fact that he is in some way or other connected with the murder of a king, though the time of the murder is in no wise specified. But if a man is described as being, say, a ruler on some definite occasion, we naturally connect the action of ruling with that occasion, and indeed, since there is nothing to denote the completion or development of the action, we understand it as continuing. Thus to say that a certain thing
happened when Quirinius was governor is equivalent to saying that it happened while he was governing; in other words our attention is directed neither to the completion of the act of government, nor to its development from stage to stage, but to its mere continuance.

This sense, however, of the continuance of an action must be regarded as a development, though a very natural one, from the primary sense of the Participle, which merely denotes the agent, or in the case of a Passive Participle, the sufferer of an action which is in no way defined as to time or state.

The Participle is thus used to denote the agent or sufferer of some verbal action, whether

(a) habitual: e.g.

יְהוָה וֹלְכִית וֹלְיהָיִה

Jehovah killeth and preserveth alive (1 Sam. ii. 6)

יְהוָה וֹאֱלֹהִים יְהוָה לְגַלְסָמָה לְקָם

Jehovah your God, He it is that fighteth for you

(Deut. iii. 22)

or

(b) of isolated occurrence, both

(a) with reference to some one special act in the past, present or future, in which case the Participle will naturally be definite: e.g.

אני יְהוָה וֹפַעַל לְתֹכֵם מְאָרָים מְאָרִים

I am Jehovah who brought you up from the land of Egypt

(Lev. xi. 45)
Now Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh were of the number of those men who went to spy out the land (Num. xiv. 38)

*It is my mouth that speaks to you* (Gen. xlv. 12)

*The men of Anathoth who seek thy life* (Jerem. xi. 21)

*That which shall die may die, and that which shall perish may perish* (Zech. xi. 9)

*The man who shall speak to thee (i.e. if any one speak to thee), thou shalt bring him to me* (2 Sam. xiv. 10)

and

(β) with reference to some action in connexion with the main narrative, in which case it corresponds to our Participle: e.g.

*They were going along, talking as they went* (2 Kings ii. 11)

*Behold, I am standing beside the well* (Gen. xxiv. 13)
N.B. 1. When it is necessary to negative an act in a state of continuance, תָּנָא (תָּנָא), not שָׁלָה, is used with the Participle: e.g. נָתָנְנִי שָׁלָה I am not (or shall not be or was not) hearing; literally I am not, shall not be, was not, present as a hearer.

2. When it is desired to mark to some extent the time of an action, and at the same time to represent it as continuing, the verb הוה is sometimes used with the Participle: e.g. הוה הרֵעָה תִּשָּׁרָה את־ירוח. And the boy was ministering to Jehovah (1 Sam. ii. 11), ויהי יבּהים that it may be (continually) dividing (Gen. i. 6).

3. When the definite article is used with a predicative Participle, it has the effect of emphasizing the Nominative. Thus, for example, the phrase עָתְנָכָם הָרָא אֶל (Deut. iv. 3) literally Your eyes are those that see, have seen etc., means It is your own eyes that have seen. This idiom may be explained as follows: הָרָא implies certain definite eyes that see; these are stated to be עָתְנָכָם.
THE INFINITIVE.

There are two forms of the Infinitive in common use in Hebrew, the one, the so-called Infinitive Construct, corresponding roughly to the Infinitive of the Greek; the other, the Infinitive Absolute, altogether idiomatic and peculiar to the Hebrew. Both these forms are nouns of action, undefined as to time, person and state. The difference between them lies in the method of their use and not in their essential meaning.

THE INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT.

The name 'Infinitive Construct' is somewhat misleading. It suggests that the form which is so called is the construct state of the Infinitive Absolute, whereas in the Kal always, and to some extent in the other conjugations, the two Infinitives are derived from different stems\(^1\). Moreover the Infinitive Construct, though frequently used in the construct state, is also very commonly found when no Genitive follows it. But unsuitable as the name is, it is so familiar, that any change would cause confusion.

\(^1\) Thus the Infinitive Absolute פָּנַי arises from ḫafāl, the Infinitive Construct פִּנַי from ḫṭūl or ḫṭūl.
The Infinitive Construct, being a noun of action, can naturally be followed by a subjective Genitive\(^1\), e.g. ירו� יבגוי my lifting up, יבגוי תושוה thy forsaking, יבגוי יושוה his making etc. At the same time it possesses sufficient verbal force to allow it to govern an Accusative: e.g. יבגוי תושוה אטיב and to keep the Sabbath day (Deut. v. 15).

I. The Infinitive Construct being an abstract noun of action may occur as the subject of a sentence: e.g.

An evil and grievous thing is thy forsaking (Anglice An evil and grievous thing it is that thou hast forsaken)
Jehovah (Jeremiah ii. 19)

Obedience is better than sacrifice (1 Sam. xv. 22)

It is not well that man should be alone (Gen. ii. 18)

N.B. It is however doubtful whether in such cases the Infinitive Construct should be regarded as the Nom- native, since in many exactly similar cases the preposition

\(^1\) Whether the Infinitive Construct is ever followed by an objective Genitive is doubtful. There is a distinct form for the Accusative suffix of the first pers. sing., e.g. יבגוי יבגוי יבגוי למשתא to kill me. We find also יבגוי יבגוי יבגוי למשתא to do it. At the same time it must be admitted that יבגוי יבגוי יבגוי למשתא and יבגוי יבגוי יבגוי למשתא, which are commonly used as Infinitives Construct of the verbs יבגוי יבגוי יבגוי and יבגוי, and which ordinarily govern the Accusative, may be followed by an objective Genitive: e.g. יבגוי יבגוי יבגוי למשתא and to love kindness (Micah vi. 8), יבגוי יבגוי יבגוי למשתא the fear of Jehovah (Isaiah xxxiii. 6).
occurs with the Infinitive: e.g. מַעַּכְּפֵּנִי יְהוָה לְבָרָךְ It was good in Jehovah’s eyes to bless Israel (Num. xxiv. 1). The rule indeed seems to be that, if the Infinitive stand before the ל, it is used without the ל, but if it stand after, it may be used with or without the preposition. See 1 Sam. xv. 22, Prov. xvii. 26, xviii. 5. Perhaps however in such cases the preposition ל has become part and parcel of the Infinitive as to in English: cf. Rom. vii. 18 To will is present with me. The Infinitive Construct seems never to occur as the Nominative to a finite verb.

II. More commonly however the Infinitive Construct is used objectively, being governed either by a verb or by a preposition. In such cases, although there is no change in the essential meaning of the Infinitive Construct, the translation of it in English will vary considerably, it being sometimes necessary to translate it by an abstract verbal noun, as for example when it is followed by a subjective Genitive, sometimes by the ordinary Infinitive, as when it is followed by an Accusative. Thus we find it used

(a) as the direct object of a verb: e.g.

He knows thy traversing (Anglice how thou didst traverse)  
this great wilderness (Deut. ii. 7)

He thought not of kind dealing (Ps. cix. 16)
THE INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT.

I am pleased to justify thee (Job xxxiii. 32)

And what was I able to do in comparison of you? (Judges viii. 3)

They would not hear Jehovah's law (Isaiah xxx. 9)

And He tried to kill him (Ex. iv. 24)

I have begun to set before thee (Deut. ii. 31)

(b) governed by a preposition: e.g.

After I have seen (literally after my seeing) thy face (Gen. xlvi. 30)

Forasmuch as ye do (literally because of your doing) all these deeds (Jerem. vii. 13)

And in order to perform the word (Deut. ix. 5)

And because of their putting Jehovah to the test (Ex. xvii. 7)

k. 6
When he saw (literally in his seeing) the angel (2 Sam. xxiv. 17)

And thou wilt honour Him rather than carry out thy own doings (Isaiah lviii. 13)

He began to be a mighty man in the land (Gen. x. 8)

Jehovah intended to put them to death (1 Sam. ii. 25)

And they were not able to dwell together (Gen. xiii. 6)

And she went to fetch some (1 Kings xvii. 11)

N.B. 1. It must be remembered that the preposition ל (lā) is used in Hebrew in a much wider sense than to in English; for example המָלֹא (māla) means in truth, truthfully. Accordingly the Infinitive Construct with the preposition ל is frequently used in cases where it cannot be translated by the English Infinitive: e.g. בֵּאֵל הָלָךְ (be'el hālāḵ) literally in saying. On the other hand with the exception given above, § 1. note, in every case where the English Infinitive would be used the Infinitive Construct with the preposition ל may be used in Hebrew.
2. When it is necessary to negative an Infinitive Construct with ל this is effected by the use of ל instead of ל: e.g. אֶתֶנָּה לַלָּבָּתָהּ לַלָּבָּתָהּ תַּחַתְּךָ אֲנָהּ And he built Ramah so as to allow none to go out or come in etc. (1 Kings xv. 17), רָמָה לְלָבָּתָהּ תַּחַתְּךָ And the man who shall act presumptuously in not hearkening to the priest (Deut. xvii. 12).

3. When the Infinitive Construct is the direct object of a finite verb, the agent of the action expressed by the Infinitive is usually the same as the subject of the finite verb, and the Infinitive therefore needs no definition as to the agent. But when the Infinitive is subordinated by a preposition, it is frequently necessary to define the agent, and this is done by placing a subjective Genitive immediately after the Infinitive Construct: see above, § II. (b), examples from Gen. xlvi. 30, Jerem. vii. 13, etc. That the agent in such cases is the subjective Genitive there can be little doubt, but after the decay of the case-endings in Hebrew the exact nature of the construction became obscured, and the Accusative or some other word is sometimes inserted between the Infinitive Construct and its Genitive: e.g. לַלָּבָּתָהּ הָפִּיתוּ חוֹמֵךְ לָלָבָּתָהּ And Jehovah appointed to Cain a sign, to the intent that any one who might meet him should not slay him (Gen. iv. 15), לֶא יְשָׁמְךָ רָדֹחַ That a homicide might flee thither (Deut. iv. 42). It is however not impossible that in such cases the noun defining the
Infinitive Construct is added as an afterthought and is to be regarded as a *casus pendens*.

III. By a slight extension of the foregoing usages the Infinitive Construct with the preposition ל is employed to denote actions as being necessary, desirable, possible, or about to take place, and in late style it is even combined with the conjunction ב in lieu of a finite verb. Examples are

What can be done for thee? Can the king be spoken to concerning thee? (2 Kings iv. 13)

And it came to pass, the sun was just setting (Gen. xv. 12)

And when we burn sacrifices to the queen of heaven, and pour out libations to her etc. (Jerem. xliv. 19)

N.B. To negative such sentences both את and ל are employed: e.g. את יהוה ביש Jehovah's name

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1 Compare the phrase 'This house to let' and the North-country idiom 'What is to do with so-and-so?'

2 That ל is used in its common meaning, and that יהוה is not the Nominative to it, is proved by v. 17 where יהוה is construed as feminine.

3 Point thus.
must not be mentioned (Amos vi. 10), לֹהֵם אָלָל-שִׁיטְרָה. It was impossible to enter the king's gate (Esther iv. 2).

The use of the Infinitive described in the foregoing section belongs, however, rather to a treatise on Hebrew syntax than to a description of the Hebrew tenses, since in every case the Infinitive Construct retains its essential meaning.
THE INFINITIVE ABSOLUTE.

The Infinitive Absolute is, as stated above, peculiar to the Hebrew. Leaving out of account a few instances in which it takes the place of the Infinitive Construct after another verb, where the Infinitive Construct should probably be restored, its usage is altogether idiomatic.

I. Since the Infinitive Absolute denotes the mere action of the verb without any limitation of time, person, or state, it is frequently used in addition to the finite verb, which it generally precedes but sometimes follows, in order to emphasize the purely verbal notion. In practically every case the meaning conveyed by it can, by an intelligent reader, be represented in English by the mere emphasis; though in order to leave no doubt as to the exact meaning of a translation, it is frequently desirable to render it by some adverb. It may in fact be said that whatever meaning is capable of being conveyed by the emphasis on an English verb may be expressed in Hebrew by the addition of the Infinitive Absolute. Thus it may express solemn assurance or warning, impatience, surprise etc., contrast with another action; or it may imply that the action is in some way limited to the verb which it qualifies. The context will always be a sufficient guide to its exact shade of meaning. Examples are

שׁוֹב אֲנָשִׁי אֵלֹהִי

I will return to thee (Gen. xviii. 10).
And on no account slay it (1 Kings iii. 26)

The fellow came here alone as an utter stranger and now he has turned judge!! (Gen. xix. 9)

Well, but the man actually asked about us and our kindred......Were we to know (Anglice, How were we to know) that he would say etc.? (Gen. xliii. 7)

But I would not listen to Balaam, and he blessed you (Joshua xxiv. 10)

[The emphasis on the word blessed is to bring out the contrast with Balaam's intention of cursing.]

I only just tasted......a little honey (1 Sam. xiv. 43)

Only hearken unto me, and ye shall enjoy\(^1\) prosperity (Isaiah lv. 2)

But if, on the other hand, the slave shall say etc. (Exodus xxii. 5)

\(^1\) For this use of the Imperative see above, on the Cohortative, Jussive and Imperative, § IV.
If Thou wilt only give this people into my hand, I will destroy their cities (Num. xxi. 2)

And Moses inquired indeed for the sin-offering goat, and lo, it had been burnt (Lev. x. 16)

[The Infinitive Absolute in this sentence implies that Moses could do no more than inquire, since the goat was not forthcoming.]

The trees went to anoint over them a king (Judges ix. 8)

[The meaning of the emphasis here seems to be that the trees started with a certain purpose, but, as the fable shews, this purpose was unsuccessful.]

N.B. The explanation of this use of the Infinitive Absolute seems to be as follows. Hebrew possesses but few particles, and makes good its deficiency in this respect entirely by the emphasis. Unfortunately this is a matter to which translators have as yet given practically no attention. Not only is the whole force of many passages entirely overlooked through this neglect of the emphasis, but translations are frequently suggested, especially in the book of Job, which absolutely ignore the emphatic word, and depend for their meaning on the supposed emphasis on some word that in the Hebrew is altogether without emphasis. Under ordinary circumstances the first word in a sentence is most emphatic, and as in a normal sentence the chief emphasis falls on the verb, it naturally
occupies the first place. It frequently happens however that it is necessary to put some extra emphasis on the verb, and since it is manifest that this cannot be done by altering its position, it can only take place by the addition of some word. Now a finite verb consists of two parts, either of which may require to be emphasized. If it is desired to emphasize the person, this is naturally done by the addition of a personal pronoun. If, on the other hand, it is necessary to lay stress on the action, the Infinitive Absolute, which expresses the mere action of the verb undefined as to time, person or state, is employed in addition to the finite verb, and qualifies it as an adverbial Accusative. In such cases the Infinitive Absolute is usually, but not necessarily, of the same conjugation as the finite verb.

II. By a slight extension of the foregoing usage two Infinitives Absolute are commonly coupled together to express simultaneous actions qualifying that of a finite verb or participle. In this case one of the Infinitives will be from the same root as the finite verb. Examples are

\[ \text{מַעַלְוָה} \text{ אָחַת אִשָּׁה} \text{ וַיֹּאמֶר} \text{ וַיַּלְכֹּל} \]

*And her husband went with her, weeping as he went*  
(2 Sam. iii. 16)

\[ \text{שְׁלַחְתִּי} \text{ אלהים} \text{ אֶת-עַבְרֵי} \text{ דְּבָרִי} \text{ וַיְבִיאם} \text{ חָשֵׁם} \text{ משֶׁה} \]

*I sent unto them my servants the prophets from the beginning onward (literally starting early and sending)*  
(Jerem. xxix. 19)

\[ \text{מִנָּכַו} \text{ וָאֵשְׁוָה} \text{ וַלָכְנָה} \]

*Mincing along they go*  
(Isaiah iii. 16)
III. By a similar usage the Infinitive Absolute is frequently employed adverbially to qualify the action of a preceding verb, though the Infinitive Absolute of that verb is not expressed. This is especially common in the case of קְרַבָּה וַימְסִי מָהָר and which have in fact become mere adverbs. The following are examples:

אָבַּה אֲחָו מָהָר עִיּוֹב

And I beat it to atoms, grinding it thoroughly (Deut. ix. 21)

כֶּרֶם מִלָּה מַרְבִּינָה

They have quickly turned aside from the way (Ex. xxxii. 8)

יֵאַה אֲעֻבְּדֶה נְרָבָה

Jehu shall serve him much (2 Kings x. 18)

IV. The Infinitive Absolute is used interjectionally to express the wish of the speaker, generally as an Imperative, but occasionally perhaps as a Cohortative or Jussive. This usage, however, which is especially common with the verb לָלַח, occurs more frequently in the silver

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1 This last usage is a little doubtful from the paucity of illustrations. There are indeed only three passages in which it seems necessary to understand an Infinitive Absolute as equivalent to a Cohortative or Jussive, viz. 1 Kings xxii. 30 (quoted p. 91), Num. xv. 35, Prov. xvii. 12. Another difficulty presents itself in the last two of these passages in the fact that the Infinitive Absolute is coupled with a Nominative. In Num. xv. 35 לָפְלֹם וַנַּעֲשֶׂה may be explained as due to an afterthought, added in order to take away any ambiguity. This explanation will not however serve in the case of the passage from Prov. xvii. 12, and it is possible that here and in 1 Kings xxii. 30 the text needs correction.
age of Hebrew, i.e. the period subsequent to Isaiah and Micah. Examples are

\[\text{Take this law-book (Deut. xxxi. 26)}\]

\[\text{Go and wash (2 Kings v. 10)}\]

\[\text{Eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die (Isaiah xxii. 13)}\]

\[\text{I will disguise myself and go into the battle (1 Kings xxii. 30)}\]

V. The Infinitive Absolute is used to denote actions of which it is unnecessary to specify the agents or state; either because these have been already sufficiently indicated or because the actions are purely general: e.g.

\[\text{They commit perjury (literally swear and lie) and murder and steal and commit adultery, they break out etc. (Hosea iv. 2)}\]

[In this sentence the Infinitives are in reality a series of nouns, as much as to say 'There is perjury etc.']

\[\text{Thus saith Jehovah, They shall leave after eating (2 Kings iv. 43)}\]
Are you to steal, murder, and commit adultery and perjure yourselves, and burn sacrifice to Baal, and follow other gods......and then come and stand before Me?

(Jerem. vii. 9, 10)

And now I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard: I shall take away its hedge, so that it shall be browsed upon; I shall pull down its wall, so that it shall be trampled down (Isaiah v. 5)

And this will be the sign for thee; ye shall eat (i.e. there shall be an eating) this year that which is self-sown

(2 Kings xix. 29, Isaiah xxxvii. 30)

Whosoever will boast, let him boast in this, that he understands and knows Me (Jerem. ix. 23)

VI. The Infinitive Absolute is likewise used in narration in lieu of the Perfect or Imperfect with Wāw Consecutive, when the time and the person have been made sufficiently clear by a preceding finite verb. This usage however can hardly be considered an elegance, and belongs to the later period. Examples are
And they committed Jeremiah to the Court of the Guard, and gave him a loaf of bread a day  
(Jerem. xxxvii. 21)

You have sown much and brought in little; you eat but cannot satisfy your hunger; you drink but cannot get mellow; you wrap yourselves up but cannot grow warm  
(Haggai i. 6)

They shall buy fields for money, and write deeds, and seal them, and take witnesses  
(Jerem. xxxii. 44)
ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE INFINITIVE.

Any account of the use of the Infinitive in Hebrew is complicated by the fact that, if we are to trust the Masoretic text, the two forms of the Infinitive can be used indifferently except that the Infinitive Absolute cannot take a suffix. Thus we find the Infinitive Absolute used for the Infinitive Construct in the following instances:

(a) when governed by another verb: e.g. תֹּבֹא לָמָּר Cease to do evil, learn to do well (Isaiah i. 16, 17);

(b) apparently as the subject of a sentence: e.g. יֵבְשֵׁל לְכָל Keep still it cannot (Isaiah lvii. 20, Jerem. xlix. 23); וְלָא אֵבְשֵׁל בָּרָה בְּיוֹלָה And they would not walk in His ways (Isaiah xlii. 24);

(c) when

A scoff er loves not that one should reprove him (Prov. xv. 12); מְשֹׁבְלָה לֹא אָכַל A scoff er loves not that one should reprove him (Prov. xxv. 27); סְדוֹר הַמָּחֶל מֵעָל Sovereignty and terribleness are with Him (Job xxv. 2): (c) when
governed by a preposition: e.g. בַּעֲרוֹת אלֹהִים וְזָנוֹת When the most High apportioned the nations (Deut. xxxii. 8); עַד הָעַבְרָה לָעָשָׂר When thou shalt finish tithing (Deut. xxvi. 12); בְּעַשֵּׂר הָלֹאִים When the Levites take the tithe (Nehem. x. 39); בִּרְשֵׁית ובָּרָם הִיאָה בְּשָׁמְשֹׁן In keeping quiet and in confidence shall be your might (Isaiah xxx. 15); וְנָאַנַחְנוּ מִקְפְּרוּ לְעַלַּלְתָה חָשְׂפֵי הָלֹאִים לֵאמָּה And when we burn sacrifices to the queen of heaven, and pour out^ libations to her (Jerem. xliv. 19, cf. v. 25); וְנִשְׁבַּר אֵד אֶלֹהִים לַעָבְרָה And the people sat down to eat and drink (Ex. xxxii. 6); הֶלְחֹמָה in abundance (Nehem. v. 18); הָעַרְקָבָה till an end is made (2 Kings xiii. 17, 19, Ezra ix. 4); הַעַרְקָבָה till they had made an end (2 Chron. xxiv. 10, xxxi. 1).

It is however remarkable that in most of the above instances the difference between the two Infinitives is merely one of pointing, and moreover a concordance shews that in similar cases the Infinitive Construct is the normal form. Thus לְמַר and לְרִית are elsewhere always followed by the Infinitive Construct with or without the preposition ל; לְבֵילָה is elsewhere always construed with the Infinitive Construct, unless לִשְׁרוּ (Ex. xviii. 18) be the Infinitive Absolute with a suffix !, and לִזָּה (Jerem. xlix. 10) be a mistaken pointing for לִזָּה. לְאָרָה לִזָּה, לְאָרָה לִזָּה (in the sense to allow, governing an Accusative of the person) are all elsewhere followed by

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1 Point thus.
2 For the construction see above, on the Infinitive Construct, § III.
the Infinitive Construct with or without the preposition \( \text{ל} \). Again, to consider the instances quoted under \((b)\), it is noteworthy with reference to Proverbs xxv. 27 that in all other similar cases in which \( \text{בורה רכינ} \) is the predicate—with the doubtful exception of \( \text{בורה רכינ} \) (Prov. xxiv. 23, xxviii. 21), which owing to the shortening of the syllable through the Makc\( \text{כ}\)\( \text{ך} \) may be either the Absolute or the Construct—the Infinitive Construct is the normal form; the rule being apparently that, if the Infinitive stand before the predicate \( \text{בורה} \), it is used without the preposition \( \text{ל} \). Moreover as a parallel to the passages quoted from Jeremiah x. 5 and Job xxv. 2, we find with the Infinitive Construct \( \text{לביה רכינ} \) \( \text{לברל התחים לפל} \) \text{And in Thine hand it is to make great and to give strength unto all} (1 Chron. xxix. 12). At the same time it must be admitted that in \( \text{לביה} \) (Job xxv. 2) we seem to have a mere abstract noun of which the verbal force is almost entirely lost, and it is not improbable that the Infinitive Absolute Hiph\( \text{י} \)l was actually so used in the later stages of the language; at least this seems to be the natural conclusion from the occurrence of such nouns as \( \text{הפיס} \) in Rabbinic Hebrew.

In most of the instances quoted under \((c)\) it is probable that the pointing is wrong. In Ex. xxxii. 6, however, we may possibly have the work of a ‘compassionate editor,’ whereas \( \text{הרWISE} \) has so completely become an adjective, that there is no great difficulty in accepting the reading \( \text{להפי} \) (Nehem. v. 18), though the text is not improbably corrupt.

On the other hand we find the Infinitive Construct used for the Infinitive Absolute in \( \text{תורה רכינ} \) (Prov. xxv. 27), \( \text{תרות שפי} \) (Isaiah xxii. 13), \( \text{תללא} \) (Hosea x. 4), \( \text{תובר} \).
ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE INFINITIVE. 97

(2 Kings iii. 24), יָבֵר (Josh. vii. 7), הָרֹץ וֹדָאָמְר (Ezek. xxi. 31), כֶּבֶל (Ps. i. 21), נָכֹל (Neh. i. 7), קֹל (1 Chron. xxi. 24), הָרֹזֶה (2 Chron. vii. 3). It is however noteworthy that רּוֹזֶה as an adverbial Infinitive is unique, whereas רּבָּנָה occurs upwards of forty times, though, strangely enough, not in Proverbs. The curious hybrid רֶבֶנֶשֶׁי is probably a scribe's blunder, since רֶבֶנֶשֶׁי occurs in the same verse. It is, however, significant that the Masoretes, notwithstanding the fact that the word looked like a Construct, pointed it as Absolute. The same remark applies to רֶבֶנֶשֶׁי, unless we are to understand it as the Construct Plural of the noun רֶבֶנֶשֶׁי. Hosea elsewhere (chap. iv. 2) uses רֶבֶנֶשֶׁי as the Infinitive Absolute. In 2 Kings iii. 24 the text is certainly corrupt: the LXX. read two Infinitives, but whether their ms. had בָּה or רּוֹזֶה it is impossible to say. Perhaps the final ב is due to the following בָּה. In Ezek. xxi. 31 the pointing is chaotic: it is scarcely likely that the forms בָּה and בָּה were used by the same writer. In Ps. i. 21 the text is uncertain, the LXX. having read בָּה (cf. Ps. lvii. 2). בָּה (Neh. i. 7) was probably intended by the punctuators to be understood as a noun with the same sense as in Ezek. xviii. 16: in any case the vowels only are in question. In the two instances from Chronicles a ב has probably dropped out, and should be restored according to the idiom described above: see on Infin. Constr., section III.

It is true that an objection may be made to altering the Masoretic pointing on the ground that there exist forms, pointed by the Masoretes as Constructs in accordance with the norm, which would more naturally be...
pointed as Absolutes: e.g. בָּנָי (Gen. xxxviii. 9), יִּתֶּן (Num. xx. 21) as the Infinitive Construct of seven times as the Infinitive Construct of לָיָה, לָיָה, לָיָה, לָיָה, לָיָה, לָיָה, לָיָה. But the pointing of these forms as the Infinitive Absolute would involve the conclusion that the Infinitive Absolute can be used with the prepositions לְ, מְ, לִמְ, לִבְלָה; and in the face of the great number of cases in which these prepositions govern forms which can only be the Construct, it would be difficult to accept such a supposition. Great as the work of the Masoretes undoubtedly is, it is impossible to shut our eyes to their numerous vagaries. The men who pointed, for example, לָיָה (Joshua iv. 24), even though in this instance we can find a motive for the pointing in Jewish exclusiveness, were, from a grammatical point of view, capable of anything!
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Kennett, R.

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