

Biblical Hebrew 103

Developing Grammatical Concepts

Lesson 22

שְׁעוֹר כַּב

Construct Chains, *introduction*



Mahane Yehuda is a very busy market in Jerusalem. It is filled with people and a myriad of sounds like none other. When entering this market, you are suddenly entering Israeli life – the west meeting then Middle East. It is a must-see ... seeing is experiencing.

What we will learn in Lesson 22

- 22.01 Introduce construct chains
- 22.02 Examples of construct chains
- 22.03 Find construct chains in these verses
- 22.04 Review vocabulary
- 22.05 Weekly Parasha

22.01 *Introduce construct chains*

A construct chain is the relationship between two nouns that are linked together. In English, we do the same thing by either making them into one word (like playground), a hyphenated word, or adding the word “of” (like President of the United States).

In Hebrew, this type of construction is made up of two or more nouns; this is called a construct chain. A Hebrew example, “a voice of a man” = קול איש. These two nouns (קול voice & איש man) together form a construct state, which takes the place of the word “of” and creates a possessive relationship. The first noun *voice* קול serves as the construct noun, meaning “voice of.” The second of the two nouns is the absolute noun: *man* איש, meaning “man.”

Hebrew construct chains are either indefinite or definite. For example, “A voice of a man” is an *indefinite* construct chain. It is a non-specific phrase as it does not refer to a specific man. It can be made *definite* by adding the article “the” (ה); this then changes the meaning from “a voice of a man” (indefinite) to “the voice of the man” (definite): קול האיש.

The first noun, or nouns, in the construct chain is called a **construct noun**. The final noun in the chain is the **absolute noun**. (Absolute nouns are how nouns appear in a lexicon or dictionary.)

22.02 *Examples of construct chains*

Construct Chains		
English	Hebrew	Construct
A voice of a man	קול איש	קול – a voice of / construct noun איש – a man / absolute noun
The voice of the man	קול האיש	קול – the voice of / construct noun האיש – the man / absolute noun
A servant of a king	עבד מלך	עבד – a servant of / construct noun מלך – a king / absolute noun
The servant of the king	עבד המלך	עבד – the servant of / construct noun המלך – the king / absolute noun
A book of a prophet	ספר נביא	ספר – a book of / construct noun נביא – a prophet / absolute noun
The book of the prophet	ספר הנביא	ספר – the book of / construct noun הנביא – the prophet / absolute noun
A king of a land	מלך ארץ	מלך – a king of / construct noun ארץ – a land / absolute noun
The king of the land	מלך הארץ	מלך – the king of / construct noun הארץ – the land / absolute noun
A son of a king	בן מלך	בן – a son of / construct noun מלך – a king / absolute noun
The son of the king	בן המלך	בן – the son of / construct noun המלך – the king / absolute noun
Bethlehem (House of Bread)	בית לחם	בית – house of / construct noun לחם – bread / absolute noun

22.03 Find construct chains in the following verses

Numbers 1:1

The LORD [YHVH] spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tent of meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying,

וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְבַּר סִינַי בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁנַי
בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִית לְצֵאתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם לֵאמֹר:

Strong's	Translit	Hebrew	English	Morphology
1696 [e]	way-dab-bêr	וַיְדַבֵּר	And spoke	Conj-w V-Piel-ConsecImperf-3ms
3068 [e]	Yah-weh	יְהוָה	Yahweh	N-proper-ms
413 [e]	'el-	אֶל־	to	Prep
4872 [e]	mō-šeh	מֹשֶׁה	Moses	N-proper-ms
4057 [e]	bə-miḏ-bar	בְּמִדְבַּר	in the Wilderness of	Prep-b N-msc/ construct noun
5514 [e]	sī-nay	סִינַי	Sinai	N-proper-fs/ absolute noun
168 [e]	bə-'ō-hel	בְּאֹהֶל	in the tabernacle of	Prep-b N-msc/ construct noun
4150 [e]	mō-w-'ēḏ;	מוֹעֵד	meeting	N-ms/ absolute noun
259 [e]	bə-'e-ḥād	בְּאֶחָד	on *first	Prep-b *Number-ms
2320 [e]	la-ḥō-ḏeš	לַחֹדֶשׁ	the day of the month	*Prep-l, Art N-ms
8145 [e]	haš-šê-nî	הַשְּׁנַי	*second	Art *Number-oms (ordinal masc num)
8141 [e]	baš-šā-nāh	בַּשָּׁנָה	in the year	*Prep-b, Art N-fs
8145 [e]	haš-šê-nīt,	הַשְּׁנִית	*second	Art *Number-ofs (ordinal fem num)
3318 [e]	lā-šē-tām	לְצֵאתְכֶם	after they had come out	Prep-l V-Qal-Inf 3mp
776 [e]	mê-'e-reš	מֵאֶרֶץ	(of) the land of	Prep-m N-fsc/ construct noun
4714 [e]	miš-ra-yim	מִצְרָיִם	Egypt	N-proper-fs/ absolute noun
559 [e]	lê-mōr.	לֵאמֹר:	saying	Prep-l V-Qal-Inf

*We will discuss numbers and dates used in the Torah in a later class.

Genesis 40:1

Some time after this, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and his baker committed an offense against their lord the king of Egypt. Gen 40:1, ESV

וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה תִּטְאוּ מִשְׁקָה מֶלֶךְ-מִצְרַיִם וְהָאֹפֶה
לְאֲדֹנֵיהֶם לְמֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם:

Strong's	Translit	Hebrew	English	Morphology
1961 [e]	way-hî.	וַיְהִי	And it came to pass	Conj-w V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms
310 [e]	'a-ḥar	אַחֲרֵי	after	Adv
1697 [e]	had-də-bā-rîm	הַדְּבָרִים	things	Art N-mp
428 [e]	hā-'êl-leh.	הָאֵלֶּה	these	Art Pro-cp
2398 [e]	hā-tə-'û	תִּטְאוּ	[that] offended	V-Qal-Perf-3cp (note: symbol under aleph is a cantillation mark, it is not a chirek)
4945 [e]	maš-qêh	מִשְׁקָה	the cupbearer of	N-ms cstr / construct noun
4428 [e]	me-leḵ-	מֶלֶךְ-	the king of	N-msc / construct noun
4714 [e]	miš-ra-yim	מִצְרַיִם	Egypt	N-proper-fs / absolute noun
644 [e]	wə-hā-'ō-pēh:	וְהָאֹפֶה	and the baker	Conj-w, Art V-Qal-Prtcpl-ms
113 [e]	la-'ă-dō-nê-hem	לְאֲדֹנֵיהֶם	their lord	Prep-l N-mpc 3mp // construct noun
4428 [e]	lə-me-leḵ	לְמֶלֶךְ	the king of	Prep-l N-msc // construct noun
4714 [e]	miš-rā-yim.	מִצְרַיִם:	Egypt	N-proper-fs // absolute noun

22.04 *Review Vocabulary for Lesson 22:*

The vocabulary in this lesson include high frequency words, which appear frequently in the TaNaKh.

We encourage you to review these words until the vocabulary becomes familiar.

22.05 *Weekly Parasha reading* (go to www.RestoringTorah.org)