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MINISTRIES

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Learning Biblical Hebrew Lesson 10

Welcome back to Learn Biblical Hebrew with 119 Ministries! This is lesson 10. You can find a written summary of this lesson at the link in the description below this video. ([CLICK HERE](#))

Parts of sentences

- A sentence must have a subject and a verb
- Some sentences also have an object

Two lessons ago, I told you that a sentence must have a subject and a verb. A verb is a word describing an action, and the subject is a noun that is doing the action. In this lesson, we are going to introduce another part of a sentence, which is the object.

Subject and Object

- Subject is the one performing the action
- Object is the one having the action performed on it

So, the subject is the noun that is doing the action of the verb. The object is a noun that is having the action done to it.

Sentence:

Adam found David.

Verb: found

Subject: Adam

Object: David

Here is an example in English. Adam found David. In this sentence, the verb—the action—is found. The subject—the one doing the finding—is Adam. And the object—the one being found—is David. So, again, the subject is doing the action, and the object is having the action done to it.

Sentence:

אָדָם מָצָא דָוִד

Adam found David.

Here is that same sentence in Hebrew. Adam Matsa David. Adam is the subject, Matsa is a new word, it is a verb that means found, and David is the object.

Now, what I said about the word order in Hebrew sentences? The verb and the subject can appear in any order. Also, the object can appear anywhere in the sentence.



So, this presents a problem. In this sentence, Adam Matsa David, how do we know that Adam is the subject and David is the object? In other words, how do we know that this sentence is saying that Adam found David, and not saying that David found Adam?



Also, consider this sentence: Matsa Adam David.

Remember, word order doesn't matter, so this sentence is just as good as the last sentence. How do we know who is the subject and who is the object in this sentence? The words are in a different order, but we have the same problem. In both of these sentences, we don't actually know who is finding who.

Fortunately, there is a solution to this problem, and it comes in the form of this little word. This word is spelled Aleph, Tav, and it is pronounced Et (ate).

Word

את

“et”

the direct object preposition

What is the definition of Et? Et is a unique word, in that it cannot be defined as any single word. Instead, Et is sometimes called the direct object preposition. What this means is that in a sentence, Et is the word that comes before the object in that sentence. The purpose of Et is to tell you which word in a sentence is the object of the sentence.

Going back to our example sentence, we can add Et, and now the sentence makes perfect sense.

Sentence:

אָדָם מָצָא אֶת דָּוִד

Adam found David.

Adam Matsa Et David. Since the Et comes right before David, we know that David is the object of the sentence—David is the one being found. So now we can say with confidence that this sentence means Adam found David.

Here is the same sentence, but we’ve changed the position of the Et.

Sentence:

אֶת אָדָם מָצָא דָוִד

David found Adam.

This reads Et Adam Matsa David. In this sentence, since the Et comes before Adam, that means that Adam is the object of the sentence. Adam is the one being found.

So, the translation of this sentence would be David found Adam. Even though the subject, verb, and object can be written in any order in a sentence, the Et is always written right before the object. Again, that is the entire purpose of the word Et. Et tells you which word in a sentence is the object.

With that in mind, take a look at this sentence: Matsa Et Adam David.

Sentence:

מָצָא אֶת אָדָם דָוִד

What do you think this sentence means? You can pause the video here, and hit play again when you're ready to hear the answer. Ready?

The translation of this sentence is David found Adam.

Sentence:

מֵצָא אֶת אָדָם דָּוִד

David found Adam.

Since the Et appears directly before Adam, Adam is the object of the sentence.

We're going to use Et some more, but first, here is another word. This word is spelled Resh, Chet, Lamed.

This word is pronounced Rachel,

Word

רַחֵל

"rachel"

ewe; Rachel

and Rachel means a Ewe, which is a female sheep. It is also a name, the name we know in English as Rachel.

With our new word, we can make a new sentence. This is Matsa Adam Et David V'et Rachel.

Sentence:

מצא אדם את דוד
ואת רחל

This is our longest sentence yet, so let's break it down one word at a time before we try to put it all together.

The first word is Matsa, which is a verb that means found. Our next word is Adam, which is the name Adam.

Next, we have Et, so that means that the word after Et is the object of the sentence. Next is the object of the sentence, David, which is the name David.

After David, we have V'et. This word starts with a Vav, so we can assume that is the Vav prefix, which means "and". The rest of the word is Et, so that would mean that the very next word is the object of the sentence.

But, wait, don't we already have an object for this sentence? Isn't David already the object of the sentence?

It is, but we can in fact have more than one object in a sentence. When a sentence has more than one object, each object in the sentence needs to have an Et in front of it. So, then, what is the second object in this sentence? The word after the second Et is Rachel, which is the name Rachel.

So, to recap: the verb in this sentence is Matsa, there are two Ets, one before David, and one before Rachel, so those are the objects of the sentence. The other word in this sentence is Adam, and that must be the subject.

When we put it all together, we get Adam found David and Rachel. Again, the Ets in this sentence let us know who is doing the finding, and who is being found.

Sentence:

מֵצָא אָדָם אֶת דָּוִד
וְאֵת רָחֵל

Adam found David and Rachel.

There is one more thing about sentence structure that I want to show you, and that is the idea of a prepositional phrase. There are words and prefixes that are called prepositions.

I'm not going to explain exactly what prepositions are right now; instead, what you need to know is that the Bet prefix, the one that means in or with, that prefix is also considered a preposition.

So, when the Bet prefix is attached to a noun, then that combination of prefix and noun then becomes a prepositional phrase.

Prepositional Prefixes

- The prefix בְּ is also a preposition
- When a preposition is attached to a word, that word becomes a prepositional phrase
- A prepositional phrase cannot be the subject of a sentence

The reason that's important is because a prepositional phrase *cannot* be the subject of a sentence. Let's look at an example so you can see what I mean.

Here is our example sentence. Bevatit Adam Matsa Et David.

Sentence:

בְּבַיִת אָדָם מָצָא אֶת דָּוִד

Bevayit means in a house, Adam is Adam, Matsa is found, and Et David tells us that David is the object of our sentence. Notice, though, that we have two nouns that could be the subject of this sentence: Adam and Bayit. However, because Bayit has a preposition in front of it, it is Bevayit, it is a prepositional phrase, and so Bayit cannot be the subject of this sentence. The house cannot be the one doing the finding, not only because that wouldn't make any sense, but because the Bet prefix in front of it tells us that it cannot be the subject of this sentence.

Sentence:

בְּבַיִת אָדָם מָצָא אֶת דָּוִד

Adam found David in the house.

So, this sentence would read Adam found David in a house.

For the remainder of this lesson, I'm going to quickly review all of the grammar concepts we've learned over the past few lessons. We're going to need all of them for our next lesson.

Here are our rules for sentences:

Grammar Review

- Verbs: words that describe actions
- Subject: nouns that perform actions
- Object: nouns that have actions performed on them
- Every sentence must have a verb and a subject
- Verb, subject, and object can be written in any order

- Verbs are words for actions
- Subjects are nouns that are performing actions, and
- Objects are nouns that are having actions done to them.
- Every sentence must have a verb and a subject.
- Verbs, subjects, and objects can be written in any order.

Grammar Review

- The word **אֵת** is written before the object in a sentence

The word Et is written before the object in a sentence, and its purpose is to show that the word after it is an object.

Grammar Review

- Hebrew has no word for “is,” “are,” “am,” or “a.”
- Prefixes can be added to the beginning of words
- Prefix ה־ means “the”
- Prefix ב־ means “in” or “with”
- Prefix ו־ means “and”

Hebrew does not have several words that English has, but these words must be translated into English wherever they belong. The words is, am, and are do not exist as their own words in Hebrew, but their meaning is understood in some sentences

Also, the word “a” does not exist as a stand-alone word in Hebrew, but many times it must be added when a sentence is translated into English.

Next, we have the prefixes. Prefixes are letters that are added to the beginning of words to add additional meaning to the word.

One prefix is a Hey with a Patach underneath it. When this appears at the beginning of a word, it adds the meaning the.

Another prefix is a Bet with a Sh’vah underneath it. This prefix means in or with.

And, our last prefix is a Vav. This can take a number of vowels, but in any case, it means and.

That concludes lesson 10. You can find the exercises for this lesson in the link in the description below. ([CLICK HERE](#))

In our next lesson, we’ll be translating our first Bible verse, so I definitely encourage you to do the exercises for this lesson, and also go back and review anything we’ve learned so far that you’re not totally clear on. I’ll see you again next time. Shalom!

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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