

Exodus 2:1-4

וַיֵּלֶךְ אִישׁ מִבֵּית לֵוִי וַיִּקַּח אֶת-בַּת-לֵוִי: 2 וַתְּהֶר האִשָּׁה וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן
וַתֵּרָא אֹתוֹ כִּי-טוֹב הוּא וַתְּצַפְנֶהוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה יָרְחִים: 3 וְלֹא-יָכְלָה עוֹד
הַצְּפִינוֹ וַתִּקַּח-לוֹ תַּבַּת גָּמָא וַתַּחְמְרָה בַּחֲמֵר וּבַזֹּפֶת וַתִּשֶׂם בָּהּ
אֶת-הַיֶּלֶד וַתִּשֶׂם בְּסוּף עַל-שֵׁפֶת הַיָּאָר: 4 וַתִּתְצַב אַחֲתוֹ מֵרַחֵק
לְדַעָה מֵהַיַּעֲשֶׂה לוֹ:

Vocabulary

Verse 1

לוי name: "Levi"

בת "daughter" (not to be confused with בית "house")

Verse 2

הרה verb: "conceive" (BDB, 247)

צפן verb (3ms pronominal suffix): "hide" (BDB, 860)

ירח noun: "month" (BDB, 437)

Syntax & Miscellaneous

- Notice the morphological difference/similarity between the construct form of "house" and "daughter" noted above.
- The second clause of verse two, וַתֵּרָא אֹתוֹ כִּי-טוֹב הוּא, exhibits several interesting syntactic phenomena. The conjunctive ׀ indicates temporality "and when," the relative clause is marked by כִּי "that," and the conjunction in the following clause would be the resultant temporal marker, "then." Also, the verbless clause follows the normal typology S-P (subject-predicate).

Vocabulary

Verse 3

צפן verb (*Hiphil*): "hide" (cf. verse 2)

תבה noun (construct): "ark" (BDB, 1061)

גמא noun: "reed, papyrus" (BDB, 167)

חמר verb: "smear, cover" (BDB, 330)

חמר noun: "bitumen" (BDB, 330)

זפת "pitch" (BDB, 278)

סוף "reed" (BDB, 693)

שפת "side, bank"

Verse 4

יצב verb (*Hithpael*): "station oneself" (BDB, 426)

רחק "far away, distant, far"

Exodus 2:1-4

Syntax & Misc.

Verse 3

- As with the conjunctives in verse 2, the first two clause connectors should be understood sequentially: “and when...then.”

Verse 4

- The differentiation (i.e. determination) of clause boundaries is difficult for students. Consider this clause: וַתִּחַמְרֶהָ בַחֲמֵר וּבְזָפֹת. How does one decide which *waw* is a clause connector and which is a word/phrase connector? In this case there are several “markers.” The first *waw*, attached to the verb, connects two clauses together; whereas, the second connects two noun phrases together. The *beth* preposition repeated on the second noun denotes a compound object (in English: “with this and with that” or “with this and that”). Additionally, the diacritical mark, *athnach*, shows that this word is the end of the phrase; thus the *waw* is a noun connector and not the beginning of a new phrase.
- The verb, יִעֲשֶׂה “will happen,” should be understood as a modal (possibly “subjective” mood: “what might happen”). The Hebrew modal system (i.e. verbal mood) is even more disputed than the tense/aspect relationship.
- How might לִידְעָה be parsed?

וַתֵּרֶד בַּת־פַּרְעֹה לְרַחֵץ עַל־הַיָּאֵר וַנַּעֲרֹתֶיהָ הִלְכֹת עַל־יַד הַיָּאֵר וַתֵּרָא
אֶת־הַתְּבָה בְּתוֹךְ הַסּוּף וַתִּשְׁלַח אֶת־אֲמָתָהּ וַתִּקְחָהּ: 6 וַתִּפְתַּח
וַתֵּרְאֶהוּ אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד וְהִנֵּה־נֹעַר בֶּכֶה וַתַּחֲמַל עָלָיו וַתֹּאמֶר מִי־לִדֵי
הָעִבְרִים זֶה: 7 וַתֹּאמֶר אַחֲתוֹ אֶל־בַּת־פַּרְעֹה הַאֵלֶּךְ וּקְרָאתִי לָךְ
אִשָּׁה מִיִּנְקָת מִן הָעִבְרִית וַתִּינַק לָךְ אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד: 8 וַתֹּאמֶר־לָהּ
בַּת־פַּרְעֹה לְכִי וְתֵלְךְ הָעֵלְמָה וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־אִם הַיֶּלֶד: 9 וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ
בַּת־פַּרְעֹה הַיִּלְכִי אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד הַזֶּה וְהִנַּקְהוּ לִי וְאֲנִי אֶתֵּן אֶת־שְׂכָרְךָ
וַתִּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה הַיֶּלֶד וַתִּנַּקְהוּ: 10 וַיִּגְדַּל הַיֶּלֶד וַתְּבֹאֶהוּ לְבַת־פַּרְעֹה
וַיְהִי־לָהּ לְבֵן וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ מֹשֶׁה וַתֹּאמֶר כִּי מִן־הַמַּיִם מָשִׂיתָהוּ:

Vocabulary

Verse 5

- פרעה name: "Pharaoh"
- רחץ verb: "wash"
- יאר noun: "river"
- תבה noun: "ark" (BDB, 1061)
- סוף noun: "reeds, papyrus" (BDB, 693)
- אמת noun: "maid, female servant"

Verse 6

- פתח verb: "open"
- בכה verb: "weep, cry"
- חמל verb: "spare, have compassion" (BDB, 328)
- עברים name: "Hebrews"

Syntax & Miscellaneous

- The prepositional phrase, עַל־יַד הַיָּאֵר, can be understood idiomatically as "by the hand (i.e. side) of the river."
- Anyone want to try their hand at the parsing of וַתִּקְחָהּ?
- The final clause of verse six is a quotation, מִי־לִדֵי הָעִבְרִים זֶה. This verbless clause follows the typical order S-P "This is one from the children of the Hebrews."
- What is the purpose of the article with the name Hebrews?

Vocabulary

Verse 7

Exodus 2:5-10

הינק verb (*Hiphil*): “nurse” (BDB, 413)

Verse 8

עלמה noun: “young woman” (BDB, 761)

Verse 9

שכר noun: “wages” (BDB, 969)

Verse 10

מֹשֶׁה name: “Moses”

משה verb: “draw” (BDB, 602)

Syntax & Misc.

Verse 7-8

- The recipient of the quotation can be marked by several different prepositions. In verse 7, it is marked by אֶל and in verse 8 by ל.

Verse 9

- The forms of the verbs הִילִיכִי and הִינְקִהוּ are Hiphil imperatives (feminine singular).
- The clause, וַתִּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה הַיְלֵד, follows the typical Hebrew sentence typology V-S-O.

Verse 10

- The phrase, וַיְהִי־לָהּ לְבָן, is similar to covenant language. Are their implications for understanding adoption as a covenantal relationship?

Exodus 2:11-15

וַיְהִי | בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם וַיִּגְדַּל מֹשֶׁה וַיֵּצֵא אֶל-אֶחָיו וַיֵּרָא בְּסַבְּלָתָם וַיֵּרָא
אִישׁ מִצְרֵי מִכָּה אִישׁ-עֲבָרֵי מֵאֶחָיו: 12 וַיִּפֶן כֹּה וְכֹה וַיֵּרָא כִּי אֵין
אִישׁ וַיֵּד אֶת-הַמִּצְרִי וַיִּטְמְנֵהוּ בַּחֹל: 13 וַיֵּצֵא בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁנִי וְהִנֵּה
שְׁנֵי-אָנָשִׁים עֹבְרִים נֹצִים וַיֹּאמֶר לְרָשָׁע לָמָּה תִכֶּה רֵעֶךָ: 14 וַיֹּאמֶר מִי
שִׁמְךָ לְאִישׁ שָׂר וְשִׁפְטָ עָלֵינוּ הֲלִהְרַגְנִי אֶתְּהָ אָמַר כַּאֲשֶׁר הִרְגַתָּ
אֶת-הַמִּצְרִי וַיֵּרָא מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲכֵן נֹדַע הַדָּבָר: 15 וַיִּשְׁמַע פְּרַעֲה
אֶת-הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וַיִּבְקֶשׁ לַהֲרֹג אֶת-מֹשֶׁה וַיִּבְרַח מֹשֶׁה מִפְּנֵי פְרַעֲה
וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּאֶרֶץ-מִדְיָן וַיֵּשֶׁב עַל-הַבְּאֵר:

Vocabulary

Verse 11

גדל verb: “grow up”

סבלה “burden” (BDB, 688)

מכה “strike, smite” (root נכה)

Verse 12

פנה verb: “turn and look” (BDB, 812)

יד “smite” (root נכה)

טמן verb: “hide” (BDB, 380)

חול “sand” (BDB, 297)

Syntax & Miscellaneous

- Notice the gentilic endings of מִצְרִי “Egyptians” and עֲבָרֵי “Hebrews.” The English language uses a plethora of gentilic endings, sometimes called [demonyms](#) (e.g. -ian, -ish, -ite, -er, -ese, -s, etc.). The gentilic suffix is a historically long “i” in Hebrew, Arabic, and Aramaic (actually “ay”).
- The idiom, כֹּה וְכֹה, describes how he looked. A common idiom in English would be “he looked ‘both ways’” or “this way and that.”
- The word וַיֵּד is difficult to identify. The root as indicated above is נכה. The *nun* has assimilated and the *he* [apocopated](#). Thus, the only root letter remaining in the form is the *kaf*. (HINT: Hebrew professors enjoy including this word on final exams)

Vocabulary

Verse 13

נצה participle: “struggle with one another” (BDB, 663)

רשע adjective: “wicked, evil”

Verse 14

Exodus 2:11-15

הרג verb: “kill”

אכן “surely, certainly” (BDB, 38)

Verse 15

פרעה name: “Pharaoh”

מדין name: “Midian”

באר noun: “well” (BDB, 91)

Syntax & Misc.

Verse 13

- Notice the difference in the idiom of time. In Hebrew, one refers to the “second day;” whereas, the English idiom is the “next day.” *Today* in the Hebrew understanding of temporality is called day *one*, or the first day, *tomorrow* is called day *two*, or the second day, and the *day after tomorrow* is day *three*, or the third day.
- The adjective, רשע, is used as a denominative.

Verse 14

- The initial *he* of הֲלֹהֶיךָ־גִּיִּי marks an interrogative.
- In the last clause, הַדְּבָרִי means “matter, thing”

Verse 15

- An adjective must agree in gender, number, and definiteness (cf. הַדְּבָרִי הַזֶּה).

וּלְכֹהֵן מִדִּין שִׁבְעַת בְּנוֹת וַתְּבֹאנָה וַתְּדַלְּנָה וַתְּמַלְּאנָה אֶת־הַרְהוּטִים
 לְהַשְׁקוֹת צֹאן אֲבִיהֶן: 17 וַיָּבֹאוּ הַרְעִים וַיִּגְרָשׁוּם וַיִּקַּם מֹשֶׁה וַיִּשְׁעֶן
 וַיִּשֶׁק אֶת־צֹאנָם: 18 וַתְּבֹאנָה אֶל־רְעוּאֵל אֲבִיהֶן וַיֹּאמֶר מִדּוּעַ מֵהֲרִיתֶן
 בָּא הַיּוֹם: 19 וַתֹּאמְרֶן אִישׁ מִצְרַיִ הִצִּילָנוּ מִיַּד הַרְעִים וְגַם־דָּלָה דָּלָה
 לָנוּ וַיִּשֶׁק אֶת־הַצֹּאן: 20 וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־בְּנֹתָיו וַאֲיֹ לָמָּה זֶה עָזַבְתֶּן
 אֶת־הָאִישׁ קְרָאן לוֹ וַיֹּאכַל לֶחֶם: 21 וַיֹּאֶל מֹשֶׁה לְשַׁבֵּת אֶת־הָאִישׁ
 וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־צִפְרָה בְּתוֹ לְמִשָּׁה: 22 וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ גִּרְשָׁם כִּי
 אָמַר גֵּר הָיִיתִי בְּאֶרֶץ נְכַרְיָה: פ

Vocabulary

Verse 16

מִדִּין name (of place): Midian

דָּלָה verb: “draw [water]” (BDB, 194)

רהט “trough” (BDB, 923)

שָׁקָה verb (Hiphil infinitive construct): “water, cause to drink”

Syntax & Miscellaneous

- The first clause, **וּלְכֹהֵן מִדִּין שִׁבְעַת בְּנוֹת**, is verbless and the *lamed* preposition is functioning as a possessive.
- The word, **צֹאן**, is a collective singular.

Vocabulary

Verse 17

גרש verb: “drive out” (BDB, 176)

ישע verb: “help”

Verse 18

רעואל name: “Reuel”

Verse 19

נצל verb: “deliver”

Verse 20

אי interrogative (with 3ms suffix): “where” (BDB, 32)

עזב verb: “leave, forsake”

Verse 21

יואל verb (*Hiphil*): “be willing” (BDB, 383)

צפורה name: “Zipporah”

Verse 22

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גרשם name: “Gershom”

נכרי “foreign” (BDB, 648)

Syntax & Misc.

Verse 17

- Notice the gender shift from feminine verbs to masculine plural suffixes, and then back again in verse 8.

Verse 18

- Other places in Exodus, Reuel is named Jethro (3:1; 4:18; 18:1-12)

Verse 19

- The repetition of routes, as in דָּלָהּ דָּלָהּ, is a Hebrew literature form.

Verse 20

- The single unit, וְאַיִן, is a complete clause—“where is he?”
- The verb, קְרִיאָן, is a feminine imperative/command form.

Verse 21

- The word, אִתּוֹ, is not used as the indirect object in this clause, but as the preposition “with.”
- In the phrase, צִפּוֹרָה בְּתוּלָהּ, the second word—“his daughter”—is in apposition to her name.

Verse 22

- This verse follows the standard naming formula.

Exodus 2:23-25

וַיְהִי בַיָּמִים הָרַבִּים הָהֵם וַיָּמָת מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם וַיֵּאָנְחוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל
מִן־הָעֲבֹדָה וַיִּזְעְקוּ וַתַּעַל שְׁוַעֲתָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים מִן־הָעֲבֹדָה: 24 וַיִּשְׁמַע
אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נַאֲקָתָם וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּרִיתוֹ אֶת־אַבְרָהָם אֶת־יִצְחָק
וְאֶת־יַעֲקֹב: 25 וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּדַע אֱלֹהִים: 25

Vocabulary

Verse 23

אָנַח verb: “sigh” (BDB, 58)

זָעַק verb: “call, cry out”

שָׁוַעָה “cry for help” (BDB, 1003)

Syntax & Miscellaneous

- The idiom, וַיְהִי בַיָּמִים הָרַבִּים הָהֵם, is common for an extended temporal break in narrative.

Vocabulary

Verse 24

נָאֵק verb: “groaning” (BDB, 611)

Syntax & Misc.

Verse 24

- The word, אֶת, is used not as the direct object marker but as the preposition “with” in the phrase, וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּרִיתוֹ אֶת־אַבְרָהָם אֶת־יִצְחָק וְאֶת־יַעֲקֹב.