Chapter 10 (Construct Chain) – Goals

- Be able to translate a Hebrew construct chain
  - Be able to parse words in the construct state.
    - Gender, number, ‘construct of’, lexical form
      - E.g., נְשֵׁיאַ is MP construct of שֵׁי ‘men of’
      - Memorize difficult construct forms as vocabulary.
  - Know whether the chain is definite or indefinite.
  - Know how to translate adjectives that follow a construct chain.
- In my class you do NOT need to be able to write the construct state for a noun in the absolute state.

Chapter 10 (Construct Chain) – Agenda

- Meaning
- Identifying
- Practice
  - Identifying construct vs. absolute state
  - Translating construct chains

Construct Chain

- Construct chain = 2 or more nouns linked together.
- Every noun except for the last is ‘in the construct state’
  - Add ‘of’ after each word in the construct state
    - This is a rough, initial translation
      - E.g., ‘the son OF the king’
      - E.g., ‘a son OF a king’
- The last word in the chain is in the ‘absolute state’
  - ‘absolute state’ is the ‘normal’ spelling and meaning.

A Construct Chain is Either Definite or Indefinite

- The entire construct chain is either definite or indefinite.
  - E.g., ‘THE son of THE king’
  - E.g., ‘A son of A king’
- A construct chain can’t mix definite and indefinite.
  - To say ‘A son of THE king’ or ‘THE son of A king’ you can NOT use a construct chain.
  - You would use לְדָוִד
    - E.g., ‘A Psalm of David’ is לְדָוִד
The Last Word Sets Definiteness of the Chain

- If the last word in the chain is definite, every word in the chain is definite.
  - E.g., לֶךַּה הַמֶּ = 'THE son of THE king'

- If the last word in the chain is indefinite, every word in the chain is indefinite.
  - E.g., לֶךַּה = 'A son of A king'

What Makes a Word Definite

- A word is definite if it:
  - Has the article.
  - Has a pronominal suffix.
  - Is a proper noun.
  - Is in a construct chain where the last word is definite

What Makes a Construct Chain?

- Two or more nouns or noun-substitutes in a row
- Nothing else can come between the words of the chain
  - If an attributive adjective or demonstrative adjective modifies a word in the chain, it comes after the whole chain.
    - Figure out which word it modifies by matching the gender and number.
    - Which noun an adjective modifies can be ambiguous.
  - All words in the chain (except for the last word) are in the construct state.
Practice the Grammar of Construct Chains

- Which words are in the construct chain?
- Which words would be in the construct state?
- Which nouns do the attributive adjectives modify?
- Which words would have the article in Hebrew?
- What is a reasonable English translation?
  - The sister of the king
  - The sister of the king the pious(fs)
  - The sister of the girlfriend of the brother of my mom
    the smart(fs) the strong(ms)
  - The wife of David the strong(fs) the smart(ms) the beautiful(fs)

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How to Recognize a Construct Chain

- Two or more noun or noun-like words in a row
- All words except the last are in the construct state:
  - No article
  - No pronominal suffix
  - No long vowels that aren’t vowel letters: ָ or ֹ or ִ
    - Except accented long vowel in the penult: ָָָָ
  - No diphthong ָָ or ִָָ ( ָָ → ָָ & ָָ → ָ )
  - May have reduced vowel in the penult
  - Noun ending may have changed (discussed later)
  - A noun followed by maqqef ָ is in the construct state
    - E.g., ָָָָ

Identifying Construct State by the Vowels

- Long vowel (not a vowel letter) → Absolute
  - Unless accented long vowel in the penult
- Long vowel letter → Either
- Diphthong ָָ or ִָָ → Absolute
- Reduced vowel in penultima → Construct (usually)
  - מְשַׁפַּט מְשַׁפַּט בְּרָכֹת כָּל סֵ
  - בְּרָכֹת בְּרָכֹת פֶּר כְּבָרָכָה סֵ
  - מְשַׁפַּט מְשַׁפַּט בְּרָכֹת כָּל סֵ
  - בְּרָכֹת בְּרָכֹת פֶּר כְּבָרָכָה סֵ
  - מְשַׁפַּט מְשַׁפַּט בְּרָכֹת כָּל סֵ
  - בְּרָכֹת בְּרָכֹת פֶּר כְּבָרָכָה סֵ
Other: ָָָָ
Some Noun Endings Change in the Construct

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<th>Construct</th>
<th>Unchanged</th>
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<tr>
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<td>ַת</td>
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<tr>
<td>FP</td>
<td>ָה</td>
<td>ַת</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Constructs to Memorize (Chapter 10)

- יִֽהְיָֽה - all of'
- אֵֽבִי - father of'
- אֵֽחִי - brother of'
- אֵֽנִי - wife of'

- The ה is Qamets Hatuf (short o)
- ‘My father’ is אֵֽבִי
- ‘My brother’ is אֵֽחִי
- ‘wife of’ is אֵֽנִי

These constructs will show up on quizzes and in the Bible, so you must be able to recognize them.
- If they aren’t obvious, make flash cards of them.

Construct Chains – What to Remember

- Noun is definite if: proper, article, pron. suff, def. chain.
- ‘The son of the queen’ OR ‘A son of a queen’
- All words except the last are in the construct state.
  - No article or pronominal suffix
  - No long vowels except vowel letter or accented penult
  - Doesn’t end in ה or ה or ה or ה or ה or ה
  - ה ending is construct (probably masculine plural)
  - Reduced penult vowel is usually construct (e.g., אֵֽנִי)
  - Noun with Maqqef is construct (e.g., אֵֽנִי)
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Practice Translating Construct Chains

1. the laws of the king
   תורומת מלך

2. laws of a king
   תורומת מלך

3. the laws of the good and upright king
   תורומת מלך תשובה ומשנה

4. the good and upright laws of the king
   תורומת מלך תשובה ומשנה

5. laws of a good and upright king
   תורומת מלך טוב ומשנה

6. good and upright laws of a king OR laws of a king are good and upright
   תורומת מלך טוב ומשנה OR תורומת מלך טוב ומשנה