she did what to David was told 2 Sam 21:11

B  Circumstantial Clauses 630

A circumstantial clause describes the manner, circumstances, or conditions under which the main clause occurs. For example, in the sentence ‘I slept while the sun was shining’ the circumstantial clause ‘while the sun was shining’ indicates the conditions under which ‘I slept’ occurred. Such clauses can often be translated beginning with ‘while,’ ‘with,’ ‘inasmuch as,’ ‘since,’ ‘seeing that,’ or ‘now that.’

It can be difficult to decide if a clause is circumstantial (§494–5), temporal (§496–510), or causal (§533–5). The difference is a matter of emphasis. In the example ‘I slept while the sun was shining,’ if the time is emphasized, then the ‘while’ clause is temporal, whereas if the weather is emphasized, then the ‘while’ clause is circumstantial.

Circumstantial clauses usually begin with ו (of accompaniment, §436), then the subject, then the predicate (§582).

494 A concomitant circumstantial clause 631 occurs at the same time as the main clause. Its predicate may be a participle (§219), a predicate adjective (§75), a prepositional phrase, or a copulative demonstrative (§115).

- while the mountain was burning with fire Deut 5:23 (participle)
- while the famine was severe in Samaria 1 Kgs 18:2 (predicate adjective)
- with his shield bearer before him 1 Sam 17:41 (prepositional phrase)
- since it is YHWH’s Passover Exod 12:11 (anaphoric demonstrative pronoun)

This circumstantial clause is unusual because it does not begin with ו.

Other examples include Gen 11:4; Exod 22:9 (no ו); 2 Kgs 8:7.

495a An antecedent circumstantial clause 632 explains circumstances that precede the main clause. Its predicate is a perfect verb.

630 Cf. GBHS §5.2.11; GKC §156; JM §159; Driver 1892, 211; Gibson 1995.
631 Cf. GBHS §5.2.11; GKC §141e, 142d–e, 156; JM §159; Steiner 2000.
632 Cf. GBHS §5.2.11.
Syntax of Clauses – Temporal Clauses

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- my way MADE SUCCESSFUL and YHWH me (you) delay not Gen 24:56
  Do not delay me, now that YHWH HAS MADE my trip SUCCESSFUL.

- he said to her APPROACHED not and Abimelech Gen 20:4
  Now Abimelech HAD not APPROACHED her, and he said …

- Other possible examples include Gen 1:2, 26:27; 2 Kgs 3:22.

495b A subsequent circumstantial clause explains circumstances that occur after the main clause. Its predicate is an imperfect verb.

- doing I what from Abraham I hiding? Ge n 18:17–18
  Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, since Abraham WILL certainly BECOME a great and mighty nation?

C Temporal Clauses

- A temporal clause indicates the time when another clause occurs.

496 Temporal clause beginning with an imperfect waw consecutive (when). Such temporal clauses are often used in past time narratives.
  - A clause beginning with an imperfect waw consecutive (§178) can have a variety of functions. Only the context indicates when such a clause is temporal.
  - and she said to give him a drink SHE FINISHED Gen 24:19
    WHEN she finished giving him a drink, she said …

497 Temporal clause beginning with ḫ (when). See §445.
  - he looked down the days there to him were long WHEN (it was) Gen 26:8
    When he had been there a long time, he looked down.

498 Temporal clause beginning with a preposition. §499–502 describe how a variety of prepositions are used to form temporal clauses.

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633 Cf. GBHS §5.2.11.
634 Cf. GBHS §5.2.4; GKC §164; IBHS §38.7; JM §166; Van der Merwe 1996; Van der Merwe 1997.
635 Cf. GBHS §5.2.4b; GKC §111d, 164b; JM §166a–i, 167f–g.