



# Rocine Lesson 5

וְלֹאֲדָם אָמַר

Genesis 3:17

# Goal

- Identify and read the **X-qatal** construction.

# What we already know

וְלֹאֲדָם אָמַר

We can identify and parse the verb.

Root	Stem	Form	Person, Gender, Number	Function	Root meaning

# What we already know

וְלֹאֲדָם אָמַר

We can identify and parse the verb.

Root	Stem	Form	Person, Gender, Number	Function	Root meaning
אָמַר	Qal	Qatal	3 m s	To Be Determined*	say

## \* Note

- The Qatal here is NOT in a dependent clause. (It would need to follow אֲשֶׁר, אִם, or כִּי to be in a dependent clause.)
- Since it is not in a dependent clause, it is NOT fulfilling the function of relative past background.

# The significance of the qatal

וְלֹאֲדָם אָמַר

- The qatal verb form gives an **attribute to the subject of the verb**. Translate many of the qatal verb forms which are NOT in a dependent clause as “attributions.”
- For your translation, use a gerund (-ing noun) + possessive pronoun. an -er word or
- E.g. Translation of אָמַר
  - *He was a sayER (of)*
  - or*
  - *His sayING (of)*

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- For your translation, use an -er word or a gerund (-ing noun) + possessive pronoun.
- E.g. Translation of אָמַר
  - *He was a sayER (of)*
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- In our verse above (Genesis 3:17) YHWH is speaking to Adam after he has spoken to the serpent and to the woman. Now he turns to address the man, Adam.
- YHWH, therefore, is the subject of the our verb אָמַר.
- According to our rule, then, how would you translate אָמַר here?
- Or to put it another way, what attribute of YHWH is being brought into focus here?

# X-qatal

וְלֹאֲדָם אָמַר

- The word order in our verse is referred to as an
  - X-qatal  
or sometimes
  - Waw-X-qatal

# X-qatal

וְלֹאֲדָם אָמַר

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- What are the elements?
  - The Waw is the Waw.
  - The X is the bit that comes between the waw the verb. The X can be a number of different things, e.g. subject, direct object, indirect object, or a prepositional phrase.
  - The Qatal is the Qatal verb.

# X-qatal

וְלֹאֲדָם אָמַר

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RULE: In Historical Narrative, the X-Qatal has focus-shifting function, called topicalization.

- It is this unusual word order in Hebrew (something coming before the verb) that signals to the reader that the X component is in focus.
- We will try to represent that in English with the following construction (also an unusual word order in English)

(And) It was “X” who(that) Remainder of clause

# X-qatal

וְלֹאֲדָם אָמַר

- Using what we have learned, how would you translate our lesson verse (above)?

Translation of the qatal in a non-dependent clause:

- E.g. Translation of אָמַר
  - *He was a sayER (of)*  
*or*
  - *His sayING (of)*

Translation of the X-Qatal or Waw-X-Qatal construction:

- (And) It was “X” who(that) (Remainder of clause) \_\_\_\_\_.

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Translation of the X-Qatal or Waw-X-Qatal construction:

- (And) It was “X” who(that) (Remainder of clause).

Translation: *And it was to Adam that he was a sayer.*

# What does the X-qatal do?

וְלֵאדָם אָמַר

*And it was to Adam that he was a sayer.*

In Historical Narrative the X-qatal does a number of things:

Beginning of a discourse	Middle of a discourse
a summary of what follows	a change in focus, e.g. - a switch in time - switch of characters in a story

The one word used for all these functions is topicalization.

X-qatal = topicalization

# What we already know

וְלֹאֲדָם אָמַר

We can now identify the “function” column of our verb analysis chart from above.

Root	Stem	Form	Person, Gender, Number	Function	Root meaning
אָמַר	Qal	Qatal	3 m s	To Be Determined	say

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# Summary

## Qatal in Historical Narrative

	QATAL IN DEPENDENT CLAUSES (Lesson 4)	QATAL IN INDEPENDENT CLAUSES (Lesson 5)
Preceded by	a relative, e.g. כִּי אִם אֲשֶׁר	any other word or phrase, i.e. an "X"
Translate	<i>has, had, have</i>	(And) it was <u>"X"</u> who(that) _____
"Function" in verb analysis chart	Qatal in dep. clause = relative past background	X-qatal = topicalization
Example	וַיִּשְׁמַע יִתְרוֹ אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֱלֹהִים Jethro heard all which God had done.	וְלְאָדָם אָמַר And it was to Adam that he was a sayer.

# Summary of Qatal and Wayyiqtol

	QATAL IN DEPENDENT CLAUSES (Lesson 4)	QATAL IN INDEPENDENT CLAUSES (Lesson 5)	WAYYIQTOL (Lessons 1, 2, 3)
Preceded by	a relative, e.g. כִּי אִם אֲשֶׁר	any other word or phrase, i.e. an "X"	nothing
Translate	<i>has, had, have</i>	(And) it was ___ "X" who(that) ____	Usually as an English past tense
"Function"	Qatal in dep. clause = relative past background	X-qatal = topicalization	Historical narrative Mainline
Example	וַיִּשְׁמַע יִתְרוֹ אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֱלֹהִים Jethro heard all which God had done.	וּלְאָדָם אָמַר And it was to Adam that he was a sayer.	וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה YHWH said  וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי יְהוָה God spoke to Moses and said to him, "I am YHWH"  וַיֵּלֶךְ מֹשֶׁה וַיְדַבֵּר אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים אֵל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל Moses went and spoke the words to all Israel

# Concerning English Bibles

Most English translations generally ignore the difference between the qatal and the wayyiqtol verb forms.

- Genesis 1:1 is a **qatal** verb form, and translators generally use a simple past translation: “In the beginning God created.”
- Genesis 1:3 is a **wayyiqtol** verb form, and translators use simple past once again: “And God said ...”
- This book, on the other hand, suggests trying to capture the difference in meaning between the qatal and wayyiqtol verb forms: “It was in the beginning that God **was creator** ... And then God **said** ...”

# Concerning English Bibles

The reason we are learning Biblical Hebrew is not to once again translate the Hebrew Bible. Many excellent translations already exist. Rather, we are trying to better understand the nuance of the original language.