

Gk-101 Introduction to Hebrew and Greek

Prepositions

April 26, 2018

Definition - Preposition

- Preposition (pp) means placed before.
- A pp is placed before its object which is usually a noun, or a pronoun.
- A pp phrase includes a pp, an object and it may have an optional article prefixing the object.
- The function of a pp is to show a relationship between the object or the pp and another word outside of the pp phrase. The outside word may be either a noun, or a verb

Hebrew's Top 4 Prepositions

In this lesson we will only be learning a few prepositions, the most common ones:

Note: the highlighted boxes are the primary meanings.

in	בְּ-	by	to	לְ-	for
with		on	toward		at
		among			
		at			
from		away from	like		as
out of	מִ- / מֵ- / מִן	since	according to	כְּ-	approximately

Three prepositions are never independent words: ב, כ, ל. They are prefixes:

בְּבַיִת (*in a house*)
 כְּבַיִת (*like a house*)
 לְבַיִת (*to/for a house*)

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Cool Prepositions We Won't Be Learning This Lesson

עַד until	עַל on, over, concerning	עִם with	אֶל unto, into
אֵת with	תַּחַת under, instead of	לְפָנַי before	בֵּין between, among
מֵאֵת away from	עַל יָד near	בְּתוֹךְ in the midst	אֶצֶל beside
בְּיָד by means of	בְּקֶרֶב in the midst	סָבִיב around	אַחַר after, behind

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* But I included them here for advanced students and the curious ;~)

Prepositions - structure

- PP can be instantiated in one of three ways:

– Separated:

לְפִי מֶלֶךְ before a king

– Separated with a maqgef

אֶל-בֵּיח before a king

– Prefixed with it's object

מִלְּמֶלֶךְ from a king מֶלֶךְ מִלְּמֶלֶךְ

Prepositions – structure

- There are 3 pp that are always inseparable – that is attached to their objects as prefixes.

– בְּ “in, with, by”

– כְּ “like, as, according to”

– לְ “to, for”

Prepositions - Funtion

• לְ

- Marker of an Indirect object
- Place
- Dis/Advantage
- Reference/respect
- Time
- Possession
- Purpose

Prepositions - Function

• בְּ

- Place
- Time
- Accompaniment
- Dis/Advantage
- Instrument
- Agency/Means
- Cause

Prepositions - Function

- מן
 - Separation
 - Source
 - Cause
 - Comparison

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How מן & מ Work

In front of the definite article ה the preposition מן is usually spelled out as an independent word:

מִן־הַבֶּטֶן

from the womb,
Judges 1:7

מִן־הַנַּחַל יִשְׁתֶּה

from the stream he
would drink, 1 Kgs 17:6

In front of gutturals (אהחע) and ר it is מ:

מֵאוּר

אֲנִי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים...

I am Adonai who brought you out
from Ur of the Chaldeans... Gen 15:7

In front of most letters it is מ:

מִשְׁעִיר

יְהוָה בְּצֵאתְךָ מִשְׁעִיר...

Adonai, when you went out from Seir ... Judges 5:4

Prepositions - Function

- על
 - Place
 - Dis/Advantage
 - Cause
- אל
 - Destination
 - Place
 - Indirect Object
 - Dis/Advantage

Prepositions – Changing of Verb ...

- Some verbs can have their meanings changed when they are followed by certain prepositions:

Consider the Verb: שָׁמַע to hear

Followed by the preposition בְּ

As in: בְּ שָׁמַע changes to verb to “obeyed”