

# תָּלָה: Second Person Feminine Singular or Second Person Masculine Singular? The Study of Tiberian Prosodic Hierarchy

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## Abstract

Textbooks on Biblical Hebrew grammar, including works by Futato (2003), Verbruggen (2014), and Schneider (2016), identify תָּלָה as the suffix of the second person feminine singular form. In addition, Bible parsing tools – such as biblehub.com and Bibleworks 10 – also favor תָּלָה as the suffix of the second person feminine singular. For instance, these Bible parsing tools analyze תָּלָה as the suffix of the second person feminine singular in the contexts of 1 Samuel 10:7. This article, however, challenges the simple identification in various Biblical Hebrew grammar textbooks, as well as the analyses found on Bible parsing tools. This research posits that the Hebrew preposition תָּלָה can be identified in two distinct ways: as the suffix of the second person feminine singular form and as the second person masculine singular form. The methodology employed in this study is based on the Tiberian prosodic hierarchy and contextual analysis of the book of Obadiah to prove its thesis.

## Keywords

Old Testament – Hebrew preposition – Tiberian Hebrew – Hebrew pausal form – Hebrew accent – contextual analysis

### 1 Introduction

Students embark on their exploration of the Hebrew language, whether in a seminary setting or for personal enrichment, by utilizing textbooks focused on Biblical Hebrew grammar. These textbooks become their first and main source in exploring the Hebrew language. For instance, when the students of the Hebrew language learn the Hebrew preposition ‘אֵלַי’, they will rely on Biblical Hebrew grammar textbooks. These textbooks simply identify it as the suffix of the second person feminine singular form.<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, these students rely on Bible parsing tools while reading the Old Testament in Hebrew. They will confirm their Hebrew knowledge by utilizing Bible software and/or online interlinear Bibles. For instance, these Bible software and/or online interlinear Bibles identify ‘אֵלַי’ as the suffix of the second person feminine singular in the contexts of 1 Samuel 10:7, Obadiah 1:5 and Obadiah 1:15.

This article, nevertheless, argues against the simple identification of ‘אֵלַי’. This research unfolds that the Hebrew preposition ‘אֵלַי’ can be recognized in two separate manners: as the suffix of the second person feminine singular form and as the second person masculine singular form. This thesis employs Tiberian prosodic hierarchy and contextual analysis of the book of Obadiah as its methodological framework to substantiate its thesis.

### 2 Methodology

This research employs two methodologies. The first methodology is derived from Tiberian prosodic hierarchy to decipher the preposition ‘אֵלַי’. The second methodology is contextual analysis. This methodology serves to verify the

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<sup>1</sup> Mark David Futato, *Beginning Biblical Hebrew*, Winona Lake, IN 2003; J. Verbruggen, *Essential Biblical Hebrew*, South Carolina: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014; Wolfgang Schneider, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, Translated by Randall L. McKinion, New York 2016.

conclusion from Tiberian prosodic hierarchy regarding the preposition ‘תָּבֵן’.<sup>2</sup> The primary focus of the text is on the Leningrad Codex, specifically referencing Dotan’s edition and the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (BHS), as well as the Aleppo Codex, utilizing the Jerusalem Crown edition.

### 3 Tiberian Prosodic Hierarchy

Theoretical frameworks concerning prosodic structure, as established by Selkirk (1978, 1984, 1986, 2011), Hayes (1989), Truckenbrodt (1999), and Nespor & Vogel (2007), suggest that prosodic representation serves as a crucial intermediary in the interaction between phonology and syntax.<sup>3</sup> DeCaen and Drescher state that a prosodic hierarchy is posited to structure the domains within which phonological rules function.<sup>4</sup> Ascending from the word level, the components of the prosodic hierarchy are generally believed to encompass at least the levels illustrated in (1a), whereas the Tiberian transcription additionally represents a prosodic hierarchy, as illustrated in (1b).

Modern prosodic hierarchy	Tiberian prosodic hierarchy
Utterance (U)	Verse (V)
Intonational phrase (I)	Hierarchy of disjunctive phrases (Di)
Phonological phrase (P)	Hierarchy of disjunctive phrases (Di)
Prosodic word (plus clitics) (W)	Prosodic word (plus clitics) (W)

2 Philip Suciadi Chia, “Das geheimnisvolle Wort von ‘Michtam’”, *Verbum et Ecclesia* 45.1 (2024), a3159.

3 Elisabeth O. Selkirk, “On prosodic structure and its relation to syntactic structure”. Paper presented at the Conference on Mental Representation in Phonology, in: Thorstein Fretheim (ed.), *Nordic Prosody. Papers from a Symposium, Trondheim 198*, 111–140. Elisabeth O. Selkirk, *Phonology and syntax: The relation between sound and structure*, Cambridge, MA 1984; Elisabeth O. Selkirk, *On derived domains in sentence phonology*, in: *Phonology Yearbook 3* (1986) 371–405; Elisabeth O. Selkirk, *The syntax–phonology interface*, in: John A. Goldsmith et al. (ed.), *The Handbook of Phonological Theory* 2011, 435–484. Bruce Hayes, *The prosodic hierarchy in meter*, in: Paul Kiparsky / Gilbert Youmans (ed.), *Rhythm and Meter*, Orlando, FL 1989, 201–260. Hubert Truckenbrodt, *On the relation between syntactic phrases and phonological phrases*, in: *Linguistic Inquiry* 30.2 (1999) 219–55; Marina Nespor / Irene Vogel, *Prosodic Phonology: With a New Foreword* (Studies in Generative Grammar 28), Dordrecht 2007.

4 V. DeCaen, and B. Elan Drescher, *Pausal Forms and Prosodic Structure in Tiberian Hebrew*, in: Aaron D. Hornkohl and Geoffrey Khan (ed.), *Studies in Semitic Vocalisation and Reading Traditions* (Cambridge Semitic Languages and Cultures), Cambridge 2021, 331–377.

The biblical verse at the beginning functions as an utterance. Like an utterance, a verse can be a complete sentence, but it may also appear as a fragment or a list, or it can extend beyond a single sentence. For the purposes of this analysis, we will accept the divisions of the verses as they are presented.

The Tiberian transcription diverges from the prosodic hierarchy outlined in (1a) when considering the relationship between the utterance and the word. Instead of recognizing merely two categories of phrases – namely, an intonational phrase and a phonological phrase – the Tiberian system organizes each verse into a more complex hierarchy of phrases. In other words, Tiberian Hebrew replaced the intonation phrase (I) of natural speech with the accentual cantillation,<sup>5</sup> although it has been noted that the endpoints of intonation phrase align with locations where pauses are likely to take place.<sup>6</sup> Tiberian Hebrew system lacks the ability to represent is in any segment of the prosodic tree, owing to the unpredictable nature of the syntactic, semantic, and prosodic elements linked to intonational phrases. Thus, pausal forms cannot be reliably connected to specific disjunctive accents, except for Do accents, while a pausal form sometimes occurs alongside a conjunctive accent. Consequently, it is reasonable to anticipate that pausal forms will be linked to the conclusions of the intonation phrases. The most apparent location for a pause to manifest is, naturally, at the conclusion of an utterance. Within utterances, it has been observed that specific syntactic structures typically create their own intonational phrase. These structures encompass parenthetical expressions, non-restrictive relative clauses, certain adjunct clauses, vocatives, lists, and similar expressions. This collection of constructions aligns well with those in which pausal forms have been documented. For instance, Revell notes that approximately 75% of the pausal forms found in Deuteronomy appear at the ends of clauses.<sup>7</sup> Within clauses, pausal forms are utilized in lists; Tiberian Hebrew typically organizes items in lists in pairs or triplets, with a pausal form following each grouping. Furthermore, pausal forms tend to occur at the conclusion of the most significant segment or “core” of the clause, effectively separating it from less critical phrases, often serving as explanatory modifiers, that follow. Clauses in Deuteronomy that conclude with a contextual form are generally closely linked to the subsequent clause and tend to

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5 *DeCaen and Drescher*, Pausal Forms (s. Anm. 4) 1–27.

6 *Manfred Bierwisch*, Untersuchungen über Akzent und Intonation im Deutschen (Studia Grammatica 7), Berlin 1966, 99–201. *Janet Bing*, Aspects of English prosody. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 1979; *Nespor / Vogel*, Prosodic Phonology (s. Anm. 3), 187–220.

7 *E.J. Revell*, Pausal forms in Biblical Hebrew: Their function, origin and significance, in: *Journal of Semitic Studies* 25.2 (1980) 165–179.

be brief.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, Revell notes that pausal forms within a clause appear in the same positions as the interjection ‘declares the LORD’.<sup>9</sup> DeCaen and Drescher add that a verb that comes before an object clause introduced by the complementizer כִּי ‘that’ typically appears in contextual form, as illustrated in Genesis 43:25.<sup>10</sup>

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**Direct object clause introduced by כִּי ‘that’**

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Hebrew text	כִּי שָׁמְעוּ כִּי־שָׁם יֵאָכְלוּ לֶחֶם
English translation	For they heard that they should eat bread there (NAS).

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In Genesis 43:25, the second occurrence of כִּי translated as ‘that’. This conjunction introduces a clause functioning as the direct object of the verb ‘they heard’. Generally, an intonational boundary does not separate a verb from its direct object, which results in the verb שָׁמְעוּ appearing in its contextual form.<sup>11</sup> In contrast, a verb that precedes an adjunct clause initiated by כִּי, ‘because, for, but’, among others, generally takes on pausal form, as indicated in Judges 2:17.

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**Adjunct clause introduced by כִּי ‘but’**

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Hebrew text	וְגַם אֶל־שֹׁפְטֵיהֶם לֹא שָׁמְעוּ כִּי זָנוּ אַחֲרַי אֱלֹהִים אַחֲרֵים וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לָהֶם
English translation	And yet they did not listen to their judges, for they played the harlot after other gods and bowed themselves down to them (NAS).

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In judges 2:17, the clause initiated by כִּי exhibits a significantly weaker semantic and likely syntactic connection to the verb. It is anticipated that this conjunction will initiate a new intonational phrase, thereby leading to the conclusion of the preceding intonational phrase with the verb שָׁמְעוּ which is indeed presented in its pausal form. It is important to observe that, notwithstanding this essential distinction in phrasing, both instances of the verb ‘hear’ receive the

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8 Revell, *Pausal Forms* (s. Anm. 7) 165–179.  
 9 Revell, *Pausal Forms* (s. Anm. 7) 165–179.  
 10 DeCaen / Drescher, *Pausal Forms* (s. Anm. 4) 1–27.  
 11 DeCaen / Drescher, *Pausal Forms* (s. Anm. 4) 1–27.

identical D<sub>1</sub> accent (zaqef).<sup>12</sup> Intonational phrases and consequently pausal forms, are influenced by more than just syntactic structures. Various elements, including the duration of a phrase, speech rate, rhetorical pauses, and emphasis, contribute to this phenomenon.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, the placement of a phrase within an utterance or biblical verse, along with semantic considerations, can result in differences regarding whether a specific construction concludes with an intonational phrase or a phonological phrase.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the accentual system in Tiberian Hebrew plays an important role in Tiberian prosodic hierarchy. In the execution of the logogenic liturgical chant, a range of transformations were implemented for both prosodic and musical purposes.<sup>15</sup>

In addition to both prosodic and musical purposes, the rules that dictate cliticization are multifaceted and closely linked to the division of accentuation which is the classification of a form as either an independent prosodic word or a prosodically dependent clitic carries significant consequences for its phonological characteristics.<sup>16</sup> This notation system identifies two distinct types of accents: a structured series of disjunctive accents and the conjunctive accents that accompany them. A conjunctive accent on a word signifies that it belongs to the same phonological phrase as the subsequent word, while a disjunctive accent denotes that a word concludes its respective phrase.<sup>17</sup> A phrase characterized by a disjunctive accent at its conclusion, without the presence of any additional disjunctive accents, is referred to as a minimal phrase.<sup>18</sup> In other words, Tiberian Hebrew hierarchy of accents influences phonological phrase in consonant (the appearance of *dagesh lene*) and vowel. For example,

12 *DeCaen / Dresher*, Pausal Forms (s. Anm. 4), 1–27.

13 *Nespor / Vogel*, Prosodic Phonology (s. Anm. 3) 193–205.

14 *DeCaen / Dresher*, Pausal Forms, 1–27.

15 *William Wickes*, Two treatises on the accentuation of the Old Testament, reprinted with a prolegomenon by Aron Dotan in 1887. New York, NY 1970; *Miles B. Cohen*, The system of accentuation in the Hebrew Bible, Minneapolis, MN 1969; *Mordecai Breuer*, רספרי אמת, ימעט ארקמה בכ"א ספריים [The Biblical accents in the twenty-one books and in the three books]. Jerusalem 1982; *James D. Price*, The syntax of Masoretic accents in the Hebrew Bible. (Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 27), Lewiston, NY 1990.

16 *Breuer*, Biblical accents, 134–223; B. Elan. Dresher, “The word in Tiberian Hebrew” in the nature of the word: Essays in honor of Paul Kiparsky, ed. by Kristen Hanson & Sharon Inkelas, 95–111. Cambridge, MA 2009; *Robert D. Holmstedt / B. Elan Dresher*, Clitics: Pre-Modern Hebrew, in: Geoffrey Kahn (ed.), Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics, Volume 1: A–F, Leiden 2013, 458–463.

17 *DeCaen / Dresher*, Pausal Forms (s. Anm. 4) 1–27.

18 *Tobie Strauss Sherebrin*, Biblical accents: Relation to exegetical traditions, in: Geoffrey Kahn (ed.), Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics, Volume 1: A–F, Leiden 2013, 296–301.

the consonant ‘ב’ of ‘ברהם’ in Obadiah 1:8 does not have *dagesh lene* because it is preceded by the vowel ‘ו’ and the conjunctive accent merecha. Thus, this consonant is supposed to be read as *v* instead of *b*. The primary and the other disjunctive accents can also trigger the pausal form which leads in exhibiting either a lengthened or altered vowel, a change in stress, or a combination of both a lengthened or altered vowel and a change in stress such as ‘אָמַרְ’ (Genesis 3:10) and ‘אָמַרְ’ (Genesis 14:19) which have the same meaning ‘he said’.<sup>19</sup> Genesis 31:54 also demonstrates the noun ‘לָחֶם’ in pausal form ‘לָחֶם’ and non-pausal form ‘לָחֶם’ (cf. Genesis 21:19 on pausal form ‘מַיִם’ and non-pausal form ‘מַיִם’). The contextual or non-pausal forms exhibit slight disjunctive or conjunctive accents due to their reduced pausal significance. This perspective has been upheld by Hebrew grammarians for over a thousand years. Wu, however, provides some exceptions such as *h* is not lengthened to a *qames* with the *silluq* and *ʾatnah* in Nehemiah 5:14 on the Hebrew verb ‘אָכַלְתָּ’ and conjunctive accent with a pausal form, for instance, the Hebrew verb ‘פָּשְׁטָה’ in Isaiah 32:11.<sup>20</sup> DeCaen and Dresner list some typical different between contextual and pausal form in Hebrew.<sup>21</sup>

Contextual form	Pausal form	Translation
יִשְׁמְרוּ (Eze 37:24)	יִשְׁמְרוּ (Psalm 56:7)	They (masculine) will guard
יָלַד (1 Chr 1:20)	יָלַד (Jer 17:11)	He begot
אָמַרְתָּ	אָמַרְתָּ	You (ms) said
שֶׁשֶׁשׁ (Jos 19:22)	שֶׁשֶׁשׁ (Jos 19:38)	Sun
יָדְךָ (Isa 64:7)	יָדְךָ (Jer 40:4)	Your (masculine singular) hand (feminine singular construct)

19 Z. Wu, Reading the pausal forms together with the accents in the Masoretic Text. Doctoral Dissertation. ProQuest LLC, 2023. Available at: <https://hdl.handle.net/10392/7103>.

20 Wu, Pausal Forms (s. Anm. 19) 2.

21 DeCaen / Dresner, Pausal Forms (s. Anm. 4), 1–27; cf. Richard L. Goerwitz, Tiberian Hebrew pausal forms. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1993; Israel Ben-David, The capacity of grammatical patterns to generate contextual and pausal forms in Biblical Hebrew, in: Leshonenu 54 (1990) 279–299; Israel Ben-David, Contextual and pausal forms in Biblical Hebrew, Jerusalem 1995; E.J. Revell, The pausal system: Divisions in the Hebrew Biblical text as marked by voweling and stress position, edited by Raymond de Hoop & Paul Sanders, Sheffield 2015.

The table above reveals that both noun and verb can have contextual and pausal form in Hebrew. The pausal forms retain the traditional stress pattern and uphold a syllable that may be diminished or omitted in certain contexts. However, the pausal form does not consistently preserve the original stress; as illustrated in 'וַיִּאמֶר', it is the contextual form that upholds the older stress on the penultimate syllable, while in a paused state, the stress transitions from the penultimate to a closed final syllable.<sup>22</sup> Pausal forms exhibit a range of manifestations; however, it can be summarized that the defining phonological processes responsible for their emergence include increased stress and vowel lengthening or a tendency to resist reduction. These processes are typically anticipated at the boundaries of intonational phrases. Consequently, it is evident from both the locations of pausal forms and the characteristics of the phonological processes that generated them that these forms are situated at the conclusion of intonational phrases.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to both prosodic, musical purposes, and phonological account, Tiberian Hebrew hierarchy of accents also occurs at a morphological and grammatical level. The conjunctive 'וְ' for example. Biblical Hebrew grammar textbooks teach that the conjunctive 'וְ' becomes 'וּ' if it is followed by labial letters (מ פ ב) such as 'וְבִי' (in Genesis 1:7).<sup>24</sup> However, Jeremiah 1:4 reveals that the conjunctive 'וְ' becomes 'וּ' when it is followed by labial letter 'ב': 'וְבָהּ' (cf. Genesis 1:2). Biblical Hebrew grammar textbooks do not unfold that pausal form triggers the conjunctive 'וְ' becomes 'וּ' in open pretonic. At the grammatical level, Tiberian Hebrew hierarchy of accents helps in distinguishing the difference of qal perfect third feminine singular with qal participle feminine singular absolute. Genesis 15:17 reveals 'וְבָהּ' is qal perfect third feminine singular because the disjunctive accent zaqeph is on the consonant 'ב': 'וְבָהּ'.<sup>25</sup> The same Hebrew verb 'וְבָהּ' is qal participle feminine singular absolute because the disjunctive accent ticpha is on the consonant aleph: 'וְבָהּ' (Genesis 29:6).

At the higher levels, Tiberian Hebrew hierarchy of accents also appears. The syntax structure and interpretation of the textual unit dictate the pausal form, rather than the prosodic emphasis of the accents. In this regard, the pausal

22 Joshua Blau, *Phonology and morphology of Biblical Hebrew*, Winona Lake, IN 2010, 155.

23 DeCaen / Dresher, *Pausal Forms* (s. Anm. 4) 1–27.

24 Mark D. Futato, *Beginning Biblical Hebrew*, Pennsylvania 1999; Jan Verbruggen, *Essential Biblical Hebrew: The Language and Life of Ancient Israel*, 2014. Wolfgang Schneider, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew (Studies in Biblical Hebrew)*, New York 2016. Russel T. Fuller / Kyoungwon Choi, *Invitation to Biblical Hebrew: A Beginning Grammar*, Grand Rapids 2006.

25 Cf. BDB.

form and the accentuation system function independently of one another. Consequently, pausal forms manifest within specific contexts and can coexist with conjunctive accents; however, contextual forms arise during pauses due to syntactical requirements or other secondary objectives.<sup>26</sup> DeCaen and Dresler describe that there exist two primary types of transformation: division and simplification. Division involves the separation of words that typically would constitute a single minimal phrase into two distinct minimal phrases.<sup>27</sup> This process takes place at elevated tiers of the prosodic hierarchy, predominantly within the domain of D<sub>0</sub>. It is associated with a deceleration in reading pace during salient prosodic positions.<sup>28</sup> The inverse process of division is known as simplification.<sup>29</sup> In this process, words that would typically constitute two or more distinct minimal phrases are merged into a singular minimal phrase. During simplification, a disjunctive accent is converted into a conjunctive one. This phenomenon effectively accelerates the reading pace in the prosodically subordinate segments of a verse.<sup>30</sup> Price characterizes these conjunctive accents as virtual disjunctives. Despite being expressed through a conjunctive accent, they maintain a fundamentally disjunctive nature. Consequently, within the context of this altered disjunctive, the phrase remains segmented as though the accent were still functioning as a disjunctive.<sup>31</sup> In the accentuation framework of the twenty-one prose works, the process of simplification is observed to occur with increasing frequency as one descends the hierarchical structure. Accents classified as D<sub>0</sub> and D<sub>1</sub> are seldom altered, while D<sub>2</sub> accents undergo transformation only within specific, restricted contexts. In contrast, D<sub>3</sub> accents are subject to frequent modification. For instance, the D<sub>3</sub> accents *gereš* and *legarmeh* often function as conjunctives when positioned adjacent to a subsequent D<sub>2</sub> accent.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, simplification is commonly seen in subordinate D<sub>3</sub> accents, which are D<sub>3</sub> accents that serve to divide other D<sub>3</sub>

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26 Wu, Pausal Form (s. Anm. 19) 2.

27 DeCaen / Dresler, Pausal Forms (s. Anm. 4) 1–27; cf. Breuer, Biblical accents (s. Anm. 16) 108–127; B. Elan Dresler, The prosodic basis of the Tiberian Hebrew system of accents, in: *Language* 70.1 (1994) 1–52.

28 Norman Janis, A grammar of the Biblical accents. Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1987.

29 Miles B. Cohen, The system of accentuation in the Hebrew Bible, Minneapolis, MN 1969; Breuer, Biblical accents (s. Anm. 16) 108–127; Price, Syntax (s. Anm. 15) 24–79; Dresler, Prosodic (s. Anm. 27) 36–37, 44–47.

30 DeCaen / Dresler, Pausal Forms (s. Anm. 4) 1–27.

31 Price, Syntax (s. Anm. 15) 36.

32 Breuer, Biblical accents (s. Anm. 16) 50.

accents.<sup>33</sup> The D<sub>3</sub> accent *tešā gedolah* is partitioned by the D<sub>3</sub> pazer. This pazer consistently undergoes transformation into the conjunctive *munaḥ* when it is in immediate proximity to the D<sub>3</sub> it separates, and it often transforms even when multiple words are present between them.<sup>34</sup> Breuer provides the illustration presented in (6). The tree depicted in (6a) represents the phrasing within the context of higher disjunctive accents; in contrast, the phrasing of ‘what I did to the Egyptians’ within the D<sub>0</sub> domain is illustrated in (7a). The designation D<sub>3</sub> = D<sub>4</sub> signifies that the D<sub>3</sub> pazer is segmenting a D<sub>3</sub> domain, functioning structurally (though not prosodically) as an accent that is one level beneath D<sub>3</sub>.<sup>35</sup>

#### 4 Preposition ‘לְ’ and Tiberian Prosodic Hierarchy

Tiberian prosodic hierarchy affects prosodic, musical purposes, phonological account, morphological level, grammatical and syntactical level. However, the study of ‘לְ’ reveals that Tiberian prosodic hierarchy also influences the lexical meaning. This system discloses that both Hebrew noun and Hebrew verb have two forms: contextual form and pausal form.<sup>36</sup> They (masculine) will guard, for instance, have two forms: contextual form ‘שָׁמְרוּ’ (Ezekiel 37:24) and pausal form ‘שְׁמָרוּ’ (Psalm 56:7). In other words, although there are two forms, both forms communicate the same meaning.

This research, however, argues that Tiberian prosodic hierarchy also affects the lexical meaning. The Hebrew preposition ‘לְ’ can be parsed into two definitions: the preposition ‘לְ’ with the suffix of the second person feminine singular form and the preposition ‘לְ’ with the suffix of the second person masculine singular form. In other words, ‘לְ’ has a single form, but there are two different interpretations. Both contextual form and pausal form have the same form, but they do share distinct significances. The contextual form of ‘לְ’ with an accent on the last consonant indicates the suffix of the second person feminine

33 *DeCaen / Dresher*, Pausal Forms, 1–27.

34 *Breuer*, Biblical accents (s. Anm. 16) 74.

35 *DeCaen / Dresher*, Pausal Forms (s. Anm. 4) 1–27.

36 What is pausal form? Wu simply refers a pausal form to a word in which the original stressed vowel is either preserved or extended due to the presence of pauses or a quasi-pausal context, such as when emphasis is applied. The pausal forms are characterized by a prominent disjunctive accent, which may sometimes be accompanied by a secondary, less pronounced disjunctive accent (*Wu*, Pausal Form (s. Anm. 19) 1). In other words, the pausal form occurs at the conclusion of a sentence or at a significant pause within a sentence.

singular form. The pausal form of ‘אָךְ’ with an accent on the first consonant signifies the suffix of the second person masculine singular form.<sup>37</sup>

## 5 Preposition ‘אָךְ’ and Contextual Analysis

The book of Obadiah represents the briefest text within the Hebrew Bible, detailing the destinies of Edom and Israel. It proclaims that God will bring about the destruction of Edom, while simultaneously promising the restoration of Israel.<sup>38</sup> In relation to Edom, divine judgment will be enacted. Throughout this discourse, God speaks in the first-person singular, addressing Edom in the second person masculine singular, and only one time occurs in the plural form (1:16). The table below is the summary of Edom as the second person masculine singular (and in the plural form.)

Verse	Verb	Personal pronoun	Suffix
1:2		אתה (you)	נתתך (I have made you)
1:3			לבך (your heart) השיאך (deceived you)
1:4	תגביה (you exalt)		אורידך (I will bring you down)
1:5			אָךְ (to you)
1:7			שלחוך (sent you) בריתך (your covenant) אָךְ (to you) שלמך (your peace) לחמך (your bread) תחתך (under you)

37 Joüon and Muraoka also support the thesis of this article by saying that the pausal form of the second masculine also takes ‘אָךְ’. Thus, Biblical Hebrew has ‘אָךְ’, ‘אָךְ’, ‘עָמְךָ’, ‘אֲתָךְ’, ‘אֲתָךְ’, while in the noun, it takes ‘אָךְ’ (Joüon-Muraoka 2003: 33).

38 *P.R. Raabe*, *Obadiah: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Anc.Bib), New Haven / London 2021; *Daniel C. Timmer*, *Obadiah, Jonah and Micah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries 26), Downers Grove, IL 2021; *James D. Nogalski*, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, and Jonah* (New International Commentary on the Old Testament), Grand Rapids, MI 2023; *Elaine A. Phillips*, *Obadiah, Jonah and Micah* (Apollos Old Testament Commentry), London 2022.

(cont.)

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Verse	Verb	Personal pronoun	Suffix
1:10	ונכרת (you will be cut off)		אחיך (your brother) תכסך (it will cover you)
1:11		אתה (you)	עמדך (you stood)
1:12	תרא (you see) תשמח (you rejoice) תגדל (you boast)		אחיך (your brother)
1:13	תבוא (you enter) תרא (you see)	אתה (you)	
1:14	תעמד (you stand) תסגר (you confine)		
1:15	עשית (you did)		גמלך (your retribution) בראשך (on your head)
1:16	שתיתם (you (masculine plural) drank)		

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The Hebrew word 'לְךָ' appears twice in the text of Obadiah (1:5 and 1:15). While biblical parsing tools classify it as the preposition 'לְ' combined with a suffix indicating the second person feminine singular, a contextual examination presents a different perspective. Throughout the book, Edom is consistently referred to in the second masculine singular (or plural). Contextual analysis supports the interpretation of 'לְךָ' as the preposition 'לְ' combined with a suffix denoting the second person masculine singular. This indicates that 'לְךָ' should be understood in its pausal form rather than its contextual form. While both forms appear identical, they convey distinct meanings.

This study additionally includes the enumeration of 'לְךָ' as it pertains to its pausal form within the Pentateuch, specifically examining the preposition 'לְ' in conjunction with the suffix denoting the second person masculine singular. All occurrences of 'לְךָ' appears with disjunctive accents such as silluq, atnach, tipcha, zaqeph, shegolta, and pashta.

Atnach	Silluq	Zaqeph	Shegolta	Pashta	Tipcha
Gen 3:18; 4:6, 4:12; 14:23, 20:7; 30:31; 31:32; 33:5; <sup>a</sup> Lev 25:39, 44; Num 18:15; 18:18; 22:3; Deut 1:21; 6:10; 8:13; <sup>b</sup> 15:6–7; 16:9; 17:2; 18:9; 19:2; 20:11, 20:14; <sup>c</sup> 22:7; <sup>d</sup> 22:12; <sup>e</sup> 25:15; <sup>f</sup> 26:18; 27:2; 28:9, 28:31; 29:12;	Gen 14:21; 28:15, 22; 29:19; 31:12; <sup>g</sup> 33:9; 45:10, 45:11; Exod 13:11; 20:12; 33:5, <sup>h</sup> 14; 34:17; Lev 25:15–16; Num 10:32; 18:10; <sup>i</sup> Deut 5:16; 7:13; 7:16; 8:10; 9:3; 10:13; 12:9; 16:5, 16:17, 16:20–21; <sup>j</sup> 19:7, 19:13; 20:14; <sup>k</sup> 25:15, <sup>l</sup> 27:3; 28:8, 28:11, 28:52; 32:7	Gen 15:1; 18:25; <sup>m</sup> 20:9; 23:11 <sup>n</sup> ; 24:41, 33:11; 40:14; Exod 4:8; 13:5; 32:34; Lev 21:8; <sup>o</sup> Num 10:29; 22:37; Deut 3:26; 5:16; 6:3; 6:18; 7:16; 7:25; 17:14; 22:7; <sup>p</sup> 25:15; <sup>q</sup> 28:41; 33:29	Deut 12:20;	Gen 20:16; 27:37	Gen 23:11; <sup>r</sup> 35:17; Deut 26:2

- a This preposition appears with dageš conjunctivum which has a prosodic function.
- b This preposition appears with dageš conjunctivum which has a prosodic function.
- c The first occurrence.
- d The first occurrence.
- e This preposition appears with dageš conjunctivum which has a prosodic function.
- f The second occurrence. This preposition appears with dageš conjunctivum which has a prosodic function.
- g This preposition appears with dageš conjunctivum which has a prosodic function.
- h This preposition appears with dageš conjunctivum which has a prosodic function.
- i This preposition appears with dageš conjunctivum which has a prosodic function.
- j This preposition appears with dageš conjunctivum which has a prosodic function in verse 21.
- k The second occurrence.
- l The third occurrence.
- m This preposition appears with dageš conjunctivum which has a prosodic function.
- n The first occurrence.
- o This preposition appears with dageš conjunctivum which has a prosodic function.
- p The second occurrence.
- q The first occurrence. This preposition appears with dageš conjunctivum which has a prosodic function.
- r The second occurrence. This preposition appears with dageš conjunctivum which has a prosodic function.

## 6 Conclusion

What is the meaning of the preposition 'לְךָ'? This article argues that the preposition 'לְךָ' has two different meanings. Although the contextual form and the pausal form of the preposition 'לְךָ' are the same, they do share contrasted meanings: the preposition 'לְךָ' with the suffix of the second person feminine singular for the contextual form and the preposition 'לְךָ' with the suffix of the second person masculine singular for the pausal form. This thesis uses Tiberian prosodic hierarchy alongside contextual analysis of the book of Obadiah as its methodological framework to substantiate its thesis. In addition to prosodic, musical purposes, phonological account, morphological, grammatical and syntactical level, this research argues that Tiberian prosodic hierarchy also affects the lexical meaning of the Hebrew word especially 'לְךָ'. In the book of Obadiah, all occurrences of 'לְךָ' indicate the pausal form: the preposition 'לְךָ' with the suffix of the second person masculine singular.