

Appendix O

Joshua 5:10

“And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept [עָשָׂה *gāh-sāh*⁶²¹³] the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even [בָּעֶרֶב *bāh geh’rev*⁶¹⁵³] in the plains of Jericho.”

Some claim that this verse is describing a Passover at the end of Nisan 14. However, the structure of the text does not support this interpretation of Joshua 5:10. An examination of the context reveals that this verse is in a series of *waw*-relative verses. Each of these verses is linked to the next by the Hebrew *waw*, which is translated into the English conjunction “and.” The use of the relative *waw* at the beginning of each verse shows that the events in these verses are in **sequential order**. The consecutive chain of events begins with Verse 8 of Joshua 5 and continues through Verse 15 at the end of the chapter.

Waltke explains the use of relative *waw* to describe a sequence of events: “Situations described with *wayyqtl* [relative *waw*] are mostly temporally or logically succeeding. ‘The most obvious and frequent relation is,’ as S.R. Driver notes, ‘that of simple **chronological succession**...but of this there is no need to give...examples, as they abound throughout the historical portions of the Old Testament.’ *Wayyqtl* signifies **logical succession** where a logical entailment from (a) preceding situation(s)...is expressed” (*An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p. 547, emphasis added).

As Waltke shows, relative *waw* may be used to show either chronological or logical succession. In logical succession, relative *waw* connects two events that are related by circumstances. He gives several examples of logical succession:

“YHWH was with Joseph *and so he was prosperous*” (Gen. 39:2).

“Because you have rejected the word of YHWH, he *has rejected* you as king” (I Sam. 15:23).

“He did not kill me in the womb, *so that my mother would have become my tomb* (Jer. 20:17)” (Ibid., p. 548).

We can easily see that the element of time is not part of these descriptions. There is no indication as to when these events occurred. Logically linked events do not express chronological sequence but, rather, show a cause-effect relationship between events.

Verses 13 through 15 of Joshua 5 relate events that are linked logically. Although an initial time element is expressed in Verse 13, the *waw*-relative clauses that follow are all in logical succession; that is, each action is based on the circumstances of the preceding action:

“And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho [a temporal event], that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, *Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?* And He said, Nay; but *as captain of the host of the LORD* am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto Him, What

saith my Lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so" (Josh. 5:13-15).

The logical succession in Verses 13 through 15 of Joshua 5 differs greatly from the chronological succession that is expressed in Verses 10 through 12:

"And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover **on the fourteenth day of the month at even** in the plains of Jericho. And they did eat of the old corn of the land **on the morrow after the passover**, unleavened cakes, and parched *corn* in the selfsame day. And the manna ceased **on the morrow after they had eaten** of the old corn of the land..." (Josh. 5:10-12).

These verses are clearly describing a chronological sequence of events which took place during three consecutive days. The *waw* that introduces each verse shows that each event was completed before the next event took place.

Verse 10 describes the event that took place during Nisan 14:

"**And** the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover **on the fourteenth day of the month at even** [a specific unit of time] in the plains of Jericho." Although the word "and" appears twice in the King James translation, the Hebrew *waw* is used only at the beginning of this verse. Owens parses Joshua 5:10 as follows:

"**While** [*waw*]...were encamped

the people of Israel

in Gilgal

they kept

the passover

on the fourteenth

day

of the month

at evening

in the plains of

Jericho" (Analytical Key to the Old Testament, vol. 1).

This translation accurately conveys the meaning of the Hebrew text, which shows that the children of Israel were already encamped at Gilgal when the 14th of Nisan began. The only event that took place on Nisan 14 was the observance of the Passover.

Verse 11 describes the next event, which took place on Nisan 15:

“**And** they did eat of the old corn of the land **on the morrow after the passover** [a specific unit of time], unleavened cakes, and parched *corn* in the selfsame day.”

Verse 12 describes the event that took place on the following day, Nisan 16:

“**And** the manna ceased **on the morrow after they had eaten** [a specific unit of time] of the old corn of the land....”

The events that are recorded in these verses took place during **separate and distinct units of time**; that is, three separate days. The relative *waw* that introduces the verses separates the unit of time (day) that is specified in each verse from the next unit of time (day). This use of the *waw* rules out any link between the events in the first unit of time (Nisan 14) and the events in the second unit of time (Nisan 15). The Hebrew text does not allow any overlapping of events from one day to the next.

The use of the relative *waw* in Joshua 5:10 places all the Passover events, including the eating of the Passover, “**on the fourteenth day of the month.**” This fact is further verified by an analysis of the phrase “on the fourteenth” in the Hebrew text. The Hebrew phrase contains three words: the preposition בַּ *b*, the number four אַרְבַּע *ar-bag*⁷⁰², and the number ten עָשָׂר *gāh-sāhr*⁶²⁴⁰. In this phrase, *b* is used in its temporal sense, indicating events that occurred on or during the fourteenth day of the month. The entire phrase is modifying the Hebrew verb עָשָׂה *gāh-sāh*⁶²¹³ (translated “kept”), which is a *Qal* stem in the imperfective form. This construction of the text shows that the action is occurring at the time indicated by the preposition *b*; i.e., Nisan 14.

The Hebrew phrase translated “at even” also contains three words: the preposition בַּ *bāh*, the definite article (untranslated) and the noun עֶרֶב *geh’rev*⁶¹⁵³. In this phrase, the preposition *bāh* is used in a temporal sense to indicate the time of sunset (*geh’rev*). Because they kept the Passover entirely “on the fourteenth,” it is clear that *geh’rev* in Joshua 5:10 denotes the sunset **beginning** the 14th day of the month. Thus the Passover observance in Joshua 5 corresponds perfectly with the Passover command in Exodus 12 to keep the lambs **until** the arrival of the fourteenth, when they were to be killed. This event was the initial act in the keeping (*gah-sah*) of the Passover (See Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, pp. 794-795.)

The Hebrew preposition *b* is used in both phrases to designate the exact time of the observance. The use of *b* in the phrase “on the fourteenth day of the month” informs us that all the elements of the Passover were kept (*gāh-sāh*) within the bounds of the fourteenth. In the following phrase, “at even,” *b* informs us that this Passover observance began at the time of sunset (*geh’rev*), which signaled the arrival of Nisan 14.

The relative *waw* that begins Verse 11 shows that the events in the preceding verse have been completed and a new unit of time is being introduced. Notice: “And they did eat of the old corn of the land **on the morrow after the passover**, unleavened cakes, and parched *corn* in the selfsame day.”

The phrase “on the morrow after” is translated from מִמָּחָרָה *m moh-‘ghorahth*, which is composed of the Hebrew preposition *mn* (assimilated as *m*) and the noun *moh-‘ghorahth*⁴²⁸³ (Owens, *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*, vol. 1). *Mn* is used in a temporal sense in this phrase to express a specific period of time. Waltke describes the

temporal function of the preposition *mn*: “*Temporal* uses of *mn* vary in relation to the beginning point, which may be included (‘from, on, in’, #5) or not (‘after’; #6). Temporal *mn* can also mark a block of time (‘after’, #7)” (Waltke, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p. 212).

The preposition *mn* is used in Joshua 5:11 to describe the eating of the produce of the land “on the morrow after [*moh-‘ghorahth*] the passover.” The noun *moh-‘ghorahth* is defined as “the day following a past day” (Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p. 564). Thus *moh-‘ghorahth* includes the entire twenty-four hours of Nisan 15. Although the Israelites continued to eat of the produce after that day, the eating that is recorded in Joshua 5:11 was a special event—it was the first eating of the harvest on the Wave Sheaf Day.

As Owens shows, the noun *moh-‘ghorahth*⁴²⁸³, translated “the morrow after,” is used in construct (*Analytical Key to the Old Testament*, vol. 1). The term “construct” denotes that *moh-‘ghorahth* is being modified by a noun phrase, or clause that follows (Waltke, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, pp.137-138). In Joshua 5:11, *moh-‘ghorahth* is modified by the noun פֶּחַסָּה *peh’sagh*⁶⁴⁵³ (“passover”). Thus the Hebrew text designates “the morrow after” (i.e., Nisan 15) as separate from the observance of the Passover.

The Hebrew text clearly contradicts the claim that the eating of the lambs took place on Nisan 15. The phrase “**on the morrow after**” does not include any period of time on which the Passover was kept. Every act related to keeping the Passover—including eating the lambs was completed on the preceding day, Nisan 14.