A NEW APPROACH TO THE INTERPRETATION OF THE *HITPAEL* CONJUGATION

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It is well known that biblical verbs derive from 3-letter roots which can be conjugated in a variety of *binyanim*. For example, the root *shamar* refers to *watching*. Conjugated in the active (*qal*), for example, *shamarti,* it would mean *I watched,* while conjugated in the passive (*nifal*), for example, *nishmarti*, it would mean *I was watched.*

There are seven primary conjugations (*binyanim*). This paper offers a new approach to the meaning of the *hitpael* conjugation, which is traditionally understood to primarily refer to *reflexive* action. First, we will review the traditional approaches to the *hitpael.* Then, we will describe the new approach. The rest of the paper explores consequences and applications of this approach as well as alternative historical approaches.

TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO THE HITPAEL

The meaning of the *hitpael* form may be found throughout the various grammar works of the *rishonim* (early authorities) in their classic works such as the *Sefer Shoroshim* of the Radak, the *Sefer Moznayim* of the Ibn Ezra, or the *Kitab al-Tanqīḥ* of Yonah Ibn Ganach. Moshe Silverman in the introduction of his *Sefer Amelim Batorhah*[1] summarizes three meanings of *hitpael,* as given by these early Hebrew grammarians: Reflexive: For example[2], *Make yourselves holy and remain holy* (Lev. 41:14); Feigning, acting like, wishful thinking: For example *There is a person who behaves as if he is rich but has nothing* (Prov. 13:7), or *He (the sinner) imagines himself blessed saying I will have peace* (Deut. 29:18); Active: For example, the *hitpael* conjugation of *hitpalel* simply means to pray. The *hitpael* can typically refer to the active if there is no usage of the root in the active (*qal*) tense.

Gesenius[3], a Lutheran grammarian from the 19th century presents five meanings: i) reflexive, ii) feigning / acting, iii) active, iv) reciprocal action, for example, *There is food in Egypt why do you look at each other* (Gen.

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42:1) and v) the passive, for example, *A woman fearing God, she shall be praised* (Prov. 31:30).

Gesenius also introduces arguments of historicization. He points out, for example, that the verb to mourn, *avel,* is conjugated in the *hitpael* in the early biblical literature but conjugated in the active (*qal*) in the later biblical literature. In other words, he regards conjugation not necessarily only dependent on meaning but also depending on the historical period of the statement.

There are several modern treatments of the *hitpael* both by writers of grammar books as well as in doctoral theses. Waltke and O'Connor[4], citing the doctoral thesis of Bean[5], point out that in the Bible there are 175 roots conjugated in the *hitpael* with 825 occurrences. Other approaches to counting roots and occurrences while sometimes differing in exact number are in the same range of under 1000 occurrences.[6]

Besides the reciprocal and passive meaning, they mention a durative meaning such as for example, *the waves batter continually but cannot prevail* (Jer. 5:22) or *Eliezer gazed continually at Rivkah* (Gen. 24:21). Moreover, they mention four types of reflexive meaning: the direct reflexive where the subject and object are the same, for example, *Gird yourselves for battle* (Isa. 8:9); the indirect reflexive where the subject and indirect object are the same, for example, *Jonathan stripped his robe from himself* (I Sam. 18:4) or *the nation unloaded* [for themselves] *the jewelry on their ears* (Ex. 32:3).; the benefactive reflexive where the activity is done for someone's benefit, for example, *give back his wife and he will pray for you* (Gen. 20:7), or *this is our food which we prepared for ourselves* (Josh. 9:12); and the estimative-declarative reflexive which includes declarations and acts of feigning, such as for example, *I will declare My Greatness to the nations* (Ezek. 38:23), or *lie down in bed and feign yourself sick* (II Sam. 13:5).

In their grammar book they also bring a variety of other viewpoints. They cite the historical approach presented in the doctoral thesis of Bean[7] that the *hitpael* grew in popularity in the later biblical period as meaning passive not reflexive. They also mention the view that because of the wide diversity of meanings some scholars think that the *hitpael* is a conglomeration of conjugations without any unified meaning.

As we venture forward with a proposed added nuance to the meaning of the *hitpael*, it would be good to have a brief summary of meanings. Siebesma

and Mazars provide such a summary: "The *hitpae*l may be translated as active, reflexive, or reciprocal, but rarely as passive."[8]

AN ALTERNATE APPROACH TO THE HITPAEL

This paper presents the view that the *hitpael* is an active verb which differs from the ordinary *qal* (active) conjugation by providing an emphasis on some person, environment, or inner emotion influencing the person doing the activity, with the influence being either for or against doing the activity.

There follow ten examples grouped into four categories of types of influence. Eight of the ten examples present a pair of verses (A and B) dealing with a common theme but differing in that A uses the *hitpael* while B uses some other conjugation such as *nifal* (passive) or *qal* (active). The examples come from papers by Biden[9], Garr[10], and Teshima,[11] which studied the difference between *hitpael* and other conjugations. After presenting each verse pair and the various papers' suggested reasons for the difference in conjugation we show that this paper's suggested concept of influence either offers a simpler translation avoiding certain problems of translation or provides an alternative translation that enhances the text's meaning with added nuances implied by other cues in the text.

COUNTER-INFLUENCE

The three examples in this section enhance the interpretation of the *hitpael* as indicating an active voice, by adding the nuance that the person doing the activity is fighting a counter-influencing force attempting to prevent the activity.

Example 1: Both the (A) and (B) verse in this example describe Adam and Eve's hiding from God after sinning. (A) *They heard the voice of God, Lord, going back and forth in the garden; Adam and his wife hid from facing God in the midst of the trees of the garden* (Gen. 3:8); (B) (Responding to an inquiry from God, "Where are you," Adam responds) *I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked and became hidden.* (Gen. 3:10)

Although both verbs are derived from dealing with 'hiding', the individual depictions are not quite the same. The first presents the writer's viewpoint; the second presents that of the man. The first scenario, expressed in the

hitpael, describes a deliberate action that the subject nouns direct to themselves. The man and the woman respond to the sound with a self-conscious and intentional act of evasion. The second, expressed as a *niphal*, is likewise an evasion—but of personal responsibility. The man only confesses to a simple act of concealment as a knee-jerk response to danger. Had the man used the *hithpael*, he would have admitted guilt. Instead, he deflects and offers a no-fault excuse as if it were a completely natural reaction. Each representation of concealment here is semantically and exegetically significant.[1]

The additional nuance of the *hitpael* proposed by this paper nicely enhances the interpretation of the text consistent with the above explanation. Adam was not just actively hiding, but rather also fighting the counter-influence of his feelings of guilt requiring a confession. This nuance intensifies the contrast of the two verses. Adam knew he *should* confess but despite this emotional influence overcomes it and attempts to hide. Later when speaking to God he doesn't mention his intentional cover up but rather acts as if the hiding was something spontaneous.

Example 2: Both the (A) and (B) verse in this example describe selling oneself for slavery to remedy poverty. (A) *God will return you to Egypt in ships by a route that I told you you'd never see again. There you will put yourselves up for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves. Yet there will be no buyer* (Deut 28:68); (B) *If your kinsman becomes impoverished under you and is sold to you, you cannot (make) him perform slave labor* (Lev 25:39)

Garr explans:[13] "The situation presented in (B) is hardly voluntary. The subject of the *niphal* verb has no control. In contrast, the subject of the *hithpael* alternant (A) is a self-affecting agent."

The proposed understanding of the *hitpael* presented in this paper sharpens this contrast. In (B) the *nifal* (passive) describes a situation where the person has no choice; he merely *allows* himself to be auctioned and is bought bringing him the necessary money. In contrast, in (A), there are counter-influences to the attempted sale: i) "there is no buyer,"[14] and additionally ii) the buyers if they purchased would be "enemies"[15] indicating that abuse will accompany the sale. Thus, the translation of *hitpael* with an added nuance of counter-influence highlights the pathos of the situation.

Example 3: Both verses in this example describe something not noticed. (A) *Do not see your brother's ox or sheep wandering and avoid noticing them; rather return them to your brother* (Deut. 22:1); (B) *Or, a person who touches any ritually impure object (either a ritually impure wild beast, or a ritually impure animal, or a ritually impure rodent), and it escaped his notice, and (while) he is ritually impure he was guilty (of violating the laws of impurity)* (Lev. 5:2).

Garr explains:[16] "The difference between these two examples is transparent: (B), the *niphal* (passive) usually has an involuntary, cognitive sense: 'escape notice'. In contrast, (A), the *hithpael* 'disregard, ignore' is a verb of deliberate inattention that is governed only by human subjects."

This paper's proposal that the *hitpael* is an active voice with an added emphasis of influence enhances appreciation of the above explanation that the person ignoring a lost object which he has seen, is deliberate, by adding the nuance that the person is also (deliberately) fighting the counter-influence of his sight and his moral obligation to return the loss article.

EMOTIONAL INFLUENCE

The four examples presented in this section enhance the interpretation of the *hitpael* as indicating an active voice by indicating that the activity is influenced by an inner emotion. While the emotional influence is not always explicitly mentioned, it can be inferred from context and the general knowledge of the underlying situation. The emotional influence enhances appreciation of the text by showing that the underlying activity was not arbitrary or capricious but resulted in part from inner influences possibly pushing a person to do activities not normally done by that person.

Example 4:[17] Both examples (A) and (B) describe attempts to become smarter. (A) *Don't excessively become smarter* (Ecc.7:16); (B) *Give to a wise person and he will become smarter* (Prov. 9:9).

Although no emotional influence is indicated in (A) it seems reasonable that a person who is excessive in his desire to become smarter may be acting under the influence of self-aggrandizement, conceit, or ego. The pair of verses together would then advise the person wishing to increase his smartness that while it is all right to do so, one should become aware of the inner needs driving him and avoid unhealthy motivations.

Example 5: Both examples (A) and (B) describe self-exposure. (A) *He [Noah] drank some wine, became drunk, and exposed himself inside his tent* (Gen 9:21); (B) *David was twirling with all his might before God; David was wrapped in a linen garment [lit. ephod]. David went back to greet his household. Saul's daughter Michal came out to meet David and said, "How honorable today is the king of Israel, exposed (trad., exposing himself) today in plain view of his subjects' slave girls just as one of the worthless might be totally exposed(trad., expose himself)!* (2 Sam 6:14–20). Garr explains the difference:[18]

> The episode with Noah ((A) written with the *hitpael*) requires little explanation. He removes all or most of his clothes. In comparison, David's behavior (in (B) using the *nifal* (passive) is minor. The text presents three perspectives. His demoted and mistreated first wife accuses him of ignoble recklessness and unacceptable ritual romping. In her view. … David's perspective is the polar opposite. He rejects Michal's opinion and doubles down in proud defiance (vv. 21–22). The narrator, however, mainly sticks to the facts: David energetically gyrated, wore a light covering, and was likely in a celebratory or triumphant mood. All parties might agree, though, that David was careless if not clearly unbecoming a king. They would also agree that his self-exposure was unintentional, accidental, and without immediate consequence.

The thesis of this paper can be used to reformulate the dispute between David and Michal. Michal's point of view is that David was careless and let himself be accidentally exposed (*nifal*, passive). She totally ignores, as David responded, his intentions to actively glorify God. Thus, in this example, the content of the dispute is neatly mirrored by the differing grammatical conjugations. Similarly, the use of the *hitpael* by Noach emphasizes that his self-exposure was not arbitrary and capricious but done under the influence of being drunk. Thus, the *hitpael*, in each case, enhances our appreciation of *why* the exposure took place.

Example 6: Both the (A) and (B) passages occur in the same narrative, dealing with the unloading of jewelry to provide metal to create an idol. Responding to the request of the Jewish people to make a god for them, (B) "*Aaron says, 'Unload (qal-active) the jewelry from the ears of your wives, sons, and*

daughters, and bring to me.' (A) *The entire nation unloaded (hitpael) the jewelry from their ears and they brought it to Aaron.* (Ex. 32:2-3)

Prior to analyzing this example, we note that the golden-calf incident degenerated from an intended religious ceremony to a herd hysteria as evidenced by the textual passages, *they arose for frivolity* (Ex. 32:6) and *the raucous in the camp is neither a victory raucous nor a depressive raucous but a raucous* (Ex. 32:18). This presence of raucous is consistent with what we know about idolatrous rites. It is further strengthened by the grammatical differences between (A) and (B) above. Aaron's request was addressed to individuals (singular) and recognized the possibility of household dialogue (the jewelry of your "wives, sons, and daughters") with reasonable possible disagreement slowing down the gathering of jewelery;[19] in contrast, the text formulates the nation's response using the plural, not the singular, conjugation of the underling root; similarly the jewelry is attributed to plural ownership ("their" jewelry vs. "the jewelry in the ears of your "wives, sons, and daughters").

We can succinctly reformulate the above analysis using the thesis of this paper that *hitpael* connotes activity under an influence. Aaron just asked that jewelry be unloaded and hence the text for (B) uses the *qal* (active). On contrast, the response to Aaron (A) were individuals acting under the influence of the group as indicated by the plural response vs. the singular request and the general raucous atmosphere documented later; hence, the *hitpael.*[20]

Example 7: This and the next example present verses using the *hitpael* without a contrasting verse in another conjugation. By way of background, recall that *Joseph's brothers saw that their father loved Joseph over all other brothers and therefore they hated him and couldn't speak peacefully with him* (Gen. 37:4). Furthermore, *Joseph dreamt a dream which he told to his brothers; they increased their hatred of him (*Gen. 37:4*).* The repeated mention of dreams led to *His brothers avenging [their honor] on him* (Gen. 37:11).

The text discussing a meeting outside their home says, *They (his brothers) saw him in the distance and before he came near they plotted on him to kill him* (Gen. 37:18). The active verb, *plotted,* is conjugated in the *hitpael* not the *qal* (active). This paper regards the use of the *hitpael* as indicating an influence on their activities. Based on the context, the influence would be their hatred of him, which evolved over time and incidents. Interestingly, through

this use of the *hitpael* the biblical text partially explains how the brothers, descendants of the Patriarchs, came to a point where they considered murder an option; their decision was partially influenced by developing hatred.[21]

INFLUENCE OF ANOTHER PERSON

The previous sections presented examples where the influence was contrary to the activity, or the influence was internal and emotional. This section presents two examples where the influence is that of another person.

Example 8: Proverbs 31 describes the woman of valor. The chapter concludes with, *Charm is false, and beauty is transient; the woman who fears God; she is the one who will be praised* (Prov. 31:30). The phrase *who will be praised* is conjugated in the *hitpael*. The context of the verse suggests a passive interpretation. The passive fits in nicely with this particular verse, and is consistent with some English translations of the Bible. For example, NJPS[22] translates this verse as *Grace is deceptive, beauty is illusory, it is for her fear of the Lord that a woman is to be praised.*

However, as pointed out earlier here, the *hitpael* as indicating the passive is rare; an active interpretation would be preferable. Biden suggests two interpretations: *It is for her fear of the Lord that a woman gains praise for herself,* and *it is for her fear of the Lord that a woman is praiseworthy.* Here, Biden uses the traditional reflexive interpretation of the *hitpael*, *praise for herself.*[23]

Using the approach of this paper, we would interpret, *Charm is false, beauty is transient, the woman who fears God: She is the one others will praise.* This interpretation simply contrasts between charm, beauty, and fear of God. The contrast says that people do not praise and encourage charm and beauty because they know it is false or transient. However, they do praise and encourage fear of God. The encouragement implied by the translation reflects this paper's proposed nuance of the *hitpael* as indicating influence; i.e. others will influence her (by praising her).

Both approaches to the verse pose difficulties, arising either from translating the *hitpael* as passive which is rare or translating the *hitpael* as active with influence. We believe the approach of this paper, active with encouragement and influence, to be an equally valid approach that has relevance and correctly nuances the intent of the passage.

Example 9: In a discussion of removing the plague of frogs from Egypt, Moses says to Pharaoh, *Boast [of your superiority] over me. When shall I entreat for you, for your servants, and for your people, to destroy the frogs from you and from your houses, [that] they should remain only in the Nile?* (Ex. 8:8).[24] Rashi[25] elaborates:

> The use of boast in this verse is similar to the use of boast in *Shall the axe boast over the one who hews with it* (Isa. 10:15). It praises itself, saying, "I am greater than you," . . . . Similarly, [Moses says to Pharaoh,] "Praise yourself by acting cleverly and asking a difficult thing and hoping [lit. saying] that I will be unable to do it.

This translation fits in neatly with the thesis of this paper that *hitpael* refers to activity with a nuance of influence. Moses in effect says to Pharoh, "Challenge me; try to influence me to be wrong."

It was comments by Rashi like these that inspired the idea of this paper. However, the paper itself stands on the usefulness of this concept of influence in the various examples presented. Of course, we must bear in mind that Rashi frequently gave bottom line explanations without citing sources and without elaborating on grammatical reasons. That is why there are over 200 super-commentaries on Rashi trying to ascertain his sources and reasoning. There are three other Rashi comments on the *hitpael* in his commentary on the Torah and we believe they also fit into this paradigm.[26]

THE HISTORICAL APPROACH

While the preceding examples mostly studied pairs of verses, one with the *hitpael* and one with another conjugation, the next example studies larger collections of verses which can be partitioned based on whether they use the *hitpael* or the *qal* (active). It affords us the opportunity to examine the historical approach to the study of language which posits that grammatical differences may not reflect differences in meaning but rather usages of different historical periods. This contrasts with the approach adopted in this paper, the unified approach to the entire biblical text which sees the text as reflecting a single language governed by grammatical laws. Both the unified approach and the historical approach are found in the academic literature. During different periods, certain viewpoints may be more dominant.[27] What is of inter-

est in this next example is that the verses seem to naturally, and strongly, suggest a simple and direct historical explanation.

Example 10**:** We start with a simple pair of verses, (A) and (B), both dealing with mourning. (A) *Jacob tore his clothes and put on sackcloth; he mourned his son many years*. (Gen. 37:34); (B) *The field is plundered, the land mourns; for grain is plundered; new wine is dried up, oil languishes* (Joel 1:10). One can multiply this pair of verses with many similar pairs with one verse in the *hitpael* and the other in the *qal* (active). Gesenius, noticing that the active form typically occurred in the later-written biblical works while the *hitpael* form occurred in the earlier-written works, formulated a historical approach to the difference between the *hitpael* and *qal* (active). According to this approach there is no substantive difference in meaning between the two conjugations; rather in different historical periods different conjugations were preferred.[28]

The approach advocated by this paper affords a reasonable alternative solution. Upon examining the two lists of verses dealing with mourning, those conjugated in the *hitpael* and those conjugated in the *qal* (active), we find that the *hitpael* conjugations typically refer to mourning by a person for the loss of a loved one while the *qal* (active) conjugations typically refer to a metaphoric use of the mourning of inanimate objects over the loss of other objects associated with them. By way of illustration, in example (B), the land which typically grows grain and produces plants leading to wine and oil production, is plundered resulting in a loss of these products. The prophet metaphorically describes the loss as mourning by the land for its lost produce.

However, while humans actively mourning a loved one are doing so under the influence of their emotions, feelings, and memories of the deceased, inanimate objects, such as land, are not acting under any influence. The metaphor of mourning only applies to the objective loss, not to any inner feelings, memories, or emotional influences.

CONCLUSION

This paper has explored an alternate approach to the interpretation of the *hitpael*. We simply suggest that the *hitpael* refers to an active voice with an added nuance and emphasis on forces influencing or counter-influencing the activity. The influence can come from other people (Examples 8 and 9) or

from inner emotions such as emotions of conceit, drunkenness, group influence, hatred, or the mourning of a loved one (Examples 4-7 and 10). The influence can also refer to a counter-influence, a force trying to prevent the activity which the person doing the activity ignores. Thus, in Examples 1-3 we saw the counter-influences of guilt on sinning or expected lack of response to an activity. We have also explored possible roots of this idea in Rashi as well as its ability to offer viable alternatives to the historical approach to grammar. We encourage readers to explore the possible use of this approach in other biblical passages.

NOTES

1. Alfred Silverman, *Sefer Amelim Batorah,* Rev. 2, (Private Printing, 2017).
2. Throughout this section, the examples presented as well as their translation are those of the respective authors.
3. (GKC) E. Kautzsch & A. E. Cowley. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (2nd English Edition revised in accordance with the twenty-eighth German Edition), (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1910).
4. B. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax***,** (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1990).
5. A. F. Bean, *A Phenomenological Study of the Hithpa'el Verbal Stem in the Hebrew Old Testament*, (Louisville, Kentucky: Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Dissertation, 1975).
6. See footnote 8 in Joel S. Biden, "Hithpael and Niphal in Biblical Hebrew: Semantic and Morphological Overlap," *Vetus Testamentum*, 60(2010), pp. 33-44, which cites works of Waltke and O'Connor, Bean, and Mazars with total occurrences of "over 825", 946, and 780 respectively.
7. Bean, 1975 op. cit.
8. Cited in footnote 9 of Biden, 2010, op. cit. The actual citation is from Siebesma. Biden notes that Mazars makes a similar observation.
9. Ibid.
10. W. Randall Garr, "Reflextivity: The Cases of the Niphal and Hithpael, "Journal *of Near Easter Sttudies*, 80(2), 2021, pp. 341-356.
11. Isaiah Teshima, *Rashi and Ibn Ezra on the Hitpa'el. Peshat in the Medieval Disputes of Hebrew Grammar*, in Hindy Najman & Judith H. Newman (eds**.)** *The Idea of Biblical Interpretation. Essays in Honor of James L Kugel* (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism**)**, (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2004) pp. 473—484.
12. Section 4.1 of Garr, (2021), op. cit and page 36 of Biden (2010), op. cit. Interestingly, unlike Garr who sees a difference between the two conjugations Biden speaks about the two conjugations "confused within the same text" and notes that it is "remarkable that here in a single narrative, in precisely the same context, even in the description of the very same act, the two different stems should be used." By contrast Garr, as presented in the body of this paper, sees a meaningful difference between the two conjugations. Going further, this paper adds to Garr's explanation still another nuance differentiating the two conjugations.
13. Section 4.2 of Garr (2021), op. cit.

14. Deuteronomy 28:68
15. Ibid.
16. Section 4.1 of Garr, (2021), op. cit.
17. Teshima, on page 476 of Teshima, (2004), op. cit. simply asks "What is the difference" between the two conjugations. This article however seeks to provide a relevant difference consistent with the text.
18. Section 4.3 of Garr (2021), op. cit.
19. Rashi on this passage explicitly indicates that Aaron's request was a delay tactic reasonably assuming that wives and children would not want to give up their jewelry.
20. An alternate approach to the hitpael in this verse is mentioned by Teshima, (2004), op. cit. pp. 477-478. Teshima emphasizes a grammatical approach focusing on whether the verb is transitive or intransitive. His approach necessitates reinterpreting markers of objects such as the word *eth.* By contrast, the approach of this paper is more straightforward regarding *eth* as indicating the direct object. of an active verb.
21. An alternate approach to the hitpael in this verse is mentioned by Teshima, (2004), op. cit. pp. 482-483. Teshima emphasizes a grammatical approach focusing on whether the verb is transitive or intransitive. His approach necessitates reinterpreting markers of objects such as the word *otho.* In contrast, the approach of this paper is more straightforward regarding *eth* as indicating the direct object.of an active verb.
22. Pages 33-34 of Biden (2010), op. cit. The 1985 NJPS translation is also available on Sefaria at
https://www.sefaria.org/Proverbs.30?lang=bi For a comparison of three dozen other translation approaches (including some in the active) visit https://www.biblestudytools.com/proverbs/31-30-compare.html
23. Page 34 of Biden, (2010), op. cit.
24. The English translation with Rashi is (with minor adjustments) from the Chabad website and may be accessed at https://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/9869/jewish/Chapter-8.htm
25. Rashi, ibid.
26. The four Rashi comments are as follows: i) On Genesis 37:18 Rashi identifies the plotting of the brothers to kill Joseph as due to being filled with hatred of him. One approach to his comment is to see Rashi as *explaining* the use of the hitpael conjugation (cf. Example 7 in the body of the paper). For an alternate reading of this Rashi see the discussion in footnote 21 above. ii) The Rashi comment on Exodus 8.8 discussed in Example 8 is almost explicit as to the idea of trying to influence or steer a person. iii) The Rashi comments on the golden calf episode, Exodus 32:2-3 are discussed in Example 6 and footnotes 19 and 20. We could read this comment as an explanation of the contrast between the "singular active command" of Aaron and the plural *hitpael* response of the nation which could naturally lead to the idea of group influence. However, this reading is somewhat weaker than the readings in the other Rashi comments. See footnote 20 for an alternate reading. iv) The Rashi comment on Leviticus 25:46 explicitly discusses the difference between use of the *hitpael* and use of the *hifil* (in the active sense). Rashi seems to say that the hitpael doesn't merely describe passing inheritance of non-Jewish slaves to one's offspring, but encourages, as indicated by the *hitpael*, taking possession of them as something needed by the children (without further elaboration). One could reasonably suggest that Rashi is speaking about doing activities that influence the children to see the non-Jewish slaves not just as

something they inherit but as something they should possess and be aware of the need to maintain their slave status.

27. See pages 172-173 inJ. Cooke, *Time and Biblical Hebrew Verb: The Expression of Tense, Aspect, and Modality in Biblical Hebrew,* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2012).

28. GKC (1910), op. cit.

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