

Analyzing זָה Grammar and Reading זָה Texts of Ps 68:9 and Judg 5:5

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ANALYZING הָ GRAMMAR AND READING הָ TEXTS OF Ps 68:9 AND JUDG 5:5*

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I. INTRODUCTION

It is an almost unavoidable problem of the specialization in modern scholarship that with all the insights achieved, just as many broad—and sometimes deeper—insights and connections are lost. For the study of the ancient Hebrew language, the advantages of specialization are clear and numerous. Advances in many areas of general linguistics, from historical-comparative to typological to a variety of theoretical frameworks, have been and continue to be applied with success to the description of ancient Hebrew phenomena. And yet, exegetical competence is often the unfortunate casualty of achieving competence in historical-comparative Semitics or a linguistic theory. Grammatical descriptions typically present data as if they exist in a syntactic and semantic vacuum, disconnected from the communicative, discourse pragmatic context of the texts out of which the data come.

The typical disconnect between grammar and text may work for many examples, perhaps even a majority of the data, but never for all. For example, in a clause like **יִרְאֶת יְהוָה תּוֹסִיף יָמִים** (Prov 10:27), the 3rd f. sg. features of the verb unambiguously identify the f. sg. **יִרְאֶת** as the syntactic subject. But, of course, there are many examples in which both the subject and verbal complement match the features of the verb, and only the context allows reasonable interpretation. Consider **רְשָׁעָה תִּסְלֹף חֲטָאתָהּ** (Prov 13:6), in which both **רְשָׁעָה** and **חֲטָאתָהּ** match the 3rd f. sg. features of the verb **תִּסְלֹף**, allowing either to be the syntactic subject. The discourse context, though—in this case, the poetic parallelism—strongly points to **רְשָׁעָה** as the subject since the clear subject of the preced-

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ing clause is **צִדְקָה רְשָׁעָה** (Fox 2009: 563). My point, of course, is that while grammaticality obviously influences literary interpretation, the influence is not unidirectional. Rather, the relationship between grammar and interpretation is symbiotic. It is a fundamental principle of good philology that both grammatical and literary features are kept in view and used to check and improve the results of each other.

With this basic principle of philology in mind, in this study I will re-visit the grammar of the demonstrative **זֶה**. The masculine singular **זֶה**, with its feminine counterpart, **זֹאת**, and the common plural, **אֵלֶּה**, are primarily used in ancient Hebrew as demonstratives, but also as relative markers and copular elements. After describing the grammar of **זֶה**, I will conclude by illustrating the conjunction of linguistic analysis and textual interpretation with a discussion of **זֶה** in Judg 5:5 and Ps 68:9.

II. DEMONSTRATIVE SYNTAX IN ANCIENT HEBREW: AN OVERVIEW

The most recent thorough study of demonstratives from a typological perspective is Diessel 1999.¹ In his introduction, he helpfully previews the nature and distribution of demonstratives. First, he defines demonstratives as “deictic expressions serving specific syntactic functions” (2) and notes a common discourse-pragmatic function: “they are primarily used to focus the hearer’s attention on objects or locations in the speech situation (often in combination with a pointing gesture), but they may also function to organize the information flow in the ongoing discourse” (2). Second, Diessel observes that all languages have two sets of demonstratives used for proximal deixis and distal deixis (2). And finally, he organizes the typology of demonstratives into four categories: pronominal, in which a demonstrative serves as the argument (e.g., subject) of a verb or adposition (e.g., the object of a preposition); adnominal, in which a demonstrative accompanies a co-occurring noun; adverbial, in which a demonstrative modifies a verb (e.g., a locative deictic); and identificational, in which a demonstrative serves as the expletive subject of a non-verbal or copular clause, often with a presentative nuance (4–5).

Ancient Hebrew **זֶה** fits Diessel’s typological profile in straightforward terms. It is often clearly deictic, pointing to entities or events in the preceding discourse, and it is also used in pronominal and adnominal functions. The basic deictic nature (1) as well as the first two of Diessel’s four functions—pronominal (2) and adnominal (3)—are illustrated in the examples below.

¹ For a clear application of Diessel’s typological study to Semitic demonstratives, see Hasselbach 2007.

(1) Deictic

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לְאִשָּׁה מֵהַזֹּאת עֲשִׂית

And Yhwh God said to the woman, “What is this (that) you have done?” (Gen 3:13).

(2) Pronominal

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים זֹאת אֶת־הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר־אֲנִי נֹתֵן בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם וּבֵין כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה אֲשֶׁר אִתְּכֶם לְדֹרֹת עוֹלָם:

And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I am setting between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for everlasting generations” (Gen 9:12).

(3) Adnominal

וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר לְזָרְעוֹ אֶתֵּן אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וַיְבֹן שָׂם מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה הַנִּרְאָה אֵלָיו:

And Yhwh appeared to Abram and said, “To your seed I will give this land.” And he built there an altar to Yhwh, who appeared to him” (Gen 12:7).

In (1), the זֹאת points back to the woman’s transgression. In (2), the זֹאת functions as a pronominal subject of the null copula clause. And in (3) the הַזֹּאת modifies the preceding noun הָאָרֶץ attributively.

Whether Hebrew הַ behaves as a demonstrative adverbial, that is, Diessel’s third functional category, is unclear due to lack of sufficient data. Diessel restricts the term demonstrative adverbial to “locational deictics such as *here* and *there* in English ... which are primarily used to indicate the location of the event or situation that is expressed by a cooccurring verb; that is, locational deictics function as some sort of verb modifiers” (1999: 74). In all but a handful of cases, the presence of הַ within an adverbial modifier is complicated by the fact that the הַ is not itself the adverbial, but rather the complement of a preposition (i.e., הַ is a pronominal demonstrative), such as מִזֶּה “from this [place]” > “from here” or following a temporal or spatial noun that is used adverbially (i.e., הַ is an adnominal demonstrative), such as הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה “this day” > “today.” Only in the six cases of הַגֵּה־זֶה “hey this!” > “look here”² does הַ itself approach an adverbial sense, like English *here*.

Finally, with regard to the fourth functional category, it is doubtful that הַ functions as a “demonstrative identifier,” at least as it is described by Diessel (1999: 78–88). There is no distinct class

² 1 Kgs 19:5; 2 Kgs 6:33; Isa 21:9; Ezek 16:49; 43:12; Job 5:27. In two additional cases in Song 2:8, 9, it is more likely that the הַ is the subject of the following participial clause even though it is prosodically connected to the preceding הַגֵּה by the מִקֶּרֶן. It is unclear what Waltke and O’Connor mean by calling this use of הַ “tautologous” (1990: 313), since even in these cases הַ carries a force that can be distinguished from that of the deictic presentative הַגֵּה, i.e., “hey, this (thing)” or “look here.”

of demonstrative identifiers in Hebrew and זה when used as the subject of a copula (overt or null) always retains its deictic demonstrative characteristics (Diessel’s comment on English is apropos; 1999: 79).

Beyond the four core demonstrative functions (two of which are not attested for זה), Hebrew exhibits two additional, derivative uses of זה—as a non-verbal copula (4) and as a relative marker (5).

(4) Copular³

וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל-יַעֲקֹב גְּשֵׁה-נָא וְאִמְשֵׁךְ בְּנִי הַאֲתָהּ זֶה בְּנִי עֵשָׂו
אִם-לֹא:

And Isaac said to Jacob, “Draw near and let me feel you, my son. You are my son Esau, or not?” (i.e., Are you my son Esau or not?) (Gen 27:21).

(5) Relative⁴

יַעֲלוּ הָרִים יִרְדּוּ בְּקַעֲוֹת אֶל-מְקוֹם זֶה | יִסְדַּתְּ לָהֶם:

They went up the mountains, they went down the valleys, to a place that you established for them (Ps 104:8).

Both functions in (4) and (5) are attested cross-linguistically as the result of the grammaticalization of the demonstrative (for copulas, see Diessel 1999: 143–48; for relatives, see Diessel 1999: 120–23). The copular use of זה is similar to the grammaticalization of the independent pronoun הוא into a pronominal copula, though the precise path is slightly different and the copular זה is rare (see Holmstedt and Jones 2014). The relative use of זה (and זו and זו) reflects a grammaticalization of the Semitic demonstrative, perhaps as early as proto-West Semitic (PWS); moreover, the זה relative represents a type of relative element—the relative marker—that is unlike other early Semitic relative elements: the זה (PWS *ḏ*) relative marker is inflected (contrary to, e.g., אֲשֶׁר) though not for the relativized noun’s position within the relative but in the matrix clause, resulting in an inflectional redundancy (see Deutscher 2001, 2002; Holmstedt 2013).

The grammatical description of זה that I have just sketched accounts for all the data involving זה, זאת, and אלה. That is, it transparently accounts for all the data except one small set—the זה—NP type.

³ See Gen 25:22, 32; 27:21, 24; 1 Sam 9:18; 17:55; 2 Sam 2:20; 1 Kgs 18:7, 17; 2 Kgs 3:8; Ps 24:8; 25:12; Job 28:12, 20; 38:19; Esth 7:5.

⁴ Only m. sg. זה is used as a relative marker, not the f.sg. זאת or common plural אלה; however, the relative use is also found with the rare f. sg. variants זו and זה as well as an indeclinable form found only in poetry, זו. See Exod 13:8, 15:13, 16; 2 Sam 14:2; Isa 42:24; 43:21; Hab 1:11; Ps 9:16; 10:2; 17:9; 31:5; 32:8; 62:12; 68:29; 74:2; 78:54; 104:8, 26; 132:12; 142:4; 143:8; Job 15:17; 19:19; Prov 23:22.

III. THE SYNTAX OF הַ-NP

Grammarians have long noted a small number of cases in which the demonstrative precedes its associated NP, often a quantified NP or number phrase. In Gesenius-Kautzsch-Cowley, the syntax of these examples is explained as apposition, in which the NP is appositive to הַ, or a null copula clause in which the הַ is the subject and the NP is the copular complement (1910: §126aa, 136d). Joüon and Muraoka depart from this by suggesting that in very rare cases הַ is used before the noun but still attributively (2006: §143i), as in (6).

(6) Exod 32:1

וַיֵּרָא הָעָם כִּי־בֹשֶׁשׁ מֹשֶׁה לָרֶדֶת מִן־הַהָר וַיִּקְהָל הָעָם עַל־אֹהֶרֶן
וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו קוּם | עֲשֵׂה־לָּנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר יֵלְכוּ לְפָנֵינוּ כִּי־זֶה |
מֹשֶׁה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלָנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֹא יָדַעְנוּ מַה־הָיָה לוֹ:

And the people saw that Moses was delaying to come down from the mountain. And the people gathered to Aaron and they said to him, “Get up. Make for us gods that walk before us, because this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt—we do not know what has happened to him.”

Waltke and O’Connor analyze examples like (6) similarly (§17.4.1), but also describe the cases of הַ preceding a number phrase as the use of הַ to “emphasize the time,” as in (7):

(7) Josh 14:10

וַעֲתָה הִנֵּה הַחַיָּה יְהוָה | אוֹתִי כַאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּרְתָּ זֶה אַרְבָּעִים וְחָמֵשׁ שָׁנָה

Now then, Yhwh has kept me alive, just as he promised, these forty-five years (Waltke and O’Connor 1990: §17.4.2, #6).

Few previous studies have focused on the syntax of הַ, especially the non-conforming examples. Those that have attempted explanations, such as Pennachiatti 1980, Joosten 1991, and Pat-El 2007, have contributed important pieces to the grammatical puzzle, though none provides an overall adequate and thus convincing analysis.

Pennachiatti argues that the temporal adverbial use of הַ in the הַ-Number phrases (e.g., זֶה שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים, Judg 16:15) developed out of a cleft-construction. That is, for discourse structure reasons, the cleft construction זֶה שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים הִתְלַתְּ בִּי “this is three times (that) you have deceived me,” serves both to focus the clefted constituent (the הַ-NP) and “to establish a relationship of identification between the first and second section.”⁵ From this original cleft

⁵ Pennachiatti 1980: 237: “è quello di stabilire un rapporto di identificazione tra il primo troncone e il secondo.” I am grateful to Krzysztof Baranowski and Mark Graham for discussing Pennachiatti’s argument with me.

structure, Pennachiatti argues that the זה-Number examples were reanalyzed as adverbial phrases rather than full predications, e.g., “già tre volte ti sei burlato di me!” for Judg 16:15 (226).

Joosten specifically addresses the very rare cases of “a proper noun with an adjectival demonstrative” that precedes the noun (1991: 413). He cites מִשֶׁה | זֶה in Exod 32:1 and 23 as the only sure examples, but also discusses the possible cases in Ezek 5:5 (זֶה אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם), Isa 25:9 (זֶה יְהוָה), Ps 48:15 (זֶה | אֱלֹהִים), and Gen 15:2 (הוּא דִמְשַׁק זֶה מִשֶׁה).⁶ He argues that the זה מִשֶׁה pattern “implies that the speakers take their distance” from the named person or entity, thus assigning a plausible pragmatic function to the demonstrative-noun sequence, but providing little insight into the syntactic structure. Since he does not find the “distancing” function in Isa 25:9 and Ps 48:15, he suggests that they are better understood as null copula clauses, i.e., “this is Yhwh” and “this is God?”

The most recent attempt is in Pat-El 2007, and it is with her study that I will end my survey. Pat-El concentrates on the cases of זה preceding a number phrase or quantified NP. Though her argument is not always perspicuous, she appears to make the following claims:

1. זה in these constructions is adverbial (151);
2. The זה אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה construction is just as often at the end of a clause and so cannot be, or be derived from, a cleft construction, contra Pennachietti 1980 (153–54);
3. There are no comparable syntactic patterns in other Semitic languages (154);
4. The זה אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה pattern developed from an “adverbial circumstantial sentence,” such as in Gen 31.41 [see appendix, below], “lost the possessive marker *l*, perhaps first in colloquial parlance, and became more and more dependent on the main sentence until it was understood to be a circumstantial adverbial phrase, rather than a clause with full nexus” (156).

Though the recent proposals, such as Pat-El’s have been creative, I suggest that when it comes to the syntax of זה we should admit that Gesenius-Kautzsch-Cowley articulated a more accurate description over a century ago. First, nowhere do they make the ill-advised claim that זה is adverbial, either in origin or use. Hebrew זה transparently patterns according to the pronominal and adnominal functions of demonstrative in all but a very few cases (see above, section II). Even when זה is used within adverbial phrases, its own function remains clearly demonstrative. Thus, it is confusing at best and simply inaccurate at worst to compare זה with demonstrative adverbials like English *here* and *there* (contra Joüon and Muraoka 2006: 143a).

⁶ In Holmstedt and Jones 2014, we read the הוא in Gen 15:2 as a pronominal copula (83).

Second, Gesenius-Kautzsch-Cowley were correct that two syntactic patterns explain all the examples in which זָה precedes an NP or number phrase: either the NP following זָה is in apposition to it or the NP is the complement of a null copula clause, of which זָה is the subject. Consider again Exod 32:1 from (6), repeated in (8).

(8) Exod 32:1

וַיִּרְא הָעָם כִּי־בָשַׁשׁ מֹשֶׁה לָרֶדֶת מִזִּהְרָר וַיִּקְהַל הָעָם עַל־אַהֲרֹן
וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו קוּם | עֲשֵׂה־לָּנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר יֵלְכוּ לְפָנֵינוּ כִּי־זָה
מֹשֶׁה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הֵעֵלָנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֹא יָדַעְנוּ מַה־הָיָה לּוֹ:

And the people saw that Moses was delaying to come down from the mountain. And the people gathered to Aaron and they said to him, “Get up. Make for us gods that walk before us, because this one, Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt—we do not know what has happened to him.”

In cases like Exod 32.1, the זָה cannot modify מֹשֶׁה, since that implies the existence of at least two men named Moses, “this one (that led us)” versus “that one (that did not lead us)” (see also 1 Sam 21:12; Isa 23:13; Song 7:8). Rather, the deictic pronominal זָה is the people’s way of dismissively referring to Moses, who has not met their expectations (similarly, Joosten 1991; see also Brockelmann 1956: 20). The proper noun מֹשֶׁה follows the זָה to clarify it appositively, as does a second appositive, the more complex הָאִישׁ with its relative clause. Thus, “because this one, Moses, that man who took us out of the land of Egypt—we don’t know what has happened to him.”

In the second pattern, where זָה is followed by a temporal phrase, the זָה points backward or forward to an event that can be quantified, mostly in years. Consider the example in (9).

(9) Deut 8:2

וַיִּזְכַּרְתָּ אֶת־כָּל־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר הִלַּכְתָּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ זָה אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה
בְּמִדְבָּר לְמַעַן עֲנֹתְךָ לְנִסְתָּךְ לְדַעַת אֶת־אֲשֶׁר בְּלִבְבְּךָ הִתְשַׁמֵּר
מִצְוֹתוֹ [מִצְוֹתָיו] אִם־לֹא:

And you shall remember the whole road that Yhwh your God led you on. This was forty years in the wilderness in order to humble you, to test you, to know what was in your heart ...

Rather than interpret זָה אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה in (9) as some sort of questionably formed adverbial phrase (Pat-El 2007), it is much simpler and avoids imaginative grammatical creations to follow the Masoretes in understanding a small prosodic break before the זָה and so take זָה as the subject of a new clause: “And you shall remember the whole road that Yhwh your God led you on. This was forty years in the wilderness in order to humble you, to test you, to know what was in your heart.” Examples like Gen 27:36, given in

(10), should be read similarly but with an unmarked relative following the זה clause (so also Pennachietti 1980: 238):

(10) Gen 27:36

וַיֹּאמֶר הַכִּי קָרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹבֵנִי זֶה פְּעַמַּיִם אֶת־בְּכֹרְתִי לָקַח
וְהִנֵּה עַתָּה לָקַח בְּרָכְתִּי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא־אֶצְלַתְּ לִי בְרָכָה:

And he said, “Is it because one called his name Cheater (that) he cheated me? This is twice (that) my birthright he has taken!

The proposed syntax of (10) is precisely what Pennachietti argues for the examples he identifies as originally cleft constructions. He is, in fact, correct, though I see no support for his subsequent proposal that these cleft sentences were transformed into non-cleft adverbial phrases.

Although Waltke and O’Connor may not accurately describe the syntax of the זה אַרְבַּעִים שָׁנָה pattern, the notion that the pattern “emphasize[s] the time” (1990: 311) points in the correct direction. Most of the examples exhibit a clear exclamative function within their discourse contexts. For example, in (10), Esau expresses his distress and anger at being cheated by Jacob two times. Similarly, in (11), the messenger’s use of the separate clause זה שְׁבַעִים שָׁנָה, at the end of his plaintive question is intended to reinforce his perspective that it has been entirely too long since Yhwh has acted on behalf of his people (see, e.g., Petersen 1984: 146–51).

(11) Zech 1:12

וַיַּעַן מַלְאָכֵי־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עַד־מַתִּי אֶתְהָ לְאֶתְרַחֲם
אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאֶת עָרֵי יְהוּדָה אֲשֶׁר זָעַמְתָּה זֶה שְׁבַעִים שָׁנָה:

And the messenger of Yhwh answered and said, “O Yhwh of Hosts, until when will you not have compassion on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah that you have been angry (with them)? This has been seventy years!”

The exclamative force of (10) and (11) are due to the implicatures arising from the nature of the discourse. Yet the syntax in the two examples is simply a null copula clause with the זה as the subject and the number phrase as the copular complement.⁷

These two patterns, that זה is followed by an appositive NP or that זה is the subject of a null copula clause that is completed by a number phrase, build on known, widely attested features of Hebrew grammar. On these points alone, the principle of parsimony suggests that the more complex descriptions, no matter how creative, are dispreferred. If the well-established patterns also ade-

⁷ Cf. the unnecessary development posited in Blau 1976 (103): “. . . also [i.e, functioning as temporal adverbs] phrases introduced by זה, as in Gen 34, 10 זה פְּעַמַּיִם ‘now (already) twice’; 45, 6 זה שְׁנַתַּיִם ‘now (already) two years’, presumably originally independent clauses opening with deictic זה (‘it is twice’, ‘it is two years’).”

quately explain the data within their literary context, then the novel proposals should be firmly rejected.

IV. THE SYNTAX OF זָה סיני EXPLAINED

How the syntactic analysis of זָה relates to textual interpretation brings us back to the general principle of philology I asserted in the introduction, which I shall formulate a slightly different way here—grammatical analysis must make good sense of a text. To illustrate how this principle ought to work, as well as how it has been ignored, resulting in interpretive unlikelihoods, I will conclude this study by examining the syntax of זָה סיני in Ps 68:9 and Judg 5:5, provided in (12) and (13):

(12) Ps 68:9

אַרְצָא רָעָשָׁה | אֶף-שָׁמַיִם נָטְפוּ מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים זָה סיני מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים
אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

The earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain at the presence of God, the God of Sinai, at the presence of God, the God of Israel (NRSV; alternatively, “before God, the One of Sinai,” e.g., Tate 1990: 160, 163).⁸

(13) Judg 5:5

הָרִים נָזְלוּ מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה זָה סיני מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

The mountains quaked before the LORD, the One of Sinai, before the LORD, the God of Israel (NRSV; alternatively, “Yhwh of Sinai,” e.g., Pat-El 2007: 44).⁹

Both examples are from notoriously difficult poems, sometimes considered to be among the earliest texts in the Bible (see, e.g., Sáenz-Badillos 1993: 56–57 as well as the references listed below in note 11).¹⁰ It has become standard to analyze זָה סיני in both

⁸ NJPS: “the earth trembled, the sky rained because of God, yon Sinai, because of God, the God of Israel”; NIV: “the earth shook, the heavens poured down rain, before God, the One of Sinai, before God, the God of Israel”; KJV: “The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel.”

⁹ NJPS: “The mountains quaked Before the LORD, Him of Sinai, Before the LORD, God of Israel”; NIV: “The mountains quaked before the LORD, the One of Sinai, before the LORD, the God of Israel”; KJV: “The mountains melted from before the LORD, even that Sinai from before the LORD God of Israel.”

¹⁰ See Frolov 2011 for arguments placing the Hebrew of Judges 5 between c. 700 and c. 450 B.C.E. Though there is certainly not the space in this study to address Frolov’s arguments, I find it compelling that the language of Judges 5 mirrors the early monarchic period, but I disagree with the implication that a monarchic setting suggests that there is no distinction between “archaic” and “standard” biblical Hebrew. Also, Frolov uses the same problematic argument typified by Young and

examples as remnants of the proto-West Semitic *ḡ*-series “determinative-relative” and to take the הַיְ as a marker of the genitive, resulting in “God of Sinai” (Ps 68:9) and “Yhwh of Sinai” or “Yhwh, the one of Sinai” (Judg 5:5).¹¹ The sample translations in (12) and (13) and notes 8 and 9 reflect this analysis.

There are two good reasons that the genitive analysis is very unlikely for Ps 68:9 and Judg 5:5—1) it is an ad hoc grammatical analysis and 2) it makes little sense in their poetic contexts. I will spell out each of these issues below, but first a comment on the “genitive” analysis of הַיְ in comparative Semitic perspective is in order.

EXCURSUS: הַיְ סִינַי AND COMPARATIVE SEMITIC

ARGUMENTATION

Those who appeal to comparative Semitic evidence to support the “genitive” analysis of הַיְ סִינַי (e.g., “the one of Sinai”) appeal to a wide geographic and chronological range of divine epithets, e.g., Assyro-Babylonian *šī atānim* “of the [man] of the she-ass,” Nabatean *ḡū-šara* [Gk. Dusares] “the [god] of [mount] šara,” Liḥyānite *ḡū-Ġābat* “the [god] of the Thicket,” Classical Arabic *ḡū l-qarnayn* “the [man] of two horns,” Colloquial Arabic *ḡū ‘ilm* “the [man] of learning,” Sabaic *ḡāt-ḥamīm*

Rezetko 2008 and Rezetko and Young 2014, that pointing to the occasional presence of the identified “early” features in arguably “later” texts invalidates the whole diachronic enterprise. See Drescher 2012 for insight into why both “early” and “late” features may co-exist and the distributional patterns that allow for their identification. On the distributional analysis of אֲשֶׁר and שֶׁ that also accounts for its presence in both early (Judges 5) and late (Qoheleth) texts, but not between, see Holmstedt forthcoming.

¹¹ See Grimme 1896: 573; Albright 1935: 204; 1936: 30; 1950–1951: 20; Allegro 1955: 311; Cross 1962: 239, n. 61; Waltke and O’Connor 1990: 337, §19.5; Lipinski 2001: 334, 510; Huehnergard 2006: 111; Pat-El 2010: 44; 2012: 323; 2013: 2 (note that in her latest article, Pat-El mistakenly cites הַיְ סִינַי as “Exod 15:13”). Albright reconstructs Judg 5:4–5 and so changes what poetic structure exists in the MT. Cross 1962, Huehnergard 2006, and Pat-El 2010, 2012, 2013 all ignore the poetic lineation and cite the phrase הַיְ סִינַי completely divorced from any textual context. Allegro (followed by Pat-El 2010) suggests that there are three more examples of this הַיְ “genitive” use: Mic 5:4 הַיְ שְׁלוֹם (“[the one] of peace”; Ps 34:7 הַיְ עָנִי “[the one] of poverty”; Hab 1:11 הַיְ כֹחֹו “[possessor] of his strength.” But the הַיְ is Mic 5:4 is certainly the pronominal use of the demonstrative, “this (one) shall be peace” (see, e.g., Smith 1984: 44), the only way this works in Ps 34:7 is to repoint the adjective עָנִי to the noun עָנִי (Allegro 1955: 311; Pat-El does not mention the need to repoint the MT; 2010: 44, n. 7), and הַיְ in Hab 1:11 is more easily understood as the relative marker with a null head, “(he) who his strength is his god (becomes guilty)” (see, e.g., Smith 1984: 99). In sum, there are no compelling examples of the alleged “genitive” use of הַיְ.

“the [goddess] of the heat” (Lipinski 2001: 334; cf. Birkeland 1948).¹²

Additionally, Cross adduces in support of the “genitive” analysis Albright’s reading of *dt btn* “the Serpent Lady,” as an epithet of Asherah, El’s consort, the phrase *d tb*, “the Merciful One,” as an epithet of El similar to Ugaritic *dū pa’idi*, “the Compassionate One” (1962: 238). Cross adds additional proto-Canaanite evidence to reconstruct the phrase **ēl dū ōlami* “El, the ancient one,” as the origin of the biblical epithet אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי (Gen 21.33), which supposedly reflects the loss of the demonstrative (239–40).

Based on this comparative evidence, the Hebrew הָ סִינִי, or more fully, the sequences הָ סִינִי יְהוָה or אֱלֹהִים הָ סִינִי are understood as “genitival” in that the הָ marks a genitive relationship between הָ יְהוָה or אֱלֹהִים (as the “possessed,” broadly understood) and הָ סִינִי (as the “possessor”). While the comparative evidence for הָ סִינִי is salient, the flaw lies in how the “genitive” origin of this Semitic construction has been understood and applied to the Hebrew phrase.

In an insightful argument concerning the origin of subordination, Deutscher (2009) points to this very structure in Old Akkadian, such as, *šūt in TU.RA uḫirū-n liḫuz* “he should take those.of/šūt (who) were delayed in illness” (209, with slight modification), in which the *šūt* demonstrative is the East Semitic reflex of the West Semitic *d-* demonstrative-cum-relative. In this example, the demonstrative *šūt* is the head of an unmarked relative clause; moreover, it is bound to the unmarked relative that modifies it (a common Semitic structure; see, e.g., Holmstedt 2008). Deutscher then argues that relative clauses formed using the *š-* demonstratives, such as *dīn-um šu idīn-u* “the judgment that he rendered,” reflect the integration of an appositional structure, in which a noun (e.g., *dīn-um*) is modified by demonstratively-headed relative clause (e.g., *šu idīn-u*), that is, “the judgment, that one.of (that) he rendered.” From this apposition structure, the “demonstrative pronoun was degraded from an independent head of a relative clause to a mere marker of the onset of a relative” (209).

Deutscher’s cogent analysis can be directly applied to most of the Semitic parallels adduced in the study of הָ סִינִי. In each of these demonstrative-noun constructions, the analytical options are either that the demonstrative retains its demonstrative force (and is bound to and so modified by an unmarked relative clause, e.g., *dū-šara* “that one of šara” or “that one (who is) of šara”) or has become a relative word modifying a null head, “(the one) who is of šara.” In either case, the demonstrative pronoun itself is *not* a genitive marker (contra, e.g., Allegro 1955; Pat-El 2010); rather, the “genitive”

¹² See also the references above in note 11.

nature of the relationship is a product of the bound/cliticization construction in Semitic.

As most grammatical references recognize, and as I have briefly described in this study, there are four well-established uses of the deictic demonstrative **זֶה** in ancient Hebrew: 1) pronominal, 2) adnominal, 3) relative, and 4) copular. A “genitive” use is not among these. Moreover, Diessel 1999 provides no comparable typological evidence for a demonstrative used as a genitive marker as suggested for ancient Hebrew.¹³ This strongly suggests that we should consider whether one of the four established functions for **זֶה** can adequately explain the data.

Perhaps more damning for the “genitive” analysis of **זֶה** in Ps 68:9 and Judg 5:5 than the misunderstood comparative Semitic data is the poetic structure of the two verses, which seems to have been ignored by those who have proposed the “genitive” analysis. It is worthwhile starting our poetic discussion by noting that the Masoretic tradition divides the verse in Ps 68:9, given again in (14), by the **עַלִּי וַיִּוְרַד** on **אֱלֹהִים**, leaving **זֶה סִינֵי** in the second half.¹⁴ Similarly, in Judg 5:5, given again in (15), the **אֶתְנַחַּ** after **יְהוָה** once again places **זֶה סִינֵי** in the second half of the verse (so also Frolov 2011: 166).

(14) Ps 68:9

אַרְצַ רְעֵשָׁה | אֶף־שָׁמַיִם נֹטְפוֹ מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים
זֶה סִינֵי מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

¹³ The only potential demonstrative-genitive connection Diessel describes is one of the proposed origins for a genitive linker in Chadic, that it developed from a demonstrative used as an adnominal determiner or as the demonstrative used pronominal with a possessor NP in apposition. Importantly for the discussion of Hebrew, though, is that in the Chadic data, the NP following the demonstrative is the possessor NP, i.e., *John's in the horse of John's* (1999: 131–32). This structure has no parallel in the Hebrew data, in which the alleged “genitive” noun is not a possessor. Indeed, the variable semantics of the cliticization process of the bound (or “construct”) structure, which may but do not necessarily signal possession, mislead many Hebraists and Semitics to use the Latinate “genitive” label inaccurately.

¹⁴ Joüon and Muraoka also invoke the Masoretic **טַעֲמִים**, but their point is opaque (2006: 500, §143i, n. 10). An anonymous reviewer questioned whether the **אֶתְנַחַּ** in Ps 68:9, which is placed on **סִינֵי**, does not imply that the Masoretes, at least, understood **זֶה סִינֵי** to be associated with the preceding **אֱלֹהִים**. The simple answer to this is, absolutely not. In a poetic verse with an **עַלִּי וַיִּוְרַד**, this **טַעֲמִים** marks the primary division of the verse, which results in a downgrade of the **אֶתְנַחַּ**, which then marks the primary division of whatever half-verse in which it appears (see Yeivin 1981: 266–67). Thus, in Ps 68:9, the **אֶתְנַחַּ** separates **זֶה סִינֵי** from the remainder of the half-verse, **מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**. That is, the **אֶתְנַחַּ** neatly separates the subject from the complement of the gapped verb, **רְעֵשׂ**.

The earth shook—even the heavens dripped—before
God;
this one, Sinai, (shook) before God the God of Israel.¹⁵

(15) Judg 5:5

הָרִים נָזְלוּ מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה

זֶה סִינַי מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

The mountains streamed¹⁶ before Yhwh;
this one, Sinai, (streamed) before Yhwh, God of Israel.¹⁷

¹⁵ Knohl (2012) proposes that סִינַי in Ps 68:9, 18 is not a geographic reference but an epithet for יהוה, thus “The earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain, before Elohim—that is, Sinai.” With this supposed epithet, Knohl sees an early equation of יהוה with the Mesopotamian moon god Sin. But the textual argument for this in Psalm 68 is very weak. First, Knohl builds the equation on his analysis of 68:18, in which he finds the reference to Mount Sinai too close to the description of Mount Bashan as the eternal residence of יהוה in vv. 16–17. Even Knohl acknowledges, however, that by a small (and common) emendation the reference to סִינַי in v. 18 can be understood to “depict God as coming from his abode at Mount Sinai in order to assist his people in the war (see Judg 5 and Hab 3), and moreover, as deciding to reside on Mount Bashan and to make this mountain into His eternal bode” (2012: 16). Second, Knohl’s analysis is definitely not “based on the usual meaning of the word זָה in Biblical Hebrew” (2012: 17), since his translation “that is, Sinai” does not transparently reflect any accepted understanding of זָה, but suggests that he takes it (uniquely) as an appositive marker (and Isa 23:13, which he provides in n. 44 as a similar use of זָה, is not a helpful comparison; see below, example (41) in the Appendix). In sum, there is no good literary or grammatical reason to take סִינַי as an epithet of יהוה in Psalm 68.

¹⁶ The Qal נָזַל “flows” is often repointed, based on the putative evidence of ἐσαλεύθησαν in the LXX, as a Nifal from זָלַל, so נָזְלוּ “quaked”; see NRSV; DCH, s.v. נָזַל; HALOT, s.v. נָזַל; Keil 1874: 249; Boling 1975: 108; Butler 2009: 115–16. However, the Greek evidence is not as clear as the lexa and commentators suggest or imply and the sense of “stream” for mountains is neither illogical nor out of place in the literary context of both Judges 5 and Psalm 68. First, the LXX rendering ἐσαλεύθησαν for נָזְלוּ in Judg 5:5 does not clearly suggest that a verb from the root זָלַל II “to quake” (HALOT) was in its Vorlage. The root זָלַל II “to quake” (DCH זָלַל III) appears only in Isa 63:9 and 64:2. In both cases the LXX has the noun τρόμος ‘trembling’ (not a verb). Moreover, at the end of the same clause in Is 63:9 is τανύσσονται (< τήκειν “to melt”), which reflects נָזַל “to flow” (Muraoka 2010: 275), not זָלַל II. Thus, the Greek evidence does not clearly support repointing the MT Hebrew נָזְלוּ to נָזַל.

Second, the image of mountains melting and subsequently “flowing” (see, e.g., Ps 147:18 for the sequence “melting-flowing”) is neither illogical nor necessarily foreign to the biblical conception of theophanic effects. The language of the mountains “dripping” and “flowing” occur in images of agricultural bounty connected to restoration (see, e.g., Joel 4:18, Amos 9:13) and is arguably extended to Yhwh’s appearance in judgment in Mic 1.4 (וְנָמְסוּ הָהָרִים תַּחְתֵּי וְהַעֲמָקִים יִתְבַּקְּעוּ כְּדוֹנֵג מִפְּנֵי הָאֵשׁ כְּמִים מִגְרִים) (בְּמוֹרֵד).

It seems transparent that the poetic structure (i.e., the parallelism of the respective couplets) indicates that **זֶה סִינִי** is best understood as parallel to **אֶרֶץ** in (14) and to **הָרִים** in (15). But given the difficulties these verses have posed for interpreters, I will briefly situate each verse within its literary context and describe the poetic features that I have represented in my translations.

Psalm 68 covers numerous themes, often dealing with Yhwh's kingship, though scholars have had difficulty determining a clear structure.¹⁸ However the psalm is structured overall, vv. 8–11 are widely recognized as a unit in which most interpreters see a theophany that builds both on the imagery of the storm-god and God's advocacy for his people. The poetic structure of v. 9 consists of a well-balanced bicolon, with three prosodic word-pairs in each half, illustrated in (16) by the division of pairs using ||:

(16) Ps 68:9

אֶרֶץ רַעְשָׁה || אֶף-שָׁמַיִם נֹטְפוּ || מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים
זֶה סִינִי || מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים || אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

Additionally, the verb **רַעְשָׁה** in the first half-verse is gapped into the second half. While the second half is complicated by the verb-gapping and the appositive **אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** (both to clarify who this **אֱלֹהִים** is and to balance the lines), the first half includes its own complication—a parenthetical clause, beginning with **אֶף**, that sits between the verb **רַעְשָׁה** and its adjunct **מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים**.

In sum, in Ps 68:9, when Yhwh marched before his people, the earth **רַעַשׂ**, the heavens **נֹטַף**, and Mount Sinai **רַעַשׂ** (by gapping from the preceding main clause), all of which reflects a progression of nature's responses to Yhwh's theophany during the Exodus.¹⁹

Like Psalm 68, the complications surrounding the interpretation of Judges 5 are numerous, and run the gamut from genre to

¹⁷ Moore (followed by Seeligman 1964: 80, n. 1) suggests that **זֶה סִינִי** in Judg 5:5 is a gloss (1895: 142). Fishbane argues similarly that **זֶה סִינִי** in Ps 68:9 is a scribal gloss to connect the earthquake imagery with the Sinai theophany: “It is therefore readily conceivable that a later glossator-scribe read the particular imagery of Ps. 68:9 within its particular historico-geographical context as an allusion to the Sinaitic revelation—and so interrupted the a~ab parallelism (‘before Elohim ... before Elohim, God of Israel’) with the specifying comment: **זֶה סִינִי** ‘this [earthquake caused by Elohim] refers to [the theophany of] Sinai’” (1985: 55). Knohl allows that **זֶה סִינִי** in Judg 5:5 might be a gloss, but dismisses Fishbane's argument for Ps 69:9 (2012: 16, n. 43). I see no reason to take **זֶה סִינִי** as a gloss in either text; it fits the literary development and poses no grammatical problems, as I argue below.

¹⁸ See, among myriad others, Gray 1977; Dahood 1968: 133–34; Tate 1990: 170–75; Hossfeld and Zenger 2005: 160–64; Knohl 2012.

¹⁹ Although not all scholars connect the mention of **סִינִי** in Ps 68:9 to the Exodus traditions (see, e.g., Knohl 2012), many do take such a connection to make sense not only of the word **סִינִי** in the verse but also of the perceived literary progression (or concentricity) of the Psalm as a whole (see, e.g., Tate 1990: 177; Hossfeld and Zenger 2005: 165).

structure, language to dating.²⁰ This passage is the Song of Deborah about the Israelite victory over the army of Hazor. But more than a poetic recital of the victory that was narrated in Judges 4, the song in Judges 5 celebrates both those who בָּאוּ לְעִזְרַת יְהוָה (to paraphrase 5:23) and Yhwh himself as Israel's champion (Webb 2012: 205–6). After the narrative introduction (v. 1) and then brief preliminary elements of the song in vv. 2–3, the song quickly moves to the powerful image of Yhwh marching forth to battle, beginning from the southern areas associated with the beginning of his relationship with Israel, אֲדוֹם/שַׁעִיר (v. 4). This battle march affects creation, including סִינֵי (v. 5), by which the song draws Israel's constitutional tradition into the glorious victory. Just as the psalmist invokes Mount Sinai to connect the theophanic imagery to the Exodus memory (see above, n. 15), so Deborah draws on the Exodus event by invoking Sinai in order to describe the similar victory provided by Yhwh against Sisera:

This powerful poetry draws on the historical memory of the exodus, when Yahweh as the divine warrior manifested his presence by making wind and water change their normal behavior for the sake of his people, and Sinai, where his presence was manifested on the mountain in cloud and fire and earthquake ... Here in Judges 5 it gives powerful poetic expression to the belief that the storm which broke over Sisera and his army and threw them into panic and retreat was no merely natural event, or amazing stroke of luck; it was unleashed by Yahweh, as he had divided the Sea at the exodus and shaken Mount Sinai by descending on it (Webb 2012: 208).

The poetic structure of Judg 5:5 consists of a bicolon with three words or word pairs in each half, illustrated in (17) using || to divide the units:

(17) Judg 5:5

הַרִים || נָזְלוּ || מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה
זֶה סִינֵי || מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה || אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

Though the six units of the bicolon are not quite as neatly isolated as they are in Ps 68:9, the separation of subject phrases (הַרִים and זֶה סִינֵי) from the other syntactic elements of the clause is clear. Moreover, just as in Ps 68:9, the gapping of the verb in the first half into the second half is compensated for by the appositive אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל in the second half so that the basic balance between the two lines is preserved. There is also a similar thematic progression in Judg 5:5 compared to Ps 68:9—the earth רָעַשׁ (5:4a), the heavens and the clouds נָטַף water (5:4b), and the mountains נָזְלוּ (5:5a) as does Mount Sinai (5:5b gapped from v. 5a).

²⁰ For accessible and good summaries, see Butler 2009: 121–35 and Webb 2012: 199–206, and the vast body of scholarship cited in both.

In summary, in both Ps 68:9 and Judg 5:5, **זֶה סִינַי** “this (mountain), Sinai” is experiencing the effects of Yhwh’s power, not defining *who* Yhwh is (as a **זֶה** relative clause would do, and presumably as the supposed **זֶה** genitive phrase would do). Thus, the weight of Hebrew grammar as well as the literary features of the verses in question indicate that it unnecessary to propose a novel grammatical function for the demonstrative **זֶה**. Rather, in both cases the **זֶה** operates as a deictic demonstrative followed by an appositive proper noun, **סִינַי**, which clarifies the deictic reference. As such, these examples are no different than the **זֶה מֹשֶׁה** (Exod 32:1) or **זֶה אֲרֶבְעִים שָׁנָה זֶה** (Deut 8:2) types explained above.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, **זֶה** grammar in ancient Hebrew straightforwardly accords to cross-linguistically attested patterns of demonstratives. **זֶה** and its feminine and common plural counterparts function primarily as deictic pronouns or deictic nominal modifiers. A small set of examples indicate that some stage of Hebrew witnessed the grammaticalization of **זֶה** as a relative marker and a copular pronoun.

But beyond this, there is no compelling evidence for the use of **זֶה** as a “genitive” marker. Indeed, as I have shown with the two examples most often adduced as **זֶה** genitives, the genitive analysis fails the tests of both grammar and literary sensitivity. Instead, both Judg 5:5 and Ps 68:9 should be understood as the Masoretes understood them, with **זֶה סִינַי** beginning the second half-verse and the **זֶה** in each as a pronominal demonstrative.

More than simply clarifying the grammar of **זֶה**-NP or **זֶה**-Number phrases in the Hebrew Bible, this study also serves as a bifold warning. First, comparative Semitic evidence must be used cautiously, since there are many nuances of syntax yet to be fully understood. To wit, the demonstrative does *not* ever serve as a “genitive” marker in **זֶה** constructions (nor in the Semitic parallels). Second, ancient language grammarians, whether operating within an historical-comparative framework or theoretical linguistic framework, must not—indeed, cannot!—ignore the literary context of data examples. To put it more bluntly, linguists and grammarians risk significant error if they ignore (or simply cannot read) texts.

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APPENDIX: READING THE הַ—NP DATA

The following examples have been previously mis-analyzed within at least one of the studies or reference works I have cited in this work. Below I provide the texts with translations that clearly indicate the analysis I consider legitimate, according to the arguments I present in this study. In a few cases, I add salient notes after the translation.

(18) Gen 2:23

וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם זֹאת הַפֶּעַם עֵצִים מִעֲצָמִי וּבָשָׂר מִבָּשָׂרִי לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִישׁ לְקַחְהָ-זֹאת:

And the man said, “This is the time! Bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh! This one will be called ‘Woman’, because from man this one was taken.”

(19) Gen 27:36

וַיֹּאמֶר הָכִי קָרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיִּעַקְבֵנִי זֶה פַעַמִּים אֶת-בְּכֹרְתִי לָקַח וְהִנֵּה עַתָּה לָקַח בְּרַכְתִּי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא-אֶצְלַת לִי בְרַכָּה:

Is it that one called his name Grasper (that) he grasped me? This is twice (that) my birthright he has taken!

(20) Gen 31:38

זֶה עֲשָׂרִים שָׁנָה אֲנֹכִי עִמָּךְ רְחֵלִיד וְעֵזְרָא לֹא שָׁבְלוּ וְאֵילֵי צֹאנֶיךָ לֹא אֲכָלְתִּי:

This is twenty years (that) I have been with you. Your ewes and goats have not been childless. And I have not eaten the rams of your flock.

(21) Gen 31:41

זֶה-לִּי עֲשָׂרִים שָׁנָה בְּבֵיתְךָ עֲבַדְתִּיךָ אַרְבַּע-עָשָׂר שָׁנָה בְּשֵׂתֶיךָ בְּנֹתֶיךָ וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים בְּצֹאנֶיךָ וַתַּחֲלֵף אֶת-מִשְׁכָּרְתִּי עֲשֶׂרֶת מְנִים:

This has been for me twenty years (that) I have served you in your house—fourteen years in exchange for your two daughters and six years in exchange for your sheep and you have changed my wage ten times.

(22) Gen 43:10

כִּי לֹלֵא הִתְמַהְמַהְנוּ כִּי-עַתָּה שָׁבְנוּ זֶה פַעַמִּים:

Because if we would not have tarried, indeed, now we would have returned twice.

(23) Gen 45:6

כִּי־זֶה שְׁנָתַיִם הָרַעַב בְּקֶרֶב הָאָרֶץ וְעוֹד חֲמֵשׁ שָׁנִים אֲשֶׁר אֵין־
חֶרֶשׁ וְקָצִיר:

Because this has been two years (that) the famine has been in the midst of the land and five more years that no plowing or harvest will be.

(24) Num 14:22

כִּי כָל־הָאֲנָשִׁים הָרְאוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי וְאֶת־אֲתֵי אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתִי
בְּמִצְרַיִם וּבְמִדְבָּר וַיִּנְסוּ אֹתִי זֶה עָשָׂר פְּעָמִים וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹלִי:

Indeed, all the men who saw my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness tested me. This was ten times! And they didn't hear my voice.

(25) Num 22:28

וַיִּפְתַּח יְהוָה אֶת־פִּי הָאֲתוֹן וַתֹּאמֶר לְבַלְעָם מָה־עָשִׂיתִי לָךְ כִּי
הִכִּיתָנִי זֶה שְׁלֹשׁ רְגָלִים:

What have I done to you, because you have hit me? This is three times (now)!

(26) Num 22:32

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מְלָאֲךָ יְהוָה עַל־מָה הִכִּיתָ אֶת־אֲתֵנִךְ זֶה שְׁלֹשׁ
רְגָלִים הִנֵּה אֲנִכִּי יֵצְאָתִי לְשֹׁטֵן כִּי־יֵרֵט הַדֶּרֶךְ לְנֹגְדִי:

And the messenger of Yhwh said to him, “Why did you strike your ass? This is three times (that) behold, I have come out as an adversary, because your way is slippery(?) before me.”

(27) Num 22:33

וַתִּרְאֵנִי הָאֲתוֹן וַתֵּט לְפָנַי זֶה שְׁלֹשׁ רְגָלִים אוּלַי נִטְתָּה מִפְּנֵי כִי
עָתָה גַם־אֲתַכֶּה הָרִגְתִּי וְאוֹתָהּ הִחַיִּיתִי:

And the ass saw me. And it turned before me. This is three times! If it had not turned from me, indeed, I would therefore have killed you but it I would have let live.

(28) Num 24:10

וַיַּחֲרֹאף בָּלַק אֶל־בַּלְעָם וַיִּסְפֹּק אֶת־כַּפָּיו וַיֹּאמֶר בָּלַק אֶל־בַּלְעָם
לֵקֵב אִיבִי קִרְאִיתִךָ וְהִנֵּה בִרְכָתָ בְּרַךְ זֶה שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים:

And Balak's anger burned against Balaam and he clapped his palms and Balak said to Balaam, “To curse my enemies I called you and look—you have blessed them! This is three times (now)!

(29) Deut 2:7

כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בֵּרַכְךָ בְּכֹל מַעֲשֵׂה יָדְךָ לְכָתוּב אֶת־הַמְדַבֵּר
הַגָּדֹל הַזֶּה זֶה | אַרְבַּעִים שָׁנָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ עִמָּךְ לֹא חָסְרָת דָּבָר:

Because Yhwh your god blessed you in every deed of your hand. He knew your going through his great wilderness. This is forty years (that) Yhwh your god has been with you. You have not lacked a thing.

(30) Deut 8:2

וְזָכַרְתָּ אֶת־כָּל־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר הִלִּיכְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ זֶה אַרְבַּעִים שָׁנָה
בַּמְדַּבֵּר לְמַעַן עֲנִתְךָ לְנִסְתְּךָ לְדַעַת אֶת־אֲשֶׁר בְּלִבְבְּךָ הִתְשַׁמֵּר
מִצְוֹתוֹ [מִצְוֹתָיו] אִם־לֹא:

And you shall remember the whole road that Yhwh your God led you on. This was forty years in the wilderness in order to humble you, to test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.

(31) Deut 8:4

שְׁמֹלְתְךָ לֹא בִלְתָה מֵעֲלִיד וְרַגְלְךָ לֹא בָצָקָה זֶה אַרְבַּעִים שָׁנָה:

Your shirt has not worn out from upon and your foot has not swelled, (even though) this has been forty years.

(32) Josh 9:12

זֶה | לַחֲמֵנוּ חֶם הַצֹּטִי־דָנוּ אֹתוֹ מִבֵּיתֵינוּ בַּיּוֹם צִאתָנוּ לְלַכֵּת אֵלֵיכֶם
וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה יָבֵשׁ וְהָיָה נִקְדָּים:

This is our bread; we took it from our houses warm on the day that we went out to come to you and now, look—(it) is dry and spotted.

(33) Josh 14:10

וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה הִחִיָּה יְהוָה | אֹתִי כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּרְךָ זֶה אַרְבַּעִים וְחָמֵשׁ
שָׁנָה מֵאֲזֵי דִבְרֵי יְהוָה אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר־הִלְךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל
בַּמְדַּבֵּר וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה אֲנִכִּי הַיּוֹם בְּן־חָמֵשׁ וּשְׁמוֹנִים שָׁנָה:

And now, look, Yhwh has let me live, just as he spoke. This has been forty five years since Yhwh spoke this work to Moses (at the time) that Israel walked through the wilderness ...

(34) Josh 22:3

לֹא־עָזַבְתֶּם אֶת־אֲחֵיכֶם זֶה יָמִים רַבִּים עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וּשְׁמִרְתֶּם
אֶת־מִשְׁמַרְתֵּי מִצְוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

You have not abandoned your brothers. This has been many days until today and you have kept the watch of the commandment of Yhwh your God.

(35) Judg 16:15

וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֵיךְ תֹאמַר אֶהְבֶּתִּיךָ וְלִבְךָ אִין אִתִּי **זֶה שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים**
הִתְלַתְתָּ בִּי וְלֹא־הִגַּדְתָּ לִּי בְמָה כַחַךְ גְּדוֹל:

And she said to him, “How can you say ‘I love you’ and your heart is not with me. This is three times (that) you have deceived me and you have not told me how your strength is great.”

(36) 1 Sam 29:3

וַיֹּאמְרוּ שָׂרֵי פְלִשְׁתִּים מֶה הָעֲבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶכְיֵשׁ אֶל־שָׂרֵי
פְלִשְׁתִּים הַלֹּא־זֶה דָּוִד עֶבֶד | שְׂאוּל מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הִיָּה אִתִּי
זֶה יָמִים אֹזְיָה שָׁנִים וְלֹא־מָצָאתִי בּוֹ מְאוּמָה מִיּוֹם נָפְלוּ עַד־הַיּוֹם
הַזֶּה:

Is not this David, the servant of Saul, king of Israel who has been with me? This has been days or this has (even) been years and I have not found anything in him from the day he fell until this day.

(37) 2 Sam 14:2

וַיִּשְׁלַח יוֹאָב תְּקוּעָה וַיִּקַּח מִשָּׁם אִשָּׁה חַכְמָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֶיהָ
הַתֹּאבְלִי־נָא וּלְבָשִׁי־נָא בְגָדֵי־אֲבָל וְאַל־תְּסוּכִי שִׁמּוֹן וְהָיִיתְ כְּאִשָּׁה
זֶה יָמִים רַבִּים מִתֹּאבְלַת עַל־מָת:

And Joab sent to Tekoa and he took from there a wise woman. And he said to her, “Mourn and put on mourning clothes. Do not anoint yourself with oil. And so you shall be like a woman (who) has for many days been mourning over a dead person” (on relative זה used with a f. sg. head, see הר ציון זה in Ps 74:2).

(38) 1 Kgs 14:14

וְהָקִים יְהוָה לּוֹ מֶלֶךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יִכְרֹת אֶת־בֵּית יִרְבֵּעַם זֶה
הַיּוֹם וּמָה גַם־עַתָּה:

And Yhwh shall raise for himself a king over Israel who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this time—today! And what? Even now!

(39) 2 Kgs 6:33

עוֹדֵנּוּ מְדַבֵּר עִמָּם וְהִנֵּה הַמֶּלֶךְ יֵרֵד אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה־זֹאת
הָרָעָה מֵאֵת יְהוָה מֶה־אוֹחִיל לִיהוָה עוֹד: ס

And while he was speaking with them, look—the king* was coming down to him and he said, “Look—this, the trouble, is from Yhwh. Why should I wait for Yhwh longer?”

(40) 2 Kgs 14:14

וְהָקִים יְהוָה לּוֹ מֶלֶךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יִכְרֹת אֶת־בֵּית יִרְבֵּעַם זֶה
הַיּוֹם וּמָה גַם־עַתָּה:

Then Yhwh shall raise for himself a king of Israel who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this (day), today! And what now?

(41) Isa 23:13

הָן | אֶרֶץ כַּשְׂדִּים זֶה הָעַם לֹא הָיָה אֲשׁוּר יְסֻדָּה לְצִיִּים הַקִּימוּ
בַחֲנִינוֹ עָרְרוּ אֶרְמֹנֹתֶיהָ שָׁמָּה לְמַפְלָה:

Behold, the land of the Chaldeans. This is the people (that) does not exist (any longer). Assyria—He appointed her for wild beasts. They raised its towers (*Ketiv*), destroyed its citadels, and made it into a ruin (this is as admittedly difficult verse, much more than Knohl's citation as an analogue for Ps 68:9 would suggest [2012: 17, n. 44]; for discussion, see Wildberger 1997: 405, 410–11).

(42) Jer 25:3

מִן־שָׁלֹשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה לִיאֲשִׁיהוּ בֶן־אָמוֹן מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וְעַד | הַיּוֹם
הַזֶּה זֶה שָׁלֹשׁ וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה הָיָה דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי וְאָדַבְרָ אֲלֵיכֶם
אֲשֶׁכֶּיִם וְדַבַּר וְלֹא שָׁמַעְתֶּם:

From the thirteenth year of Josiah, son of Amon, king of Judah, until this day, this has been twenty-three years (that) that word of Yhwh came to me. And I spoke to you, waking early and speaking, and you did not listen.

(43) Zech 1:12

וַיַּעַן מַלְאָךְ־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עַד־מַתִּי אֶתְּהָ לְאַתְרָתְךָ
אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאֶת עָרֵי יְהוּדָה אֲשֶׁר זָעַמְתָּה זֶה שְׁבַע־עָשָׂר שָׁנָה:

And the messenger of Yhwh answered and said, “O Yhwh of Hosts, until when will you not have compassion on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah that you have been angry (with them)? This has been seventy years!”

(44) Zech 7:3

לֵאמֹר אֶל־הַכֹּהֲנִים אֲשֶׁר לְבֵית־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְאֶל־הַנְּבִיאִים לֵאמֹר
הֲאֵבֶכֶה בַחֲדָשׁ הַחֲמִשִּׁי הַנִּזְוֹר כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי זֶה כַּמָּה שָׁנִים:

Say to the priests who are at the Temple of Yhwh of Hosts and to the prophets, “Shall I weep on the fifth month, separating myself like I have done? This has been how many years?”

(45) Zech 7:5

אָמַר אֶל־כָּל־עַם הָאָרֶץ וְאֶל־הַכֹּהֲנִים לֵאמֹר כִּי־צַמְתֶּם וְסָפַדְתֶּם
בַּחֲמִישִׁי וּבְשִׁבְעִי זֶה שְׁבַע־עָשָׂר שָׁנָה הָצִוִּים צַמְתִּי אֲנִי:

Say to all the people of the land and to the priests: When you fasted and lamented in fifth month and in the seventh month (this has been seventy years!), did you really fast for me?—me?!

(46) Ps 34:7

זֶה עָנִי קָרָא וַיהוָה שָׁמַע וּמְכַל־צָרוֹתָיו הוֹשִׁיעוּ:

This (one), a poor man, cried and Yhwh heard; and from all his distresses he saved him (Waltke and O'Connor emend עָנִי to עָנִי “poverty”; 1990: 338).

(47) Ps 49:14

זֶה דַּרְכָּם בְּסֵל לָמוֹ וְאַחֲרֵיהֶם | בְּפִיהֶם יִרְצוּ סֵלָה:

This is their way—folly is theirs; and (this is) their end—they take pleasure in their own mouth. Selah.

(48) Ps 104:25

זֶה | הַיָּם גָּדוֹל וְרוֹחַב יְדָיִם שָׁם־רָמַשׁ וְאֵין מִסְפָּר חַיֹּת קְטָנוֹת
עַם־גְּדֹלוֹת:

This, the sea, is great and broad; creeping things are there, and there is no number; small creatures are (there) with the great ones (alt. “this is the sea; it is great”; also, “this is the sea [that] is great”).

(49) Ps 118:20

זֶה־הַשַּׁעַר לַיהוָה צְדִיקִים יָבֹאוּ בּוֹ:

This is the gate belonging to Yhwh; righteous people will enter by it.

(50) Job 19:3

זֶה עָשָׂר פְּעָמִים תְּכַלְמֵנִי לֹא־תִבְשׂוּ תִהְיֶה־לִּי:

This has been ten times (that) you have reproached me! Are you not ashamed (that) you have wronged me?

(51) Song 7:8

זֹאת קוֹמַתָּה דָּמְתָה לְתַמָּר וְשֹׁדֵד לְאִשְׁכָּלוֹת:

This, your stature, resembles a palm tree, and your breasts (resemble) clusters.

(52) Esth 4:11

כָּל־עַבְדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְעַם־מְדִינֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ יוֹדְעִים אֲשֶׁר כָּל־אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה
אֲשֶׁר יָבֹא־אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־הַחֲצֵר הַפְּנִימִית אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִקְרָא אַחַת
דָּתוֹ לְהִמִּית לְבַד מֵאֲשֶׁר יוֹשִׁיט־לוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־שֵׁרְבִיט הַזָּהָב וְחַיָּה
וְאֵנִי לֹא נִקְרָאתִי לְבֹא אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ זֶה שְׁלוֹשִׁים יוֹם:

All the servants of the king and the people of the provinces of the king know that, any man or woman who goes in to the king, in to the inner court, who is not called—one is his law, to kill anyone apart from the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter and so lives. But I have not been called to go in to the king. This is (another) thirty days.

(53) Ezra 3:12

וְרַבִּים מֵהַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וְרֵאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת הִזְקֵנִים אֲשֶׁר רָאוּ אֶת־
הַבַּיִת הָרִאשׁוֹן בְּיָסְדוֹ זֶה הַבַּיִת בְּעֵינֵיהֶם בְּכִים בְּקוֹל גָּדוֹל וְרַבִּים
בְּתֹרֵעָה בְּשִׂמְחָה לְהַרְיֵם קוֹל:

And many among the priests and the Levites and the heads of the families, elderly people who had seen the first temple, when it was founded, this one, the temple in their sight, were weeping with a great voice; but many with a shout and with joy (responded) by being loud.