

# THE GRAMMAR OF SOCIAL GENDER IN BIBLICAL HEBREW

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*When does the Hebrew Bible's masculine or "male" wording allow for women to be in view?* This paper addresses that question via a philological (inductive) approach, taking the biblical corpus as a whole and distilling the rules of its linguistic system according to a plain-sense reading of the text. The investigation focuses on what the biblical text seems to expect of its readers with regard to construing the social-gender import of three linguistic usages: second-person masculine singular address; third-person masculine singular references; and "male" nouns (i.e., those with specifically female counterparts), including *אִישׁ*, *בֶּן*, *אָדָם*, and *אִנּוּן*. It finds that women may be in view given any of these types of language. For all of the usages discussed, this paper supplements or supersedes the standard grammars; it also touches on several implications for translation and exegesis.

*When does the Bible's masculine or "male" wording allow for women to be in view?*<sup>1</sup> This is a difficult question to answer, partly because standard grammars of Biblical Hebrew say almost nothing about the relationship between grammatical gender and social gender.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, translators and exegetes invoke the topic only spottily and in ad hoc terms.

In this brief paper, I will attempt to fill the apparent void in methodical treatments by looking at three representative grammatical issues: second-person masculine (2 masc.) address; third-person masculine (3 masc.) reference; and so-called male nouns. (By ordering the three topics in this way, I am saving my most dramatic findings for last.) For simplicity of presentation, I will consider plural language only insofar as it sheds direct light on singular and collective usage.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is a written version of my presentation to the National Association of Professors of Hebrew session at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature on Nov. 19, 2007. The opening question was at the heart of my translation work during the past three years; I thank the other members of the translation teams—Adele Berlin, Ellen Frankel, Carol Meyers, and Hara Person—for their encouragement as I inferred and delineated the principles discussed herein, and I thank Edward L. Greenstein, an early reviewer. In slightly different form, the question was the starting point for Phyllis Bird's application-oriented essay "Poor Man or Poor Woman? Gendering the Poor in Prophetic Texts" (1996), reprinted in her collection *Missing Persons and Mistaken Identities* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), pp. 67–78. I will have occasion, below, to comment on Bird's observations at points where the foci of our work intersect.

<sup>2</sup> For example: *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (ed. and enlarged by E. Kautzsch; trans. A. E. Cowley; 2nd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1910); C. L. Seow, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew* (rev. ed.; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995); B. K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990; 2004 printing); P. Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (rev. T. Muraoka; Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2006); C. H. J. van der Merwe et al., *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar* (New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999; 2006 printing).

My ultimate interest is in a *plain-sense* reading of the text—that is, what the text conveys when read according to normal rules of grammar and syntax—in light of ancient reading conventions. This paper’s approach is philological (inductive), taking the biblical corpus as a whole and distilling the rules of its linguistic system.<sup>3</sup>

In this paper, I use the term “social gender” to denote the societal categories of “women” and “men,” as distinct from grammatical gender.

## 1. SECOND-PERSON MASCULINE SINGULAR ADDRESS

Let’s look first at address to a *class* of persons (that is, to a category rather than an individual). For example, toward the end of Deuteronomy, Moses delivers a speech in which he lists the blessings that will accrue to the people of Israel if they faithfully obey the Covenant. In part, he says (Deut 28:3):

בְּרִיתְךָ אֶתְּהַלַּךְ בְּעִיר

*You* will be blessed in the settlements

He is speaking not to one specific person but rather to whoever fulfills the conditions that he has set. As I will demonstrate, the construction of this passage implies that its 2 masc. address logically must be presuming females in its target audience. The Torah contains five more such passages, but this one is the most straightforward example, although it, too, will require some explanation.<sup>4</sup> This passage (Deuteronomy 28) contains the book’s litany of blessings and curses, a literary unit in which Moses employs 2 masc. address well over two hundred times, almost always in the singular.

The very last verse of this passage (Deut 28:68) depicts a poignant and ironic climax: Israelites who break the covenant will return to Egypt, where they will beg to be enslaved, competing against each other for a slave master to purchase them, so that they do not starve to death. How is this message

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<sup>3</sup> Treating Biblical Hebrew as a single linguistic system is an approach that Robert Holmstedt has rightly called into question (“Issues in the Linguistic Analysis of a Dead Language, with Particular Reference to Ancient Hebrew,” *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 6.11 [2006]: 2–21). Yet an assumption of uniformity is reasonable in a first pass through the biblical data. Further, it seems to me that the grammar of social gender is a basic enough feature of the language that it is not likely to change significantly across time and from one local area to another.

<sup>4</sup> The other five cases (Exod 20:10; Lev 10:14; Num 18:11; Deut 5:14; 12:18) involve a listing of household members in which one must account for the wife’s conspicuous absence. Ironically, in those constructions and situations, it is by the very *lack* of explicit address to women that one can demonstrate that they are *present* in the mind of the speaker who employs 2 masc. language.

expressed? As is characteristic of the passage, 2 masc. address starts off the verse:

וְהִשִּׁיבָךְ ה' מִצְרַיִם בְּאֵנִיּוֹת

God will ship *you* back to Egypt

which then morphs into both masculine *and* feminine plurals:

וְהִתְמַכְרְתֶם שָׁם לְאִיבֵיךְ  
לְעִבְרִים וְלַשְׁפָּחוֹת

and there *you* shall put *yourselves* up for sale as *male-slaves* and as *female-slaves*

The verse interweaves singular with plural, and masculine with feminine. How can this construction be read so as to make the most sense?

I presume that like all authors or editors of texts and their audience, the composers of the Bible and its target audience shared an *unstated reading strategy* that allowed the text to communicate meaningfully. Part of that shared strategy was for the audience to read the text in such a way that references to the same party would be coherent. If so, then we seem to have a problem, because this text is at first glance not being consistent with its address, in terms of number.

That problem can be solved by presuming that the ancient shared strategy included a particular approach to decoding 2 masc. address. I take Deut 28:68 to evince this part of the conventions of reading. That is, if we were ancient Israelites, we would have known all along—throughout this passage, including the הָיָה of 28:3—that Moses was addressing both men and women directly.<sup>5</sup> That is something that we readers are supposed to know already; it is part of what I am calling the “grammar of social gender.”

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<sup>5</sup> More precisely, the audience was expected to construe the 2 masc. address as gender inclusive *except where the topic by its nature was restricted to men*, as in Deut 28:30. Moses is addressing the entire people in his speeches. However, because certain topics do not pertain equally to everyone, the meaning of “you” shifts fluidly as he speaks. In Deuteronomy, Moses shifts his address (without marking the shift) among various groups of those present—warriors only, householders only, non-priests only, Transjordanian tribes only, etc.—quite apart from the question of women’s inclusion. The convention must have been to construe 2 masc. address in a “to whom it may concern” fashion. Unmarked shifts were apparently natural in Biblical Hebrew (as in contemporary English) when addressing a group or crowd of people.

Marc Zvi Brettler similarly observes that Deut 28:68 is “incorporating women into the chapter” at Deut 27:16 (M. Z. Brettler, “Women in Covenant Curses,” in *Women in Scripture: A Dictionary of Named and Unnamed Women in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, and the New Testament* [ed. C. Meyers, T. Craven, and R. S. Kraemer; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000], p. 235); cf. his more

Here is the unstated rule: *when the 2 masc. address is to a class of persons, I cannot infer from grammatical gender alone that the audience is male.*<sup>6</sup>

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tentative proposal at Exod 20:8, “Women in the Decalogue” (p. 192), that the 2 masc. sing. address there “could also be used as a neuter, thereby including the adult woman.” Also D. A. Carson, without treating the gender aspect, points out that singular address can have group-wide application: “If the prohibition has been in the singular, but written in a context of moral constraints for a general audience and not to a named individual, then the singular form nevertheless applies to all who fall within the general audience” (D. A. Carson, “The Limits of Functional Equivalence in Bible Translation—and Other Limits, Too,” in *The Challenge of Bible Translation* [ed. G. G. Scorgie et al.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2003], p. 87). In the present instance, a source-critical scholar can hardly object that perhaps the confusion of grammatical number is the result of sloppy redaction (in which a piece of plural language has been awkwardly tacked onto a singular passage by a later editor), for in that plural clause is embedded the word אַתָּה with its singular address. The wording is not accidental.

<sup>6</sup> Eckart Otto presents a more oblique argument: “In Deut. 15:12 men and women were equally called אָח and אָחָה, brother and sister, so that both of them were embraced by the concept of a brotherly and sisterly solidarity, which should be interpreted inclusively.... Since for the Deuteronomist author men and women were equally אַתָּה they were also equally addressed by ‘you’” (E. Otto, “False Weights in the Scales of Biblical Justice?” in *Gender and Law in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East* [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998], pp. 142–143).

Meanwhile, Georg Braulik constructs a far-reaching and persuasive argument from the syntax of Deut 12:12: אַתָּה וּבְנֵיֶיךָ וּבְנֹתֶיךָ ... וְשִׂמְחֶתְהֶם (literally, And you shall rejoice ... you [masc.] with your sons and your daughters). Because the male householder’s wife is conspicuously missing from the list of household members, Braulik explains that the resumptive syntax fixes the gender sense of many masculine-inflected verbs and pronouns thereafter: “all masculine singular forms of the corresponding laws on sacrifices and feasts textually-pragmatically have to be applied to both men and women. Owing to the ‘you’ referring to the woman, and her being missing in the actual list, she is singled out from the ‘house’ and authorized for the corresponding sacrificial acts like the man” (G. Braulik, “Were Women, Too, Allowed to Offer Sacrifices in Israel? Observations on the Meaning and Festive Form of Sacrifice in Deuteronomy” *HvTSt* 55.4 [1999], pp. 909–942, 937–939).

Similarly, Jeffrey Tigay concludes: “the text can hardly expect wives to remain at home; it must include them in the ‘you’ to whom the law is addressed” (J. Tigay, *JPS Torah Commentary: Deuteronomy* [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996], 12:7). And Carol Meyers concludes: “Wives are not designated apart from the masculine ‘you,’ which thus is being used in a neuter sense to designate the senior male-and-female conjugal pair of a family group” (C. Meyers, *Women in Scripture* at Deut 12:12; similarly, with regard to the singular, in T. C. Eskenazi, ed., *The Torah: A Women’s Commentary* [New York: Union for Reform Judaism Press, 2008], p. 445). So also T. Frymer-Kensky, “Deuteronomy,” in C. A. Newsom and S. H. Ringe, eds., *Women’s Bible Commentary*, (expanded ed.; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1998), p. 59, with regard to Deut 5:14. By such reasoning, I render אַתָּה as “you [and your wife]” in Lev 10:14, and as “you [and your wives]” in Num 18:11; cf. my endnotes at Exod 20:3 and Deut 5:6 (D. E. S. Stein, revising ed., *The Contemporary Torah: A Gender-Sensitive Adaptation of the JPS Translation* [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2006]). So the commentary in *The Torah: A Women’s Commentary* by Elaine Goodfriend at Exod 20:10 and 21:2; the editors at Lev 10:14; and Shawna Dolansky at Num 18:11.

My analysis contradicts the interpretation of 2 masc. sing. language in works such as the following: A. Brenner, “An Afterword: The Decalogue—Am I an Addressee?” in *A Feminist Companion to Exodus to Deuteronomy* (ed. A. Brenner; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), pp. 255–258; H. C. Washington, “‘Lest He Die in the Battle and Another Man Take Her’: Violence and the Construction of Gender in the Laws of Deuteronomy 20–22,” in *Gender and Law*, p. 199; Judith Plaskow (*Standing Again at Sinai* and again in *The Torah: A Women’s Commentary*, p. 423); and Drorah Setel (“Exodus,” *The Women’s Bible Commentary*, regarding the Decalogue, p. 37).

The rule that I have described subsumes a point in GKC (§ 122*h*): 2 masc. address can have a gender-inclusive force when syntax and context of situation together point to the most impersonal sorts of reference. Thus in Gen 13:10, the narrator who is describing the extent of a visible area of land can say:

Let me now move from discussing a *class of persons* to a *particular individual*. So far as I know, the Bible contains no examples of second-person address to anyone whom the text clearly indicates to be *neither male nor female* in social gender. Thus we can neither prove nor disprove that when pointing to an individual, Biblical Hebrew's 2 masc. address *necessarily* means that the speaker believes that the addressee is *male*. For the situation is not binary: Let us say that I am standing on a theater stage, and you are in the audience, and you hear me call offstage to someone whom you yourself cannot see, and I say (in proper Biblical Hebrew) “אַתָּה־קִלְךָ שְׂמֵעָהּ־י.” From that utterance—with its grammatically masculine possessive suffix—you might try to infer the social gender of my addressee, but your choices are not only *male* or *female*. Rather, my addressee's social gender may not be known to me; or I may believe the addressee to *not* possess one definite gender (intersexual); or I may consider the addressee to be by nature “beyond” gender classification (אַתָּה־קִלְךָ שְׂמֵעָהּ־י having been the first words in the Bible addressed to God; Gen 3:10); or I may be using the singular language collectively, addressing a *mixed* group of males and females. All that you can say for sure is that I as the speaker believe my addressee to be *not female* (or not comprised solely of females).

Before I go on to third-person usage, let me restate the basic rule for 2 masc. address: *it means that the speaker believes the addressee's social gender to be not (solely) female, yet I cannot infer that the addressee's social gender is specifically and exclusively male.*

## 2. THIRD-PERSON MASCULINE SINGULAR LANGUAGE

As before, I will first discuss the case of reference to a *class* of persons. In a narrative passage in Exodus, Moses (on God's behalf) solicits the Israelites for donations of materials to construct what will become the Tabernacle (Exod 35:5):

... קָחוּ מֵאֲתֶכֶם תְּרוּמָה  
כָּל נָדִיב לְבוּ יְבִיאֶהָ

Take from among you gifts.... Everyone whose heart is so moved shall bring them (then follows a list of materials).

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וְיָרָא אֶת־כָּל־כֶּסֶד הַתְּרוּמָה ... בְּאֶמְתָּה זֶעַר in which the last phrase is literally “until *you* (2 masc.) come to Zoar.” GKC correctly construes the intent as being regardless of the audience's gender—that is, “as far as Zoar” or “all the way to Zoar.”

Moses employs 3 masc. language to characterize who should take action. Tellingly, though, Exod 35:22 echoes this language while supplying explicitly gender-inclusive terms, as it describes the Israelites' response to Moses' call:

וַיָּבֹאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים עַל־דַּעְשֵׁימָם כָּל־נְדִיב לֵב הֵבִיאוּ

Men and women, all whose hearts moved them, came bringing (then follows a list of materials).

In the story, the women donors among the Israelites construe God's invitation as including them, even though Moses neither mentions women nor uses feminine language.<sup>7</sup>

But my spotlight is on what it is that the reader is expected to understand: In order for the story to seem plausible, the shared reading strategy must be that any 3 masc. language employed in reference to a class ("to whom it may concern") is *gender inclusive, by default*.

Now let me move on to where 3 masc. language points to a *particular* person. The paradigmatic case is in Genesis 38, as Tamar is about to give birth. The midwife has determined that the prospective mother is carrying twins. One of the fetuses puts out its hand and then draws it back in—before being born. While I have just referred to the subject of the action in English with a neutral pronoun ("it"), the Hebrew text uses grammatically masculine language (Gen 38:28–29):

וַיְהִי בְלִדְתָהּ נִתְּנָה יָד  
וַתִּקַּח הַמִּוֹלְדֶת וַתִּקְשֶׁר עַל־יָדוֹ שָׁנִי  
לְאֹמֶר זֶה יֵצֵא רִאשׁוֹנָה  
וַיְהִי כִּכְשִׁיב יָדוֹ וְהִנֵּה יֵצֵא אָחִיו

While she was in labor, one of them put out a hand, and the midwife tied a crimson thread on that hand, to signify: This one came out first. But just then it drew back its hand, and out came its brother

GKC cites this case as an instance of an "indefinite subject" (§ 144*d*). I question that classification. True, the possessor of that tiny little hand is nowhere specified by a substantive and is hardly visible in the scene. Yet seven masculine inflections and pronouns all refer to the same subject that is un-

Should read: Exod

<sup>7</sup> See also Gen 35:25–26, 29 and 36:6. Reinforcing the explicit statements in the story of women's participation is the historical reconstruction of ancient Israel society, such that an Israelite audience would have taken it for granted that certain of the materials would have come primarily from women. See, e.g., T. C. Eskenazi, ed., *The Torah: A Women's Commentary*, pp. 467, 560.

doubtedly *present* in the scene and is *situationally unique*: namely, a particular one of the aforementioned twins that are definitely inside Tamar's womb. What is indefinite and unknown is the subject's sex.<sup>8</sup>

Construing the 3 masc. language in question as “gender agnostic” is not the only way to read this passage.<sup>9</sup> However, it is plausible and also consistent with Rabbinic Hebrew, which employs masculine language matter-of-factly to denote specific persons who are hermaphrodites or of indeterminate sex.<sup>10</sup> In my view it is the most likely reading.

On these grounds I infer that when the Biblical Hebrew 3 masc. refers to a particular individual, this does not *necessarily* mean that the speaker believes that the referent is *male*. Such usage does rule out the possibility that the referent is thought of as *female* (or a group comprised solely of females), but a *male* is not the only alternative possibility.

Before I go on to “male” nouns, let me restate the basic rule for 3 masc. language: *it rules out solely female social gender; but because the social gender is not specified further, women are not necessarily excluded from view.*

### 3. “MALE” NOUNS

Of course, many of the Bible's masculine verbal inflections, pronouns, and adjectives correspond to what are often called “male” nouns, in the sense that they have female counterparts. Here are the exemplars:

<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
אָב	אָם
אָח	אָחֹת
בֶּן	בַּת
אִישׁ	אִשָּׁה

<sup>8</sup> Interpreters differ as to whether the character of the midwife speaks in this passage. If so, then both she and the narrator employ 3 masc. language, implying that such is the normal way to refer to a particular person whose gender is unknown.

<sup>9</sup> It could be argued that the fetus's maleness is prospectively assumed by the narrator, due to the later genealogical importance of these births, such that the outcome of the story is already known to the reader. (But see the previous note.) Even less likely is the possibility that the Torah is so male-oriented that a fetus's maleness is simply assumed until proven otherwise. (Lev 12:2 provides counterevidence, for it specifies rather than presumes maleness. Also the midwife's notice in Gen 35:17 and the attendant's notice in 1 Sam 4:20 appear to suggest that maleness is not assumed, although gender may not be at issue in those utterances; cf. Jer 20:15.)

<sup>10</sup> On the categories of אַנְדְּרוֹגִינִיט (hermaphrodite) and טוֹמְטוּם (indeterminate sex), see *t. Bik. 2* (= *m. Bik. 4* in some editions); *b. Yebam. 83a–b*; Moses Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot 'Ishut* § 2.24–25. I adduce post-biblical usage under an assumption of historical uniformity of the grammar of personal reference.

This time, I will look first at references to a *particular individual*. The rule for “male” nouns runs along the lines already described for 2 masc. and 3 masc. language: Reference to a particular individual signals that the speaker ascribes to the referent *something other than female social gender*. This is true only provided that the reference is literal rather than figurative.<sup>11</sup>

I can tabulate this schema via a step-by-step procedure that may seem trivial in this situation, yet it will prove useful for more complex comparisons later. To construct the table, I first note that the reference is to an individual, which—grammatically speaking—can take place in one of two ways:

<b>Deixis (pointing)</b>	<b>Referential function</b>
Definite	Particular or Unique
Indefinite	Specific

Either way, the result is that the utterance specifies social gender:

<b>Deixis (pointing)</b>	<b>Referential function</b>	<b>Social gender per grammar (denotation)</b>
Definite	Particular or Unique	Not female
Indefinite	Specific	Not female

The referent’s maleness is specified regardless of what else is going on in context:

<b>Deixis (pointing)</b>	<b>Referential function</b>	<b>Social gender per grammar (denotation)</b>	<b>Social gender per context (connotation)</b>
Definite	Particular or Unique	Not female	—
Indefinite	Specific	Not female	—

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<sup>11</sup> If the reference is figurative, then masculinity in the vehicle does not necessarily match the social gender of the tenor except where the context makes gender germane by drawing some contrast with femininity. See further Part 1 of my article “On Beyond Gender: Representation of God in the Torah and in Three Recent Renditions into English,” *Nashim* 15 (Spring 2008): 108–137.



Finally, I will illustrate the two possibilities using the noun אָהָב as an example:

Deixis (pointing)	Referential function	Social gender per grammar (denotation)	Social gender per context (connotation)	Examples: אָהָב
Definite	Particular or Unique	Not female	—	Gen 4:2 וַתִּסַּף לְלֶדֶת אֶת־אָהָבִיו אֶת־הָבֶל
Indefinite	Specific	Not female	—	Gen 24:29 וַיִּלְבַּקֶּה אֶת־וְשָׁמוֹ לְבָן

Now, for references to a *class* of persons, let us consider how the book of Jeremiah recounts an episode in which the king and Jerusalem’s elite together covenanted to free their male *and female* slaves (Jer 34:8–16):

בְּרִית אֶת־כָּל־הָעָם ...  
 לְשַׁלַּח אִישׁ אֶת־עַבְדּוֹ וְאִישׁ אֶת־אִשְׁקֶרְתּוֹ  
 הָעֶבְרִי וְהָעֶבְרִיָּה חַפְּשִׁים

Such language appears three times in this passage (34:8–10), specifying both genders of the slaves involved. Shortly thereafter, the narrator quotes God’s restatement to Jeremiah of the relevant directive as had been stated to the Israelites “when I brought them out of the land of Egypt” (34:14). Here, the text reads differently:

תְּשַׁלְּחוּ אִישׁ אֶת־אֶחָיו הָעֶבְרִי  
 אֲשֶׁר־יָמַכְךָ לֶךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים וְשַׁלַּחְתּוֹ חַפְּשִׁי מִעַמְּךָ

each of you shall let his brother Hebrew go free who has been sold to you and has served you for six years—you must set him free

Grammatically speaking, the divine wording is decidedly and thoroughly masculine. But just as obviously, Jeremiah is supposed to construe that legal directive as gender-inclusive, for the temporary “covenant” as was carried out by all of Jerusalem—presumably in response to the same directive—clearly included female slaves as well as male.

More important is the matter of a shared reading strategy that will produce a coherent text: it must be the case that the reader is expected to take

N.B. (21 Aug 2021): Jeremiah 34:9 not only specifies the slaves in question as both male and female but also labels them as אָהָב. The usage in v. 14 then reinforces this labeling.

for granted the *gender-inclusive* force of the word אָנֹכִי in this legal utterance.<sup>12</sup>

But how does this work? It works because of the noun’s *referential function*, which is *definite but not particular or unique*. That is, the noun points to a class—which in this case is then defined by the adjective and by the relative clause that follows it.

My claim is this: When a “male” noun points to a class, the referent’s social gender is always grammatically *unspecified*. What is happening in our verse, in terms of the semantic components of our noun, is that the sentence construction evokes the “kinship” meaning-component of אָנֹכִי while it suppresses the noun’s “male” meaning-component.

It’s important to notice that the audience for such an utterance disambiguates the social gender of the referent by beginning with a *lack of gender exclusiveness*. Procedurally speaking, the grammatical construction prompts the reader to undertake the following steps:

1. Recognize that the social gender is not solely female.
2. Look for (contextual or situational) evidence that it is solely *male*.
3. In the absence of such evidence, conclude that the utterance remains non-exclusive.

In other words, the construction is *gender-inclusive by default*.<sup>13</sup> This finding prompts me to expand my earlier table for אָנֹכִי, by inserting a new row to account for the usage in our verse:

Deixis (pointing)	Referential function	Social gender per grammar (denotation)	Social gender per context (connotation)	Examples: אָנֹכִי	
Definite	Particular or Unique	Not female	Male	Gen 4:2	וַתִּסַּף לְלֶדֶת אֶת־אֶחָיו אֶת־הָבֵל
	Class	Unspecified	Inclusive	Jer 34:14	תִּשְׁלַח־אִישׁ־אֶת־אָחִיו הָעֶבְרִי
Indefinite	Specific	Not female	Male	Gen 24:29	וַיִּלְבָּקֶה אֶת־וְשָׁמוֹ לְבָן

<sup>12</sup> Carolyn Pressler discusses this passage in arguing (mostly on the basis of factors other than grammar) that in ancient Israel, masculine legal language was sometimes construed gender inclusively (C. Pressler, “Wives and Daughters, Bond and Free,” in *Gender and Law*, p. 169). She also adduces Lev 25:39, where אָנֹכִי functions in a gender-inclusive sense as confirmed when viewed in light of 25:44. Meanwhile, Jer 34:14 provides counterevidence to J. Tigay’s reasoning that the noun בֶּן in Deut 25:5 means “son” because “in a legal passage ... had the text meant to include daughters, it would probably have said so explicitly” (J. Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, at 25:5).

<sup>13</sup> Technically, such utterances are “gender non-exclusive,” but for simplicity I prefer the term “gender inclusive,” which is effectively the same thing, particularly when one distinguishes it from “gender neutral,” as I do below.

In Jer 34:14, then, the adjective, two verbal inflections, and pronominal suffix are all masculine only because they refer to the grammatically masculine word **אָדָם**. What at first glance appeared to be hirsute masculinity is a matter of *grammatical* gender concord only.

Of course, when the referent's social gender is unspecified, it can also turn out (from the context of situation or from co-text) that only males are in view after all. To account for both possibilities, I should expand my table still further, as follows.

Deixis (pointing)	Referential function	Social gender per grammar (denotation)	Social gender per context (connotation)	Examples: אָדָם	
Definite	Particular or Unique	Not female	Male	Gen 4:2	וַתִּסַּף לְלֶדֶת אֶת־אָדָם/וּ אֶת־הַבָּלָה
	Class	Unspecified	Male		
Indefinite	Specific	Not female	Inclusive	Jer 34:14	תִּשְׁלַחוּ אִישׁ אֶת־אָדָם/וּ הָעֶבְרִי וְלִרְבֵּקָה אָמָּ וּשְׂמוֹ לְבָן
			Male	Gen 24:29	

But this is still not the only *grammatical* possibility. Nouns can refer to a class (or genus) also when they are *indefinite*. These constructions, too, allow for gender-inclusive force, depending again upon the context. To account for these further possibilities, I will expand the table yet again, adding two rows at the bottom:

Deixis (pointing)	Referential function	Social gender per grammar (denotation)	Social gender per context (connotation)	Examples: אָדָם	
Definite	Particular or Unique	Not female	Male	Gen 4:2	וַתִּסַּף לְלֶדֶת אֶת־אָדָם/וּ אֶת־הַבָּלָה
	Class	Unspecified	Male		
Indefinite	Specific	Not female	Inclusive	Jer 34:14	תִּשְׁלַחוּ אִישׁ אֶת־אָדָם/וּ הָעֶבְרִי וְלִרְבֵּקָה אָמָּ וּשְׂמוֹ לְבָן
			Male	Gen 24:29	
	Generic	Unspecified	Male		
			Inclusive		

And now I will fill in the table with examples for each possibility:

Deixis (pointing)	Referential function	Social gender per grammar (denotation)	Social gender per context (connotation)	Examples: אָח	
Definite	Particular or Unique	Not female	Male	Gen 4:2	וַתִּסְכֶּף לְלֵדָת אֶת־אָחֶיךָ אֶת־הָבֵל
	Class	Unspecified	Male	Gen 13:11	וַיִּפְרְדּוּ אִישׁ מֵעַל אָחִיו
			Inclusive	Jer 34:14	תִּשְׁלַחוּ אִישׁ אֶת־אָחִיו הָעֶבְרָי
				Gen 9:5	כִּי־אִישׁ אָחִיו אָדַרְשׁ אֶת־נַפְשׁ הָאָדָם
Deut 15:12	כִּי־יִזְכָּר לְךָ אָחִיךָ הָעֶבְרָי אוֹ הָעֶבְרָיָה				
Indefinite	Specific	Not female	Male	Gen 24:29	וַלְרִבְקָה אָח וּשְׁמוֹ לָבָן
	Generic	Unspecified	Male	Gen 29:15	וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן לְיַעֲקֹב הֲכִי־אָחִי אַתָּה
			Inclusive	Jer 9:3	וְעַל־כָּל־אָח אֶל־תִּבְטְחוּ

(Note that in the category in which Jer 34:14 belongs, I have now supplied two additional examples, to show that our paradigmatic example is not unique.<sup>14</sup>)

Let me observe from this table that the word אָח functions differently than does the English word “brother.” In contemporary English usage, “brother” *in the singular* never connotes gender inclusiveness, whereas אָח can do so. In this respect, אָח works akin to the English word “actor.” Like אָח, “actor” has a feminine counterpart (“actress”); and much like אָח, it nevertheless functions regularly as a gender-inclusive term. In both languages for the words in question, the semantic component that refers to *function* is separable from the meaning-component that refers to *social gender*. In situations where the focus is on function rather than on gender, the male meaning-component temporarily disappears.

Even so, the Biblical Hebrew noun אָח (in reference to a class) is not “gender neutral” as we use that term to speak about English words. For ex-

<sup>14</sup> This analysis seems to challenge P. Bird’s insistence that in Deut 15:12, 17 the specification of females were later “editorial additions ... [that] seek to redefine the ‘brotherhood’ to include women” (P. Bird, “Poor Man or Poor Woman,” p. 73). Rather, the word אָח is gender inclusive in such grammatical situations, while the repeated specification of females is warranted because the application of the laws to female slaves and male slaves might otherwise be thought to differ, for the law sometimes does differentiate between them as the result of gender asymmetry in Israelite society’s sexual mores.

My analysis also contradicts P. Bird’s claim that “in Leviticus the terms describing the Israelite bondsman [namely, אָח] are exclusively male” (P. Bird, “Poor Man or Poor Woman,” p. 73, n. 23).

ample, an impresario could call an audition for local actors, and if only women happen to show up, an English speaker can still refer to them as “actors.” In Hebrew, however, the word **אָנִישׁ** is agnostic regarding gender only up to a point, for its referent is never solely female. (That is what the feminine counterpart **אִתְּחִי** is for.)

What is true for **אָנִישׁ** is equally true for the other Hebrew personal nouns that have a female counterpart. Scholars widely recognize that **אִישׁ** can have a gender-inclusive sense in some contexts;<sup>15</sup> my table for **אִישׁ**, which for simplicity shows only the types of reference that point to a class (or genus),<sup>16</sup> offers insight into when and how such a phenomenon occurs: in certain kinds of grammatical constructions, the maleness of this noun itself is simply not salient.

Deixis (pointing)	Referential function	Social gender per grammar (denotation)	Social gender per context (connotation)	Examples: אִישׁ
Definite	Class	Unspecified	Male	Num 30:11 <b>וְאִם־בֵּית אִישָׁהּ נָדְרָה</b>
			Inclusive	Lev 14:11 <b>וְהָעֲמִיד הַכֹּהֵן ... אֶת הָאִישׁ הַמְּטַהֵר</b>
				Deut 27:15 <b>אָרוּר הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה פֶסֶל וּמַסֵּכָה</b>
Indefinite	Generic	Unspecified	Male	Gen 24:16 <b>בְּתוּלָה וְאִישׁ לֹא יִדְעָהּ</b>
			Inclusive	Gen 11:7 <b>לֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ אִישׁ שְׂפַת רֵעֵהוּ</b>
				Gen 39:11 <b>וְאִין אִישׁ מֵאֲנָשֵׁי הַבַּיִת שָׁם בְּבָיִת</b>
				Exod 21:12 <b>מִכָּה אִישׁ נָמַת מוֹת יוֹמָת</b>
				Exod 21:20 <b>וְכִרְיוּכָה אִישׁ ... אֶת־אָמְתוֹ בַּשֶּׁבֶט</b>
				Lev 27:2 <b>אִישׁ כִּי יִפְלֹא נָדַר בְּעֶרְכָּךְ נִפְשָׁת</b>

<sup>15</sup> For example, V. Poythress and W. Grudem, *The Gender-Neutral Controversy: Muting the Masculinity of God’s Words* (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman, 2000), p. 247; D. A. Carson, *The Inclusive Language Debate: A Plea for Realism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1998), pp. 120–128; M. Strauss, *Distorting Scripture? The Challenge of Bible Translation and Gender Accuracy* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1998), pp. 104–112; D. J. A. Clines, personal communication; E. Greenstein, personal communication; S. A. Kaufman, personal communication; R. Alter, personal communication.

<sup>16</sup> Such cases account for most instances of **אִישׁ** in the Bible. Alison Grant’s lexical study (“Adam and ‘Ish: Man in the OT,” *ABR* 25 [1977]: 2–11) shows that more than 80% of the Bible’s instances of **אִישׁ** or **אִנְשִׁים** point to a class (or genus). See the discussion in my article D. E. S. Stein, “The Noun **אִישׁ** (’אִשׁ) in Biblical Hebrew: A Term of Affiliation,” *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 8.1 (2008).

Now, you and I may disagree about whether a given instance of אִישׁ, in context, retains its initial gender-inclusive scope. We might have different understandings of ancient Israelite gender roles, or how to interpret other words in the passage in question. If we disagree, the important thing is to notice that our disagreement belongs in the fourth column of my table—not in the third column.

I was able to complete similar tables to my satisfaction for the frequently used nouns אָב, בֶּן, עֶבֶד,<sup>17</sup> and מְלֶכֶךְ (see appendix).<sup>18</sup> (I created these tables to assure myself that no matter how “male” the noun in question, the grammatical principle holds up.)

But how far does the principle extend? Is it *only* for nouns that designate human social roles, like the ones shown here? Almost any grammatically masculine noun in Hebrew can form a grammatically feminine counterpart! What about grammatically masculine nouns whose semantic content is *not* so obviously male? I will now present two such examples to test the principle.

According to Judges 11, the Israelite chieftain Jephthah sacrificed his daughter after he made an infamous vow (Judg 11:30–31) as he went into battle:

וְהָיָה הַלְוָיָא אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִדֹּלְתִי בַיּוֹם  
לְקַרְאֹתִי בְּשׁוּבִי בְּשָׁלוֹם מִבְּנֵי עַמּוֹן

In her 1984 book *Texts of Terror*, Phyllis Trible included a chapter “The Daughter of Jephthah: An Inhuman Sacrifice,” and many feminists since have assailed this story as a prime example of the lamentable lot of women

<sup>17</sup> This contradicts P. Bird’s claim that “Hebrew has no gender-inclusive term for ‘slave’” (P. Bird, “Poor Man or Poor Woman,” p. 72, n. 22).

<sup>18</sup> For some personal nouns with a female counterpart (such as עֶלְמָם or דְּהָתָן), there probably are not enough biblical attestations for us to fill in a table completely.

As for the personal noun זָכָר, both of its semantic meaning-components are male-only by definition, which makes that word rather useless for gender-inclusive expression. But I do not consider זָכָר to be an exception to the rule, because it can be said that *in terms of grammar alone*, the social gender is still unspecified. All of its biblical instances point to generic or class referents.

As for the common noun אָדָם, scholars have recently debated whether it is gender neutral (e.g., J. Barr, “One Man, Or All Humanity?” in *Recycling Biblical Figures: Papers Read at a NOSTER Colloquium in Amsterdam, 12–13 May 1997*. [Studies in Theology and Religion 1; ed. A. Brenner and J. W. Van Henten; Leiden: Deo, 1999], pp. 3–21; David J. A. Clines, “The Hebrew for ‘Human, Humanity’: A Response to James Barr,” *VT* 53.3 [July 2003]: 297–310). Although אָדָם does not have a feminine counterpart, it nevertheless accords with the schema brought forth in this paper, for אָדָם has a male reference only when it is applied to a particular person. And in the Bible, the only particular individual that the noun אָדָם ever points to is the first human being—the progenitor of humankind. Of the Bible’s 532 remaining occurrences of אָדָם, A. Grant (see above, n. 16) cited just one other instance, Josh 14:15, as referring to a particular individual, but it is a class reference to a progenitor; see further Dictionary of Gender in the Torah, *The Contemporary Torah*, s.v. ‘adam.

in ancient Israel. Yet how many of them have thought to appreciate Jephthah for being politically correct enough to couch his vow in gender-inclusive language?—Ah, but *how* was it gender-inclusive? The operative term (the object of the vow) is **כִּי־יֵצֵא** (“whatever/whoever comes out”), and it is grammatically masculine. Nevertheless, as our story proceeds, Jephthah understands that his vow applies to his only child after she otherwise fulfills its conditions (Judg 11:34–40).

It could hardly be true that the text’s audience was expected to react by saying, “Oh, what a fool that Jephthah was! Look at the *masculine* language that he used! He could have spared his daughter simply by claiming that he had *only a male in mind* when he made his vow.” The fact that Jephthah does *not* do so—when it would save his daughter’s life and his legacy from ruin—enables us to safely infer that both the composer(s) of the text and the text’s ancient audience shared an understanding of the unassailably *gender-inclusive* sense of 3 masc. wording in which the reference is to a class, not to an individual.<sup>19</sup>

Notice that **כִּי־יֵצֵא** is not even a “real” noun; it is a verbal participle employed as a substantive. This suggests that all types of substantives follow the principle that “male” nouns are gender-inclusive by default when they point to a class.

Further confirmation of the validity and extent of this principle is that it accounts for what GKC (§ 122*f*) considered to be an anomalous “epicene” (common-gender) use of a male noun where they expected a feminine form, namely, in Genesis 23—the story of the burial of Sarah.<sup>20</sup> Eight times in that

<sup>19</sup> Tribble herself notes that “the masculine tender of these terms is a standard grammatical usage that by itself does not identify either species or sex” (P. Tribble, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984], p. 97). My point is that this very narrative is a proof text for what the “standard grammatical usage” was! And it is not a trivial example. The Israelite audience of the text surely presumed that the precise wording of Jephthah’s vow mattered, because the audience was supposed to presume that God holds people accountable for their vows, as the Bible reiterates in numerous cases (Num 30:3; Deut 23:22; 2 Sam 15:7–8; Eccl 5:3–4, etc.).

Although standard grammars do not mention the gender-inclusive force of 3 masc. language as presumed by Jephthah’s vow, GKC § 144.2–3 does say that when the Bible refers to an indefinite personal subject, it usually employs grammatically masculine language, typically couched in the singular—for instance, Josh 5:9:

וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמְּקוֹם הַהוּא גִלְגָּל עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה

In such situations, English translators often use a passive construction: “So that place was called Gilgal.” In effect, my observations from Exodus 35 and Judges 11 incorporate GKC’s point, for an indefinite personal subject is a type of class reference.

<sup>20</sup> GKC § 122*f* mentions one other supposedly anomalous usage of a “masculine” noun in place of an expected feminine form—in Prov 8:30, where Wisdom, personified as female, refers to herself:

וַאֲנִי־הִיא אֲצַלֹּי אֲמֹנָה

I was for [God] a master artisan.

episode, the narrator and various characters refer to her via the male noun *מָה*, as in Gen 23:3 (rather than the feminine form *מָתָה*; cf. Gen 30:1):

וַיִּקָּם אַבְרָהָם מֵעַל פְּנֵי מָתוֹ

Again, this is not a “real” noun; it is a stative participle employed as a substantive. How is it that a “male” term can be employed with regard to an *individual* female? The answer is that it actually refers to a *class*—the class defined as “dead bodies in Abraham’s household.” (In this particular case, the class has only one member. But if a plague had killed several persons in his household, the term used to refer to that class would not change. Alternatively, one could say that it is a singular collective term.) When a “male” substantive refers to a class (so says the principle), the referent’s social gender is automatically unspecified. The so-called male term temporarily sheds its gendered meaning-component. And in contradiction to GKC, I would argue that in the Bible such usage occurs frequently and across the board—although it is not epicene, strictly speaking.<sup>21</sup>

#### 4. THE GRAMMAR OF SOCIAL GENDER: RULES AND SUMMARY

Here, all together, are the rules that I have distilled:

1. Readers can assume that 2 masc. address rules out solely female social gender, yet we cannot assume that it specifies solely male social gender. (*Women may be in view.*)
2. Readers can assume that 3 masc. language rules out solely female social gender, yet we cannot assume that it specifies solely male social gender. (*Women may be in view.*)

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The principle that I have described accounts for this usage, too: The noun’s reference is to a *class*—the class of “master artisans,” and therefore the so-called male noun *מְבָרָךְ* functions as a gender-inclusive term.

<sup>21</sup> Regarding the common singular nouns that possess (attested or theoretical) female counterparts, the standard grammars reserve the term “epicene” for substantives that are attested as pointing to evidently female *animal* referents. See, e.g., GKC § 122*b*, *e–g*; *IBHS* § 6.5.2; and C. H. H. van der Merwe et al., *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, § 23.3(ii). (Let me note that all of the examples that these grammarians cite—Gen 33:13; 2 Sam 19:27; Jer 2:24; Hos 13:8; Ps 42:2; 144:14; Job 1:14—are class references.) With regard to human beings, the corresponding phenomenon is not found in the Biblical Hebrew corpus. Apparently, female nouns were the terms of choice when referring specifically to female human beings. In that respect, while male nouns do not themselves exclude women when they are employed so as to point to a class (or genus) of human beings, such nouns are not truly epicene.



3. Regarding personal nouns that have female counterparts:
  - a. When they point to a particular individual, these nouns indicate that the person's social gender is not female—for the writer or speaker has chosen not to employ specifically feminine terminology—provided that the reference is literal rather than figurative. (*Women are not in view.*)
  - b. When they point to a class of persons, these nouns function as socially gender inclusive—except that they are not used when pointing to a solely female class. (*Women may be in view.*)

SUMMARY: Grammatically masculine inflections or pronouns and so-called male nouns bear little correlation to the social gender of the persons they point to. Such language eliminates the possibility of a female-only referent, yet otherwise it does not necessarily exclude women from view. Whenever masculine wording or a “male” noun points to a class, its reference is to be construed as socially gender-inclusive by default. In those cases, readers can determine the referent's social gender only from *non-grammatical* clues in co-text and context.

## 5. IMPLICATIONS FOR TRANSLATION AND EXEGESIS

These principles have radically affected how I talk about, teach about, and edit other authors' discussions about Biblical Hebrew. Due to time constraints, I can state only three of the implications, with little elaboration.<sup>22</sup>

1. *Literal English translation is often more “male” than the Hebrew original.* For those Biblical Hebrew grammatical constructions that leave the social gender unspecified (regardless of the connotation), if I represent 3 masc. sing. inflections via the English pronouns “he/his/him/himself,” or if I translate or gloss the nouns אִישׁ, אָב, אָח, and בֶּן with male terms (such as “man,” “father,” “brother,” and “son”), then I am *over-representing* the “maleness” of the Hebrew wording. (This is because those English words convey a maleness that the constructions in question have suppressed in the Hebrew words.) Unless I as translator or glossator avoid—or at least disclose—the male-amplifying impact of such a rendition, the Bible will

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<sup>22</sup> See also Part 1 of my article “On Beyond Gender”; and “The (In)adequacy of ‘Man’ as an English Equivalent of the Biblical Hebrew Noun *’ish*” (paper presented to the Bible Translation section of the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Boston, Mass., November 2008).

come across in English as being more androcentric (male-oriented) than the ancient Israelites themselves actually perceived it.<sup>23</sup>

2. *Our discernment of the Bible's social-gender ascriptions is grammatically driven to a lesser extent, and in a different way, than interpreters have often assumed.* The task of interpretation is challenging because the Bible's composers often used grammatically masculine language to refer to a generic individual or group.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, they often used generic language to refer either to an individual man via a group classification or to a men-only group.<sup>25</sup> In all such cases, if a specific social-gender ascription was necessarily in mind, *it went without saying*—it was presumed to be clear to the audience, given the context of the situation. Unfortunately, nowadays we cannot always be so sure what the audience would have assumed about social gender in a given textual situation. That being said, it does sometimes help to recall the procedure followed by the ancient Israelite audience, due to the grammatically based presumption of non-exclusion. The question is not “How do we know that women are *in view*?” but rather “How do we know that women are *excluded* from view?”

3. *When both genders are mentioned, it serves to underscore women's inclusion in a situation of potential doubt.* We have seen that when a legal text discusses classes of persons and mentions only the male half of a male-female dyad, that absence of the explicit mention of women paradoxically tells us that women may well be in view. Conversely, where the text does mention both male and female dyads (such as אִישׁ אִוְּ אִשָּׁה or עֶבֶד וְאִמָּה) yet employs only grammatically masculine language to carry the argument, it appears that, given the particular circumstances of the situation under discussion, the text's composer(s) imagined that its ancient audience had some reason to think that women might be excluded from consideration, and so the female party was mentioned to prevent such a misreading. (There may also be literary structural reasons for the inclusive phrasing.) The grammar of social gender, as I have described it, undermines the effort by historically minded scholars to construe the text's mention of a female party as evidence of diachronic development in that text.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, our supposing that there has

<sup>23</sup> This statement both refines and expands a point that Mark Strauss makes about the word “he” (M. Strauss, “Current Issues in the Gender-Language Debate,” in *The Challenge of Bible Translation*, p. 130).

<sup>24</sup> An English analogue is the word “actor,” which has a feminine counterpart yet is often used generically, as discussed above in Section 3.

<sup>25</sup> An English analogue is the generic term “basketball player,” which is often used to refer to an athlete who plays in the men-only National Basketball Association.

<sup>26</sup> Michael Fishbane holds that legal formulas that mention women explicitly are “pleonastic” or “secondary” when the rest of the language in the passage presumes a grammatically masculine antecedent,

been a “secondary” editorial alteration does not explain the fact that the grammatically masculine language is still treated as gender-inclusive after that alteration.

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as in Lev 13:29; Num 6:2; and Deut 15:12; M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), pp. 169, n. 12; 171; 211, n. 99. He believes it significant that in the cases he cites, “the singular masculine noun is followed by a singular masculine verb, [whereas] usually the verb precedes if it is singular and followed by plural subjects (as especially in Arabic)” (personal communication, June 18, 2008).

APPENDIX TABLE: Applying the Schema to אָב, בֶּן, עֶבֶד, and מְלֶכֶךְ

Deixis (pointing)	Referential function	Social gender per grammar (denotation)	Social gender per context (connotation)	Examples:	
Definite	Class	Unspecified	Male	Gen 32:10	וַיֹּאמֶר וַיַּעֲקֹב אֶלְהֵי אָבִי אֲבֹרְתָם
			Inclusive	Ezek 18:4	כִּנְפֹשׁ הָאָב וּכְנֹפֶשׁ הַבֶּן לִי־הִנֵּה
Indefinite	Generic	Unspecified	Male	Esth 2:7	כִּי אֵין לָהּ אָב וְאָם
			Inclusive	Ezek 18:20	וְאָב לֹא וְשָׂא בְעֵינֵי הַבֶּן
				<b>Examples:</b>	בֶּן
Definite	Class	Unspecified	Male	Exod 1:22	כָּל־הַבָּנִים הַיְלִוּוּד ... תִּשְׁלִיכֵהוּ
			Inclusive	Ezek 18:4	כִּנְפֹשׁ הָאָב וּכְנֹפֶשׁ הַבֶּן לִי־הִנֵּה
Indefinite	Generic	Unspecified	Male	Exod 21:31	אוֹרֶבֶן יָגַח אוֹרֶבֶת יָגַח
			Inclusive	Deut 25:5	וּמֵת אַחֵר מֵהֶם וּבֶן אֵין־לּוֹ
				<b>Examples:</b>	עֶבֶד
Definite	Class	Unspecified	Male	Exod 21:5	יֹאמֶר הָעֶבֶד אֶתְבַּתִּי ... אֶת־אִשְׁתִּי
			Inclusive	—	(attested only in the plural)
Indefinite	Generic	Unspecified	Male	Exod 21:32	אִם־עֶבֶד יָגַח הַשּׁוֹר אוֹ אִמָּה
			Inclusive	Deut 23:16	לֹא־תִסְגֹּר עֶבֶד אֶל־אֲדָמָתְךָ
				<b>Examples:</b>	מְלֶכֶךְ
Definite	Class	Unspecified	Male	Gen 39:20	מִקּוֹם אֲשֶׁר־אִסְרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲסוּרִים
			Inclusive	1 Sam 12:14	וְגַם־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר מְלֶכֶךְ עֲלֵיכֶם
Indefinite	Generic	Unspecified	Male	1 Kgs 11:37	וְהָיִיתָ מְלֶכֶךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל
			Inclusive	Gen 36:31	לִפְנֵי מְלֶכֶךְ מְלֶכֶךְ לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
				Neh 13:26	לֹא־הָיָה מְלֶכֶךְ כְּמוֹהוּ