

אל-ירושלם, לירושלם, ירושלמה

אבנר רמו



In the Book of Chronicles we read:

ויסבו ביהודה, ויקבצו את-הלויים מכל-ערי יהודה וראשי האבות לישראל; ויבאו אל-ירושלם.
“And they went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, and the heads of fathers' houses of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem” (2 Ch 23:2).

We also read in this Book:

אך-אנשים מאשר ומנשה ומזבלון-נכנעו, ויבאו לירושלם.
“Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem” (2 Ch 30:11).

In the Book of Kings we read:

ותבא ירושלמה בחיל כבד מאד, גמלים נשאים בשמים וזהב רב-מאד ואבן יקרה; ותבא אל-שלמה ותדבר אליו את כל-אשר היה עם-לבבה.
“And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bore spices and gold very much, and precious stones; and when she was come to Solomon, she spoke with him of all that was in her heart” (1 Ki 10:2).

Similarly we read in the Book of Ezekiel:

ותשא אתי רוח בין-הארץ ובין השמים ותבא אתי ירושלמה במראות אלהים, אל-פתח שער הפנימית הפונה צפונה, אשר-שם מושב סמל הקנאה המקנה.
“And a wind lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the gate of the inner court that looks toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provokes to jealousy” (Eze 8:3).

These examples indicate that in biblical Hebrew, there are three different ways to express the English word: “to.” One can use an independent word **אל** (*el*) between the verb and the subject, or to attach, after the verb, the letter **ל** (*l*) as a prefix to the subject, or to attach a **ה** (*h*) letter as a postfix to the subject. When the biblical subject is Jerusalem, the total occurrence of these Hebrew modes of: “to” are 17, 35, and 5, respectively.

Yet we also find biblical verses where none of these methods is used, while the content (as well as the understanding of the translators, and Modern Hebrew) suggests that they should be there. Here are several examples:

In the Book of Judges we find: **ויביאהו ירושלים, וימת שם** - “And they brought him [to] Jerusalem, and he died there” (Jud 1:7).

In the Book of Samuel we find: **ויקח דוד את-ראש הפלשתי, ויבאהו ירושלים** - “And David took the head of the philistine, and brought it [to] Jerusalem” (1 Sam 17:54).

In the Book of Kings we find:

וירכבהו עבדיו מת ממגדו, ויבאהו ירושלים, ויקברוהו בקברתו;
 “And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him [to] Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulcher” (2 Ki 23:30).

In the Book of Chronicles we find:

ואת אמציהו מלך-יהודה בן-יואש בן-יהואחז, תפש יואש מלך-ישראל-בבית שמש; ויביאהו ירושלים,
 “And Joash king of Israel, took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, at Beth-shemesh, and brought him [to] Jerusalem” (2 Ch 25:23).

For analyzing the distribution of the absence of a Hebrew equivalent of the Greek (and English) “to”, I studied all the biblical verses that contain verbs relating to **ירושלים** - “Jerusalem” as the subject.

Book	Total mentions of Jerusalem	Number of cases lacking a Hebrew analog to “to”
Joshua	9	0
Judges	4	1 (1:7)
1 Samuel	1	1 (17:54)
2 Samuel	30	15 (5:6; 8:7; 10:14; 12:31; 14:23; 15:8, 29, 37; 16:15; 17:20; 19:26, 35; 20:3; 24:8, 16)
1 Kings	28	5 (3:15; 8:1; 12:18, 21, 28)
2 Kings	58	8 (14:13; 16:5; 18:17, 17; 23:20, 30; 24:10; 25:8)
Isaiah	49	2 (7:1; 66:20)
Jeremiah	103	2 (27:3; 35:11)
Ezekiel	26	1 (17:12)
Minor Prophets	63	0
Psalms	17	0
Canticles	8	0
Ecclesiastes	5	0
Lamentations	7	0
Esther	1	0
Daniel	9	1 (1:1)

Ezra	47	6 (3:8; 7:8; 8:31, 32; 10:7, 9)
Nehemiah	36	0
1 Chronicles	24	5 (11:4; 18:7; 19:15; 20:3; 21:4)
2 Chronicles	121	12 (2:15; 10:18; 11:1, 16; 14:14; 15:10; 19:8; 20:28; 25:23; 30:13; 33:13; 35:24)

However, it is obvious that verse Is 7:1 is a copy of verse 2 Ki 16:5 (or vice-versa).

Verses: 1 Ch 11:4; 18:7; 19:15; 20:3; 21:4; 2 Ch 10:18; 11:1; and 35:24 appear as copies of verses: 2 Sam 5:6; 8:7; 10:14; 12:31; 24:8; 1 Ki 12:18; 12:21; 2 Ki 35:24), respectively, and could not be viewed as independent examples.

In addition, the same event is mentioned in verses: 2 Ki 24:10; 25:8; Jer 35:11; Eze 17:12; and Dan 1:1, and they are likely to be copies of one verse.

We may therefore conclude the absence of a grammatically required Hebrew analog of the English “to” occur mainly in the 2nd book of Samuel, the Books of Kings, the Book of Ezra, and the 2nd Book of Chronicles.

Furthermore, the expression: **אל-ירושלם** (*el-yerushalaim*) - “to Jerusalem” does not appear in the Books of Samuel or Kings, while in the Book of Ezra it appears three times (Ezr 3:1; 7:7, 9).

The Hebrew **לירושלם** (*leyerushalaim*) - “to Jerusalem” does not appear in the Books of Samuel or 1st Kings. It appears three times in the 2nd Book of Kings (2 Ki 18:22; 23:4, 6), and five times in the Book of Ezra (Ezr 1:3, 11; 2:1; 3:8; 8:20).

The third variant: **ירושלמה** (*yerushalaimah*) - “to Jerusalem” does not appear in the Books of Samuel or Ezra, while in the Book of Kings it appears twice (1 Ki 10:2; 2 Ki 9:28).

The absence of a Hebrew equivalent of the English “to” between a verb and Jerusalem as a subject, occurs in the Books of 2nd Samuel, 1st and 2nd Kings, and Ezra, too often to be the result of haplography. It seems also unlikely that these omissions were carried out intentionally by late scribes. On the other hand the parallel scarcity of all the biblical equivalents of the English “to” in verses mentioning Jerusalem in these books, suggests that such a word, a prefix, or a postfix, may have not been used often in the language spoken in the periods when these books were composed.

This conclusion cannot be applied to the 2nd Book of Chronicles were all the three Hebrew equivalents of the English “to” are also found in a significant numbers. It is possible that while gleaning information from several older biblical books, the writer of 2nd Book of Chronicles had also employed some of the language found there.

The conclusions obtained from the above analysis may be valid only for the single biblical subject tested here which was **ירושלם** - “Jerusalem” (with all the biblical verbs that this subject was associated with).

However, the validity of these conclusions would be much more significant if similar results would be obtained from the analysis of all the associations of a single biblical verb (or a small group of verbs) with all its subjects.

For the analysis I chose the following verbs: **ויבאו** - “and they came”, **ותבא** - “and she came”, and **ויבאהו** and **ויביאהו** both meaning “and he brought it (or him)”, all these verbs are from the root **בוא** (bva), and they appear in the Hebrew Bible 201, 32, and 20 times respectively.

Book	Total of the chosen verbs	Number of those lacking a Hebrew analog to “to”
Genesis	20	1 (45:25)
Exodus	15	1 (19:2)
Numbers	12	3 (20:1, 22; 22:39)
Deuteronomy	2	0
Joshua	16	3 (2:1; 6:11; 8:19)
Judges	18	4 (1:7; 9:22; 18:2; 20:26)
1 Samuel	27	2 (11:4; 17:54)
2 Samuel	24	7 (2:29; 4:7; 10:2, 14, 16; 24:7, 8)
1 Kings	22	3 (11:18, 18; 14:4)
2 Kings	29	6 (2:4; 10:21; 11:18; 23:30; 25:7, 26)
Isaiah	3	0
Jeremiah	13	2 (43:7; 52:11)
Ezekiel	9	0
Minor Prophets	2	0
Psalms, Job, Ruth	8	0
Daniel, Nehemiah	2	0
1 Chronicles	12	1 (19:15)
2 Chronicles	19	3 (20:28; 23:17; 25:23).

This analysis shows that more than one third of all biblical verses that contain these selected verbs (associated with any subject) and that lack the Hebrew equivalent of the English “to” appear in the 2nd Book of Samuel and the 2nd Book of Kings. However, both these Biblical books also have significant numbers of other verses that contain these verbs with the Hebrew equivalents of the English “to.”

Therefore, it seems that when the 2nd Book of Samuel and the 2nd Book of Kings were written, the spoken language allowed the use of such verbs with or without the Hebrew equivalents of the English “to”, yet for unknown reason the lack of Hebrew equivalent of “to” was much more common when the subject was **ירושלם** - “**Jerusalem**.” This conclusion is supported by the fact that in the Book of Ezra, except for the subject “Jerusalem”, all the verbs with any other subject never lack (the needed) the Hebrew equivalents of the English “to.”