Conservatism and Innovation in the Hebrew Language of the Hellenistic Period

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CIRCUMSTANTIAL QUALIFIERS IN QUMRAN HEBREW: REFLECTIONS ON ADJUNCT EXPRESSIONS IN THE MANUAL OF DISCIPLINE (1QS)

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Circumstantial qualifiers are any word, phrase or sentence which is not an obligatory constituent of the main sentence or main sentences. On the phrase level and the sentence level this is as much as the English term “adjunct”, but in a text linguistic perspective it is fruitful to expect linguistic devices for marking circumstantial information also on the discourse level.

The Arabic grammatical tradition has coined its own term, ḥāl, for circumstantial qualifiers on the phrase and sentence levels. On the phrase level, the accusative case is an exceedingly productive device for generating adverbial expressions of all kinds. In particular, the active participle in the accusative case is an adverbial adjunct, as in the Arabic school example ǧā’ar Zaydun rākiban “Zayd came riding”, in which the participle rākiban corresponds naturally to the English ing-form and the Swedish anda/ende forms: Zayd came riding and Swedish Zayd kom ridande, where “riding” and “ridande” are non-obligatory adverbial complements to the main sentence Zayd came. In a similar manner Arabic may use infinitives and other nouns in the accusative case as complementary devices for the expression of ḥāl. The Arabic school grammars give many examples:

(1) ʾistayḥaliḥu ǧalusan “they received him seated”.

1 Cf. J. Lyons, Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics (Cambridge, 1968), 344 f. The treatment in P. H. Matthews, Syntax (Cambridge, 1981), 136 f., is less fruitful on this point. It does not consider adjuncts on the sentence level and is mainly concerned with the generative problem of finding a formal way of identifying circumstantial qualifiers.

2 This one and those above are taken from J. A. Haywood, H. M. Nahmad, A New Arabic Grammar of the Written Language (2nd ed., London, 1965), 394 f.
This means, that they received him while they remained seated, where ǧulūsan is the infinitive (maṣdar) of the verb “to sit” in the accusative case.

On the sentence level the repository of Arabic ḥāl devices exhibits the exceedingly common verbal ḥāl, usually consisting of an imperfect verb form asyndetically attached to the main sentence, as in the school example:

(2) ǧaʾa Zaydun yarkabu “Zayd came riding”.

Example (2) is practically equivalent in meaning with the beforementioned ǧaʾa Zaydun rakibān. There are numerous other devices for the expression of ḥāl in Arabic, but for the present purpose – discussing circumstantial qualifiers in the Manual of Discipline, the elementary examples given above should be enough.

The impetus to the considerations indicated above were examples of adjuncts in the Hebrew Bible that seemed to be quite similar in function to the Arabic ḥāl devices presented above. Some examples in the book of Qoheleth were discussed at a conference in Leuven in October 2004. Other examples were from pre-exilic Hebrew, e.g. in the book of Judges:

Judges 9:56

Thus God repaid the wickedness that Abimelech had done to his father by murdering his seventy brothers. (NIV)

God punishes Abimelech for his crime of murdering his brothers. In this context it is not possible to interpret the infinitive as expressing a purpose or a consequence. The infinitive construct lāhārōg simply informs us of the nature of the crime.

The existence of circumstantial imperfects in Biblical Hebrew was noticed by H. S. Nyberg in his Hebreisk grammatik (1952, §86t). For example:

Gen 48:10

Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, and he could not see well. (NRSV)

The negative imperfect phrase in Gen 48:10 corresponds to an Arabic ḥāl imperfect expressing a circumstantial information that in the context receives consequential nuance: the eyes of Israel were dim, so that he could

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This sense of consequence has no direct marker in the text, but is a result of the ability of circumstantial expressions to convey both finality (intention: in order to) and consequence (so that...), senses that are common also in Arabic ḥāl-constructions.⁴

Our observations of ḥāl-constructions in Hebrew led to a special study of the functions of the infinitive construct in the book of Judges, which was published in the Stig Norin Festschrift 2005.⁵ Our basic methodological hypothesis in the latter article was that it is fruitful to compare syntactical phenomena in Arabic and Hebrew and that syntactical constructions in the two languages may mutually elucidate each other. The result of our study was that, in particular, the infinitives in classical Arabic and classical Hebrew exhibit parallel constructions. On one hand the so-called absolute object (al-marṣāl al-muḍlaq) corresponds to the infinitive absolute in Hebrew having the basic function of an emphasis, on the other the Arabic infinitive in the accusative being an adverbial qualifier corresponds to the Hebrew infinitives liqtol and qōṯol. It was shown that both liqtol and qōṯol may be used with adverbial functions in Judges.⁶ The frequent usage of liqtol as a circumstantial qualifier indicates that the syntagm liqtol in fact functions as an alternative infinitive in classical Hebrew, and that the nuances of finality so often perceived in the texts represent a secondary phenomenon originating from the use of the infinitive as a general adverbial adjunct.

In the present article, we will use the same fundamental hypothesis when analysing circumstantial expressions in the Manual of Discipline. Considering the high frequency of the infinitive construct with lamed in this text, the main emphasis will be on the various uses of the liqtol form, but initially examples of other circumstantial qualifiers will be given as well.

Needless to say, the Manual of Discipline is indeed different from the book of Judges. It is halakic and principally non-narrative. It is prescript-

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⁴ T. Leahy, “Studies in the Syntax of 1QS”, Biblica 41 (1960), 137, properly notes that “Frequently, however, the explicative use seems to blend either into purpose or result”.


⁶ As W. Th. van Peursen has pointed out, the circumstantial infinitive (which he calls "epexegetical") is attested also in the text of Ben Sira, The verbal system in the Hebrew text of Ben Sir (Leiden, 2004), 265.
tive and normative. And yet there are numerous circumstantial expressions also in this sectarian rule of the Qumran community.

There are a few examples of circumstantial asyndetic imperfects, as in VI 25–26:

1QS VI 25 26
Anyone who answers his comrade defiantly or impatiently, thereby rejecting the instruction of his fellow and rebelling against the orders of his higher-ranked comrade, has usurped authority (Accordance, my italics)

The imperfect ḥadabber baqoser ḥappayim is actually not an alternative as the little word “or” in the translation of Accordance intimates, but a circumstantial expression expounding the previous main sentence: “in that he speaks impatiently”. Charlesworth translates “And one who answers his fellow with stubbornness, addresses him impatiently,...”. In the same passage we can see also the circumstantial nuance of the infinitive lifrūʾ. A final nuance (“in order to rebel”) would not fit the context. The infinitive does not describe an intention or a consequence, but further expounds the description of the impatient and stubborn man.

In another instance from III 20 we encounter a subordinate clause that would have been called by the Arab grammarians a sīfa, an asyndetic relative clause with a simple imperfect. Such a clause may also be interpreted as a verbal circumstantial clause. Both are, in fact, called a sīfa in Arabic grammars:

1QS III 20
The authority of the Prince of Light extends to the governance of all righteous people; therefore, they walk in the paths of light. (Accordance, my italics)

In the translation of Accordance, the word “therefore” has no specific representative in the Hebrew text; it could be supplanted by the more neutral circumstantial “in that”. The example is a good illustration that circumstantial expressions easily take explanatory or consequential connotations. This interpretation is confirmed by the next parallel clause III 21, where the circumstantial clause is introduced by the conjunction ḫaṭāʾ:
The authority of the Angel of Darkness embraces the governance of all wicked people when they walk in the paths of darkness.

Finally, an asyndetic הָל imperfect is found in IV 23–24:

Until now the spirits of truth and deceit struggle in the heart of humans, and (so) they walk in wisdom or vileness. (Charlesworth)

Accordance puts a period after גֶּבֶר, but against such a punctuation speaks that the following imperfect יִתְהַלֵּלָּו lacks a subject. Accordance is forced to supply a subject, “All people”, which is not reflected in the text. Charlesworth is better on this point and translates “and (so) they walk in wisdom or vileness”. Wernberg-Møller translates correctly: “(some) walking in wisdom and (some) in vileness”.

We have found only one example of a participle in adjunct function, and its interpretation is not undisputed. It is the nihal participle נְקֹנוּ in VIII 4–6:

When these become in Israel, - the council of the community being established in truth - an eternal plant (Charlesworth, my italics)

The clause נְקֹנוּשַׁא יִתְאָה be-קָמֶה! may be interpreted in other ways, as Accordance “then shall the council of the Yahad truly be established, an eternal planting” shows. On this passage we rely on Wernberg-Møller and Charlesworth since the construction הָיָה בָּמַתִּיתָא “become a planting” is so frequent in biblical Hebrew.

In spite of the interesting instances of imperfects and the (only?) instance of a participle in הָל function, the most common device for circumstantial expressions in the Manual of Discipline is the infinitive construct. The infinitive construct as such is attested 226 x in the text, of which the

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7 Other instances of the imperfect with circumstantial sense are found in IX 23 ff. Circumstantial usage of the imperfect in Biblical Hebrew has been observed by H. S. Nyberg, *Hebreisk grammatik* (Stockholm, 1972), § 86t.

8 The circumstantial usage of the participle in Biblical Hebrew has been observed by many scholars, although with varying terminologies, cf. Nyberg, *Hebreisk grammatik*, § 89m, P. Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, vol II (Roma, 1991), § 126a; it is attested also in Ben Sira, see van Peursen, *Verbal system in Ben Sira*, 231 ff.
vast majority, 170 x, show a prefixed lamed, 24 x a prefixed *bx*, and in 21 instances the infinitive has no prefixed particle at all. The rest are instances with less frequent particles like *ad-, al-, lipne-,* etc. The infinitive without any prefixed particle functions just like an infinitive with lamed, except that a *līqṭol* cannot partake in a construct chain. One example will suffice to illustrate this:

IQS IX 20-21

*He shall instruct* them in every legal finding that is to regulate their works in that time, and teach them to separate from every man who fails to keep himself from perversity. (Accordance)

This passage exhibits an initial infinitive with the common modal sense, which Waltke & O’Connor points out always occurs in verbless clauses. The following *la'āsot* comes close to a complement to the preceding infinitive: *He shall teach them to live—la'āsot—in this time.* The following infinitive *wehibbādel* lacks lamed but is co-ordinated with the preceding infinitive as an added complement to *tḥaškilām.* The infinitives *la'āsot* and *wehibbādel* may be interpreted as complements to the initial infinitive, but also as circumstantial adjuncts, describing life according to *ha-n-nimṣā,* the revealed law. The infinitives may also be interpreted as having a final nuance expressing the purpose: in order that they know how to live. The best interpretation in this case is probably that of a complement: *He is to teach them to do all that is revealed of the law in this time and separate themselves from every man.* The last clause with the infinitive *kāser* is a crux. It is mostly translated as a relative clause, but as all can see, *we-lo* *mikkol 'aceel kāser darkō,* being introduced by the conjunction *we-* , cannot be a relative clause. It is a circumstantial nominal clause giving information about the kind of *tīq* to keep separated from: *(he is such that) there is no keeping his way from perversity.* Such a man is not accepted for fellowship.
Waltke & O’Connor comment on the special compound between lamed and qatìl in the liqtol form, and other grammars like Gesenius-Kautzsch have treated that point as well. Obviously, the compound is old, and seems to have gradually replaced the infinitive without lamed during the Old Testament period. In Mishnaic Hebrew liqtol has replaced the infinitive without initial particle. It is therefore probable that liqtol was felt like an ordinary infinitive of the verb among the Qumran Hebrew speakers.

The most conspicuous usage of the infinitive with lamed in 1QS is the modal one, exclusively used in verbless clauses. It is found throughout the text, but is specially frequent in the introductory section, 1 1–14. There are admittedly some parallels in late Biblical Hebrew, but the frequency of this usage is clearly nonbiblical and deserves recognition here as a contrast to the circumstantial uses interspersed in the same passage:

1QS I 1–15

Translation

[...] the Rule of the Community.

They shall seek God with all their heart and with all their soul, they shall do that which is good and upright before Him, just as He commanded through Moses and all His servants the prophets, they shall love everything He chose, distancing themselves from all evil they shall hold fast to all good deeds: they shall practice truth, justice and righteousness in the land, they shall walk no longer in a guilty, willful heart and lustful desires, wherein they did

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11 B. K. Waltke, M. P. O’Connor, An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax (Winona Lake, 1990), §36.2.3a.
13 Commented on by E. Qimron in The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Harvard Semitic Studies 29 (Atlanta, 1986), § 400.02, and in “The Language”, in Qumran Cave 4: V (Miqvat Ma’ase ha-Torah), Discoveries in the Judaean Desert 10 (Oxford, 1994), § 3.4.2.1.


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They shall induct all who volunteer to live by the laws of God into the Covenant of Mercy, whereby they are joined to God's society. They shall walk faultless before Him, according to all that has been revealed for the times appointed them. They shall love all the Children of Light—each commensurate with his rightful place in the council of God—

they shall hate all the Children of Darkness, each commensurate with his guilt and the vengeance due him from God.

All who volunteer for His truth should bring the full measure of their knowledge, strength and wealth into the Community of God, purifying their knowledge in the verity of God's laws, properly exercising their strength according to the perfection of His ways, and likewise their wealth by the canon of His righteous counsel. They shall not deviate in the smallest detail from any of God's words as these apply to their own time. They shall neither advance their holy times nor shall they postpone any of their prescribed festivals. They shall turn aside from His unerring laws walking neither to the right nor the left.

As has been pointed out by Waltke & O'Connor and others, the modal sense of the infinitive has some parallels in the late books of the Hebrew Bible, especially in Chronicles, and also in negative clauses like Qoh 3:14 "nothing can be added to it". But its frequency and unmistakably imperative nuance seem to be an innovation in Qumran Hebrew. In this preamble of the Manual of discipline, 1:1–15, we can notice that in the long series of exhortations only the first is introduced without a

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14 Waltke & O'Connor, Biblical Hebrew Syntax, §36.2.3f.
Coordinating waw. The laʿāsōt in 1:2 is inconclusive since the lacuna does not permit us to know what preceded it. The whole series of exhortations continues with wəl̄él̄eḥōb (l. 3), wəl̄išnō³ (l. 4), wəl̄idḥōq and wəl̄aʿāsōt (l. 5), wəl̄o² lāl̄eket (l. 6), ūl̄shābī (l. 7), ūl̄shithal-lek (l. 8), wəl̄él̄eḥōb (l. 9), wəl̄išnō³ (l. 10), wəl̄o² l̄iš’ōd (l. 13), wəl̄o² ləqaddem (l. 14), wəl̄o² ləḥiṭ’aḥer (l. 14), and finally wəl̄o² lāsūr (l. 15). Interspersed in this series of commands are asyndetically inserted infinitives that state further circumstances of the previous main command (infinitive with initial wə-), its proper practice or another comment. In line 4, the readers are commanded to hate everything God has rejected by distancing from all evil, in line 6-7 they are to walk no longer in a willful heart since with such a heart they would do all kinds of evil things. The phrase laʿāsōt kəl rā’s in line 7 cannot be a command, it has no negation (which would be required to give the command a suitable meaning), it is just an explanation of the nature of a life in lustful desires. The second laʿāsōt in line 7 is a complement of the introductory ūl̄shābī. The bəḥiṭeḥāhed in line 8 can be interpreted as either having just a descriptive nuance (“being joined to the Yahad”) or as having a consequential sense (“so that they become joined to the Yahad”). It is the honour of T. Leahy that he already in 1960 recognized the circumstantial character of lāl̄eket yāmīn ušm̄’ol in 1:15: “going to right or left”, a meaning that “expresses neither purpose, nor yet the result of turning aside, but rather tells in what the turning aside consists.”

Thus, the infinitives with initial wə- are usually more independent commands. The conjunction wə- co-ordinates the separate commands on the phrase level, while subordinated infinitives expounding the commands are added by asyndesis. In one case (1:12) subordinated infinitives are combined by a waw in an additive co-ordination: ləbārer... wəkōhām lətakken “purifying ... and properly exercising their strength”.

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13 This observation was made already by T. Muraoka in “Notae Qumranicae philologicae”, Revue de Qumran 17, no. 65-68 (1996), 573.
14 Thus Muraoka, “Notae Qumranicae philologicae”, 576.
15 Muraoka uses the term “epexegetical” for this usage, with parallels in the Greek syntactical terminology, “Notae Qumranicae philologicae”, 575, or the Latin term “gerund”. Jouion-Muraoka, Grammar of Biblical Hebrew, vol II, § 124o. We consider the term “circumstantial” more fruitful, being rooted in comparative Semitic syntax.
16 Leahy, “Studies in the syntax of 1QS”, 137.
17 The conjunction wə- may co-ordinate linguistic entities on several levels of language: phrases, subordinated clauses, main sentences.
A clear or probable circumstantial function of liqtol in 1QS is attested in about 44 instances of a total of 170, or 26%.20

Other uses of the infinitive are complements to verbs or for expressing a final or consecutive meaning. It is not possible to discuss all these cases here. Some significant instances will be treated in the following.

1QS II 11-12

“Damned be anyone who – initiated with unrepentant heart – enters this Covenant”

In 2:11–12 the subject of the ḫāʾārī must be the habbā in line 12: “Cursed be he who enters”. The phrase laʿābōr is a circumstantial qualifier describing the state of mind in the initiation. Many scholars translate עבר as “transgress, sin” and some even emend to עבד “worship”, but the root עבר is used in close connection to the preceding phrase wokol haʿābōrim habbōrīt “and all those who cross over into the covenant” (II 10) in the specific meaning of being initiated into the covenant (II 10), and this is the most fitting meaning of the root עבר also in II 11–12. The subject of ḫāʾārī is the active participle habbā “he who enters”, giving the main clause the meaning “Cursed be he who enters this covenant”, connected with the circumstantial clause hagillātē libbō laʿābōr “being initiated with his idols retained in his heart”.21

In the passage about God’s purification of man by/in his truth, IV 20–21, many translators have tried to render the infinitives with a final nuance, but an interpretation that describes means or method or the kind of action involved is more fitting:

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20 I 4,7,8,15,16(2x),24; II 8,11 12(1x),12,25; III 6,8 9(2x),16; IV 11,20 21(2x),21 22(2x),26; V 4,12,13(2x),23,24(2x); VI 7(2x),14 15(2x); VII 1,14,18,22,24(2x); VIII 1 4(1x),7 9(1x),9 10(1x); IX 8 9(2x),9 10(1x); X 10 11(1x); XI 1(2x). Leahy, “Studies in the syntax of 1QS”, 137 ff, states 26 instances of “explicative” infinitives. The uses of the infinitive that Qimron in The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls, § 400.02:2, calls “indicative” are in reality circumstantial, which, as he notes, in many cases are equivalent to a participles (also in circumstantial position). Qimrons example (p. 72) from 1QM XII 9 is instructive: אבבב ועל תחת אדום “and as clouds of dew covering the earth.”

21 We are not convinced of T. Muraoka’s argument that the subject of the ḫāʾārī is the infinitive laʿābōr, see “Notae Qumranicae Philologicae (2).”, 67 ff. In spite of Muraoka’s example Mal 2:2, where a perfect ḫāʾārī (not a passive participle) is found with the nonpersonal object bikritēkam giving the meaning “I have cursed your blessings” (or better “I have turned your blessings into curses”), it is not satisfying to consider an infinitive laʿābōr (Muraoka prefers this hifil reading) the subject of the passive participle ḫāʾārī.
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1QS IV 20–21

By His truth God shall then purify all human deeds, and refine some of humanity, extinguishing every perverse spirit from the inward parts of the flesh, and cleansing from every wicked deed by a holy spirit.

After an imperfect יָבָאֵר and perfect “consecutive” וּבְזִיקְקֵק follow two infinitives, לְחָטֵם and לְתָחָרָה, describing the manners or moments of the purification. It is possible to translate לְחָטֵם as “in order to extinguish” or “so that he extinguishes”, but such an interpretation fails to distinguish the goal from the procedure to achieve that goal.22 The goal is to “refine some of humanity”, and the procedure to reach this goal is to extinguish perverse spirits and to perform a cleansing from wicked deeds by a holy spirit.

In IV 26, where God is said to allot the two spirits to the sons of men, both final and circumstantial nuances are expressed by לִכְטּוֹל:

1QS IV 26

he allots them to the sons of man, so imparting knowledge of good [and evil, | deciding the fate of every living being by the measure of his spirit.

The first infinitive, לָדָאָת, has a final sense: the spirits have the purpose of imparting knowledge. The second infinitive, לְחָפְפִּיל, is best described as expounding the significance of the imparting of knowledge by the two spirits: by this procedure the fate of a living being is determined by the measure of his spirit.

1QS II 25–26

Anyone who refuses to enter [the society of God preferring to continue in his willful heart, shall not [be initiated into...] (Accordance, my italics)

In II 25–26 לָלָקַּאֵט is best interpreted as describing the state of the heart of one who refuses to enter the covenant. A sense of consequence (so that he continues…) is possible but less feasible.

22 A more difficult case is IV 11, in which the infinitive with lamed, לָלָקַּאֵט, expounds the expression קִיבֹד לֵב “hardness of heart”: יִכְוֹד לֵב לְלָקַּאֵט בָּלָקַּאֵט לָשׁוּךְ “and hardness of heart, walking in all the ways of darkness (Charlesworth)”. The passage is part of the description of the principles or consequences of the Spirit of Deceit beginning in IV 9. The meaning of לָלָקַּאֵט can be interpreted as a circumstantial, as Charlesworth and Wernberg-Moller have done, but it also is close to a consequence of the hardness of heart.
In III 8–9 the infinitives are used to describe how the cleansing of man’s flesh is worked out. A meaning of finality does not fit here, nor is the purification with water a goal in itself:

1QS III 8–9

It is by humiliating himself under all God’s ordinances, that his flesh can be cleansed, *by sprinkling* with water of purification, *and by sanctifying* himself with water of purity. (Wernberg-Moller, my italics)

The infinitives *likazzot* and *lhitqaddeš* give information about the concrete process of purification by alluding to the regulations for cleaning leprosy. This is how the cleaning of the flesh should be done. The infinitives do neither describe a consequence, nor a purpose.

1QS VII 22–24

Any man who, having been in the Council of the Yahad for ten full years, backslides spiritually *by being treacherous* towards the community, and he leaves the general membership, *walking in his wilful heart*, may never again return to the Council of the Yahad.

The passage VII 22–24 regulates the treatment of backsliders. Backsliding is expressed by the perfect “consecutive” *wašāhā nūhō* “and his spirit turns back”, which is followed by two infinitives *libgod* and *lalekēt*. It is more natural to interpret these infinitives as informing of the manner and character of the backsliding person rather than of the consequences of backsliding. Especially *lalekēt* is difficult to take as consequential, since having left the society the backslider is already in his wilful heart.

1QS IX 8–9

*(the Sons of Aaron shall decide…) on money matters for the holy men who walk blamelessly*. Their wealth is not to be admixed with that of rebellious men, who have failed to cleanse their path *by separating* from perversity and *walking* blamelessly. ( Accordance)

In the passage IX 8–9 regulating the property of the members of the Yahad, the infinitives *lohibbādel* and *lalekēt* describe what the rebellious men should have done to cleanse themselves, but which they failed to do. The sense of the infinitives cannot be consequential (“so that they separated themselves”), nor describe a purpose (they failed “in order to sepa-
rate themselves"). The sense is instead describing the means by which they should have been cleansed: *by separating, by walking blamelessly.*

**Summary**

Our hypothesis was that ancient Semitic devices for the expression of circumstantial qualifiers on different levels of language were still used in Qumran Hebrew. Some of those devices are reflected in elementary Arabic syntax, such as a participle or an infinitive in the accusative case on the phrase level or an asyndetically added imperfect on the sentence level. We have discussed a few examples of imperfects functioning as circumstantial qualifiers to a main sentence. We have also shown that one of several syntactical functions of the infinitive construct with lamed is clearly that of a circumstantial qualifier, and we have pointed out that this function cannot be an innovation in Late Biblical Hebrew, since it is a living usage already in the book of Judges.