

Tamar Zewi

University of Haifa

## INDIRECT RESPONSES IN BIBLICAL HEBREW

### 1. *On interrogative clauses, questions, and answers*

Interrogative clauses are an independent clause type, whose typical function is to express questions. It is mainly contrasted with the declarative clause type, whose typical function is to express statements. Interrogative clauses are also contrasted with imperative clauses, whose typical function is to express commands, and exclamatory clauses, whose typical function is to express exclamations. Although interrogative clauses typically convey questions the two are not identical, since questions can also be expressed by other means, and interrogative clauses functioning as rhetorical questions can express declarative contents.<sup>1</sup> Interrogative clauses are usually classed according to the following types,<sup>2</sup> all of which can be rhetorical or non-rhetorical: (1) Yes-No interrogative clauses,<sup>3</sup> which often involve inverse word order (e.g., *Is it true?*) and can also have special question particles (Biblical Hebrew  $\text{-ה}$  in e.g., 2 Sam. 18:32:  $\text{הַשְּׁלוֹם לַיְגֵר לְאַבְשָׁלוֹם}$  “Is it well with the young man Absalom?”),<sup>4</sup> (2) interrogative clauses commencing with question words, entitled in English-oriented studies also WH-questions, like *who, what, where*, etc.; in Biblical Hebrew  $\text{מִי}$  ‘who,’  $\text{מָה}$  ‘what,’  $\text{אֵי}$  ‘where,’ etc.),<sup>5</sup> (3) alternative interrogative clauses (e.g., *Would you prefer this or that?*; in Biblical Hebrew such interrogative clauses usually involve two distinctive question particles  $\text{-ה}$  and  $\text{אִם}$  in that order, e.g., Josh 5:13

---

<sup>1</sup> In general, the correspondence between clause types and their function (in the sense of speech act or illocutionary force) is not one-to-one (Huddleston 1994:3845-3848). See also Siemund 2001; Crystal 2003:241, 384; Moshavi (forthcoming), and many more references there. On the various discourse functions of questions, see, e.g., Athanasiadou 1991.

<sup>2</sup> On similar classifications, Huddleston 1994:3849-3851, Siemund 2001; König & Siemund 2007:290-294; Moshavi (forthcoming).

<sup>3</sup> ‘Polar interrogatives’ according to Siemund 2001:1011.

<sup>4</sup> English translations of Biblical citations are according to the *RSV*.

<sup>5</sup> ‘Constituent interrogative clauses’ according to Siemund 2001:1011. Also entitled ‘open interrogatives,’ ‘information questions,’ ‘special questions,’ ‘partial questions’ (Huddleston 1994:3850).

הֲלָנוּ אִתָּהּ אִם-לְצָרֵינוּ “Are you for us, or for our adversaries?”), and (4) interrogative clauses ending with a question tag (e.g., *It is true, isn't it?*). This type is not attested in Biblical Hebrew. The first three types of interrogative clause are common in Biblical Hebrew.<sup>6</sup> Syntactically, when subordinate, interrogative clauses form complement clauses functioning as indirect questions (e.g., *He would like to know what you plan to do*; Exod. 2:4 לֹא מֵהֵעֵשָׂה לוֹ “And his sister stood at a distance, to know what would be done to him”).

Responses to interrogative clauses show varied patterns and can be direct and explicit<sup>7</sup> or indirect and implicit, depending on context, pre-assumptions of the responder as to the motives and expectations of the questioner, and/or mutual/background information known both to the questioner and the respondent.<sup>8</sup> The current paper discusses the second type of responses, which are indirect and implicit, the conditions in which they occur, and the means by which they achieve coherence and cohesion.<sup>9</sup> The term ‘indirect response’ refers here to answers to questions and other responses to interrogative clauses, which impart a syntactically independent utterance, not formulated in a formal reply pattern,<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Question types also include certain clauses which do not have a special interrogative form but end with a rising intonation. This type of questions can be discerned only in living languages. For general definitions and classifications of interrogative clauses and questions in general and in Biblical and Modern Hebrew, see also e.g. Burstein 1999:4-9, (forthcoming), Duvshani 1970, Moshavi (forthcoming). For discussions of Biblical Hebrew interrogative particles/pronouns and clauses in Biblical Hebrew grammars see e.g. *GKC*:296, §100i-n, 443-444, §137, 473-476, §150, Joüon & Muraoka 2006:105-107, §37, 306, §102i, 501-503, §144, 573-577, §161, Waltke & O’Connor 1990:315-329, §18, Williams 2007:51-53, 192-193. Studies dedicated to specific issues of interrogative clauses and questions in Biblical and Modern Hebrew are e.g. Hyman 1983, 1987, 1989-1990, Burstein 2000a, 2000b, 2003a, 2003b, 2005, Moshavi 2010.

<sup>7</sup> On direct answers see e.g. König & Siemund 2007:320-322.

<sup>8</sup> Burstein 1999:20-21 briefly discusses the type of answers referred to here as ‘indirect responses’ in general, and Burstein 1999:351-353 refers to such answers in Modern Hebrew. Halliday & Hasan 1976:206 use a similar term, saying that “an indirect response is either one which comments on the questions (commentary), or one which denies its relevance (disclaimer), or one which gives supplementary information implying but not actually expressing an answer (supplementary response).” Based on the latter definition, the third category, ‘supplementary indirect response,’ seems to be the closest to the term ‘indirect responses’ as employed in this paper. However, according to Halliday & Hasan 1976:213, such responses can usually be supplemented by conditional or causal clauses, and they are typically associated with Yes/No questions, while this is not the case with the Biblical Hebrew examples discussed next.

<sup>9</sup> According to Crystal 2003:81, ‘coherence’ concerns “the underlying functional connectedness or identity of a piece of spoken or written language (text, discourse),” and ‘cohesion,’ as understood and defined by Halliday, refers to “the surface-structure features of an utterance or text which link different parts of sentences or larger units of discourse, e.g., the cross-referencing function of pronouns, articles and some types of adverbs...”. See also Halliday & Hasan 1976:1-30. These two terms are used in the current discussion according to these definitions.

<sup>10</sup> See Burstein 1999:20-21, 144-369, regarding various typical patterns of answers in Modern Hebrew.

still rendering a cohesive contextual response to its preceding interrogative clause. In the absence of formal reply patterns, the identification of the means by which coherence and cohesion are achieved between such indirect responses and their preceding interrogative clauses is especially challenging, and has to lean on terminology and method developed in discourse and text-linguistics studies in regard to cohesion between units larger than a sentence. According to Halliday & Hasan, the following three are central devices commonly employed to achieve cohesion:<sup>11</sup>

1. Anaphoric reference, by means of repetition or resumptive pronouns.
2. Substitution, namely replacement of a certain element by another.
3. Ellipsis, namely omission of sentence parts or larger units which can be recovered by the context.<sup>12</sup>

Indeed, the majority of the Biblical Hebrew examples discussed below involve at least one of these devices.

## **2. Indirect responses in Biblical Hebrew**

The following lines demonstrate and discuss ten examples of indirect responses cited from Classical Biblical Hebrew prose. The means, syntactic and non-syntactic, whereby these indirect responses and the interrogative clauses to which they respond cohere are especially pinpointed. The discussion covers indirect responses to the three primary types of interrogative clauses presented above: (1) Yes-No interrogative clauses, (2) interrogative clauses commencing with question words, and (3) alternative interrogative clauses. All these types of interrogative clauses are well attested in Biblical Hebrew.

### **2.1. Indirect responses to Yes-No interrogative clauses**

The following interrogative clause (1) is a Yes-No question introduced by the question particle *-ה*:

(1)

Interrogative clause:

וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל-הַכּוּשִׁי הַשְּׁלוֹם לְנֵעַר לְאַבְשָׁלוֹם “The king said to the Cushite, ‘Is it well with the young man Absalom?’” (2 Sam. 18:32a)

Response:

וַיֹּאמֶר הַכּוּשִׁי יְהִי כְנֵעַר אֹיְבֵי אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְכָל אֲשֶׁר-קָמוּ עָלַי לְרָעָה “And the Cushite answered, ‘May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up against you for evil, be like that young man’” (2 Sam. 18:32b)

---

<sup>11</sup> Halliday & Hasan 1976:31-225.

<sup>12</sup> Also defined as “substitution by zero” in Halliday & Hasan 1976:142.

In Biblical Hebrew affirmative answers to such questions are produced by repeating the question predicate, which would be שְׁלוֹם ‘well-being’ in this case, and negative answers by using a negative word.<sup>13</sup> Here the given answer is neither; instead it is indirect, formulated as a curse or a death wish for the kings’ enemies, from which the king, who asked the question, can immediately infer its negative content, namely the mortal fate of Absalom himself. Cohesion between the question and the answer is achieved in this example anaphorically, by repetition of the word גֶּעֶר ‘a young man’ and referring to its fate in both the question and the answer. Therefore, besides relying on context, the anaphoric device of repetition is the method employed in this example to create cohesion between the question and its indirect answer.

The following (2) is another example of an answer to a Yes-No question, which is not formulated in the expected pattern typical of answers to this kind of questions:

(2)

Interrogative clause:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־יְהוֹשָׁפָט הַתְּלֵךְ אִתִּי לְמַלְחָמָה רָמֹת גִּלְעָד “And he said to Jehoshaphat, ‘Will you go with me to battle at Ramoth-gilead?’” (1 Kgs. 22:4a; Compare to 1 Chron.18:3a)

Response:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשָׁפָט אֶל־מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמוֹנִי כְמוֹדְךָ כְּעַמִּי כְּעַמְּךָ כְּסוּסֵי כְּסוּסֵיךָ “Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, ‘I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses’” (1 Kgs. 22:4b; Compare to 1 Chron.18:3b)

Instead of repeating the verb, as expected in affirmative answers to this kind of questions, the answer conveys a special phraseological utterance, from which the questioner can deduce the affirmative answer himself. Again, besides context, cohesion is achieved in this example by anaphoric measures of resumptive pronouns, disclosing 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular possessive pronouns attached to the prepositional phrases in the phraseological utterance and referring to Jehoshaphat, the king of Judea (כְּמוֹנִי... כְּעַמִּי... כְּסוּסֵי... ‘like me...’, ‘like my people...’, ‘like my horses...’), and Ahab, the king of Israel (... כְּסוּסֵיךָ... כְּעַמְּךָ... כְּמוֹדְךָ ‘like you...’, ‘like your people...’, ‘like your horses...’), respectively. These possessive pronouns refer to the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular verbal agreement pronoun implicit in the verb (... הַתְּלֵךְ ‘will you go...’) in the question and the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular possessive pronoun attached to the preposition there (... אִתִּי ‘with me...’), which refer again to Jehoshaphat, the king of Judea, and Ahab, the king of Israel, respectively.

A similar example is 2 Kgs. 3:7 וַיֵּשְׁלַח אֶל־יְהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה לֵאמֹר מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב פָּשַׁע בִּי וַיֵּשְׁלַח אֶל־יְהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה לֵאמֹר מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב לְמַלְחָמָה וַיֵּשְׁלַח אֶתִּי אֶל־מוֹאָב לְמַלְחָמָה וַיֵּשְׁלַח אֶתִּי אֶל־מוֹאָב לְמַלְחָמָה וַיֵּשְׁלַח אֶתִּי אֶל־מוֹאָב לְמַלְחָמָה וַיֵּשְׁלַח אֶתִּי אֶל־מוֹאָב לְמַלְחָמָה “And he went

<sup>13</sup> Joüon & Muraoka 2006:577, §1611.

and sent word to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, ‘The king of Moab has rebelled against me; will you go with me to battle against Moab?’ And he said, ‘I will go; I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses’.” Nonetheless, in the latter verse the response includes an affirmative answer preceding the phraseological utterance, realized in the typical biblical way, by repeating the verb in the question, ...הֲתֵלֵךְ ‘will you go...?’, with a semantically parallel verbal substitute, ...אָעֵלֶה ‘I will go.’

## **2.2. Indirect responses to interrogative clauses introduced by question words**

In the following example (3) two interrogative clauses open with the place interrogatives אֵי-מִזֶּה ‘where from?’ and אֵינָה ‘where to?’:

(3)

Interrogative clause:

וַיֹּאמֶר הָגָר הַגֵּר שְׂרָי אֵי-מִזֶּה בָּאת וְאֵינָה תֵלְכִי “And he said, ‘Hagar, maid of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?’” (Gen. 16:8a)

Response:

וַתֹּאמֶר מִפְּנֵי שְׂרָי גְבוּרָתִי אֲנֹכִי בָרַחַח “She said, ‘I am fleeing from my mistress Sarai’” (Gen. 16:8b)

A conventional answer to such interrogative clauses should include the place of departure and the destination. Instead the answer explains why the responder, Hagar, left her place in the first place. The responder interprets the interrogative clause as showing an interest in the background of the situation, and the cause of her being away from home, more than in her exact place of departure and her destination. In this interrogative clause and its response, cohesion is achieved by anaphoric means of resumptive pronouns, namely using 1<sup>st</sup> singular personal pronouns in the answer in agreement with the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular implicit in the verbs in the interrogative clause. In addition, it relies heavily on the context and the responder’s presumptions as to the questioner’s motives in asking his questions.

The following example (4) demonstrates an indirect response in the sense that the responders to the interrogative clause rely on a shared presumption that a midwife may not kill a newborn babe after it is delivered:

(4)

Interrogative clause:

וַיִּקְרָא מֶלֶךְ-מִצְרַיִם לְמֵילִדֹת וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶן מִדּוּעַ עֲשִׂיתֶן הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וּתְחַיֶּינָן אֶת-הַיְלָדִים “So the king of Egypt called the midwives, and said to them, ‘Why have you done this, and let the male children live?’” (Exod. 1:18)

Response:

וַתֹּאמְרֵן הַמֵּילִדֹת אֶל-פַּרְעֹה כִּי לֹא כִנְשִׁים הַמִּצְרַיִת הָעֵבְרִית כִּי-חַיֹּת הָיָה בְטָרָם תָּבוֹא אֲלֵהֶן “The midwives said to Pharaoh, ‘Because the Hebrew women are

not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and are delivered before the midwife comes to them.” (Exod. 1:19)

The word הַיְלָדִים ‘the male-children,’ referring to the newborn male babies, is manifested only in the question as a direct object of the verb וַתְּחַיֵּי ‘let live.’ It is omitted in the reply, leaving the verb וַיִּלְדוּ ‘to deliver, to be delivered’ without the direct object, which is the outcome of the birth-giving. This omission should be regarded syntactically as a certain type of ellipsis, in which the direct object is a verb complement, grammatically omissible. Though a reference to the direct object anaphorically, by repetition or by resumptive pronouns, is missing, it is still virtually existent and can be regarded as a syntactic means of cohesion. Another reference, this time explicit, is established anaphorically by the repetition of the word הַמִּלְדָּה ‘the midwives,’ to whom the question is addressed, with the word הַמִּלְדָּה ‘the midwife’ in singular in the answer. This partial repetition can also be regarded as partial substitution, since the plural form is substituted by a singular one. Thus, cohesion between the interrogative clause and its answer is accomplished in this example by context, shared presumptions, recovery of an elliptical component, and anaphoric means through repetition involving partial substitution.

The following interrogative clause (5) appears to probe the reason for a wrong-doing, but in fact its intention is to rebuke the hearer:

(5)

Interrogative clause:

וַיֹּאמֶר לְרָשָׁע לָמָּה תִכֶּה רֵעִי “And he said to the man that did the wrong, ‘Why do you strike your fellow?’” (Exod. 2:13)

Response:

וַיֹּאמֶר מִי שָׂמְךָ לְאִישׁ שֶׁר וְשֹׁפֵט עָלֵינוּ הַלְהַרְגֵנִי אֶתָּה אֲמֹר כְּאִשֶׁר הִרְגִית אֶת-הַמִּצְרִי “He answered, ‘Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?’” (Exod. 2.14)

While this is indeed an interrogative clause, it can be interpreted as an exclamation rather than a question. Nevertheless, it triggers a response, and therefore has to do with the issue discussed. The responder undoubtedly understands the nature of the interrogative clause, as his response aims to deny the right of the interrogator, Moses, to interfere in his affairs. Cohesion between the interrogative clause and the subsequent response in this example is in fact syntactically non-existent, and only context creates cohesion between the two speech acts.

Another example (6), which shows indirect congruence between the interrogative clause and its response, is the following:

(6)

Interrogative clause:

וַיָּשָׁב מֹשֶׁה אֶל-יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲדֹנָי לָמָּה הִרְעִיתָהּ לָעַם הַזֶּה לָמָּה זֶה שָׁלַחְתָּנִי: וּמֵאֵז בָּאתִי אֶל-פְּרַעֲוִי לְדַבֵּר בְּשִׁמְךָ הִרַע לָעַם הַזֶּה וְהֵצֵל לֹא-הֵצֵלְתָּ אֶת-עַמְּךָ “Then Moses turned again to the

LORD and said, ‘O LORD, why hast thou done evil to this people? Why didst thou ever send me?’ For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he has done evil to this people, and thou hast not delivered thy people at all.” (Exod. 5:22-23)

Response:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה עַתָּה תֵּרְאֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶעֱשֶׂה לְפָרְעֹה כִּי בְיַד חֲזָקָה יִשְׁלַחֵם וּבְיַד חֲזָקָה יִגְרֹשֵׁם  
מֵאֶרֶץ “But the LORD said to Moses, ‘Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand he will send them out, yea, with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land.’” (Exod. 6:1)

In this example Moses complains about the ill fate of the people of Israel under his leadership and God responds by promising him to make it better. Here too the interrogative clause does not seek information or any other type of answer but intends to convey a complaint. Yet, like example (5) above, it triggers a response, and can be analyzed in a similar manner.<sup>14</sup> Syntactic cohesion between the interrogative clause and the response to it is achieved in this example by context, but also by the anaphora of resumptive pronouns, through the use of two object personal pronouns attached to verb in יִשְׁלַחֵם ‘he will send them out’ and יִגְרֹשֵׁם ‘he will drive them out,’ which refer to the people of Israel mentioned in the interrogative clause, and by repetition of the name of the king of Egypt פָּרְעֹה ‘Pharaoh’.

The next example (7) contains another interrogative clause conveying a complaint:

(7)

Interrogative clause:

וַיְדַבְּרוּ בְנֵי יוֹסֵף אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ לֵאמֹר מִדּוּעַ נָתַתָּה לִּי נַחֲלָה גּוֹרֵל אֶחָד וְחֶבֶל אֶחָד וְאֲנִי עַם־רַב עַד  
הַיּוֹם “And the tribe of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, ‘Why have you given me but one lot and one portion as an inheritance, although I am a numerous people, since hitherto the LORD has blessed me?’” (Joshua 17:14)

Response:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אִם־עַם־רַב אַתֶּם עָלֶיךָ לָךְ הַיְעָרָה וּבִרְאֵת לָךְ שָׂם בְּאֶרֶץ הַפְּרָזִי וְהִרְפָּאִים  
“And Joshua said to them, ‘If you are a numerous people, go up to the forest, and there clear ground for yourselves in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim, since the hill country of Ephraim is too narrow for you.’” (Joshua 17:15)

Once more, the interrogative clause discloses not a question but an exclamation. Joseph’s sons complain that the land bestowed on them is too small for their number, using the interrogative particle מִּי־ “why,” which invites an explanation. However, Joshua’s response does not present a cause. Instead, it offers a line of action by which Joseph’s sons will be able to obtain more land.

<sup>14</sup> Similar examples appear in Exod. 14:11-13, 17:4-6, Num. 11:11-18.

Joshua, the responder, does not present a direct response formulated as a reply to the interrogative clause but suggests a solution to the problem inherent in the interrogative clause. The coherence and cohesion of this indirect response, apart from depending on context, is also established anaphorically by repetition of the noun phrase עַם־רַב ‘a numerous people,’ and by reference to the 1<sup>st</sup> singular personal pronoun in the question with a 2<sup>nd</sup> singular personal pronoun in the response. Since the argument between Joseph’s sons and Joshua continues in the following verses, the noun phrase עַם־רַב ‘a numerous people’ is repeated once more in verse 17.

### 2.3. Indirect responses to alternative interrogative clauses

The following example (8) is an alternative question construed in the pattern of a double question, whose two parts are introduced by the pair of question particles ...אָם ...הִי:

(8)

Interrogative clause:

וַיֵּלֶךְ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הֲלָנוּ אַתָּה אִם־לְצָרֵינוּ “And Joshua went to him and said to him, ‘Are you for us, or for our adversaries?’” (Josh. 5:13)

Response:

וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא כִּי אֲנִי שָׂר־צְבָא־יְהוָה עִתָּה בָּאתִי “And he said, ‘No; but as commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.’” (Josh. 5:14)

The response opening with the word לֹא “no”, as if this were a Yes-No question, rejects both options, and continues with an indirect reply conveying a third, which discloses the responder’s identity instead of indicating which side he supports. Cohesion between the interrogative clause and the response is obtained in this example anaphorically by resumptive pronouns, using 1<sup>st</sup> singular personal pronoun and similar verbal congruence in the response in agreement with the 2<sup>nd</sup> singular personal pronoun in the interrogative clause.

### 2.4. Indirect responses to more than one type of interrogative clause

Example (9) includes two questions, the first introduced by a question word, מִי ‘who,’ and the second a Yes-No question, introduced by the question particle הִי, typical of such questions in Biblical Hebrew:

(9)

Interrogative clauses:

וַיֹּאמֶר מִי הִגִּיד לְךָ כִּי עִירָם אַתָּה הַמִּזְהַעַן אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לִבְלֹתָ אֶכְל־מִמֶּנּוּ אֶכְלֹתָ “He said, ‘Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?’” (Gen. 3:11)

Response:

וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם הָאִשָּׁה הָאֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי הִיא נָתַתָּה־לִּי מִזְהַעַן וְאֶכְל “The man said, ‘The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.’” (Gen. 3:12)



In this example one indirect reply answers both questions. The responder thereby seems to consider the question rhetorical, as if he assumes that God, the questioner, already knows the exact details of the event and awaits an excuse rather than a direct informative response. Accordingly, the response is circuitous, and instead of providing informative answers to the two questions it conveys the expected excuse. Apart from relying on context, syntactically cohesion here between the interrogative clause and the response to it is accomplished anaphorically – both by repetition of the prepositional phrase מִן־הָעֵץ ‘of the tree’ and the root אכ"ל ‘to eat’, and by resumptive pronouns, namely two 1<sup>st</sup> singular personal pronouns attached to the prepositions עִמָּדִי ‘with me’ and לִי ‘to me.’

The following example (10) demonstrates two interrogative clauses which convey two real questions:

(10)

Interrogative clause:

וַיְהוּא יֵצֵא אֶל־עַבְדֵי אֲדֹנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לֹו הַשָּׁלוֹם מִדְּוַע בָּא־הַמְּשַׁעַע הַזֶּה אֵלָיךְ “When Jehu came out to the servants of his master, they said to him, ‘Is all well? Why did this mad fellow come to you?’” (2 Kgs. 9:11a)

Response:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם אַתֶּם יֹדְעֵתֶם אֶת־הָאִישׁ וְאֶת־שִׁיחוֹ “And he said to them, ‘You know the fellow and his talk.’” (2 Kgs. 9:11b)

The first, הַשָּׁלוֹם ‘is all well?’ is a Yes-No question, and the second, מִדְּוַע בָּא־הַמְּשַׁעַע הַזֶּה אֵלָיךְ ‘why did this mad fellow come to you?’ is an informative question introduced by a question word. The response does not give a direct answer to any of these two questions, and instead refers to common knowledge of the nature of the ‘mad fellow’ about whom the question inquires. Cohesion is syntactically achieved in this example by two means: once by referring to הַמְּשַׁעַע הַזֶּה ‘this mad fellow’ in the second question with a substitute noun הָאִישׁ ‘the fellow’ in the response, and once, anaphorically, by referring in the response to this very ‘mad fellow’ with a resumptive personal pronoun attached to a noun in שִׁיחוֹ ‘his talk.’

### 3. Conclusion

In all ten examples discussed in this paper coherence and cohesion between interrogative clauses and the indirect responses referring to them are apparent. Only in one example (5) are coherence and cohesion obtained by context only. In all other examples the three recognized devices commonly employed to achieve cohesion among units larger than a sentence, viz., anaphora by means of repetition or resumptive pronouns, substitution, and ellipsis, play a part. In most examples anaphoric measures are discerned: either of repetition (examples 1, 6, 7, 9 and partial repetition in example 4) or of resumptive pronouns (examples 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10). In two examples (10 and partially 4) substitution is

observed, and in one example (4) ellipsis. Four examples (1, 2, 3, 8) reveal one such syntactic measure. Five examples (4, 6, 7, 9, 10) exhibit two such measures: ellipsis + partial repetition/partial substitution in example 4, anaphoric means both through repetition and resumptive pronouns in 6, 7 and 9, and substitution + anaphoric measures of resumptive pronouns in 10.

Although indirect responses are demonstrated in Biblical Hebrew in three types of interrogative clauses: (1) Yes-No interrogative clauses, (2) interrogative clauses commencing with question words, and (3) alternative interrogative clauses, they are most evident in the second type, namely interrogative clauses commencing with question words.

## References

- Athanasiadou, A. 1991. The discourse function of questions. *Pragmatics* 1.107-122.
- Burstein, R. 1999. *Questions and Responses in Contemporary Hebrew: A Syntactic Semantic and Pragmatic Approach*. Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University. PhD dissertation (in Hebrew).
- Burstein, R. 2000a. Combined affirmative and negative answers to yes-no questions. *Helkat Lashon* 29-31.101-128 (in Hebrew).
- Burstein, R. 2000b. Yes-no questions construed as WH-questions. In: Schwarzwald, O. & Others (eds.), *Raphael Nir Jubilee Book: Studies in Communication, Linguistics and Language Teaching*, 181-198. Jerusalem: Carmel (in Hebrew).
- Burstein, R. 2003a. "He interrogative" in the Bible and in the written contemporary media – its frequency and its distribution. *Bamichlala* 14–15.55-99 (in Hebrew).
- Burstein, R. 2003b. Alternative questions in Hebrew: Types and meanings. In: Shlesinger, Y. and M. Muchnik (eds.), *Studies in Modern Hebrew on the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Israeli Association of Applied Linguistics*, 42-60. Jerusalem: Tzivonim (in Hebrew).
- Burstein, R. 2005. Dependent-context interrogatives in interviews and conversations in contemporary newspapers. *Helkat Lashon* 36.31-55.
- Burstein, R. (forthcoming). "Interrogative sentences." In: Khan, G. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics (=EHLL)*. Leiden: Brill.
- Crystal, D. 2003. *A Dictionary of Linguistics & Phonetics*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing (5<sup>th</sup> ed.).
- Duvshani, M. 1970. סוגי השאלות בתנ"ך [Question types in the Bible]. In: Ben-Shem, I. & Others (eds.), ספר יוסף ברסלבני (ברסלבסקי): מחקרים במקרא, בלשון ובידיעת הארץ. [Yosef Breslavny (Breslavski) Festschrift: Studies in the Bible, Language and Geography], 160-172. Jerusalem: Kiryat-Sepher (in Hebrew).
- GKC = Kautzsch, E. (ed.). 1910. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. Oxford: Clarendon Press (2<sup>nd</sup> English ed. by A. E. Cowley).
- Halliday, M. A. K. & R. Hasan, 1976. *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.
- Huddleston, R. D. 1994. Sentence types and clause subordination. In: Asher, R. E. (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Language and linguistics*, 3845-3857. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

*Indirect Responses in BH*

- Hyman, R. T. 1983. Questions and the book of Ruth. *Hebrew Studies* 24.17-25.
- Hyman, R. T. 1987. Fielding ‘why’ questions in Genesis. *Hebrew Annual Review* 2.173-183.
- Hyman, R. T. 1989-1990. The multiple functions of “how” in the Tanakh. *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 18.84-91.
- Joïon, P. & T. Muraoka. 2006. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico (revised English edition).
- König, E. & P. Siemund. 2007. Speech act distinctions in grammar. In: Shopen, T. (ed.), *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*, V. I: *Clause Structure*, 276-324. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Moshavi, A. 2010. “Is that your voice, my son David?” Conducive questions in Biblical Hebrew. *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 36.65-81.
- Moshavi, A. (forthcoming). Interrogative clause, Biblical Hebrew. In: Khan, G. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics (=EHL)*. Leiden: Brill.
- RSV = *Bible, Revised Standard Version*, <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/r/rsv/citation.html> (March, 2012).
- Siemund, P. 2001. Interrogative constructions. In: Haspelmath, M. & Others (eds.), *Language Typology and Language Universals: An International Handbook II*, 1010-1028. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Waltke, B. K. & M. O’Connor. 1990. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns.
- Williams, R. J. 2007. *Williams’ Hebrew Syntax*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press (3<sup>rd</sup> ed. revised and expanded by J. C. Beckman).

