LESSON II
NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES
(Johns, p. 11)

(1) Angels are\(^1\) holy (OR holy angels).\(^2\)
\(^1\)The copula “to be” can be implied, just like BH.
\(^2\)Two options are available here. (1) Because קדִּישִׁין is in the absolute state, it could be a predicate adjective (“angels [are] holy”). (2) Because קדִּישִׁין agrees with מלאכים in gender, number, and state of determination (definiteness), קדִּישִׁין could be an attributive adjective (“holy angels”). It is impossible to tell which translation is best without context. Not even word order is helpful because a predicate adjective can come before or after the word it modifies (II. 4.). Lastly, like BH, מלאכים can mean “messengers” and is often mistakenly misread as מלכים “kings.” The word “holy” might lead one to conclude that “angels” is the more appropriate translation, but keep in mind all the possible meanings of a word when translating.

(2) The books are\(^1\) holy.\(^2\)
\(^1\)The verb “to be” is implied.
\(^2\)סִפְרַיָּא is not in construct with קדִּישִׁין because of the postpositive article on סִפְרַיָּא (II. 5.). Therefore, קדִּישִׁין is an adjective modifying a noun. If the adjective קדִּישִׁין functioned attributively (“holy books”), it would have to agree with סִפְרַיָּא in gender, number, and definiteness (state of determination). However, סִפְרַיָּא is in the emphatic state, while קדִּישִׁין is in the absolute state. Therefore, קדִּישִׁין must be a predicate adjective (II. 4.).

(3) The head of the statue/image\(^1\) is gold.\(^2\)
\(^1\)As in BH, the whole construct chain is made definite (determinate) when the nomen rectum (i.e., the last noun in the construct chain) is in the emphatic state (II. 5.).
צְלֵם can mean “statue” or “image” (see vocabulary). Keep in mind all your options when translating.

דְּהַב is a noun which is functioning as a predicate nominative.

(4) The man knows\(^1\) the names\(^2\) of the animals.

1Lesson V will introduce verbs, but each verb will be parsed for all of those who are reviewing. Until then, allow context to guide your choice of “tense.” The Perfect “tense” can take on many different values in English, including the present and historical perfect tenses (V. 5.). יְדַע—Peal, Perfect, 3ms (ידע “to know”).

2Note the odd form of שֻׁם. Sometimes the plurals of words like שֻׁם and אַב add a ה. In BHS, this ה appears in the plural form of the construct state (e.g., שְׁמָהָתְהֹם “their names” in Ezra 5:10; אֲבָהָתָךְ “your fathers” in Ezra 4:15). Also see Lesson III, exercise sentence 2 in this key. However, note that the singular construct form of שֻׁם does not add the ה, and the singular construct of אַב adds a ו when followed by a pronominal suffix (e.g., אֲבוּ “your father”), except with the first person singular pronominal suffix (e.g., אַבִי “my father”). See also Lesson VII. 3.

(5) The master/lord\(^1\) of the wise men\(^2\) [is] the father\(^3\) of the queen.

1Again, though your translation will reflect only one of these options, realize that other translational values are possible.

2Like BH, adjectives can be used substantively (cf. sentence 1).

3Unlike BH, which has a different form for the construct of אָב (אֲבי), the singular construct and absolute forms of אַב in BA are the same.

(6) God made\(^1\) the earth.\(^2\)

1ﬠֲבַד—Peal, Perfect, 3ms (עבד “to do; make”). See Lesson V.

2Recall that in BA, the ל can be used in a number of ways. In this context, ל is a direct object marker (since “God made to the earth” is not as intelligible). Here the direct object happens to be in the emphatic state, but unlike BH, the direct object marker is not only for “determinate” (i.e., definite or emphatic) direct objects but also those in the absolute state.
(7) The hand [is] flesh,¹ but² the heart of the man³ [is] iron.

¹בְּשַׂר is functioning as a predicate nominative, as it is a noun and not an adjective.

²As in BH, ו can be used to denote contrast (“but,” cf. Dan. 2:6), coordination (“and”), explanation (“now such and such was the case,” cf. Dan. 4:21-22 [24-25]), or continuation (“if this…then that,” cf. Dan. 2:4, 7).

³Possibly, אֲנָשָׁא is used as a collective here. That is to say, “the heart of humanity is iron” (cf. Lesson VI, sentence 9 in this key).

(8) How¹ the stone fell² on the copper!

¹כְּמָה is never used in questions, only exclamations.

²נְפַל—Peal, Perfect, 3ms ( המלא “to fall”). See Lesson V.

(9) The prophet¹ prevailed² in the night.

¹The spelling of נְבִיָּא (“the prophet”) represents a Kethib-Qere. Johns follows the spelling found in the Hebrew Bible (BHS). When pronounced by the reader, it should be נְבִיַּיָּא (Ezra 5:1-2). ²This translation for יְכִל is not uncommon. Do not always assume that the definition for יְכִל is “to be able” (see vocabulary).

²יְכִל—Peal, Perfect, 3ms ( célib “to be able; prevail”).

(10) a thousand thousands

Literally, this phrase is “a thousand of thousands.” One could also translate this phrase idiomatically as “many thousands” or as “one million” since a thousand thousands is one million. Note briefly Johns’s discussion about numerals (XX. 1.).

(11) two hundred oxen

Keep in mind that BA has a dual ending, though it is rare (34 occurrences in BA with most of them being רַגְלָיִן). Like BH, the dual ending denotes two of something (here, “two hundreds”). Outside of שְׁמַיִן (“the heavens” or “the sky”), the dual usually occurs with natural pairs (II. 2.), like עַלָּיִן (“feet”). In terms of form, note that when the noun precedes the number, it is in the plural form (e.g., תּוֹרִין מָאתַיִן); otherwise, it is in the singular form (e.g., תּוֹר מָאתַיִין). See Johns XX. 2.
(12) The king built a house for the birds.  
1בְּנָה—Peal, Perfect, 3ms (בָּנַה “to build”).  
2Note the two different uses of ל here. It is used as a direct object marker on בַּיִת.  
3Lamedh is also used as a preposition (II. 6.), expressing the so-called “ethical dative” or “dative of benefit” on צִפְּרַיָּא. As the name implies, this dative expresses a benefit for someone or something (II. 6.). A house for birds is usually called an “aviary” in standard English.

(13) Why is he/it in the field under the grass?  
1The word הוא (albeit rarely in BA) means “it” instead of “he” (Ezra 5:8; for היא see Dan. 5:7).  
2Note that הָרוּ can mean “son” or “field.” Context forces us to decide for the latter.  
3“Under the grass” seems like an odd translation here. Idiomatically, it can be understood as “in the grass.”

Additional Notes on Lesson II

Again, it is important to note that unlike BH, the direct object marker, ל, marks both definite and indefinite direct objects.