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The Meaning of וַיַּעַל בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ in 2 Kgs 17:5a. The Semantic and Syntactic Study of the Phrase with Particular Interest in the Verb עלה and the Preposition בְּ

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Abstract: The expression וַיַּעַל בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ in 2 Kgs 17:5a is apparently simple and devoid of semantic or syntactic difficulty. This Hebrew phrase is, however, interpreted variously by the scholars who generate a considerable plurality of its translations. The problem appears to lie in the diversity with which the meaning of the verb √עלה and of the preposition בְּ, and further, their semantic and syntactic relation in 2 Kgs 17:5a, are interpreted. The examination of these lexemes' semantics and their interrelated syntax in the Hebrew text leads to the following conclusions: (1) the verb √עלה has there a technical-military meaning "to invade, attack, march against;" (2) it is used stereotypically and from the sociolinguistic perspective it denotes the nuance of an upward movement; (3) the meaning of בְּ is spatial in 2 Kgs 17:5a and marks an area moved through; (4) the syntactic relation √עלה + בְּ is not equivalent to √עלה + עַל, and consequently, the technical-military meaning of the verb does not remove the spatial meaning of the preposition. It is proposed to translate 2 Kgs 17:5a in a following way: "And then (the king of Assyria) marched up throughout the whole country." Such a rendering expresses both the Assyrian military actions, a physical movement upwards, and the area moved through. From the historical point of view, it describes the first stage of the Assyrian attack, the invasion going throughout the whole country of king Hosea (v. 5a), followed by an attack directed against its capital, Samaria (v. 5bc). Other interpretations (translations), either ignoring or highlighting one of the discussed features only, may be considered incomplete, questionable or unacceptable from the semantic and syntactic point of view.

Keywords: semantics of √עלה, semantics of בְּ, Hebrew syntax, translation technique, fall of Samaria, Hosea (king), Shalmaneser (king), Books of Kings

The chapter 17 of the Second Book of Kings contains a kind of climax in the narrative of 2 Kings by presenting the history of the last years of the Northern Kingdom and a purposefully constructed commentary on its fate.[1] There are many interesting questions heatedly disputed among scholars concerning the last days of Samaria and the fate of its inhabitants. Attempts to reconstruct the chronology of events, in consequence of which Samaria became an Assyrian province, produced a lot of theories about the number of

1 Cf. P.A. Viviano, "2 Kings 17: A Rhetorical and Form-Critical Analysis," *CBQ* 49 (1987) 548–59. She argues that 2 Kgs 17 is a composition of historical reports (vv. 1–6 and vv. 24–33) and editor's comments on them (vv. 7–23 and vv. 34–41). Cf. T.R. Hobbs, *2 Kings* (WBC 13; Waco, TX: Word Books 1985) 224–225.

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the Assyrian campaigns between 722–720 BCE, the identity of the Assyrian king(s) who invaded and captured Samaria, the sequence of events that led to that tragic end, and so forth. In fact, the biblical accounts on the fall of Samaria in 2 Kgs 17:3–6 and 18:9–10 and pieces of information drawn out from the extrabiblical sources (such as eponyms, inscriptions, reliefs, Babylonian Chronicles) do not harmonise with each other. Therefore, hypotheses put forward are often speculative and debatable.

In this paper I do not want to deal with the reconstruction of the historical events mentioned in 2 Kgs 17:3–6.[2] Neither do I intend to take position in the scholarly debate about harmonising biblical and extrabiblical sources. I would like to focus on the Hebrew text itself and examine the semantic and syntactic aspects of the phrase וַיַּעַל בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ in 2 Kgs 17:5, which appears to be problematic, in spite of an apparent simplicity of the Hebrew language.

1. Stating a Problem

It is noteworthy that, on the one hand, there is no research studying the Hebrew text of 2 Kgs 17:5 in detail. The commentators dealing with the above-mentioned questions usually pay little attention to the Hebrew text itself. On the other hand, the vast number of its renderings reveals that there is no consensus on its interpretation among scholars.[3]

The clause וַיַּעַל מֶלֶךְ־אַשּׁוּר בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ is composed of a simple predicate (וַיַּעַל, √עלה "to go up"), a subject (מֶלֶךְ־אַשּׁוּר, "the king of Assyria") and a prepositional phrase being an adverbial modifier of place (בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ; literary: "in the whole land"). Nonetheless one deals here with a basic Hebrew vocabulary, the syntactic relation between וַיַּעַל and בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ leaves much space for varied interpretations. The consulted renderings of 2 Kgs 17:5a may be categorised into five groups according to the meaning that is understood. The diagram on the next page shows an increasing degree with which the military aggression of the Assyrian king is perceived by the scholars: from the most neutral one, describing the king's coming up through the whole country, to the most expressive one, depicting his invasion of the entire land.

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2 We should bear in mind that the literary composition of 2 Kgs 17:3–6 is not interested in the first place in the exact reconstruction of historical events. The disproportion between the brief reports of historical events and the theological comments on them is striking, and so we may conclude that the whole chapter 17 is interested mostly in the theology of history. Cf. R. Dilday, *1, 2 Kings* (CCS.OT 9; Dallas, TX *et al.*: Word Books 1987) 419; cf. I.W. Provan, *1 & 2 Kings* (OTG; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1997) 53–54; cf. Viviano, "2 Kings 17," 548–550.

3 In another paper that is about to be published, I examine various renderings of 2 Kgs 17:5 in ancient and modern translations as well as commentaries on the Books of Kings, among which I singled out at least ten different ways in which the verse in question is rendered. Such a translation plurality indicates the semantic and syntactic difficulty underlying the Hebrew text of 2 Kgs 17:5, variously interpreted by the scholars and/or Bible translators.

[1]		[2]		[3]		[4]		[5]
he went up/ came up through(out) the whole country[4]	⟨	he marched through(out) the whole country[5]	⟨	he went up/ came up against the whole country[6]	⟨	he marched against the whole country[7]	⟨	he invaded/attacked/ campaigned/made an expedition against the whole country[8]

The first set of renderings of 2 Kgs 17:5a [1] is "the king of Assyria went up/came up through(out) the whole country/land." It denotes a simple action of traversing (up) the land. It combines the literal meaning of the verb √עלה "to go up" with the spatial sense of the preposition בְּ which marks an area moved through. Such an interpretation does not allude to the military attack and may be called the neutral one. In the second set

4 Such an interpretation of 2 Kgs 17:5a can be found in: Dilday, *1, 2 Kings*, 413; G. Galil, "The Last Years of the Kingdom of Israel and the Fall of Samaria," *CBQ* 57 (1995) 53; H. Tadmor, "The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur: A Chronological-Historical Study," *JCS* 12 (1958) 37. See also few Bible translations: Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem (1983), The King James Bible (1611/1769), Biblia Gdańska (The Bible of Gdansk, 1633), Nouvelle Edition Geneve (1979), The New King James Bible (1982), Die revidierte Luther-bibel (1984), Die Elberfelder Bibel (revidierte Fassung, 1993), Biblia Warszawsko-Praska (The Warsaw-Praga Bible, 1997).

5 Cf. B. Becking, *The Fall of Samaria. An Historical and Archaeological Study* (SHANE 2; Leiden – New York – Köln: Brill 1992) 48. Cf. also the rendering of the New English Translation Bible (2005).

6 This is the interpretation of A. Šanda, *Die Bücher der Könige. Zweiter Halbband. Das Zweite Buch der Könige* (Münster: Aschendorff 1912) 208; of M.A. Sweeney, *I & II Kings* (OTL; Louisville, KY – London: Westminster John Knox 2007) 386; and of E. Würthwein, *Die Bücher der Könige*. II. *1.Kön.17–2.Kön.25* (ATD 11/2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1984) 392. See also the Ecumenic Translation by the Biblical Society in Poland (Warsaw, 2016).

7 Cf. the translations of the Jewish Publication Society Tanakh (1985), of the French Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible (1988), and of Die Herder Bibel (2005).

8 Such a rendering of 2 Kgs 17:5a can be found in: L.M. Wray Beal, *1 & 2 Kings* (ApOTC 9; Nottingham, UK – Downers Grove, IL: Apollos – InterVarsity 2014) 444; C. Conroy, *1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings* (OTM 6; Wilmington, DE: Glazier 1983) 222; M. Cogan – H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB 11; Garden City, NY: Doubleday 1988) 195; T.E. Fretheim, *First and Second Kings* (Westminster Bible Companion; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox 1999) 190; J. Gray, *I & II Kings*, 2 ed. (OTL; London – Philadelphia, PA: Westminster 1970) 642; Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 220; P.R. House, *1, 2 Kings* (NAC 8; Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman 1995) 338; M.P. Matheney Jr. – R.L. Honeycutt Jr., "1–2 Kings," *1 Samuel–Nehemiah* (ed. C.J. Allen) (Broadman Bible Commentary 3; Nashville, TN: Broadman 1970) 267; P. Merlo, *Re* (Nuova Versione della Bibbia dai Testi Antichi 9; Milano: San Paolo 2020) 373; J.A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Kings* (ICC; Edinburgh – New York: Clark 1960) 466; N. Na'aman, "The Historical Background to the Conquest of Samaria (720 BC)," *Bib* 71 (1990) 211; M. Nobile, *1–2 Re* (I Libri Biblici 9; Milano: Paoline 2010) 384; J. Robinson, *The Second Book of Kings* (London – New York – Melbourne: Cambridge University Press 1976) 153; A. Rolla, *Libri dei Re* (Nuovissima versione della Bibbia dai testi originali 9; Roma: Paoline 1971) 303; R. de Vaux, *Les Livres des Rois*, 2 ed. (La Sainte Bible; Paris: Cerf 1958) 199. Cf. also few Bible translations: The New International Version Bible (1984), The New Jerusalem Bible (1985), The New Revised Standard Version Bible (1989), La Nuova Bibbia Diodati (1991), La Sacra Bibbia Nuova Riveduta (1994), The New American Standard Bible (1995), Nuovissima Versione della Bibbia (San Paolo Edizione 1995), Bible en Français Courant (1997), The Complete Jewish Bible (1998), Biblia Tysiąclecia (The Millennium Bible, 5 ed., 2000), The English Standard Version Bible (2001), Biblia Poznańska (The Bible of Poznan, 4 ed., 2004), Biblia Paulistów (The Pauline Edition Bible, 2008).

of renderings of 2 Kgs 17:5a [2]: "the king of Assyria marched through(out) the whole country/land," the meaning of the verb √עלה is perceived as a military action. The English verb "to march" implies in this co-text a kind of war manoeuvres. Such a translation retains, however, the spatial sense of the preposition בְּ. The other one, [3]: "the king of Assyria went up/came up against the whole country/land," expresses the literal meaning of the verb √עלה and the adversative sense of the preposition בְּ. Some other renderings denote more explicitly a military action of the Assyrians [4]: "the king of Assyria marched against the whole country/land." The preposition בְּ is interpreted there as denoting an adversative meaning. The renderings of the last group are even more explicit [5]: "the king of Assyria invaded/attacked/campaigned/made an expedition against the whole country/land." The king's coming in the country is interpreted there as an invasion just from the beginning of the verse.

By singling out these sets of renderings of 2 Kgs 17:5a one gains an important pointer to identify the difficulty of this text. The diagram above illustrates how different comprehension and interpretation of the verb √עלה and of the preposition בְּ may lead to varied translations. On the one hand, the matter dealt with is the polysemy of the verb √עלה, and thus, the question arises, which meaning of this lexeme is denoted in 2 Kgs 17:5a within its co-text and context. On the other hand, the problem to solve regards the syntactic relation between the verb √עלה and its adverbial modifier בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ, or more specifically, the function of the preposition בְּ, whether it expresses spatial or adversative meaning. In order to respond to the above mentioned questions, a careful study of the semantic and syntactic aspects of the clause וַיַּעַל [מֶלֶךְ־אַשּׁוּר] בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ is necessary.

To find satisfactory solution to the above expressed questions, it is necessary to establish the exact meaning and syntactic function of וַיַּעַל [מֶלֶךְ־אַשּׁוּר] בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ in 2 Kgs 17:5. The detailed analysis of this phrase shall proceed in two stages: (1) at the level of its component words, the semantics of individual lexemes shall be examined, and (2) at the second level, the syntax of the sentence and its contribution to the meaning of the whole verse shall be analysed. All these levels express linguistic meaning of the phrase under examination and, being interrelated, cannot be isolated one from another. Therefore, only such a two-fold approach shall enable us to draw conclusions about the interpretation of וַיַּעַל בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ in 2 Kgs 17:5, so that the difficulty in its comprehension may be removed.

2. Level of Individual Words: Semantics of the Lexemes

As the first approach in the study of וַיַּעַל בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ the self-contained meaning of its component words shall be examined, namely [A] that of the verb √עלה, [B] the preposition בְּ, [C] the noun כֹּל, and [D] the noun אֶרֶץ.

[A] Semantics of √עלה

The verb √עלה is one of the most frequent verbs in the Hebrew Bible occurring altogether 890 times, not less than 675 times in the conjugation Qal.[9] Concerning its meaning, the verb √עלה represents a wide range of semantic aspects in highly differentiated co-texts and contexts.[10] The multiplicity of its related senses proves the polysemous character of the verb √עלה (in opposition to unrelated senses that are characteristic of homonymy).[11] It may be, however, remarked that its basic meaning relates to a movement toward an elevated goal.[12]

By analysing the semantic spectrum of the verb √עלה, three semantic domains may be singled out. They reflect its usage[13] in the Hebrew Bible:[14] [I] when it describes a physical movement, [II] when it is used figuratively, [III] when it is employed in idiomatic expressions and technical terminology. Sometimes it acquires a theological significance, but since the Hebrew lexicography and not theology is discussed in this paper, the theological connotations will not be dealt here with for methodological reasons.

[I] The verb √עלה Qal is predominantly used with its most basic meaning "to move upwards," namely, "from a lower location to a higher,"[15] being an antonym of the verb √ירד that

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9 Cf. A. Even-Shoshan, *A New Concordance of the Bible*, 3 ed. (Jerusalem: Ha-Millon He-Hadash 2007) 874c–879c. The root *'lh* is found in all Semitic languages: Akk. *elû(m)*; Ugar. *'ly*, Can. *'ly*, Arab. *'lw/'ly*, OSA *'ly*, Eth. *la'ala* "to be high, prominent, superior;" cf. H.F. Fuhs, "עָלָה," *TDOT* XI, 77. Its concentration in the narrative portions of the Hebrew Bible is remarkable, since it occurs 377 times in the so-called Deuteronomistic History Corpus (Josh – 2 Kgs).

10 By the "co-text" I mean sentences, paragraphs or chapters surrounding the text under examination and related to it, which is sometimes defined as a literary context. By the "context" I mean the sociological and historical setting of the text. Cf. P. Cotterell – M. Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity 1989) 16.

11 For general observations about polysemy and homonymy, and about the question regarding a "core" meaning of words see Cotterell – Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation*, 135–139.

12 Cf. Fuhs, "עָלָה," 77. By stating this, it cannot be claimed that the verb √עלה has a kind of "core" sense. It should only be noticed that a movement from below upwards is an element shared in common that may produce a plurality of senses by means of semantic changes. They are due to both linguistic innovation and conservatism.

13 It should be remarked that the meaning of a word and its usages are distinct. The lexical meaning is "the range of senses of a word that may be counted on as being established in the public domain" (Cotterell – Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation*, 140). The usages of a word may not be a part of its lexical meaning, if they are not conventional. However, "if particular usage became widespread, such that it became a standard public idiom, and so conventional, we would say it was becoming, or even had become, part of the lexical meaning of the word" (Cotterell – Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation*, 140). In case of biblical Hebrew, which is a linguistically closed set, the usages of a word may be treated as a part of its lexical meaning.

14 In this analysis I follow, though with adaptations, Fuhs, "עָלָה," 81–93. Cf. G. Wehmeier, "עָלָה," *TLOT* II, 884–895. See also "עָלָה," BDB, 748a–750a; "עָלָה," *HALOT* II, 828b–830b.

15 The verb √עלה expresses [1] the ascent of Elohim/YHWH to His dwelling place in heaven (Gen 17:22; 35:13; Ps 47:6; 68:19) and Elijah's ascension/rapture to heaven (2 Kgs 2:11; cf. 2 Kgs 2:1 in Hiphil). [2] It describes frequently migrations of persons from low place to high. The verb in question is used stereotypically to denote the route from Egypt to Canaan (Gen 45:25; Exod 12:37; Judg 11:13, 16; 1 Sam 15:2, 6; 1 Kgs 9:16; Isa 11:16), from Babylon to Canaan (with an allusion to the return of the exiles; Ezra 2:1, 59; 7:6, 7, 28;

describes the opposite direction, "to move down towards a lower location."[16] The verb √עלה refers to a physical movement from below upwards in other Hebrew verb conjugations, too.[17] From the geographical point of view such a movement is a stereotypical feature connected with the sociolinguistic aspects of the biblical narratives,[18] in which one can observe a mutual relation between the symbol/sign (a concrete word), its sense (the mental concept called up by the symbol/sign) and its referent (*significatum*) in the extralinguistic realities of the physical world.[19] In specialised co-texts the verb √עלה expresses an impressive wealth of nuances involving somehow a physical movement upwards, too.[20]

Neh 7:5, 6, 61) and from the desert into Canaan (Exod 33:1; Num 13:17, 21; Deut 1:21, 26). The verb under discussion describes also a physical upward movement of objects other than human, namely, [3] of animals, such as a lion (Jer 4:7; 50:44), quails (Exod 16:12), a fox (Neh 4:3), ferocious beasts (Isa 35:9), eagles (Isa 40:31; Jer 49:22); [4] of vegetation that sprouts or grows, such as plants (Gen 40:10; Isa 53:2), weeds/thorns/briars (Prov 24:31; Isa 5:6; 32:13), a cypress/myrrh (Isa 55:13), late grass (Amos 7:1); [5] of natural phenomena, such as smoke (Gen 19:18; Ezek 8:11; Josh 8:20; 2 Sam 22:9; Ps 18:8; Isa 34:10), fire (Judg 6:21), dew (Exod 16:14), flames (Judg 13:10, 20), a cloud (1 Kgs 18:44; Jer 4:13), dust (Isa 5:24), stench (Isa 34:3; Joel 2:20; Amos 4:10), water (Num 21:17; Jer 47:2), the river Nile (Jer 46:7, 8); [6] and of inanimate things, such as a course of the border (Josh 15:3; 16:1; 19:11) and of a highway (Judg 20:31; 1 Chr 26:16), a springing up bird trap (Amos 3:5), a sprouting horn (Dan 8:3, 8), shocks of grain being raised up (Job 5:26).

16 See an interesting discussion on cases when verbs √עלה and √ירד are used in the opposite sense (√עלה denotes movement downwards, √ירד – upwards) in G.R. Driver, "On עלה 'Went up Country' and ירד 'Went down Country,'" *ZAW* 69 (1957) 74–77. The author evokes a theory that "ירד might originally have meant 'journeyed in hilly country,' so עלה might occasionally have meant 'travelled on high land,' when the context would have shown whether such movement was upwards or downwards" (*ibidem*, 75–76). He argues, however, that "עלה 'went up' may be used of going northwards, i.e. 'up country,' and ירד 'went down' may be used of going southwards, i.e. 'down country,' without reference to heights involved" (*ibidem*, 76). An Ethiopian parallel showing the same phenomenon was discussed by W. Leslau, "An Ethiopian Parallel to Hebrew עלה 'went up country' and ירד 'went down country,'" *ZAW* 74 (1962) 322–323.

17 It occurs in Niphal with a passive meaning "to be lifted up, be led up" (Exod 40:36; Num 9:17, 21; 10:11; Ezra 1:11); in Hiphil with a causative active meaning "to cause to ascend, bring up" someone/something from one place to another (Gen 50:25; Exod 8:1; Judg 16:8, 31; 1 Sam 2:19; 2 Kgs 17:4; 2 Chr 8:11; Ps 40:3; it is regularly used, about 42 times, with reference to the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt); in Hophal with a causative passive meaning "to be brought up, be taken up" (Nah 2,8) and in Hithpael with a reflexive meaning "to raise oneself up" (Jer 51:3).

18 For the sociolinguistic reason, entering a city, for example, is frequently described as a "going up" to it (Gen 38:13; 1 Sam 15:34; Ezra 7:7; Zech 14:17), since cities were usually located on elevations. Such stereotypical usage of √עלה is a standard feature of biblical Hebrew so that topographical data are sometimes omitted entirely (Gen 24:16; Exod 19:20; 2 Sam 24:19).

19 I refer here to the famous Ogden-Richard's triangle of signification. Cf. M. Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning. An Introduction to Lexical Semantics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan 1994) 102; cf. Cotterell – Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation*, 116.

20 It describes a breaking a dawn (in Qal: Gen 19:15; Judg 19:25; 1 Sm 9:26; Neh 4:15; Jonah 4:7), a leaping (mating) of flocks (in Qal: Gen 31:10, 12), a mounting a horse and a chariot (in Qal: Jer 46:4; Nah 3:3; Sol 7:9), a climbing up a palm (in Qal: Sol 7:9) and rocks (in Qal: Jer 4:29), a setting up lamp(s) (in Hiphil: Exod 25:37; 30:8; Lev 24:2; Num 8:2, 3). Furthermore, the verb √עלה is used with reference to a lot that falls on someone (in Qal: Lev 16:9, 10; Josh 19:10), to a garment that is put on (in Qal: Lev 19:19; Ezek 44:17), to a yoke that is put on an animal (in Qal: Num 19:2; 1 Sam 6:7), to a razor that touches the skin (Judg 13:5; 16:17; 1 Sam 1:11), to someone that goes to a bed/couch, sometimes with an allusion to sexual intercourse (in Qal: Gen 49:4; 2 Kgs 1:4, 6, 16; Ps 132:3; Isa 57:8), to animals chewing the cud (in Hiphil: Lev 11:3, 4; Deut 4:6, 7), to a fork taking meat up (in Hiphil: 1 Sam 2:14), to buildings being raised on the wall (in Hiphil:

Concerning the variety of semantic aspects of the verb √עלה, evidenced so far, a brief comment on the linguistic mechanisms that underlie the semantic alterations of this verb can be made.[21] They are frequently due to the phenomenon called "linguistic innovation." New nuances or new meanings of the verb can be produced as a result of a semantic shift (involving relatively small changes) such as restriction (as, for example, in the case of "dawn breaking") or generalisation (namely, that any kind of movement from below upward, performed by persons, animals, plants, and so forth, may be expressed by the verb √עלה). Changes in the meaning of the verb are sometimes a result of metonymic transfer, based on the contiguity of related senses (for example, "going to a bed with someone" may mean by metonymy in some co-texts "to have a sexual intercourse with someone"). In the following paragraphs other types of semantic changes within the semantic spectrum of the verb in question will be observed.

It is necessary to comment now on the semantic domain to which the verb √עלה belongs, namely, on verbs that describe a movement in general (verbs of locomotion). It is noteworthy that the verb √עלה is quite frequently accompanied by other verbs belonging to this semantic realm, such as √בוא Qal "to come" (Gen 45:25; Exod 7:28; Deut 1:24), √הלך Qal "to go" (Exod 33:1; Judg 11:16; 2 Sam 17:21; Isa 8:7; Mic 4:2), √פנה Qal "to turn around" (Deut 1:24; 3:1), √יצא Qal "to go out" (1 Kgs 10:29), √נגשׁ Qal "to approach" (Josh 8:11). The following verbs should also be mentioned: √עבר Qal "to traverse," √שׁוב Qal "to return," and √ירד Qal "to go down" (which is, as noted before, the antonym of our verb). In attempting to proceed with a componential analysis of the lexeme √עלה, these verbs of locomotion should be collated in order to single out "atomic" concepts that compose the sense of each of them.[22] In the present case, the "atomic" concepts concern the plane of movement (horizontal, vertical and rotary) and stages of a distance that is to be covered (namely, the notion of the departure point, of transition, and of the arrival point).[23] The table on the next page presents the component concepts ("atomic" senses) of the most frequent Hebrew verbs of locomotion.

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2 Chr 32:5), to clouds being raised up (in Hiphil: Ps 135:7; Jer 10:13), to dust being thrown on one's head (in Hiphil: Lam 2:10; Ezek 27:30), to bones being covered with flesh (in Hiphil: Ezek 37:6), to words to be included in the book (in Hophal: 2 Chr 20:34).

21 For general remarks about semantic changes in language see S. Ullmann, *Semantics. An Introduction to the Science of Meaning* (New York: Barnes & Noble 1979) 198–235; Cotterell – Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation*, 131–135; Silva, *Biblical Words*, 79–86.

22 For general remarks concerning the componential analysis see Silva, *Biblical Words*, 132–135; Cotterell – Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation*, 170–174.

23 It is necessary to highlight that only the self-contained meaning of these terms is considered here, leaving apart for a moment the syntax with prepositions.

Verbs of locomotion	Plane of movement			Phases of movement		
	horizontal	*vertical*	*rotary*	*notion of the point of departure*	*notion of transition*	*notion of the point of arrival*
√הלך Qal "to go"	+			unspecified		
√עלה Qal "to go up"	(+)	+ (up)		unspecified		
√ירד Qal "to go down"	(+)	+ (down)		unspecified		
√פנה Qal "to go around"			+	unspecified		
√בוא Qal "to come"	+					+
√עבר Qal "to traverse"	+				+	
√יצא Qal "to go out"	+			+		
√נגשׁ Qal "to approach"	+				+	+
√שׁוב Qal "to return"	+			+		+

It can be noticed that the verbs of locomotion mentioned above are semantically related to each other but only contiguously (excluding, of course the verb √ירד, which is the antonym of √עלה). Their sense relations indicate their improper synonymy. All of those verbs denote at least one plane of movement, but not all of them include in themselves concepts regarding stages of such a movement. The sense of the verb √עלה is built out of the concept of a vertical movement (motion upwards), which is always present when √עלה expresses a physical movement. Sometimes a concept of a horizontal movement (motion ahead) is also denoted. This verb, however, does not have specified in itself any notion either of the departure/arrival point or of transition. It will be discussed in the next part of this paper that such notions may be expressed by the syntactic relation of √עלה to prepositions. It may be concluded that the "atomic" sense of √עלה "motion upwards" is distinctive in relation to other verbs of locomotion.

[II] Besides the sense of a physical movement, the figurative meaning of the verb √עלה can also be singled out. The concept of an upward motion is sometimes transferred by metaphor to a new realm in order to produce new meaning of √עלה that no longer denotes a physical movement. This is another linguistic device (metaphorical transfer) that on the basis of similarity of meanings generates figurative (metaphorical) meanings of a word. When the association between meanings is established, the result of the semantic shift

is that a word may be used in the new meaning with no implication of the primary one. A similar mechanism have already been noticed with reference to the metonymic transfer (that one, however, bases on the contiguity of meanings, not on their similarity). The verb √עלה is used figuratively with a variety of meanings.[24]

[III] The verb √עלה occurs also with an idiomatic and technical meaning. Both idioms and technical terminology, being alterations in the meaning of a word, are due to the mechanism of specification (or restriction) of the meaning, which is typical of the so-called "linguistic conservatism." They are both characterised by a highly conventional usage serving as cultural tokens (in other words, they evoke a certain sociolinguistic context). There is, however, an important difference between them. Idiomatic expressions "are complex lexemes acting as a simple constituent,"[25] so that the lack of any element of the expression (by ellipsis) results in the loss of its idiomatic meaning. Technical terminology, on the other hand, being characterised by a high degree of specialisation, is less dependent on the co-text and the definite referent may be associated automatically with a word itself even if a phrase lacks some constituent (ellipsis usually does not result in a change of meaning).[26]

There are a few idiomatic expressions that employ the verb √עלה.[27] Some expressions using the verb √עלה become technical terms in the Hebrew Bible.[28] The most pertinent to

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24 It means [1] "to go to a significant personality" (√עלה Qal), namely, to a high-rank person (for example, when Joseph goes to Pharaoh in Gen 46:31; see other examples: Num 16:12, 14, Hos 8:9). [2] The verb √עלה Qal is used also when someone goes for judgment (to Deborah in Judg 4:5; to elders in the city gate in Deut 17:8; 25:7; Ruth 4:1). In other specialised co-texts it means [3] "to prosper, become great and powerful" (Gen 49:9; Deut 28:43), and [4] "to surpass [others]" (Prov 31:29). [5] Furthermore, √עלה Qal is used figuratively in relation to varied concepts, very often abstracts: to describe anger/wrath raising up (1 Sam 11:20; 2 Chr 36:16; Ps 78:21, 31; Prov 15:1; Ezek 38:18; in Hiphil: Ezek 24:8), a raging of a battle (1 Kgs 22:35; 2 Chr 18:34), an outcry going up to heaven (1 Sam 5:12), a tumult reaching one's ears (2 Kgs 19:28; Isa 37:19), an uproar raising up (Ps 74:23; Jer 14:2), death rising up (Jer 9:20), a number entering into account (1 Chr 27:24), repair works going forward (2 Chr 24:13; Neh 4:1; Jer 8:22; in Hiphil: Jer 30:17), a mountain rising up (Josh 11:17; 12:7; Ps 104:8), a city going up in smoke (Judg 20:40). [6] In a metaphoric sense the verb √עלה Hiphil expresses God's exaltation (rehabilitation) of the weak and oppressed (1 Sam 2:6) and [7] deliverance from the danger (Ps 30:4; 40:3; 71:20; Jonah 2:7).

25 D.A. Cruse, *Lexical Semantics* (Cambridge, UK: CUP 1986) §2.7, §2.9. Cf. more traditional definition: idiom is "an expression whose meaning cannot be inferred from the meaning of its parts" (Cotterell – Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation*, 131).

26 Silva, *Biblical Words*, 77.

27 For example, [1] √עלה Qal + עַל־לֵב (or עַל־רוּחַ) "to come to mind, be minded, remember" (2 Kgs 12:5; Isa 65:17; Jer 3:16; 19:5; 32:35; 51:50; Ezek 38:10); [2] √עלה Hiphil + עַל־לֵב (or אֶל־לֵב), "to take to heart," namely, "to turn one's thoughts towards something" (Ezek 14:3, 4, 7); [3] √עלה Qal + שָׁמַיִם "to mount up to heaven" (Deut 30:12; Ps 107:26; Isa 14:13, 14; Jer 51:53; Amos 9:2), which becomes in biblical Hebrew a proverbial expression; [4] √עלה Niphal + עַל־שְׂפַת לָשׁוֹן "to become an object of gossip" (Ezek 36:3).

28 For instance, [1] √עלה Qal + בְּ (1 Kgs 10:29; 2 Chr 1:17) is a commercial term for an imported product reaching a certain price. Conventional usage of this expression involves the sociolinguistic context of trade between Egypt and Israel. [2] √עלה Hiphil + מַס/לְמַס (1 Kgs 5:27; 9:15, 21; 2 Chr 8:8) is a technical term for raising a troop of forced labourers; Cf. "עָלָה," *HALOT* II, 830a, 2b. [3] √עלה Qal (Ps 47:6) and √עלה Hiphil (1 Sam 6:21; 7:1; 2 Sam 6:2, 12, 15; 1 Kgs 8:1, 4; 1 Chr 15:3, 12, 14, 25, 28; 2 Chr 5:2, 5) is a technical term for the procession of the Ark of YHWH with the cultic (liturgical) context involved. Similarly, √עלה Qal is

the present study is the analysis of the syntagma √עלה Qal + עַל which is a very frequent warfare term to describe an attack/invasion[29] (not less than 25 times in the Hebrew Bible).[30] By correspondence with the Qal meaning, √עלה Hiphil + עַל means "to bring against, lead into battle" (Jer 50:9; Ezek 16:40; 26:3; 2 Chr 36:17). It is noteworthy that the technical term √עלה Qal/Hiphil + עַל is synonymous with other expressions, such as: √עלה Qal + לְהִלָּחֵם "to go up to fight" (2 Kgs 3:21; 2 Chr 35:20), √עלה Qal + לַמִּלְחָמָה (or בַּמִּלְחָמָה) "to go into battle" (1 Sam 29:9; 1 Kgs 20:26; 2 Kgs 16:5; Isa 7:1), √בוא Qal + עַל and √בוא Hiphil + עַל which mean respectively "to come against, attack" (2 Kgs 15:19; Ezek 33:3) and "to bring against" (Jer 25:9, 13; Ezek 14:17; 38:16). The antonym of our technical term is the expression √עלה + מֵעַל with a meaning "to withdraw from, cease an attack" (1 Kgs 15:19; 2 Kgs 12:19; 2 Chr 16:3; Jer 34:21).[31]

It should be noted that the usage of √עלה Qal + עַל in the technical meaning is conventional in the Hebrew Bible, involving its sociological context, namely, that a conquest of regions and an attack against cities, constructed regularly on hills, required frequently an ascent up the hillside. The technical usage of the verb √עלה in specialised co-texts is thus stereotypical in biblical Hebrew that the preposition עַל is sometimes either omitted by an ellipsis (2 Kgs 12:18; 24:1, 10; 2 Chr 16:1), or replaced by the preposition אֶל (Num 13:31; 2 Sam 5:19; 2 Kgs 16:9; 2 Chr 18:28; Jer 35:11; 50:21). It happens also that phrases lack an object (person or thing) of an attack at all (Judg 1:4; 1 Sam 27:8; 2 Sam 5:23; 1 Kgs 22:6; 2 Kgs 18:17) with no loss in the military meaning of the term.

In addition, it should be remarked that the specialised co-texts mentioned above are identifiable by the presence of verbs that belong to the realm of warfare, that accompany

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used technically with a meaning "to go on pilgrimage" (Exod 34:24; 1 Sam 1:3; 10:3; Isa 2:3; Jer 31:6; Ps 122:4) entailing a convention based on the sociolinguistic context (geographically, sanctuaries were usually build on high places). The cultic (liturgical) context seems also to be evident. [4] √עלה Hiph is a very common technical term for an offering of a sacrifice. Its usage is conventional, entailing the cultic context, since its meaning may derive from either the placing of the sacrifice upon the altar or its rising in smoke. New technical meaning is then generated by means of a semantic shift of restriction (specialization); see Fuhs, "עָלָה," 90. √עלה Hiph is used frequently in this technical meaning in conjunction with the noun עֹלָה "a burning offering" (61 times out of 77 occurrences of this technical term), but it describes also other types of sacrifice (Exod 30:9; Lev 14:20; Josh 22:23; Judg 20:26; 2 Sam 6:17; 1 Kgs 9:25; Jer 14:12; Amos 5:22). Gerhard Wehmeier ("עָלָה," 889) argues that sometimes √עלה Hiph, occurring with no further modification, acquires the general meaning "to sacrifice." Hans F. Fuhs, ("עָלָה," 90) opposes to his opinion by claiming that the immediate co-text of the passages cited by Wehmeier speaks clearly of burnt offerings.

29 Cf. H.A. Brongers, "Das Zeitwort *ʿālâ* und seine Derivate," *Travels in the World of the Old Testament. Studies presented to Professor M.A. Beek on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday* (eds. M.S.H.G. Heerma van Voos – Ph.H.J. Houwink ten Cate – N.A. van Uchelen) (Assen: Van Gorcum 1974) 32. He states: "Es hat sich gezeigt, dass *ʿālâ ʿal terminus technicus* ist für das Herausrücken eines Heeres oder einer Heeresabteilung, mit der Absicht sich eines bestimmten Territoriums zu bemächtigen oder mittels einer Belagerung eine Stadt zu erobern." Cf. also Montgomery, *Books of Kings*, 477.

30 For example, Josh 22:12, 33; Jugd 6:3; 1 Kgs 14:25; 2 Kgs 17:3; 18:9; 2 Chr 36:6; Jer 50:3, 21; Ezek 38:11; Joel 1:6; Nah 2:2.

31 Note that the standard antonym of √עלה is the verb √ירד, however, the expression √ירד + עַל means "to descend against," emphasising that the enemy is located in a lower position (2 Chr 20:16; cf. Judg 1:9; 1 Sam 26:10; 29:4; 30:24). Cf. Wehmeier, ("עָלָה," 887).

frequently the technical term in question. They are, as follows, √לחם Niphal "to wage war, fight" (Deut 1:41, 42; Josh 19:47; 1 Kgs 12:24; 2 Chr 11:4), √לכד Qal "to capture" (Josh 19:47; 1 Kgs 9:16), √טפשׂ Qal "to capture" (2 Kgs 16:9; 18:13; Isa 36:1), √צור Qal "besiege" (1 Kgs 20:1; 2 Kgs 6:24; 17:5; 18:9; Isa 21:2), √נכה Hiphil "to strike" (Josh 7:3; Judg 8:11), √חנה Qal "to encamp" (Judg 15:9; 18:12; Josh 10:5; 1 Sam 11:11; 13:5), √שׂרף Qal "to burn" (Judg 15:6; 1 Kgs 9:16), √ירשׁ Qal "to take in possession" (Num 13:30; Deut 1:21; 9:23; Josh 19:47), √גוד Qal "to raid" (Hab 3:16), √בקע Qal "to seize" (Isa 7:6), √חרב Qal "to murder" (Jer 50:21), √חרם Hiphil "to execute the ban" (Jer 50:21), √שׁדד Qal "to annihilate" (Jer 49:28).

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Having established semantic spectrum of the verb √עלה and singled out its meanings in the Hebrew Bible, the lexical meaning of the verb in question can be now determined in 2 Kgs 17:5a. It is noteworthy that there the vocabulary characteristic of the warfare realm occurs in its co-text. It is as follows: √עצר Qal "to arrest" (v. 4), √אסר Qal "to imprison" (v. 4), √צור Qal "to besiege" (v. 5), √לכד Qal "to capture" (v. 6), √גלה Hiphil "to lead into exile" (v. 6). These lexemes indicate that √עלה should be interpreted as a technical-military term meaning "to attack, invade" regarding both of its occurrences in v. 5. The ellipsis of the preposition עַל in וַיַּעַל שֹׁמְרוֹן in v. 5b (cf. the plain form עָלָה [...] עַל־שֹׁמְרוֹן in 2 Kgs 18:9) should not give rise to any difficulty since this does not affect the meaning of the technical term. In case of וַיַּעַל בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ (v. 5a), however, there is still a question open to discussion whether the preposition בְּ is simply synonymous to the preposition עַל as its stylistic variation (as it happens in case of the preposition אֶל) or the preposition בְּ adds a new aspect to the meaning of the verb. This matter will be confronted in the next part of this paper.

[B] Semantics of בְּ

Concerning the lexical meaning of the preposition בְּ, some general remarks about the semantics of prepositions in biblical Hebrew should be taken into account. It is commonly stated that prepositions are derived, historically speaking, from nouns in the adverbial (accusative) case in the construct relation to a word they modify.[32] Bearing this in mind,

32 It is evident in case of prepositions such as, for example, בַּעַד "away from, through, within" (since it corresponds to the pattern of the segolates nouns), לִפְנֵי "in front of" (since it is a composite proposition built out of the preposition לְ and the construct form of the noun פָּנִים), עַל "on" and אֶל "to" (since both of them originate in III-y nouns, cf. forms preserved in poetry: עֲלֵי – Gen 49:17, 22; Job 6:5; and אֲלֵי – Job 3:22; 5:26; 15:22). Although the origins of the preposition בְּ are opaque, it seems to stem from a form **bi*. The only preposition that does not seem to originate in a noun is כְּ "as, like." For general remarks about prepositions in the historical-grammatical aspect see J. Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew. An Introduction* (LSAWS 2; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns 2010) 283–285.

it is indeed possible to speak about the semantics of prepositions in general and so of בְּ in our case as well. In fact, every single word in any language has some sense that is somehow self-contained, even if it is minimal.[33]

It is noteworthy that prepositions are, by their grammatical nature, relational terms in the first place and they denote their meaning through the syntactic relations to words they modify or by which they are headed. In 2 Kgs 17:5a the preposition בְּ is related syntactically to the verb √עלה (heading the verb phrase) and to the noun אֶרֶץ (headed by the preposition). The syntactic function of the preposition בְּ and, in consequence, its meaning in 2 Kgs 17:5a will be examined in the next part of this paper. Let this study be limited now to pointing out possible senses that the preposition בְּ denotes in biblical Hebrew.

The remarkable variety of senses that the preposition בְּ has in the Hebrew Bible can be noticed on the diagram on the next page.[34] They may be categorised in four groups by types of relation they signify: [1] spatial senses (in relations of place), [2] temporal senses (in relations of time), [3] circumstantial senses (in relations of circumstances, such as origin, instrument, agent, interest, cause, and goal), [4] and senses that are more strictly connected with grammatical relations between בְּ and noun/verb phrases. Despite the self-contained meaning of the preposition בְּ ("in") is minimal, it signifies, by linguistic economy, a remarkable diversity of senses. It may be argued, however, that the spatial senses of בְּ are basic.[35]

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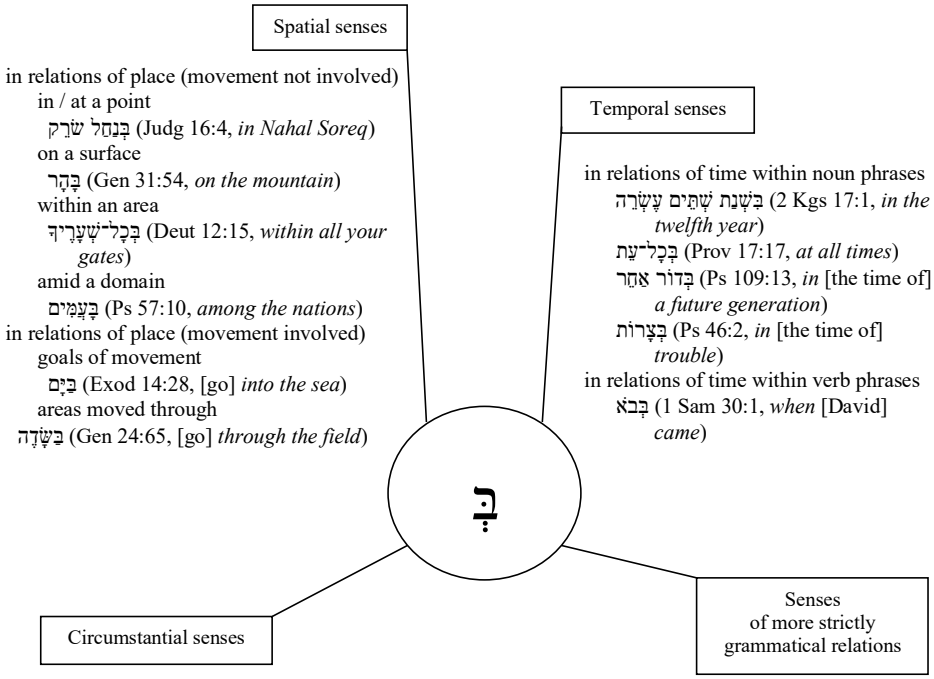
Having singled out the chief senses of the preposition בְּ in the Hebrew Bible, an attempt to define its meaning in 2 Kgs 17:5a can be made. Theoretically, three possible meanings of בְּ may be singled out in this verse. The preposition בְּ, being there a modifier of the verb of locomotion (√עלה), may have a spatial sense, marking either a goal of such movement: "to go up to the whole country," or an area moved through: "to go up through the whole country." In the third possible sense it would express the relation of circumstance, specifically, of adversative agent with a meaning "to go up against the whole country." In order to establish the exact sense of בְּ the syntax of the entire clause will have to be examined in the second part of this paper.

33 Even the definite article, which is highly functional, contains "some" meaning, namely, the concept of definiteness.

34 I rely here mostly on the study of B.K. Waltke – M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns 1990) 196–199, §11.2.5; and R.J. Williams – J.C. Beckman, *Williams' Hebrew Syntax*, 3 ed. (Toronto – Buffalo, NY – London, UK: University of Toronto Press 2007) 96–101.

35 For more on the preposition *beth* and its relation to other prepositions in Hebrew see, for example, N.M. Sarna, "The Interchange of the Prepositions *Beth* and *Min* in Biblical Hebrew," *JBL* 78 (1959) 310–316; W. Chomsky, "The Ambiguity of the Prefixed Prepositions מ, ל, ב in the Bible," *JQR* 61 (1970) 87–89; G. Schmuttermayr, "Ambivalenz und Aspektdifferenz: Bemerkungen zu den hebräischen Präpositionen ב, ל und מן," *BZ* 15 (1971) 29–51; M.J. Dahood, "Can One Plow without Oxen (Amos 6:12)? A Study of *ba-* and *'al*," *The Bible World. Essays in Honor of Cyrus H. Gordon* (eds. R. Rendsburg *et al.*) (New York: Ktav 1980) 13–23; T. Lorenzin, "Osservazioni sull'uso delle preposizioni *k*, *b*, *min*, *'el*, *'al* in 1 e 2 Cronache," *RivB* 32 (1989) 161–166.


Spatial senses
in relations of place (movement not involved)
in / at a point
בְּנַחַל שֹׂרֵק (Judg 16:4, *in Nahal Soreq*)
on a surface
בָּהָר (Gen 31:54, *on the mountain*)
within an area
בְּכָל־שְׁעָרֶיךָ (Deut 12:15, *within all your gates*)
amid a domain
בָּעַמִּים (Ps 57:10, *among the nations*)
in relations of place (movement involved)
goals of movement
בַּיָּם (Exod 14:28, [go] *into the sea*)
areas moved through
בַּשָּׂדֶה (Gen 24:65, [go] *through the field*)
Temporal senses
in relations of time within noun phrases
בִּשְׁנַת שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה (2 Kgs 17:1, *in the twelfth year*)
בְּכָל־עֵת (Prov 17:17, *at all times*)
בְּדוֹר אַחֵר (Ps 109:13, *in* [the time of] *a future generation*)
בְּצָרוֹת (Ps 46:2, *in* [the time of] *trouble*)
in relations of time within verb phrases
בְּבֹא (1 Sam 30:1, *when* [David] *came*)
בְּ
Circumstantial senses
in relations of physical circumstances (*beth comitantiae*)
בְּקוֹל גָּדוֹל (Ezek 3:12, [weeping] *aloud*)
of mental circumstances
בְּשָׂשׂוֹן (Isa 12:3, [draw water] *joyfully*)
of instruments (non-animates)
בַּשֵּׁבֶט (Mic 4:14, [smite] *with the rod*)
of agents (animates)
בָּאָדָם (Gen 9:6, [shall be shed] *by a human*)
of disadvantage
בַּכֹּל (Gen 16:12, [his hand] *against all*)
of material
בְּצַלְעוֹת בְּרוֹשִׁים (1 Kgs 6:15, *with planks of cypress*)
of price paid (*beth pretii*)
בְּשֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת (1 Kgs 10:29, *for six hundred [sheqels]*)
of price exchanged
בְּנַפְשׁוֹתָם (2 Sam 23:17, *at the risk of their lives*)
of specification
בָּהֵנָּה (Lev 5:22, *with regard to these*)
of manner
בִּבְכִי יַעְזֵר (Isa 16:9, [weep] *like Jazer weeps*)
of estimation
הַיָּפָה בַּנָּשִׁים (Sol 1:8, *the most beautiful among women*)
of identity (*beth essentiae*)
בְּאֵל שַׁדָּי (Exod 6:3, *as El Shaddai*)
of reason or originating force (casual beth)
בַּחֲמִשָּׁה (Gen 18:28, *because of* [on account of] *five*)
Senses of more strictly grammatical relations
with relation to noun phrases
relation of distribution
יוֹם בְּיוֹם (2 Chr 30:21, *day by day*)
relation of partition
בְּמַטְעַמֵּיהֶם (Ps 141:4, *some of their dainties*)
with relation to verb phrases (marking objects)
verbs of extending, touching, fastening
וְיָד אַל־תִּשְׁלְחוּ־בוֹ (Gen 37:22, *you shall not lay a hand on him*)
verbs of striking *at*, reaching *to*, filling *with*, exercising authority *over*
וַיַּךְ בָּהֶם (1 Sam 19:8, *he struck them*)
הֵמָּה בָּאוּ בְּאֶרֶץ צוּף (1 Sam 9:5, *when they came to the land of Zuph*)
מָשׁוֹל תִּמְשֹׁל בָּנוּ (Gen 37:8, *will you indeed rule over us?*)
verbs of sense perception
רָאוּ בַּאֲרוֹן יהוה (1 Sam 6:19, *they looked on the ark of YHWH*)
verbs of emotion
בְּךָ יַאֲמִינוּ (Exod 19:9, *they will trust in you*)
verbs of speaking
וְדִבַּרְתָּ בָּם (Deut 6:7, *talk about them*)

[C] Semantics of כֹּל

The third lexeme in the phrase under examination is the noun כֹּל (in the construct form כָּל־).[36] It is a very frequent term occurring about 5408 times in the Hebrew Bible,[37] stemming from the root √כלל [38] "to be complete, make complete," and originating historically in the form **kull(u)*[39] which denotes the concept of "totality."[40] The examination of the usage of כֹּל in the Hebrew Bible demonstrates that it occurs both [I] in the absolute meaning and [II] in the construct relation to noun/verb phrases.

[I] In absolute usage the noun כֹּל expresses the aspect of entirety and means "the whole, everything, everybody, all."[41] In some co-texts the noun כֹּל acquires the technical-cosmological meaning "universe" describing the entire creation in relation to God, the creator of all (Jer 10:16; 51:19; cf. Ps 103:19; Isa 44:24; Job 42:2).

[II] Very frequently the noun כֹּל occurs in the construct relation to noun phrases. In different co-texts it denotes a variety of semantic aspects of totality.[42] In some cases the aspect of totality is expressed not by the construct relation but by other syntactical features, such as the apposition,[43] the *casus pendens*[44] and the adverbial accusative.[45]

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36 I rely our here on H. Ringgren, "כֹּל," *TDOT* VII, 135–143; S. Sauer, "כֹּל," *TLOT* II, 614–616; "כֹּל," BDB, 481a–483a; "כֹּל," *HALOT* II, 474a–475a.

37 Cf. Even-Shoshan, *New Concordance of the Bible*, 534c–542c.

38 The noun in question is also very common in other Semitic languages: Ugar. *kl*, Phoen. *kl*, Aram. *kl*, *kōl*, *kōllā'*, Arab. *kll*, OSA *kl*, Eth. *kʷ ĕl*, Akk. *kalû* and *kullatu*; cf. Ringgren, "כֹּל," 135.

39 Cf. J.A. Soggin, "klh – kll: osservazioni sull'uso di due radici in ebraico biblico," *AION* 32 (1972) 366.

40 In biblical Hebrew the third radical of this term is evident only in suffixed forms such as, for example, כֻּלָּם "all of them," כֻּלָּנוּ "all of us."

41 It occurs both in the definitive form (for example, Exod 29:24 "you shall place everything," Gen 16:12 "his hand [is] against everybody," Ps 14:3 "they all have gone astray," Eccl 3:19 "they all have the same life breath") and in the indeterminate one (for instance, Job 13:1 "my eyes have seen everything," Jer 44,12 "they all will meet their end").

42 For example, [1] in relation to determinate terms expressing a unit it occurs in the quantitative meaning "whole, entire, all" ("the whole earth" in Gen 9:19; Isa 6:3; Ps 47:8; "my entire people" in Gen 41:40; "all nations" in Isa 2:2; 43:9; Ps 67:3). [2] כֹּל denotes also the quantitative meaning "any, anything, all kinds of," by governing indeterminate terms ("all kinds of trees" Gen 2:9, "all kinds of good things" Gen 24:10, "anything" Ruth 4:7, "any ransom" Prov 6:35). [3] When כֹּל governs generic terms it denotes the collective meaning "all, every" ("all mankind" Gen 7:21, "all the cattle" Gen 2:20; "all men, everyone" Deut 4:3; 2 Sam 15:2, "every people" Est 3:8, "every house" Isa 24:10). [4] In relation to negations it means "no, none, nothing" ("no work shall be done" Exod 12:16, "eat nothing unclean" Judg 13:14). [5] When כֹּל follows an enumeration it occurs in meaning "total, in all" ("towns [were] ten in all" Josh 21:26).

43 Cf. 2 Sam 2:9 יִשְׂרָאֵל כֻּלּוֹ "all Israel," Isa 29:11 חֲזוּת הַכֹּל "entire vision."

44 Cf. 1 Sam 2:13 כָּל־אִישׁ זֹבֵחַ זָבַח "each time someone offered sacrifice," Ps 74:3 כָּל־הֵרַע אוֹיֵב "[the] enemy has destroyed everything."

45 Cf. 2 Sam 1:9 כִּי־כָל־עוֹד נַפְשִׁי בִּי "because my life still [lingers] in me."

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With reference to 2 Kgs 17:5a it shall be noticed that it is the noun כֹּל that heads the construct relation in the noun phrase כָּל־הָאָרֶץ. This syntactic feature will be examined later in this paper. For the moment it can be said that כֹּל expresses in this verse the quantitative aspect of the noun אֶרֶץ, and the phrase means literally "the whole of the land," and so the realm denoted by the noun אֶרֶץ in 2 Kgs 17:5a is meant in its entirety. In the further analysis the referent of this noun will be examined.

[D] Semantics of אֶרֶץ

The term אֶרֶץ is one of the most frequent nouns in the Hebrew Bible occurring 2504 times.[46] Its basic meaning may be defined as referring to the whole space "in which man thinks of himself as living."[47] The vast range of semantic nuances denoted by this lexeme in biblical Hebrew proves its polysemous character. Its new meanings are generated in varied co-texts and contexts by means of semantic shifts (generalisation and specialisation), and so the following senses of אֶרֶץ can be singled out: [I] the cosmological meaning, [II] the physical meaning, [III] the geographical and [IV] political meaning.[48] It is noteworthy that this term acquires a theological significance in some co-texts.[49] Theological implications, however, do not generate new lexical meanings of the term. They ascribe to אֶרֶץ a pragmatic aspect (theological significance), which is, for methodological reasons, beyond our interest.

[I] In the cosmic sense the noun אֶרֶץ means "(the) earth" as a part of creation established by God. In connection with such cosmological meaning of אֶרֶץ several important concepts are subsequently developed.[50] Concerning the lexical meaning of אֶרֶץ its cosmic sense, strictly speaking, is expressed in the Hebrew Bible with varied nuances. The meaning "earth"

46 Cf. Even-Shoshan, *New Concordance of the Bible*, 112a–119b. This common Semitic root is well attested in Acadian (*erṣetu*), in Ugaritic (*ʾṛṣ*), in Arabic (*ʾard*) and in Aramaic (ארקא and ארעא); cf. H.H. Schmid, "אֶרֶץ," *TLOT* I, 172–173.

47 L.I.J. Stadelmann, *The Hebrew Conception of the World. A Philological and Literary Study* (AnBib 39; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute Press 1970) 127.

48 In this presentation the following studies are adopted: M. Ottosson, "אֶרֶץ," *TDOT* I, 388–405; Schmid, "אֶרֶץ," 172-179; the entry "אֶרֶץ," BDB, 75b–76b; "אֶרֶץ," *HALOT* I, 90b–91a. One should observe thatthe singular form of אֶרֶץ is generally preferred in all senses. The plural form אַרְצוֹת, occurring only in rather late texts, denotes the meaning marked with [III] and [IV] only, when particular territories are intended.

49 See for example the study of S. Boorer, "The Earth/Land (אֶרֶץ) in the Priestly Material: The Preservation of the 'Good' Earth and the Promised Land of Canaan throughout the Generations," *ABR* 49 (2001) 19–33. He analyses the significance of our term for the theology of the promised land.

50 For instance, God, the creator, is presented as the one who possesses the earth (cf. Isa 14:25; Ezek 36:5), who exercises his sovereignty over it as its Lord (Josh 3:11, 13; Mic 4:13; Zech 6:5; Ps 97:5), king (Ps 47:3), God (Isa 54:5) and the Most High (Ps 83:19; 97:9; 98:4; 100:1), and the one who manifests his dominion and power over the earth so that it trembles and quakes (Isa 13:3; Joel 2:10), it staggers and sways (Isa 24:19), and mourns (Isa 24:4; Hos 4:3). In such co-texts the term אֶרֶץ acquires a theological significance for statements defining YHWH's sovereignty over the whole earth, and for the theology of the promised land (cf. Deut 1:8, 36).

occurs to stand in an antithesis to heaven, which corresponds to a belief about the bipartite division of the universe.[51] Sometimes, a tripartite worldview is intended in the Hebrew Bible, namely, that the whole world consists of heaven, earth, and sea (cf. Exod 20:4, 11).[52] The term under examination occurs also in the meaning "underworld" which evokes just another type of worldview, namely, that the universe consists of heaven (as the dwelling place of God), earth (as the dwelling place of living creatures), sea, and underworld (as the abode of the dead) (cf. Ps 135:6).[53] There is also a vast rage of semantic nuances expressed by the term in question in specialized co-texts.[54]

[II] The term under examination occurs in the physical sense "ground," as well. At times different aspects of such a sense are accentuated. Sometimes, אֶרֶץ means "surface of the ground,"[55] or "soil, ground" when it refers to its products.[56] Occasionally the term אֶרֶץ is used metaphorically, too.[57] One can also notices an idiomatic expression כִּבְרַת־אֶרֶץ (or

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51 Heaven and earth describe the whole reality (world) created by God (cf. Gen 1:1; 14:19; Ps 89:12). The earth is a dwelling place of men (Gen 1:28; Ps 115:16; Ezek 41:16; 43:14), called sometimes "inhabitants of the earth" (Jer 25:19; Zeph 1:18; Ps 33:14), or "nations of the earth" (Gen 18:18; Jer 26:6; Zech 12:3), or "peoples of the earth" (Deut 28:10; 1 Kgs 8:43; Ezek 31:12). It is also the place where wild beasts live (Isa 18:6; Jer 15:3; Ps 79:2; Prov 30:24) and varied kinds of plants grow (Gen 1:11, 29; 7:3; Amos 7:12). From various texts, referring to אֶרֶץ, further information about the form of the earth may also be read. These pieces of information correspond with the worldview beliefs held through the Ancient Near East. It is said that the earth has four corners (Isa 11:12; Ezek 7:2; Job 38:13), an edge or hem (Isa 24:16), an end (Deut 28:49; Isa 5:26; Ps 61:3; Prov 17:24) or ends (Isa 40:28; Job 28:24), sides or remote parts (Jer 6:22; 50:41) and a centre or "navel" (Ezek 38:12).

52 In such a view "earth" stands in an antithesis to sea as a "dry land," arisen out of primal waters (Gen 1:10; Prov 8:27, 28), resting still upon columns in the water (1 Sam 2:8; Ps 24:2; 136:6) and having the vault of heaven anchored in itself (Amos 9:6).

53 The term אֶרֶץ implies this sense in few expressions, such as "the nether world" (Exod 31:14; 32:18), "depths of the earth" (Isa 44:23; Ezek 26:20; Ps 63:10; 139:15). Sporadically, אֶרֶץ alone involves the concept of the underworld (Exod 15:12; Ps 22:30; Isa 26:19; Jer 17:13).

54 Occasionally, the term אֶרֶץ, being a part of God's creation, denotes by metonymy an aspect of durability (Ps 78:69; Eccl 1:4). Sometimes it occurs metaphorically in the meaning of earthly existence (Eccl 5:1; 7:20; 8:14, 16; 11:2). By means of metonymy it means occasionally "the inhabitants of the earth" (Gen 11:1; 41:57; 1 Sam 17:46; 1 Kgs 10:24). The term occurs also in the idiomatic phrase הֹלֵךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ (Josh 23:14; 1 Kgs 2:2) "going the way of all the earth," which expresses the inevitability of death.

55 On such a surface people, animals and things stand (Gen 1:26; 8:19; Exod 8:12), rain and dew fall (Gen 7:4; Exod 9:33; Job 5:10), and so forth (cf. Ps 147:6; Isa 47:1; Ezek 26:16; Amos 3:5; 9:9). When the term under discussion is modified by the locative morpheme ה (אַרְצָה), it r refers to the physical movement towards the ground. In this meaning it occurs commonly with verbs, such as √נפל Qal "to fall" (Gen 44:14), √חוה Hishtaphal "to prostrate" (Gen 24:52; 2 Sam 14:33), √קדד Qal "to bow down" (Exod 34:8).

56 It is said that it gives, for example, fatness (Gen 27:28), increase (Lev 26:4; Deut 32:22; Judg 6:4; Ezek 34:27; Ps 67:7), fruit (Num 13:20; Deut 1:25; Jer 2:7), shoots (Isa 61:11), produce (Lev 23:39; Josh 5:12), bread (Ps 104:14; Job 28:5), and so forth.

57 In some co-texts the form אַרְצָה has no direct relation to the physical movement "to the ground." For example, the expression "no word of YHWH will fall to the ground" in 2 Kgs 10:10 means by metaphor that none of his words will remain unfulfilled. The expression "to pour out one's liver on the ground" in Lam 2:11 means metaphorically "to be wholly in despair." The term אֶרֶץ is also used in expressions such as "to be cut down to the ground" (Isa 14:12, √גדע Niphal + לָאָרֶץ), and "to crush to the ground" (Ps 143:3, √כדא Piel + לָאָרֶץ) which

כִּבְרַת־הָאָרֶץ) which refers to measurements of distance and means "some long distance" (Gen 35:16; 48:7; 2 Kgs 5:19).

[III] The term אֶרֶץ occurs in the geographical sense "land, region" with reference to a circumscribed territory.[58] It occurs in the geographical meaning in expressions that define individual regions.[59] They are, in fact, perceived as a kind of "microcosm" if one considers that the earth is conceived in the Hebrew Bible as "extended continuously through the continents."[60] Rarely, אֶרֶץ means a "parcel of land" (Gen 23:15; Exod 23:10). By metonymy this term alone may refer to "the inhabitants of the land" (Lev 19:29; Ezek 14:13; 1 Sam 14:25; 2 Sam 15:23). It can also be noticed that an idiomatic use of the term is employed in the expression עַם־הָאָרֶץ ("people of the land") which signifies "common people" in contrast to officials and princes. This idiom refers either to non-Israelites (Gen 23:7, 12, 13; Num 14:9) or to Israelites (Lev 20:4; Ezek 7:27). In some co-texts the idiom refers to the "land aristocracy" (2 Kgs 15:5; 16:15).

[IV] The term אֶרֶץ acquires in some co-texts the political meaning "country" in the sense of a governed area.[61] It is noteworthy that the meaning of אֶרֶץ in relation to the territory of individual tribes (for example, "the land of Ephraim/Gad/Benjamin" and so forth, cf. Deut 34:2; Judg 21:21; 1 Sam 13:7) stands on the border between the geographical and political meaning.

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means respectively "to be defeated" and "to defeat" (cf. similar expressions entailing other verbs in Ps 147:6; Isa 26:5; Ezek 28:17; Obad 3).

58 The lexeme אֶרֶץ means frequently a "tract of land, region" that may be further specified as, for example, a wilderness (Deut 32:10; Prov 21:19), a dry and weary land (Ps 63:2; cf. 143:6; Isa 32:2), a parched land (Isa 53:2; Hos 2:5; Joel 2:20; Ps 107:35), a dry and thirsty land (Ezek 19:13), a land of drought and darkness (Jer 2:6), a land not sown (Deut 29:22; cf. Jer 2:2), a salt land (Jer 17:6), a terrible land (Isa 21:1), and a land of darkness (Isa 45:19; Jer 2:31).

59 Usually, אֶרֶץ occurring in geographical sense, is defined either [a] by an indication of direction ("the land of the north" Jer 3:18; Zech 6:6; "the land of the south" Gen 24:62; Judg 1:15; Zech 6:6; "the land of the sunset = the west" Zech 8:7; "the land of the sunrise = the east" Zech 8:7; "the land of the east" Gen 25:6); or [b] by a topographical indication ("the land of the circle = the plain of Jordan" Gen 19:28; "the valley region" Josh 17:16; "the land of the plain" Jer 48:21; "the garden land" Jer 2:7); or [c] by a name of a city or a mountain ("the land of Mizpa" Josh 11:3; "the land of Tappuah" Josh 17:8; "the land of Ararat" 2 Kgs 19:37; Isa 37:38; "the land of Moriah" Gen 22:2); or [d] by the relation to either a person or a group ("native land" Gen 11:28; Jer 22:10; "the land of the fathers" Gen 31:3; cf. 48:21; "the land of your sojournings" Exod 6:4; Ezek 20:38; "the land of their possession" Lev 14:34; Josh 22:4; "the land of his possession" Deut 2:12; "the land of his dominion" 1 Kgs 9:19; Jer 51:28; "the land of their captivity" 1 Kgs 8:47; cf. Neh 3:36; "the land of their enemies" Lev 26:41, 44).

60 Stadelmann, *Hebrew Conception of the World*, 127.

61 In such a meaning the term can be subsequently defined either [1] by a proper name of the land (for example, "the land of Israel" 1 Sam 13:19; Ezek 47:18; "the land of Egypt" Gen 41:19; Exod 5:12; Jer 44:26; "the land of Canaan" Gen 17:8; Josh 24:3; "the land of Edom" Num 20:23; Judg 5:4), or [2] by a gentilic name (for instance, "the land of the Canaanites" Exod 13:5; Josh 13:4; "the land of the Philistines" Exod 13:17; 1 Sam 27:1; "the land of the Ammonites" Deut 2:19), or [3] by a name of pertinent ruler ("the land of Sihon" Deut 4:46; "the land of Og" Deut 4:47; "the land of Ramses" Gen 47:11), or by a personal suffix referring to a ruler (Gen 20:15; Deut 4:47).

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The relations of meanings expressed by אֶרֶץ and by its synonyms shall be examined, too.[62] There are a few lexemes that occur in the synonymous meaning to אֶרֶץ. Some of them correspond to certain cosmic aspects of the lexeme under discussion: תֵּבֵל "habitable part of the world" (Isa 14:21; 24:4; Jer 10:12; Ps 19:5), חֶלֶד "space of the world" (besides its temporal meaning "lifetime, age"' Isa 38:11; Ps 17:14; 49:2), יַבָּשָׁה "dry land, ground" (Gen 1:9; Exod 4:9; 14:29; Isa 44:3) and שְׁאוֹל "underworld" (1 Sam 2:6; Ps 30:4; Isa 5:14); some others – only to the geographical ones: מִדְבָּר "wilderness" (Gen 4:20; Num 10:12; 2 Sam 17:49; Isa 41:18), עֲרָבָה "wilderness" (Isa 35:1; Jer 2:6; 50:12). The term אֲדָמָה demonstrates more complex synonymity to the term אֶרֶץ and means in varied co-texts "the entire inhabited earth" (Gen 12:3; Deut 7:6; Isa 24:21), "ground yielding sustenance" (Gen 2:5; Exod 34:26; 2 Sam 9:10), "soil, humus" (Isa 45:9; 1 Sam 4:12; 2 Sam 1:2), "a piece of ground" (Gen 47:18; Deut 5:16; Isa 14:2), "land, territory, country" (Gen 47:19; Lev 20:24; Isa 19:17). By comparing these terms with our lexeme it can be noticed that אֶרֶץ, being highly polysemous, covers a much wider semantic spectrum that other terms. Their sense relations may be defined as hyponymy (inclusion), in other words, that the specific senses expressed by the terms listed above (which should be called cohyponyms) are somehow included in much wider semantic spectrum of אֶרֶץ. Additionally, these cohyponyms themselves present sense relations either of overlapping (for example, between מִדְבָּר and עֲרָבָה, between תֵּבֵל and חֶלֶד, and between אֲדָמָה and יַבָּשָׁה), or of contiguity (for example, between תֵּבֵל and שְׁאוֹל).

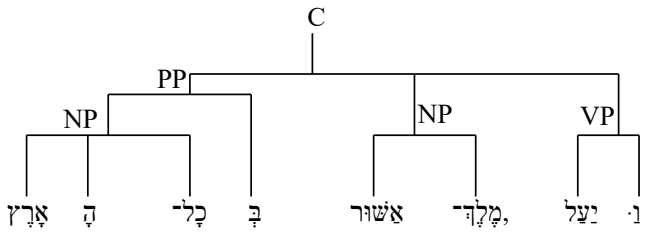
Considering the meaning of אֶרֶץ in 2 Kgs 17:5a, it occurs there in the political sense "country," even if the term is not specified explicitly. From the narrative point of view, in the co-text of 2 Kgs 17:1–6, the expression כָּל־הָאָרֶץ is connected with the figure of king Hosea. Therefore, "the whole country" in v. 5a refers to the whole territory governed by this king.

3. Level of Sentence: Syntax and Semantics of the Clause

Having established the self-contained meaning of individual words of the clause under examination, the syntactic analysis of 2 Kgs 17:5a, וַיַּעַל מֶלֶךְ־אַשּׁוּר בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ may be proceeded with. Three successively occurring phrases can be singled out in this clause: the verb phrase (VP) וַיַּעַל, literally "and he went up," the predicate of the clause, morphologically composed of the verb itself (יַעַל) and a conjunction ו integrated with it (the conjunction וַ "and" with a "sequence morpheme"); next, the noun phrase (NP) מֶלֶךְ־אַשּׁוּר "the king of Assyria," being the subject of the clause, and the preposition phrase (PP) בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ, literally

62 For detailed analysis of terms for earth and of their context see Stadelmann, *Hebrew Conception of the World*, 127–140.

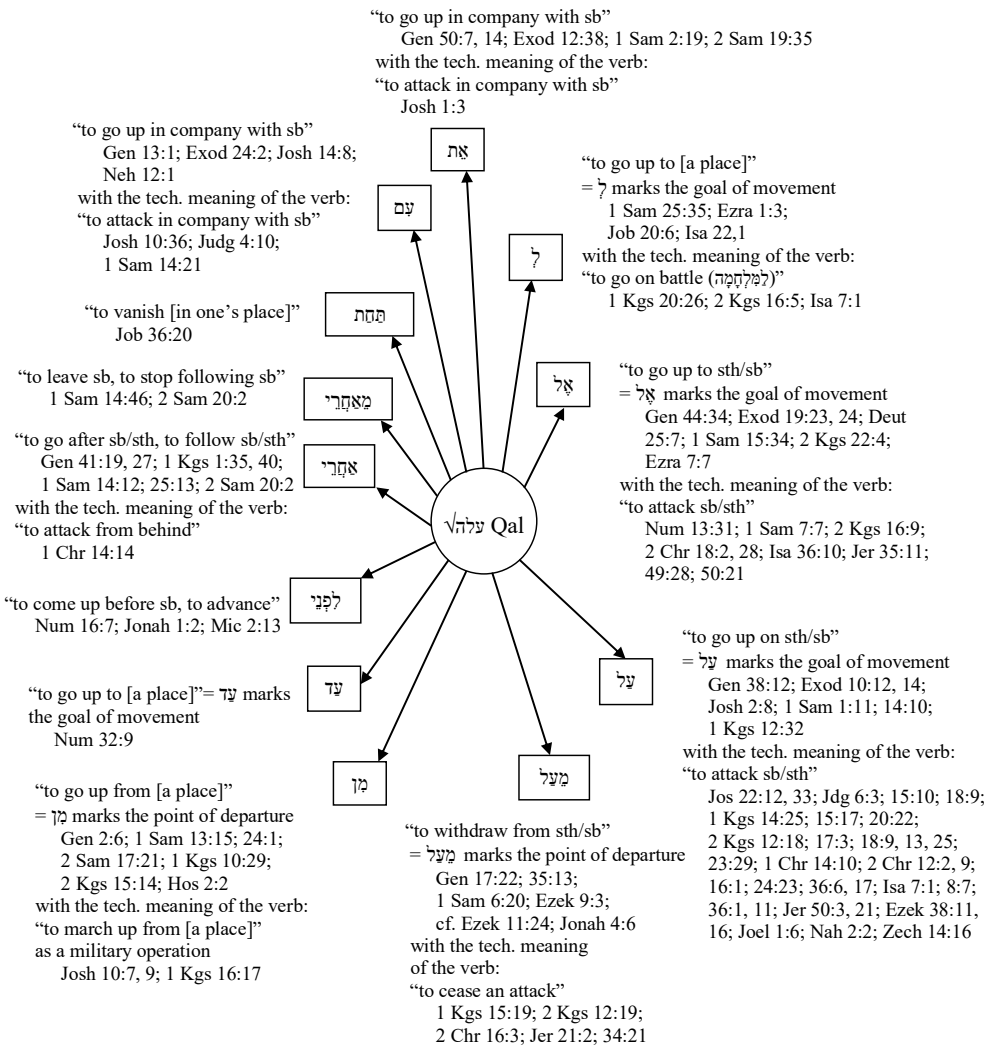
"in the whole country," being the adverbial modifier of place, syntactically consisting of the preposition בְּ and the NP כָּל־הָאָרֶץ. The schema below presents the String Constituent Analysis of this clause.



The study of semantics at the sentence level consists of the examination of the meaning expressed by syntactic relations in the clause. In this regard, the syntactic analysis of the verb √עלה Qal modified by various prepositions, with particular interest in its syntax with the preposition בְּ, is a key-tool for the interpretation of the phrase in question. The diagram on the next page presents a general overview of the syntax of √עלה Qal when it heads various prepositions (the preposition בְּ will be discussed separately).

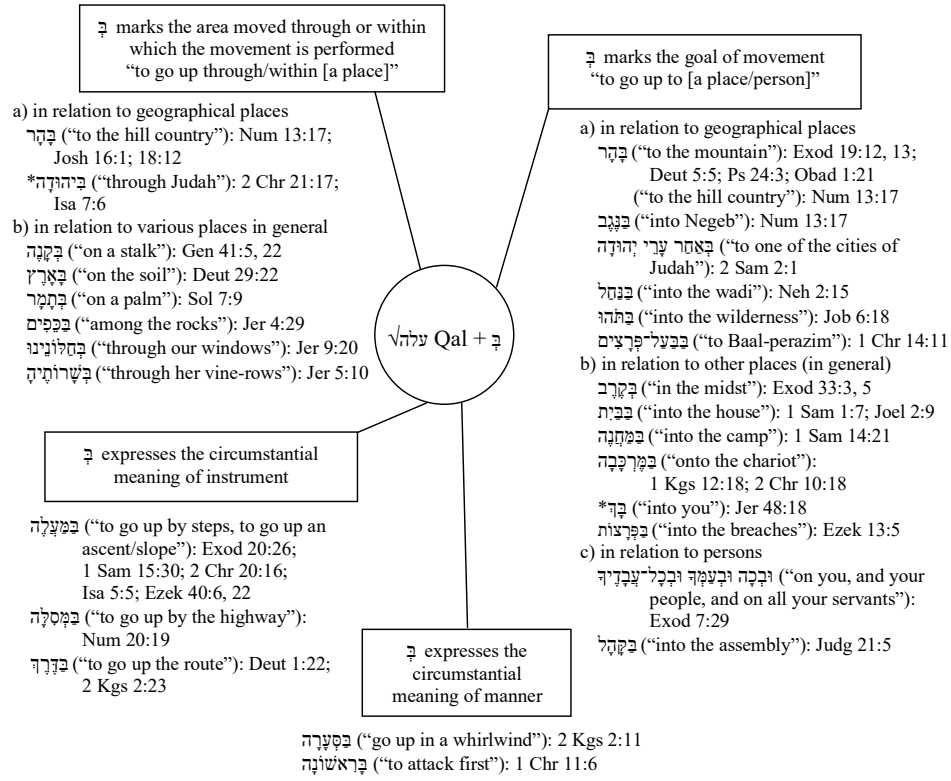
This diagram presents concisely the meaning of VPs in which the verb √עלה Qal heads various prepositions (or more specifically, PPs being headed by various prepositions). When √עלה Qal is used with the physical meaning (an upward movement) prepositions modifying the verb function as syntactic devices denoting the point of departure (מִן "from," מֵעַל "from"), the point of arrival (the goal of movement: לְ "to," אֶל "to," עַל "on, upon," עַד "up to"), or add other nuances to the movement described by √עלה Qal such as, for example, the aspect of companionship (עִם "with," אֵת "with," אַחֲרֵי "after") or its antonym, separateness (מֵאַחֲרֵי "from, without").

With respect to the technical-military meaning of √עלה Qal, it usually governs the preposition עַל, and occasionally, the preposition אֶל as its stylistic variation (see an obvious example in Jer 50:21). However, as already observed, the ellipsis of these prepositions does not result in the loss of the technical meaning, and thus, the verb √עלה alone may express such a meaning as well. It means that the technical-military meaning of this verb does not depend on the syntactic relation to the prepositions, since it itself is capable enough of expressing such a sense. However, other prepositions add further nuances to such a technical meaning of √עלה Qal, for example, they may denote the point of departure: "to march up from..." (when the verb is modified by מִן), or the position in attack: "to attack from behind..." (when it is modified by אַחֲרֵי), or to point out an accomplice of an attack: "to attack in company with" (when it is modified by the preposition עִם or אֵת).



In a nutshell, it is always √עלה Qal that syntactically heads the VPs. It should be highlighted, however, that the relation between the verb and its preposition modifiers varies in intensity from a very strict semantic linkage (when √עלה Qal occurring in the technical-military meaning governs the prepositions עַל or אֶל, and מֵעַל as their antonym) to a rather loose one (when the meaning of prepositions does not depend directly on the meaning of the verb). The question to be answered is, whether the preposition בְּ in general, and in 2 Kgs 17:5a in particular, belongs to the first or to the second "category," in other words, whether √עלה Qal governs objects modified by בְּ in the technical-military meaning. In order

to answer this question the syntactic and semantic relation between √עלה Qal and בְּ needs to be examined. The diagram below presents a concise summary of semantic nuances expressed by the preposition בְּ when headed by √עלה Qal.



The preposition בְּ when governed by √עלה Qal occurs predominantly in the spatial meaning (besides a few occurrences with the circumstantial meaning) by marking either the goal of movement, or the area moved through, or the area within which such a movement is performed.[63] It is true especially in relation to geographical places and topographical areas. In almost all cases it is unmistakably evident from their co-text that the preposition בְּ expresses spatial meaning. There are, however, three passages (marked with an asterisk on the diagram) where the adversative meaning of the preposition is sometimes argued, as if √עלה Qal in the technical-military meaning governed בְּ, in other words, as if √עלה Qal "to attack" + בְּ were a synonym of the formulation √עלה Qal + עַל).[64] These passages needs to be discussed in detail.

63 Cf. Waltke – O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 196, §11.2.5b; Williams – Beckman, *Williams' Hebrew Syntax*, 101.

64 Hans F. Fuhs ("עָלָה," 84) classifies √עלה + בְּ in Isa 7:6 as the technical term in addition to the classical construction √עלה +עַל.

The first passage is Jer 48:18, רְדִי מִכָּבוֹד [65]יֹשְׁבִי בַצָּמָא יֹשֶׁבֶת בַּת־דִּיבוֹן כִּי־שֹׁדֵד מוֹאָב עָלָה בָךְ שִׁחֵת מִבְצָרֶיךְ. Some translations (NRSV, NASV) render the Hebrew text in the following way: "Descend from glory, and sit on the parched ground, o daughter dwelling in Dibon! For the ravager of Moab has come up against you; he has destroyed your fortresses." In such a rendering the expression עָלָה בָךְ is understood as a technical-military expression, being an equivalent of עָלָה עָלַיִךְ. However, by considering the inner parallelism within the verse, the PP בָּךְ corresponds with מִבְצָרֶיךְ "your fortresses," not with בַּת־דִּיבוֹן "the daughter of Dibon," and thus, בָּךְ should be understood as referring to "your city." In such a case the phrase עָלָה בָךְ expresses "entering the city" with the spatial meaning of בְּ which marks the goal of movement. Therefore, it is possible to interpret this passage in the following way: "Descend from glory, and sit on the parched ground, o daughter dwelling in Dibon! For the ravager of Moab has entered your town; he has destroyed your fortresses" (cf. the translation of JPS Tanak).

Another passage to be discussed is Isa 7:6, נַעֲלֶה בִיהוּדָה וּנְקִיצֶנָּה וְנַבְקָעֶנָּה אֵלֵינוּ וְנַמְלִיךְ מֶלֶךְ בְּתוֹכָהּ אֶת בֶּן־טָבְאַל. The first clause, נַעֲלֶה בִיהוּדָה, is usually rendered as "let's march against Judah" (cf. the translations of NASV, NRSV, JPS Tanak) which reveals the technical-military meaning of √עלה Qal + בְּ perceived there. It is unequivocal that √עלה Qal occurs there in such a sense. It is noteworthy that the clauses which follow, namely, נְקִיצֶנָּה וְנַבְקָעֶנָּה אֵלֵינוּ וְנַמְלִיךְ מֶלֶךְ, unfold a series of actions to be performed in consequence of the military aggression: "let us tear it apart" (√קוץ Hiphil), "let us conquer it for ourselves" (√בקע Hiphil), "let us set up [the son of Tabeel] as king in the midst of it" (√מלך Hiphil). All these actions are connected with each other and fit perfectly the narrative logic if one retains the spatial meaning of the preposition בְּ, not depriving the verb √עלה, at the same time, of its technical-military meaning. It thus appears that the passage in question may be understood better, as follows, "let us march up through Judah and tear it apart and conquer it...."

The same narrative logic may be identified in 2 Chr 21:17 where one reads וַיַּעֲלוּ בִיהוּדָה וַיִּבְקָעוּהָ וַיִּשְׁבּוּ אֵת כָּל־הָרְכוּשׁ הַנִּמְצָא לְבֵית־הַמֶּלֶךְ. It is possible to render this text in a following way: "they marched up through Judah and conquered it and carried off all the property found, that belonged to the king's palace." The unfolding actions of this verse are linked with each other and form a logical chain of events, which, as can be argued, fits the narrative better if both the technical-military sense of √עלה Qal and the spatial meaning of בְּ are understood there. It is possible, then, to state that both lexemes, linked syntactically, are connected more loosely from the semantic point of view, in other words, that בְּ is not a constituent of the technical-military term involving √עלה Qal.

Before drawing conclusions for this part of our analysis, it is necessary to study the meaning of the PP בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ, in particular, the semantic relation between the preposition בְּ and the noun אֶרֶץ. It is noteworthy that PPs consisting of בְּ and אֶרֶץ, when headed by verbs of locomotion, occur in the meaning of either goals of movement or areas moved

65 The Masoretic vocalization suggests to read the consonantal writing ישבי as יֹשְׁבִי instead of an expected reading יֹשֶׁבֶת (the so-called *Qere-Ketiv*).

through.[66] Such PPs are frequently headed by verbs, such as √עבר Qal: "to pass through, traverse" an area from one point to another (Gen 12:6; Exod 12:12; Deut 2:27; Judg 12:15; Josh 18:8; Jer 2:6); √הלך Qal "to go [through the land]" (1 Kgs 18:5; Ps 73:9), in Hiphil "to bring sb/sth [through the land]" (Josh 24:3), in Hithpael "to walk [through the land] back and forth" (Josh 18:4, 8; Job 1:7; 2:2; Ps 116:9; Zech 6:7); √שוט Qal "to traverse, to roam [through the land]" (2 Sam 24:8; Job 1:7; 2:2), √בוא Qal "to enter, come [into the land]" (1 Sam 9:5; Ezek 11:16; it occurs sometimes in the technical meaning "to attack, invade" (Josh 2:18; Judg 6:5; 2 Kgs 6:23; 13:20; Mic 5:4, 5); in such cases בְּ is the constituent of the technical term √בוא + בְּ. It does not occur, in my opinion, in the case of √עלה + בְּ.

With respect to the verb √עלה, 2 Kgs 17:5a is the only passage where the PP, built out of בְּ and אֶרֶץ, is headed by this verb. H.A. Brongers claims that √עלה + בְּ means generally "to traverse [the land]" (*das Land durchziehen*), both flat and hilly regions, being a synonym of √עבר.[67] Although one may concur with him about the spatial meaning of the preposition בְּ in such an expression, it should be argued that the technical-military meaning of the verb √עלה cannot be ignored when it is evident. In conclusion, it should be highlighted that irrespective of the meaning of the verb √עלה, the preposition בְּ occurs regularly with the spatial meaning when it refers to geographical places, areas and lands.[68]

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In order to draw some final conclusions, all the arguments already expressed should be collected. It has been demonstrated that √עלה Qal with the technical-military meaning "to attack, invade" governs normally the prepositions עַל or אֶל, or expresses such a meaning by itself (with an elision of the preposition). With respect to other prepositions, it has been observed that they amplify in various ways the meaning expressed by the verb √עלה. On the other hand, the preposition בְּ occurs predominantly with the spatial meaning both in relation to the verb √עלה Qal and to the noun אֶרֶץ. The biblical passages, where the adversative meaning of בְּ headed by √עלה Qal is argued, are debatable, and in my opinion, the spatial meaning of the preposition fits better the narrative logic of the respective cotexts and should be retained. To sum up, there is no incontrovertible evidence for the statement that √עלה governs the preposition בְּ in the technical-military meaning (as a synonym of √עלה + עַל).[69] There are, however, solid grounds, both semantic and syntactic, for claiming the spatial meaning of בְּ in the clause under examination.

66 Cf. GKC, §119h.

67 Cf. Brongers, "Das Zeitwort *ʿālâ* und seine Derivate," 33.

68 On the usage of the preposition בְּ with nouns referring to places, see E. Jenni, *Die Präposition Beth. Die hebräischen Präpositionen* (Stuttgart – Berlin – Köln: Kohlhammer 1992) I, 178–195, particularly the general introduction to this question on pages 178–179.

69 Confront the verb √עלה with other verbs of the realm of warfare that govern objects modified by the preposition בְּ, such as, for example, √בוא Qal "to come against, attack" (Josh 2:18; Judg 6:5; 2 Kgs 6:23; 13:20; Mich 5:4, 5), √לחם Niphal "to wage war against" (Exod 17:9; Josh 10:31; 1 Sam 12:9; 19:8; 2 Kgs 3:21), √חנה "to encamp against" (Judg 9:50).

In keeping with conclusions of the semantic study and of the present analysis, the phrase וַיַּעַל מֶלֶךְ־אַשּׁוּר בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ in 2 Kgs 17:5a expresses three aspects: 1) the technical-military meaning of the verb √עלה; 2) the nuance of its physical meaning, namely, an upward movement; 3) the spatial meaning of בְּ marking an area moved through. It is thus proposed to render the Hebrew text in a following way: "And then the king of Assyria marched up throughout the whole country." The meaning of the English term "to march up" implies both military operations (it expresses the technical meaning of our verb) and a motion upwards at the same time (it expresses the physical movement as well). Moreover, the rendering "throughout the whole country" respects the spatial meaning of the preposition בְּ. In such a translation of 2 Kgs 17:5a all three postulated aspects of the Hebrew text are expressed.

Conclusions

The expression וַיַּעַל בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ in 2 Kgs 17:5a presents an interpretative difficulty concerning the meaning of the verb √עלה and of the preposition בְּ, and further, their semantic and syntactic relation in the clause under examination. It is remarkable that these Hebrew lexemes and their syntax are interpreted variously, generating a considerable plurality of different translations, in other words, interpretations of 2 Kgs 17:5a. Five various sets of renderings of 2 Kgs 17:5a may be identified from among translations consulted in this paper, oscillating from the most neutral statements of the Assyrian king's coming up through the whole country to those that clearly expresses his invasion of the entire land. It appears that the semantic and syntactic difficulty of the clause, besides its apparent simplicity, underlies various interpretations and translations.

In order to solve this problem, it has been necessary to study the semantics and syntax of the clause in question, consisting of the self-contained meaning analysis of all the constituent words of the clause (the level of individual lexemes), and of the study of semantics and syntax at the sentence level. As a result of such a study, it has been established that verb √עלה occurs in 2 Kgs 17:5a in the technical-military meaning "to invade, attack, march against," belonging to the vocabulary of warfare. This sense of the verb is unequivocally recognisable in the co-text of the clause by the occurrence of other verbs pertaining to warfare. In fact, the motif of invasion is present in vv. 3–6 right from the beginning of the narrative (עָלָיו עָלָה "he attacked him" in v. 3a). There is no doubt that the actions of the Assyrian king are military operations, and thus, the technical-military meaning of √עלה is unquestionable with respect to its both occurrences in v. 5.

The technical sense of √עלה is stereotypical in biblical Hebrew, involving the sociological context of the Hebrew language. This verb acquires a notion of attacking by a semantic shift of specialisation of its general sense "to go up." An invasion, in fact, entails usually an ascent up the hillside in order to attack inhabited areas located on elevations. From

historical point of view, the Assyrian troops must have invaded the Levant from the north, having to attack the hill country of Ephraim from the valleys. Both sociolinguistic setting of the military usage of √עלה and the historical setting of the narrative under examination incline to retain in the rendering of 2 Kgs 17:5a the nuance of an upward movement of the verb, besides its technical meaning. The English term "to march up" combines both aspects very well, since it implies military operations and involves at the same time a movement from below upwards.

The difficulty with the meaning and function of the preposition בְּ concerns its semantic and syntactic relation to the verb √עלה (in 2 Kgs 17:5a the verb phrase וַיַּעַל heads the preposition phrase בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ). The problem to solve consists in a question of whether the verb governs the preposition בְּ in the technical-military meaning, or not. In this regard the following remarks should be considered altogether:

(1) the verb √עלה governs the preposition עַל (or its stylistic variation אֶל) in the technical sense,
(2) this verb, used stereotypically, may denote such meaning when standing alone as well,
(3) other prepositions, when governed by the verb √עלה in such a sense, may express their "own" meaning, adding further semantic nuances to the phrase in which they occur,
(4) the preposition בְּ occurs in the spatial meaning ("to, into, through") when governed by verbs of locomotion (to which the verb √עלה belongs),[70]
(5) when denoting the physical meaning, the expression √עלה + בְּ is synonymous to the verb √עבר "to pass through, traverse,"
(6) the preposition בְּ modifying the noun אֶרֶץ occurs predominantly in the spatial meaning,
(7) the retaining of the spatial sense of בְּ in passages where √עלה occurs in the technical meaning fits their narrative logic better,
(8) in the co-text of 2 Kgs 17:5a the prime importance is given to the attack against Samaria (v. 5bc) and not against the surrounding territory, and thus, the spatial meaning of בְּ in v. 5a corresponds perfectly with the narrative dynamics of the passage.

In summary, it appears that the verb √עלה does not govern the preposition בְּ in the technical-military meaning, and consequently, the preposition בְּ expresses in 2 Kgs 17:5a the spatial nuance of the Assyrian invasion moving through the whole country. Therefore, it is proposed to translate וַיַּעַל + בְּ in 2 Kgs 17:5a, as follows: "he marched up through." In my opinion, the renderings singled out while stating a problem in the first section of this paper, which appear to ignore either the technical meaning of the verb √עלה (the renderings marked with [1] on the given diagram), or the spatial meaning of the preposition בְּ (the renderings marked with [3] through [5] on the diagram), impoverish the semantic richness of the sentence under examination and express the meaning of the Hebrew phrase in an insufficient manner. The renderings marked with [2] on the given diagram seem to be the best translational choice, since they reflect both the semantics of the constituent

70 Cf. GKC, §119h.

words of the phrase וַיַּעַל בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ and their syntactic interrelations in 2 Kgs 17:5a. They also fit better the logic of the narrative, focused on the attack against Samaria (v. 5bc), but preceded by the mention of the military expedition going throughout the whole country (v. 5a).

Considering the meaning of בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ, it has been established that the noun אֶרֶץ occurs in this phrase in the political meaning "country," referring in the co-text to the area governed by king Hosea. The noun כֹּל functions there as a quantifier specifying the entirety of the country enduring the Assyrian military operations, in other words, that none of its parts was excluded from the invasion of the Assyrians. Therefore, the noun שֹׁמְרוֹן in 2 Kgs 17:5b refers to the city of Samaria and not to the territory of Samaria. With respect to מֶלֶךְ־אַשּׁוּר, it can be stated that, apart from possible speculations about its referent in the physical world, this phrase does not present any semantic difficulty and means "the king of Assyria," and that from the narrative point of view it refers to king Shalmaneser mentioned in v. 3a.

Taking into account all above mentioned remarks it is proposed to translate 2 Kgs 17:5a in the following way: "And then the king of Assyria marched up throughout the whole country." Such a rendering puts together the technical-military meaning of √עלה and the spatial sense of בְּ, and seems to be the rendering closest to the sense intended in the Hebrew text. Other interpretations (translations), either ignoring or highlighting one of these features only, may be considered incomplete, questionable or unacceptable from the semantic and syntactic point of view.

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