

The first tablet of the Keret Epic preserves the longest, most complete pair of parallel texts in command-action sequence to be found in Ugaritic literature.¹ Thus, we have attested a speech which El delivers to Keret during the latter's dream. In the course of the speech, specifically in IK:62-153, commands are issued and future situations described. The action and narrative of IK:156-300 is, more or less,² a repetition of this speech with appropriate changes of person and mood.³

¹ For other command-action sequences in Ugaritic, see IAB, 1:11-12/13-15; IAB, 3-4:25-29/36-40; IIAB, 4-5:2-7/8-12 and 5:75-81 (=91-97)/98-102; IIIAB, A:13-15/15-17; IIIAB, B:13-19/19-20, 30-35, and 27-28/29; VAB, C:10-28/51-64; ID:50-53/54-58; ID:107-111/114-117; ID:215-216/216-218; IID, 5:16-21/21-25, 29-31; IIID, 4:17-26/27-37; IIK, 1-2:39-41/61-62; IIK, 6:1-2/13-14, 16-18/19-21, and 29-38/42-47, 50-54; IIIK, 4:3-9/14-20.

² For example, the stopover at Asherah's shrine, reported in the action section (IK:194-206), is not mentioned in the command. As a result of the inclusion of this event, the seven-day journey (from Hbr to Udm) described in the command section (IK:106-109) is divided in the repetition into a three-day (from Hbr to the shrine, ll. 194-199) and a four-day journey (from the shrine to Udm, ll. 207-211). Another literary expansion of material found in the command takes place in ll. 227-248, which seem to describe the sending of messengers to Keret by Pabel. This event was predicted in the command section by simply stating "and he (Pabel) will send messengers to you" (ll. 123-124).

³ For the most recent attempt at schematizing the tense sequence of verbs in the two sections, see T. L. Fenton, "Command and Fulfillment in Ugaritic--TQTL:YQTL and QTL:QTL," *JSS* 14 (1969), pp. 34-38.

These parallel texts, and others like them, contribute much to our knowledge and understanding of scribal practice. That is, they afford us an opportunity to compare two copies of essentially identical texts reproduced by the same scribe. Where differences between the two exist they may be interpreted either as scribal errors, or as legitimate alternatives to what appears in the parallel text.

The choice between these two designations is not always a clear-cut matter. Each textual discrepancy must be individually studied before it can be dismissed as an error or accepted as an alternative. The present study will attempt to so examine one of the variations occurring in the parallel texts of IK. To this end, it might be useful to categorize the types of variations which appear in these passages, so that our specific case may be viewed in its larger context:

- (1) orthographic inconsistencies⁴
- (2) omission of locative -h⁵
- (3) omission of possessive suffix⁶
- (4) omission of waw⁷
- (5) variation in gender⁸
- (6) different prepositional forms⁹
- (7) dittography of a stichos¹⁰

⁴ L. 93 wlrbt/1. 181 wl. rbt; 1. 110 wgr.nn/1. 212 grnn; 1. 110 šrn/1. 213 šrnn (cf., A. Herdner, *Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques* [Paris, 1963], p. 65, n. 5); 1. 113 bnk/1. 216 bnpk; bbqr/1. 216-217 wbmqr (orthographic or phonemic ?); 1. 115 ymš/1. 220 hmš; 1. 135 ytna/1. 258 ytnt (=277); 1. 144 šph/1. 290 šbh (allograph ?); 1. 96 sgr/1. 184 ysgr: for consistency in the syntax of the passage one would expect ysgr in the command section as well, cf., ybc_r (1. 101)/ybc_r (1. 190); for the present, however, the inclusion of this variation in the category "orthographic inconsistencies" is intended as non-committal.

⁵ L. 63 amt/1. 157 amth; 1. 76 šmm/1. 168 šmmh; 1. 125 mswnh/1. 247 [m_wn] (see Ginsberg, *LKK*, p. 39, l. 117).

⁶ L. 103 mdth/1. 191 mdt; (1. 112 htbh/1. 214 htb; following Ginsberg's original translation in *LKK*, p. 16. But cf., *ibid.*, p. 38, and see below, n. 8).

⁷ L. 79 wyrd/ 1. 171 yrd; 1. 102 lm nkr/1. 191 wlnkr; 1. 108 wtmgy/1. 210 ymgy; 1. 110 wgr.nn/1. 212 grnn; 1. 112 bgrnt/ 1. 215 wbgrnm; 1. 113 bbqr/1. 216-217 wbmqr; 1. 127 w^cbd (=139, 284)/1. 252 Cbd; 1. 131 wng/1. 280 ng (=261).

⁸ L. 109 r_bm/1. 210 r_bt (=257, 276); 1. 112 htbt (!)/1. 214 htb; 1. 112 bgrnt/1. 215 wbgrnm; 1. 141 btrbšt/1. 286 btrbs (=254, 273).

⁹ L. 102 lm nkr/1. 191 wlnkr; 1. 103 kirby/1. 192 km irby; 1. 105 km hsn/1. 193 khsn; 1. 109 wl.udm/1. 211 wudm (ellipsis ? omission ?) cf., 1. 122 zgt/1. 226 [lz]gt (Herdner, *op. cit.*, p. 66).

¹⁰ L. 73; see Ginsberg, *LKK*, p. 37.

- (8) conflation of two stichoi¹¹
- (9) reversed order in two stichoi of the same couplet¹²
- (10) reversed order of couplets¹³
- (11) omission of a couplet¹⁴
- (12) variation in word choice

The last category is the most significant for the present purpose. In the command section (IK:100-101) the text reads

wyši trḥ ḥdt

while the action parallel (IK:189) employs

wybl trḥ ḥdt

It has been suggested by Ginsberg that wybl "is probably miswritten for wyšu."¹⁵ Such a suggestion stands to reason when it is recalled that, of all the existing variations noted above, only the interchange of the particles mk, aḥr and hn¹⁶ involves an actual word change.¹⁷ Accordingly, the substitution in our case of the verb ybl for yš' appears as an isolated phenomenon.

Several considerations, however, would seem to counteract this impression and argue for viewing the variation of yš' and ybl as a case of acceptable alternatives. As a general consideration, it should be recalled that in another set of parallel passages in the Keret Epic (IIK, 1-2:2-5 = 15-19; 102-104), there is attested a clear case of variation in word choice between the substantives ntn and bky.¹⁸ So, too, wide latitude has been taken in the command-action sequence of IIIK, 4:6-7; 17-18, where a different, yet related

11 Ll. 66-68/11. 159-161.

12 Ll. 131-133/11. 260-261 (=279-280).

13 Ll. 131-136/11. 256-261 (=275-280).

14 Ll. 90-91, 116-118 and 148-149 do not appear in the action section.

15 ANET 3, p. 144, n. 16; see Ginsberg's comments in LKK, p. 40.

16 L. 107 mk/1. 209 aḥr; l. 118 whn/1. 221 mk.

17 An apparent exception to this statement is the interchange of yhd (l. 96) and ahd (l. 184). Since a proper discussion of the either orthographic or semantic interchange of these two would entail a study in and of itself, this case will not be appealed to as supporting either view of the wyši/wybl problem.

18 While these passages are not in command-action sequence, they do, nevertheless, correspond exactly, with the exception of this one variant. For a discussion, see Ginsberg's comments in LKK, p. 44.

idiom has been substituted in the repetition.¹⁹ Further, variation in word choice between parallel passages, although rare, is to be found elsewhere in Ugaritic epic.²⁰ When these cases are added to the few variations in word choice present in our pair of parallel texts, the occurrence of a yš' -- ybl interchange gains in probability.

The case for accepting this interchange, however, as an intended, or at least appropriate substitution should be founded on a more detailed study of our particular passage. In view of an existing divergence of opinion as to the translation and purport of the lines in question, it should be stated that this discussion is based on the following understanding of the text:

wyši trḥ ḥdt Let the newlywed sally forth;

wybl trḥ ḥdt The newlywed is mobilized.

Our rendering largely follows those of Ginsberg²¹ and Gordon,²² as opposed to those of Driver²³ and Gray.²⁴ It differs in especially stressing the military sense in which both yš' and ybl are employed. Grammatically, the form wyši is here taken as active gal,²⁵ while ybl is construed as yūbalu, a gal passive.²⁶

That the root yš' may be interpreted in a specifically military sense, i.e., "sally forth, set forth (on

¹⁹ I.e., ṣ-h "to summon," and šCrb "to usher in, cause to enter." For the relation of the two in formulaic banquet descriptions, see Lichtenstein, "The Banquet Motifs in Keret and in Proverbs 9," JANES 1 (Fall, 1968), p. 21, n. 4.

²⁰ E.g., IAB, 1:11-12/13-15.

²¹ LKK, pp. 16, 18; ANET³, pp. 143-144.

²² Ugaritic Literature (Rome, 1949), pp. 69-71; Ugarit and Minoan Crete (New York, 1966), pp. 104, 107. Note that the more recent translation abandons the interpretation of wyši as a causative. Contrast his Ugaritic Textbook (Rome, 1965), Glossary, p. 413, No. 1138: "in Krt:105 (sic!) yši means 'he brings out' // ybl (:189)."

²³ Canaanite Myths and Legends (Edinburgh, 1956), pp. 31 and 33.

²⁴ The Keret Text in the Literature of Ras Shamra (Second Edition: Leiden, 1964), pp. 13 and 15. For the most recent discussion of the various translations of our passage, see J. A. Emerton, "The Meaning of the Root 'MZL' in Ugaritic," JSS 14 (1969), pp. 22-26.

²⁵ On the question of a supposed aphel causative here, see Gordon, UT, Grammar, pp. 83-84: 9.40.

²⁶ E.g., SS:52, 59 and ID:212-213 (restored).

an expedition), " is clear. In the lines preceding our passage,²⁷ yš' functions (by ellipsis) as the verb with šbu "troops," and this corresponds exactly to both Akkadian²⁸ and Hebrew²⁹ usage. It remains to be demonstrated, however, that a passive of ybl is equally appropriate in this context, and, consequently, is to be considered an acceptable alternative to yš'.

To this end, several factors must be considered. First, an attested feature of parallel texts in the Old Testament is the substitution of a passive for an active form.³⁰ In comparing passages from Kings I and II, for example, with their counterparts in Chronicles II, one encounters the following variations:

תומת-תמיחיה/ימיחיה ³⁴	יקבר-ויקבר (הו) (אוהו) ³¹
הכבד-להכביד ³⁵	הומת-המיחיה ³²
נלכדה-לכד ³⁶	יומת-המת ³³
נתון-נחתי ³⁷	

Thus, substitution of a passive for an active form is not an unlikely phenomenon.

²⁷ IK:85-88.

²⁸ Cf., CAD, A², pp. 361-362: j, 2¹; *ibid.*, §, p. 50: g (EA). Note Akk. āšītu "expeditionary force," CAD, A², p. 355.

²⁹ Cf., the idiom יצא ל/בצבא and the term יצאי צבא "soldiers" (= אנשי צבא, e.g., I Chr. 12:8; מלחמה I Chr. 12:33). For the verb יצא alone, see Isa. 42:13.

³⁰ For a similar phenomenon in parallel Rabbinic texts, see S. Talmon, "The Three Scrolls of the Law that were Found in the Temple Court," *Textus* 2 (1962), p. 20.

³¹ I Kings 11:43/II Chr. 9:31; I Kings 15:24/II Chr. 16:14; II Kings 8:24/ II Chr. 21:20; II Kings 14:20/ II Chr. 25:28; II Kings 15:38/ II Chr. 27:9; II Kings 16:20/ II Chr. 28:27; II Kings 21:18/ II Chr. 33:20. Note that the II Chr. text, while seemingly favoring the active form, is not restricted to it; cf., II Kings 23:30 (active) /II Chr. 35:24 (passive), and verses where both texts employ the passive: I Kings 14:31/ II Chr. 12:16; I Kings 22:51/II Chr. 21:1.

³² II Kings 11:2/II Chr. 22:11.

³³ II Chr. 23:14/II Kings 11:15.

³⁴ II Kings 11:15/II Chr. 23:14; II Kings 11:16/II Chr. 23:15.

³⁵ II Kings 14:10/II Chr. 25:19.

³⁶ II Kings 18:10/II Kings 17:6.

³⁷ II Chr. 1:12/I Kings 3:12.

Second, the specific interchange of active yṣ' with passive ybl may be compared to a stylistic feature found in several Old Testament passages. In Isaiah 55:12a the following couplet occurs

For in joy you will go forth	כי בשמחה תצא
And in well-being be conveyed	ובשלוֹם תובלֹן

Here, active יצא appears in synonymous parallelism with passive יבל.³⁸ So, too, active בוא parallels passive יבל in Psalm 45:16: תובלנה בשמחה וגיל תבאינה בהיכל מלך³⁹

Third, both the parallelism of active יצא with passive יבל and the interchange in the parallel texts of IK are part and parcel of the broader lexical relationship between the two roots in the Semitic languages. One example of this semantic link is furnished by the substantive "produce, yield." Thus, Akkadian biḫlāt šadē⁴⁰ and biḫlāt šadē/māti,⁴¹ especially when referring to the timber yield of a forested mountain, is the equivalent of ṣīti šadē,⁴² while mūṣū⁴³ is employed in contexts involving grain. Hebrew יבול ארץ,⁴⁴ identical in all respects to Ugaritic ybl arṣ,⁴⁵ may be viewed alongside צאצאי ארץ in Isaiah 42:5.⁴⁶ Just as the verb בוא in Psalm 45:16 was seen to be interchangeable with יצא (parallel to passive יבל), so Hebrew תבואה ארץ⁴⁷ "produce" belongs to the pattern of יבול/צאצאי ארץ.

³⁸ This active-passive parallelism is inseparable from those cases involving identical verbs. For the latter type of parallelism in Ugaritic and Hebrew poetry, see M. Held, "The Action-Result (Factitive-Passive) Sequence of Identical Verbs in Biblical Hebrew and Ugaritic," *JBL* 84 (1965), pp. 272-282.

³⁹ Although the passage from which this verse is drawn is quite difficult from a textual standpoint, the sequence in our verse seems certain; cf., Jer. 31:8 (9).

⁴⁰ *CAD*, B, p. 220.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 231-232.

⁴² *Ibid.*, S, p. 218.

⁴³ E.g., EA 85:35, EA 86:33.

⁴⁴ Lev. 26:4, 20; Jud. 6:4; Deut. 32:22; Ezek. 34:27; Hg. 1:10; Zach. 8:12; Ps. 67:7; 85:13. For יבול אדמה, see Deut. 11:17.

⁴⁵ For Ugaritic ybl arṣ, see I*AB, 2:5-6 (//pr ṣṣm).

⁴⁶ Note the comments of Ibn Ezra on this verse, הם הצמחים שעל פני האדמה; cf., Isa. 34:1.

⁴⁷ E.g., Lev. 23:39; Isa. 30:23. Note also Akk. ṣīt pī, Heb. תבואה שפתיים beside מוצא שפתיים and מוצא פיי (Prov. 18:20).

To the cumulative weight of these three considerations should be added some indication that ys' and ybl are equally appropriate in what has been defined here as a military context. This particular technical usage of Akkadian wašû, Ugaritic ys', and Hebrew אש' was noted above. That the same military usage may be ascribed to the gal passive of ybl is clear from a passage from one of the Amarna letters (Rib-Addi of Byblos): u anūma inan(n)a tūbalūna šābē GN ana šabāti GN₂⁴⁸ "And even now troops of GN are being mobilized for the conquest of GN₂."⁴⁹

In short, although the use of different verbs for the command and the action sections occurs nowhere else in I Keret, the specific verb that was substituted in our case seems in every way to have been a legitimate alternative to its counterpart.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ EA 126:58-60.

⁴⁹ Contrast CAD, A¹, p. 14 "Now they bring soldiers from the Hatti countries to take Byblos." The form and meaning of tūbalūna in this context is little different from that of yūšarū in l. 40 of the same letter (cf. l. 19), i.e., a gal passive, "were dispatched," said of troops. It should be noted that Rib-Addi's scribe also employs forms of wašû (active) to describe troop movements, e.g., EA 138:33.

⁵⁰ Given the wysi/wybl interchange in our parallel texts, one is tempted to question the seemingly assured restoration of IK: 176-178.