Past-time Narrative "Tense": WCI
Non-Past/Future Sequences: WCP
(Ross Lesson 18)

I. Past-time Narrative "Tense": WCI

A. Many languages have a special literary "tense" form that is used strictly for narrating past-time events (for ex., French has the *passé simple*). Hebrew likewise has a form that is used as the "backbone" of narrative to push forward the sequence of narrated events in a story-line. Explanations of this form have led to its being labelled in a variety of ways:

> wci = waw-consecutive imperfect
> pret + wc = preterite plus waw-consecutive
> wayyiqtol (basing the name on the old paradigm verb קָטַל 'to kill': וַיִּקְטֹל)
> waw-conversive impf

B. Forms of the WCI (compared to the Qal Imperfect):

PG#	Qal wci	Eng. Gloss	PG#	Qal Impf	Eng. Gloss
3ms	וַיִּפְקֹד	he appointed	3ms	יִפְקֹד	he will appoint
3fs	וַתִּפְקֹד	she appointed	3fs	תִּפְקֹד	she will appoint
2ms	וַתִּפְקֹד	you appointed	2ms	תִּפְקֹד	you will appoint
2fs	וַתִּפְקְדִי	you appointed	2fs	תִּפְקְדִי	you will appoint
1cs	וָאֶפְקֹד	I appointed	1cs	אֶפְקֹד	I will appoint
3mp	וַיִּפְקְדוּ	they appointed	3mp	יִפְקְדוּ	they will appoint
3fp	וַתִּפְקֹדְנָה	they appointed	3fp	תִּפְקֹדְנָה	they will appoint
2mp	וַתִּפְקְדוּ	y'all appointed	2mp	תִּפְקְדוּ	y'all will appoint
2fp	וַתִּפְקֹדְנָה	y'all appointed	2fp	תִּפְקֹדְנָה	y'all will appoint
1cp	וַנִּפְקֹד	we appointed	1cp	נִפְקֹד	we will appoint

C. Distinctive features of the WCI form:

1. Built off of the prefix conjugation pattern (so you see all the NUTTY prefixes! (נתיא).
Note: This prefix conjugation appears to be an old Hebrew preterite tense (used for past time) that *happens to be identical in form to the imperfect*. Later you'll see the few places where the wci and the impf forms actually differ. For now, expect them to be the same.

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2. *Special* Prefixed WAW before the NUTTY prefixes: *waw-patach-DF*.

Note: The normal pointing of the conjunction *waw* is with the VS: וְ. So the vowel *patach* (וַ) should look unusual! The DF goes inside the NUTTY prefix consonant; however, since the 1cs א is a Gutt, it rejects the DF, and the preceding *patach* compensatorily lengthens to *qamets*.

3. Always, always, always translate with past-tense time value!

שָׁמַע יהוה אֹתָם וַיִּזְכֹּר בְּרִיתוֹ:
       WCI   PFT

YHWH heard them, and *He remembered* his covenant.

4. If the sequence of events in WCI forms is broken (by either an aside, background information, or a statement of what did not happen), then the new clause will begin with conjunction waw attached to a non-verb, and when the story-line event sequence is resumed, the WCI form is used again.

הָלַךְ וַיִּלְכֹּד אֹתָהּ וְלֹא שָׁבַת וַיִּשְׁמַע:
  WCI   PFT   WCI   PFT

He went, and he captured it, *and he did not rest*, and he listened.

II. Non-Past/Future Sequences: WCP

A. In genres other than historical, past-time narrative, the writer/speaker may want to express a series of events that are future in timeframe, such as in predictive prophetic texts, or instructional material: "You will go to the city, and you will find a mule, and you will purchase it. . . ." To express this series in Hebrew, the simple Perfect conjugation form is used with a simple, conjunction *waw* prefixed with normal pointing (VS). Usually the Imperfect form is used to initiate the non-past sequence, and the series of events is continued via WCP forms (waw-consecutive perfect).

יִשְׁמַע יהוה אֹתָם וְזָכַר בְּרִיתוֹ:
       WCP   IMPF

YHWH will hear them, and *He will remember* his covenant.

יִשְׂרְפוּ אֶת־הָעִיר וְלָכְדוּ אֶת־הָעָם:
       WCP   IMPF

They will burn the city and *will capture* the people.

Note that as with the WCI forms above, there are a variety of ways that grammarians label this form functioning in this way:

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wcp = waw-consecutive perfect
perfect + wc = perfect plus waw-consecutive
weqatal (using the old paradigm verb קָטַל 'to kill': וְקָטַל)
waw-conversive pft

B. Forms of the WCP (compared to the Qal Perfect):

PG#	Qal wcp	Eng. Gloss	PG#	Qal Pft	Eng. Gloss
3ms	וּפָקַד	he will appoint	3ms	פָּקַד	he appointed
3fs	וּפָקְדָה	she will appoint	3fs	פָּקְדָה	she appointed
2ms	וּפָקַדְתָּ	you will appoint	2ms	פָּקַדְתָּ	you appointed
2fs	וּפָקַדְתְּ	you will appoint	2fs	פָּקַדְתְּ	you appointed
1cs	וּפָקַדְתִּי	I will appoint	1cs	פָּקַדְתִּי	I appointed
3mp	וּפָקְדוּ	they will appoint	3cp	פָּקְדוּ	they appointed
2mp	וּפְקַדְתֶּם	y'all will appoint	2mp	פְּקַדְתֶּם	y'all appointed
2fp	וּפְקַדְתֶּן	y'all will appoint	2fp	פְּקַדְתֶּן	y'all appointed
1cp	וּפָקַדְנוּ	we will appoint	1cp	פָּקַדְנוּ	we appointed

C. Distinctive features of the WCP form:

1. Built off of the suffix conjugation pattern (the perfect conjugation); there are NO NUTTY prefixes! The *waw* is prefixed to R-1 of the verb, not to an "impf prefix."

2. The *waw* does not have a *patach-DF*; it looks like a *normal, simple conjunction waw*.
   Note: The conjunction *waw* is normally pointed with VS (remember, *waw comes standard with VS*). However, when *waw* is prefixed before a consonant with a VS under it, or prefixed to a "bump" letter (ב/מ/פ, the bilabials), וְ becomes וּ (as in the paradigm above, since the פ of פָּקַד is a "bump" letter).

3. Sometimes the stress will move back toward the final syllable on some of the perfect consonantal personal endings (when normally the stress lies on the theme vowel); when this happens, you can be certain that the form is a WCP form instead of a simple PFT with a normal conjunction *waw*. If the stress stays where it normally goes in the perfect conjugation, then it is ambiguous, and you must consider the context.

וּפָקַדְתִּי 'and I appointed'   פקד Qal pft 1cs + conj. *waw*
וּפָקַדְתִּי 'and I will appoint'   פקד Qal wcp 1cs

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