

STUDY GUIDE FOR KAMRIN

CHAPTER SEVEN PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

LESSON 50

Pages 197-199

HW50: on pages 198-199

This is a tough exercise. Plenty of notes should help you get through it.

The background for this exercise is that this is a letter to Harkhuf from King Pepy II (all of six years old at the time – he may have lived into his nineties and if he did, very early on in human history, set the current record for time on the throne, one that might never be broken). Harkhuf has been traveling. He's been to Nubia, which is in the area of the Sudan today. Anyway, it's south of Egypt (note: south = upstream for Nile traffic. Because of the desert, there was chronic low pressure over Egypt, lower than that over the Mediterranean to the north. That means that while you could use the Nile current to help you go north, you could use the nearly constant breeze to help you go south.).

The

- Column One:
 - The first two signs represent two words, the second one is an infinitive. All together, the first three signs constitute a prepositional phrase! Remember that an infinitive is first of all, a noun, and here, like any other noun, it acts at the object of a prepositional phrase. There are three major prepositional constructions which contain infinitives:
 - 'Hr' + infinitive (literally: “upon” + infinitive) = “because of ...”, “after ...”, “when”, “while”, “against (i.e.: prevent)”, etc.
 - 'm' + infinitive (literally: “in” + infinitive) = action taking place at the same time as the main verb. You might think that this is like 'Hr' + infinitive and you might be right. Perhaps these are dialectical differences or just two different ways of saying the same thing.
 - 'r' + infinitive (literally: “for the purpose of” + infinitive. It can also, less often, mean, “as far as” + X + “goes:”. An extreme example of the latter is: 'r Dd' = “saying” (“as far as saying goes”) which can simply indicate a direct quote. And, as here, it can be translated as indicating motion toward something. Don't fret. Prepositions never translate directly from one language to another.
 - Now, having had said all that, you're going to say “Wait a minute, Bob, I see that the text starts with 'm' + infinitive, but there ain't no main verb!”. To which I respond snidely saying “True. But remember that this text is an excerpt. It is not the complete original message. Assume that there is a main verb around somewhere. Just read ahead and you'll see the sense of it. - I hope.”
 - Since this infinitive is in fact a noun, the following sign, which is suffix pronoun, constitutes with it a direct genitive. You've seen these before.
 - OK, then we run into another prepositional phrase involving an infinitive. You're on your own with this one. By the way, which direction is Harkhuf traveling? **COOKIE – how does**

the direction of his travel affect the determinative for 'xd'? Read the introductory blurb to this Study Guide again and then look in your sign list at the end of the book for clues on this.

- 'xnw' = “interior” can mean in this context “king's house”. Do not necessarily think palace. Nothing like Buckingham Palace, Versailles, or Schönbrunn. The Egyptian variety was made out of mud brick, like all other houses, and therefore not built for eternity. None have survived. They may have been larger than the usual house, and maybe decorated more lavishly, but that's about it.
- 'Hr aw' = “immediately, at once”.
- **Cookie – what is Harkhuf descending from?**
- Watch out at the end of this column. There is a missing suffix pronoun. You've seen this kind of thing before.
- Column Two
 - 'Axtiw' is the name of a place
 - The preceding preposition 'm' normally means “in”, here it means “out of”. How can you tell which? Context. The preposition obviously works differently than the corresponding English prepositions. 'm' in Egyptian simply refers a noun to a particular place or time and says that the noun is “in” or “out” of it. Usually “in”, but not here.
 - The end of the column should remind you of the “l.p.h.” (“life, prosperity, health”) formula which appears after a king's name.
- Column Three
 - For the preposition at the top of the column see the relevant notes above.
- Column Four
 - The top of the column reaffirms that kings are (or in Pepy's view ought to be) eternal.
 - 'ir' = 'r', in this case. The spelling reflects something that happened in the pronunciation when 'r' started a sentence or had a suffix pronoun as an object. Naturally, as is usually the case with languages, this phenomenon isn't consistent.
 - In the middle of the column, what is apparently the word 'rT' is actually 'r(m)T', “people”. It is the direct object of an imperative.
 - 'ikrw' is a plural, it agrees with the direct object of the imperative. Ditto for 'wnnw'.
 - Toward the bottom of the column is the word 'gsy', a dual (not a plural, a dual).
- Column Five
 - 'Xr Xr', read the notes above and see the vocabulary on the facing page.
 - At the bottom of this column you should be in familiar territory. See Column Four for help.
- Column Six
 - Egyptian nouns which give the names of periods of time, like “night”, “day”, etc., can also be used to reference extents of time. Don't get me started on why the standard grammatical practice of referring to these this usage as “adverbial” is downright stupid. Not to mention thoughtless.
 - In this column 'Xnw' does not mean “palace”.
 - The word after 'sp' is the other version of 'sp'. Both are found in your vocabulary list.
- Column Seven
 - There are lots of words beginning with 'biA'. Make sure you choose the right one. Use the determinative to help you.
 - At the end of the line, 'pwnt' is a place, “Punt”, a fabled land probably down near Somalia somewhere. An ultima thule for the Egyptians, it lay just at the limit of their occasional reach for trade and actually beyond their regular reach. Hundreds of years later, King

Hatshepsut (yes, I said King, not Queen) celebrated as the great highlight of her reign a successful mission to Punt which, for her, was a strange, distant, and almost unknown land.

- Keep in mind that this six year old king wants to see a pygmy dance more than anything else in the world – and he wants to see it right now. Right now. The evidence of this is not only his statement here in column seven but the whole idea of the implicit order to keep traveling down the Nile *by night*. An extraordinary command. Travel at night on the ever-shifting river was risky. The only authorized stops were for provisions. Time is of the essence. Get that pygmy here.