

Isaiah 9:5 כִּי יֵלֵד לָנוּ בֵן נֶפְתָן לָנוּ

"a child is born, a son is given"

Obviously what is spoken of had not occurred at the time of the speaking but the surety of it caused the use of a perfect verb. This use is often lost in translation and it is one of those points making Hebrew worth every effort you give it.

4. Actions hypothetical which would have been complete...if

This is the action that happens when the perfect is used with situations that did not occur--at all--but of which the probability was such that they could have been spoken of as completed actions. Not easy to visualize, perhaps the example will help.

Genesis 43:10 כִּי אִלֵּינָא הִתְמַהֲמַהְנִי כִּי־טַפַּח שְׁבַנִי זֶה פְּעֻמִּים

"If we had not lingered we would have returned a second time..."

But, of course, they had lingered and they had not returned. The perfect is used to indicate something that did not happen at all but if it had happened would have been complete. Perhaps a hypothetical perfect? This action is often shown with the particle *כי* and this generally indicates the incapacity of fulfillment. Note in the verse cited above a hithpael verb...you may not see another for a very long time.

C. THE IMPERFECT SYSTEM

The imperfect shows a nice variety of items that are incomplete in the concept of the speaker/writer at various levels of time.

1. The Imperfect...reference to past time

The idea is that although the whole thing is over and done with today, in past time it was a progressive, on-going, never finished action. A continuing progressive chain of events is signalled by the imperfect in this case and our example is:

Genesis 2:6 וַיֵּאָדָּר גִּטְמָה בְּחַזְקָהּ יָרַח

"a mist was going up."

The progressive continuance is in view although in past time. This could be called a durative imperfect although I hate to manufacture any terminology not absolutely necessary. This is very similar to an imperfect frequentative which we are able to study in the same general heading. It is different but yet..-in the same ballpark. Note the following: