

Rabbinic Hebrew (RH) does not differ greatly from Biblical Hebrew (BH) in its inflection of the noun, although the neutralization of final *mem* and *nun* means that the masculine plural is often, as in Aramaic, ־ן . Apart from the more frequent use of the archaic feminine suffix ־ת as in כֹּהֲנֵת ‘priest’s wife’ and אֵלְמָת ‘dumb woman’, RH also employs the suffixes ־ית and ־ות for example אַרְמִית ‘Aramaic’ and עֲבָדוֹת ‘servitude’. RH developed distinctive feminine plural suffixes in ־אות (Babylonian) or ־יות (Palestinian), for example מִרְחָצִיּוֹת / מִרְחָצִיּוֹת ‘bath-houses’ and ־יות , as in מְלָכִיּוֹת ‘kingdoms’ for BH מְלָכִית , for nouns ending in ־ית in the singular. Masculine plural forms sometimes differ from those that would be expected, or are normally found, in BH, for example, נִזְקִין from נֶזֶק ‘damage’, שְׁוֹרִים from שׁוֹר ‘ox’, שְׁוָקִים from שׁוּק ‘market’, צָדָדִים from צֶד ‘side’, חֲצָאִין from חֲצִי ‘half’, and שְׁלַחִין from שְׁלִיחַ ‘envoy’. The same is true of feminine nouns, for example אוֹתִיּוֹת from אוֹת ‘letter (of alphabet)’, בְּרִיתוֹת from בְּרִית ‘covenant (without plural in BH)’, and אִמָּהוֹת from אִם ‘mother’.

Some masculine nouns take the feminine plural suffix ־ות , for example, חֲנוּת from חֵן ‘favour’, כְּלָלוֹת from כָּלַל ‘rule’, תִּינוּקוֹת from תִּינוּק ‘baby’, חִילוֹת from חֵיל ‘army’, עִירוֹת from עִיר ‘city’, and מִימַת from מַיִם ‘water’. Similarly, there are some feminine nouns which take the masculine plural suffix ־ים — יוֹנִים from יוֹנָה ‘dove’, נְמָלִים from נְמָלָה ‘ant’, and בֵּיצִים from בֵּיצָה ‘egg’, for example. Occasionally, both types of plural are evidenced, as with יָמִים / יָמוֹת from יוֹם ‘day’ or שָׁנִים / שָׁנוֹת from שָׁנָה ‘year’, with each form having a slightly different shade of meaning and the ‘feminine’ variant only used with suffixes. In RH we sometimes find plurals of nouns only attested in the singular in BH, for example אַבְרָיִם from אַבְרָ ‘limb’, דְּשָׁאִין from דְּשָׁא ‘grass’, and תָּמִידִים from תָּמִיד ‘daily sacrifice’. Likewise, there are singular forms of nouns only attested in the plural in BH, for example אַלְמוֹג ‘coral-wood’, בֵּיצָה ‘egg’, and בָּצַל ‘onion’. The dual is used more than in BH, with existing forms retained and new ones created, for example מְסַפְרִים ‘scissors’ and בִּנְתִּים ‘meanwhile’. (1993: Saenz-Badillos, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 188–89.)