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## REPETITION OF *THE*

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“the scarlets, and the fine-twined linen” (1 Nephi 13:8)

A series of nouns in English can be introduced by a single instance of *the*. By contrast, Biblical Hebrew regularly repeats the definite article for each noun.<sup>1</sup> Instances of repeated *the* abound in the Old Testament—for example, Genesis 15:19–21: “*The* Kenites, and *the* Kenizzites, and *the* Kadmonites, and *the* Hittites, and *the* Perizzites, and *the* Rephaims, and *the* Amorites, and *the* Canaanites, and *the* Girgashites, and *the* Jebusites.” Another example comes from Exodus 9:3: “The hand of the Lord is upon thy cattle which is in the field, upon *the* horses, upon *the* asses, upon *the* camels, upon *the* oxen, and upon *the* sheep.”

Like its Hebrew Bible counterpart, the Book of Mormon often repeats the article *the* before each noun in a list:

“We did observe to keep *the* judgments, and *the* statutes, and *the* commandments of the Lord.” (2 Nephi 5:10)

את הקיני ואת הקנזי ואת הקדמני  
ואת החתי ואת הפרזי ואת הרפאים ואת  
האמרי ואת הכנעני ואת הגרגשי ואת היבוסי

In this Hebrew text from Genesis 15:19-21 the repeated definite article *the* is bolded for emphasis. There are ten instances on the three lines, a remarkable number in comparison with English texts. The Book of Mormon, too, features a high percentage of the definite article throughout the text.

“Behold *the* gold and *the* silver, and *the* silks, and *the* scarlets, and *the* fine-twined linen, and *the* precious clothing, and *the* harlots.” (1 Nephi 13:8)

“There were beasts in the forests of every kind, both *the* cow and *the* ox, and *the* ass and *the* horse, and *the* goat and *the* wild goat.” (1 Nephi 18:25)

“And thus he went on, taking possession of many cities, *the* city of Nephihah, and *the* city of Lehi, and *the* city of Morianton, and *the* city of Omner, and *the* city of Gid, and *the* city of Mulek.” (Alma 51:26)

## Note

1. “This use [of *the*] is much more extensive in Hebrew than in English.” Waltke and O’Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 244. See their analysis on pp. 242–46.