CHAPTER THREE

Ţyb Lbby IN CONTEXTS OTHER THAN CONVEYANCE

1. THE TEXTS

The term ţyb lbby is found in three other contexts:

A. The term records the reaction of the father of the bride to the receipt of the mohar from the groom.

1) AP 15 (about 441 B.C.)

Ashôr marries Mibţahiah; he pays the mohar to her father, Maḥseiah and declares:

(4) ... yḥbt lk mhr (5) bptk mṯṯyḥ ... ʿl ʿlyk ṭwb lbbk (6) bgw
(4) “... I have given you the mohar (5) of your daughter, Mipţahiah ... You have received it and your heart is satisfied (6) therewith.”

2) BP 7 (420 B.C.)

Ananiah bar Ḥaggai marries Yehoyishma; he pays the mohar to her brother, Zakkur bar Meshullam and says:

(4) wyḥbt lk mhr ḫtk yḥyśmʿ (5) kšp ... ʿl ʿlyk [wṭyb lbbk bg]w
(4) “... And I have given you the mohar of your sister Yehoyishma (5) (so much) silver ... You have received it [and your heart is satisfied there]with.”

B. The term also records the reaction of the groom to the receipt of the evaluated dowry (tkwnh) 1) of the bride.

1) AP 15 (about 441 B.C.)

Ashôr receives the tkwnh of Mibţahiah, evaluates each item and after the grand total, declares:

(14) wdmn nksyʿ ... (15) ... ʿl ʿly [wṭ] yb lbby bgw
(14) “And the (total) value of the goods ... (15) ... I have received (them) and my heart is [satisfi]ed therewith.” 2)

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1) Cf. the word tkwnh “wealth” in Nahum 2: 10. Dr. Moshe Greenberg (orally) has suggested the semantic parallel between tkwnh—from kwn “to be ready, available,”—and the Rabbinic mezummnān ḫrm “ready-cash.”

2) In some of the marriage settlements (BP 7: 20–21; AP 15: 15, 16), after the grand total and the husband’s declaration of receipt, various other items the wife brings into her husband’s house—mostly oil and small amounts of cosmetics—are also listed; their value, however, is not given. It would seem that because of their
C. The term also records the acknowledgment of the consignees of goods-to-be-delivered that they had received the goods and that the goods actually received tallied exactly with the amount recorded in the bill of lading.

AP 2 (484 B.C.)

Hoshea and Ahiab received from Espemeth a consignment of barley and lentils which they undertake to deliver to the government officials in Syene.

(3) ... yhbt l ydn š[rn ...] (detailed amount of goods) ... (9) wṭyb lbbn bgw 'nñhn nbl 'bwṛ' [znh ...] (11) ... 'nñhn nntn dy[n qdm rb m'ṭl' wrbny]
(12) byt mlk' wqdm sбри 'wšr ... (13) ... [whn l' nntn kl 'bwr' zy] (14)
lk bmnyn ... (15) 'nñhn nhwb

(3) "... You have consigned to us ba[rley ...] (detailed amount) ... (9) and our heart is satisfied therewith. We will deliver [this] grain [ ... ] (11) ... We will render an acco[unt before the company commander and the authorities of the] Government House and the clerks of the treasury ... (13) ... [If we do not deliver all of the grain that is] (14) yours in full, ... (15) we shall be liable (to you for the some of etc.)"

2. THE EXPLANATION OF THE TEXTS

In all of the three contexts just cited, tyb lbby records a reaction to receipt. The objects received differ: mohar, dowry, goods-to-be-delivered. The legal implications of these various types of receipt differ from one another. Furthermore, not all of these implications are identical with those found in the conveyances (sale and mrhq). Thus, the underlying meaning of the term is elusive, to say the least. One thing, however, is certain: all known contexts that employ the term are intimately related to receipt. Furthermore, the reaction to the receipt expressed by the term tyb lbby must have had some constitutive function; otherwise it would not have been so carefully recorded.

The close relationship between tyb lbby and the idea of receipt is most clearly seen in the mohar receipt clause. Here, tyb lbhk is preceded by the unambiguous receipt term 'l 'lyk "You have received it (the mohar) and your heart is satisfied therewith." 1)


1) This is not the first time that tyb lbby has been associated with other complementary terms and phrases. Each of these complements explicate some specific