

“Recently Published Biblical Hebrew Grammars:
Assessing What is New on the Market”

Denver Seminary
Dr. Hélène Dallaire

*Recently published teaching grammars of
Biblical Hebrew*

Kregel – Fuller and Choi (2006)
Baylor – Ellis (2006)
Cambridge Univ. Press – Bergman (2005)
Brill – D. Vance (2004)
Virtualbookworm.com – Brenner (2004)
Eisenbrauns – Futato (2003)
SBL – Walker-Jones (2003)
Broadman & Hollman – Garrett (2002)
Concordia – Bartelt (2002)
Yale University Press – Brettler (2002)
Shangri La Publishers – Isbell (2002)
Chalice Press – deClaissé-Walford (2002)
Baker Book House – Ross (2001)
Zondervan – Pratico & Van Pelt (2001)
Smyth & Helwys – Rocine (2000)
Sheffield – Hostetter (2000)
Summer Institute of Linguistics – Dobson (1999)
Wingpress – Lehmann (1999)
Jerusalem Perspective – Buth (1999)
University Press of America – Bornemann (1998)
Vance Publ. – L. Vance (1997)
University Press of America – Doukhan (1993)

*Additional intermediate level reference works published
recently*

Virtualbookworm.com - Steinmann (2004)
Cambridge – Arnold & Choi (2003)
Hendrickson – Long (2002)
Sheffield – van der Merwe (1999)
Wing Press – Raizen, Lehmann, Jakusz-Hewitt (1999)

Popular traditional grammars

Darton, Longman & Todd – Lambdin (1991 – 11th printing)
Eerdmans – Kelley (1992)
Abingdom - Seow (1992 – 7th printing)
Kittel, Hoffer and Wright
Oxford – Weingreen (1959 – 2nd edition)
Eerdmans - LaSor (1978-79)
Baker – Mansoor (1990 – 9th printing)
Yale University Press – Kittel, Hoffer & Wright (1989)

- *Why do scholars decide to publish new grammars when so many are available on the market?*
 - A specific need is unmet (e.g. Brettler for those who have studied Modern Hebrew)
 - Terminology differences
 - Teachers have produced their own handouts and written their own teaching notes for years. Why not publish them for others to use?
 - Teaching philosophy – inductive vs deductive, or blended approach

- *Questions you should ask before choosing a textbook for your class:*
 1. Who is your audience?
 - a. Undergraduate students in the Judaic studies or Biblical studies Department of a university
 - b. Undergraduate students who are in a different field of study and wish to meet their language requirements with Hebrew
 - c. Graduate students who are majoring in Biblical or Judaic studies
 - d. Rabbinic seminary
 - e. Christian seminary
 - f. Lay adults in the community
 - g. High school students
 - h. Sunday school in the synagogue
 - i. Private tutoring for students who are already in a program of study
 - j. Prospective rabbinic and graduate students preparing for an admissions exam
 - k. Distance learning

 2. What level of proficiency do you want your students to achieve by the end of the semester / year?
 - a. Comfortable reading prose only? Prose and poetry?
 - b. How much of the biblical text do you want your students to have read before the end of the year?
 - c. Number of vocabulary words memorized by the end of the year?

Fuller, Russell T. and Kyoungwon Choi. *Invitation to Biblical Hebrew: a beginning grammar* (and workbook). Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2006. \$33 (grammar) + \$20 (workbook)

<i>About the author</i>	R. Fuller is associate professor of OT at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY; K Choi is Ph.D. candidate at the SBTS.
<i>Purpose of textbook & Audience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of a series of textbooks for seminaries in the Invitation to Theological Studies Series (ITS) (Hebrew, Greek, OT, NT, biblical Interpretation, preaching) • Obtain mastery of the fundamentals of Hebrew phonology, and Hebrew morphology • First year course that covers mainly phonology and morphology • Student is the audience (not scholar) therefore the language is popular and colloquial rather than technical and formal. • Authors seem convinced that their approach is the best one and the only successful one for a prospective minister of the Word of God
<i>Content & Format</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deductive approach • Textbook and corresponding workbook (with answer key) • Emphasis on ‘repetition, repetition, repetition’ and intentional drilling of details of phonology and morphology • A CD-video of each lesson is included with the grammar (where is my copy??) • Philosophy – “until phonology and morphology are mastered, syntax cannot be truly understood and appreciated. If a student cannot parse, he cannot understand or apply syntax effectively.” (p.xvii) • Very clear presentation of the material and of the exercises – great format both in the textbook and in the workbook • Explanations are clear and not too complex for an introductory course (good)
<i>Terminology for major verb forms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of ‘consecutive vav’ – good chapter with treatment of a variety of contexts where the imperfect consecutive functions to introduce temporal clauses
<i>Practice Exercises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subtle introduction to biblical text through reconstructed sentences (good sentences) • Good variety of exercises with clear presentation – Hebrew text could be a little bigger
<i>About the verbal system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces the verbal system in chapter 17 (too late in my opinion) – this delays the possibility of using ‘authentic biblical text’ in exercises • Introduces the Qal of all strong verb forms and all stems before introducing the weak verb • The weak verb is introduced in chapter 29 (much too late in my opinion)

<i>Use of Biblical text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstructed text almost throughout • Where 'authentic biblical text' is used for explanations and for exercises, it would be good to give the exact text reference
<i>Paradigms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent paradigms throughout the book and in Appendixes • Colored paradigms at the end of the textbook are clear and appealing
<i>Related website & software</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CD rom accompanies the textbook
<i>Additional comments</i>	<p>Strengths:</p> <p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

Bergman, Nava. <i>The Cambridge Biblical Hebrew Workbook</i>. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2005. \$33.	
<i>About the author</i>	Nava Bergman teacher Hebrew in Dept. of Oriental and African Languages, at Göteborg Univ., Sweden.
<i>Purpose of textbook & Audience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For college, seminary or university students. • Designed to supplement other elementary grammars of BH
<i>Content & Format</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'study kit' for Biblical Hebrew includes this workbook, a workbook for intermediate level, a textbook and an audio-CD package with word lists, exercises, texts, and biblical songs (I am unable to locate the rest of the 'study kit') • Transliteration system mixes 2 systems – • Deductive approach • Format is cluttered and uninviting – no space between paragraphs • Font for Hebrew exercises is too small, especially for a beginner
<i>Terminology for major verb forms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Weqatal</i> – Perfect + inverting vav • <i>Imperfect consecutive</i> – Imperfect + inverting vav
<i>Practice Exercises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good fill-in charts • Hebrew to English and English to Hebrew • Uses a lot of biblical text

<i>About the verbal system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal system introduced in chapter 13 • Qal perfect strong verb followed by Qal perfect weak verbs • Almost impossible to read as a teaching grammar or as a reference grammar
<i>Use of Biblical text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students begin reading portions from the biblical text in Lesson 6. • Students are exposed to Hebrew poetry (Psalm 1:1) as early as Lesson 6.
<i>Paradigms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No section with paradigms • Partial paradigms included within sections of the book
<i>Related website & software</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apparently the workbook comes with an audio-CD with word lists, exercises, texts and biblical songs, but I have been unable to locate them
<i>Additional comments</i>	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of biblical names is a good idea for practice reading and for exercises • Section entitle “Ivrit be ezrat hashem” is a good idea • Exercises from Hebrew to English and from English to Hebrew • Hebrew to English exercises are taken from the Hebrew Bible – early exposure to biblical text • Appendix 1 – sample prose texts for reading and translation exercises (with limited vocabulary list) <p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not user friendly • Cluttered with information that is unclear and difficult to understand • Hebrew font is too small for beginners • Some statements are not clear – “gutturals are often left unpronounced” (p.18) but the examples that are given require pronunciation of some of the gutturals! • A beginner of BH could not navigate this workbook with one of the other grammars of BH on the market – too complicated system • Examples should not be inserted in the introductory explanations, but should be presented in a clear manner after the explanation is given • One feature that makes the text difficult to read is that it uses small font, regular font, large font, bold font, and italics in the same paragraph – too much unhelpful variety

Futato, Mark. <i>Beginning Biblical Hebrew</i> . Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003. (\$35 hardcover)	
<i>About the author</i>	Mark Futato is Professor of Hebrew and OT at the Reform Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida.
<i>Purpose of textbook & Audience</i>	Designed for undergraduate and graduate level students in academic institutions.
<i>Content & Format</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each lesson has 3 sections: <i>grammar</i>, <i>vocabulary</i>, and <i>practice exercises</i>. • Explanations of <i>grammar</i> are clear and concise. • The <i>vocabulary</i> is keyed to R.B. Dillard, <i>Hebrew Vocabulary Cards</i> (Springfield, OH: Visual Education Association, 1981). • <i>Visual</i> for each lesson is appealing to the eye, and very easy to follow. • The book includes verbal paradigms, an Hebrew to English vocabulary list, and a key to the practice exercises.
<i>Terminology for major verb forms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Weqatal</i> = ‘vav-relative perfect’ • <i>Wayyiqtol</i> = ‘vav-relative imperfect’
<i>Practice Exercises</i>	Each chapter includes practice exercises. These are divided into 4 sections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing On The New Material • Reviewing Previous Lessons • Putting It All Together • Reading Your Hebrew Bible
<i>About the verbal system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Qal perfect and imperfect of weak roots is covered before the derived stems. • Futato devotes a whole chapter to the Volitives (Lesson 24). • The Imperfect and Perfect consecutives are explained for the first time in Lesson 26. • The rest of the book is mainly devoted to the derived stems (Lessons 28 to 40).
<i>Use of Biblical text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students begin reading portions from the biblical text in Lesson 1. • Students are exposed to Hebrew poetry (Psalm 1:1) as early as Lesson 6.

<i>Paradigms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Paradigms provided at the end of the book includes the strong verb in all stems, and the weak verbs only in attested forms. • The format for the Paradigms is clear, and includes colored headings that facilitate the navigation.
<i>Related website & software</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://home.cfl.rr.com/markfutato/index.html - Dr. Futato uses a website and a BlackBoard to supplement his classroom teaching. Students are required to obtain the BibleWorks program in order to complete a number of assignments.
<i>Additional comments</i>	<p><i>Strengths:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cumulative exercises reinforces material learned • Brief and clear explanation of grammatical key points • Exercises in early chapters include translation in separate column • Answer key at the end of the book • Exposure to biblical text begins in Lesson 1 • Format is easy to follow; use of blue heading is very helpful <p><i>Weaknesses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the terminology is unclear (e.g. <i>vav</i>-relative perfect)

Isbell, C.D. *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*. Warren Center, PA: Shangri-La Publ. 2002. (\$49.95 hardcover)

<i>About the author</i>	Dr. Isbell teaches Hebrew, Judaism, and Old Testament at the Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana
<i>Purpose of textbook & Audience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed for undergraduate students at the introductory level of Biblical Hebrew. • A two-semester course.

<i>Content & Format</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons 1-9 cover the basic rudiments of the language (nouns, basic verb forms, high-frequency particles, 300 word vocabulary). Lesson 10 is an overview of the verbal system. Lessons 11 to 36 use Jonah and Genesis for inductive learning. • The rest of the book leads students through Exodus 1-14, with explanation of linguistic features as they appear in the text. • Appendices with paradigms. Vocabulary list. Glossary of terms. • The text was typed by the author using the Davka software. Format is straightforward and easy to follow. Chapters are short and include explanations of grammatical features, a vocabulary list, and the occasional translation exercises. • A “Teacher’s Manual” is available
<i>Terminology for major verb forms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Qatal</i> = ‘Past’ or ‘Perfect’ • <i>Yiqtol</i> = ‘Future’ or ‘Imperfect’ • <i>Wayyiqtol</i> = ‘Imperfect with <i>waw</i>-conversive’
<i>Practice Exercises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No English to Hebrew exercises. • Lessons 4-10 include simple translation exercises. The rest of the lessons use an inductive method from Jonah and Genesis 24.
<i>About the verbal system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction to the verbal system is extremely simple and lacks important information.
<i>Use of Biblical text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students begin to read from the biblical text in lesson 3 (Jonah 1:1-3).
<i>Paradigms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paradigms appear in 21 appendices at the end of the book: A – Pronouns; B – Relative Pronoun; C- Jussive and Cohortative; D – Infinitive absolute; E – Stative Verb; F – Qal Passive; G – Temporal Markers; H – Hithpael; I – Pe-nun verbs; J – Geminate verbs; K – Hollow verbs; L – Nouns; M – I-Guttural verbs; N – I-Alef verbs; O – II and III-Guttural verbs; P – III-Heh verbs; Q – Infinitives with suffixes; R – Niphal of irregular verbs; S – Piel of irregular verbs; T – Hiphil of irregular verbs; U – The Hebrew Bible
<i>Related website & software</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A CD includes material from the lessons on Jonah and Genesis 24.

<i>Additional comments</i>	<p><i>Strengths:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large print facilitates reading • Information in appendices is helpful, clear, and concise <p><i>Weaknesses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over simplification of the material limits the audience • Use of obsolete terminology (e.g. ‘conversive’ verb forms)
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Garrett, D.A. *A Modern Grammar for Classical Hebrew*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2002. (\$24.49 paperback)

<i>About the author</i>	Dr. Garrett is professor of Old Testament at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminar in South Hamilton, Massachusetts. He has just accepted a position at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, for the fall of 2004.
<i>Purpose of textbook & Audience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Core principles:</i> build the students’ vocabulary, expose students to biblical text, cover main elements of grammar and syntax in prose and poetry • Although not stated in the Preface, the targeted audience is beyond today’s undergraduate level students (for the most part)
<i>Content & Format</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each chapter treats several linguistic features, followed by a vocabulary list and practice exercises. • The exercises are divided into 3 or 4 sections designed to reinforce the new and previously studied material. • Glossary of terms. • Hebrew to English vocabulary list. • Answer key to exercises (in very small print)
<i>Terminology for major verb forms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Qatal</i> = ‘Perfect’ • <i>Yiqtol</i> = ‘Imperfect’ • <i>Wayyiqtol</i> = ‘Wayyiqtol’ • <i>Weyiqtol</i> = ‘Conjoined imperfect’ • <i>Weqatal</i> = ‘Conjoined perfect’

<i>Practice Exercises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first 6 chapters include exercises entitled “Diglot Weaves” in which the new Hebrew vocabulary is inserted in an English text, for example: “The ילדה said to her אב : ‘You have for שנתים taught the תורה to your בן” (in the book, the Hebrew is vocalized) • A section entitled פֶּשֶׁר הַדָּבָר concludes the exercises; this section reviews one key point with instructions to <i>memorize</i> specific material.
<i>About the verbal system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces weak verbs before derived stems. • Good explanation of morphology and syntax for each verbal form. • Clear charts within chapters.
<i>Use of Biblical text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning in chapter 4, the exercises include a section entitled “Guided Reading” where students read a biblical text accompanied by basic grammatical explanations.
<i>Paradigms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paradigms of attested and non-attested verbal forms at the end of the book. • Print is quite small.
<i>Related website & software</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • --
<i>Additional comments</i>	<p><i>Strengths:</i> * the book is well organized, with very good charts in every chapter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough explanation of the meaning of the stems / binyanim • Early introduction of the biblical text • Good explanation of syntactical features • Great section on “Advanced Issues” for a second year class or for fast learners (e.g. ‘basics of Hebrew poetry’, ‘basic concepts in Hebrew text linguistics’, basic issues in textual criticism’, ‘predictive discourse’) <p><i>Weaknesses:</i> * the book is not user friendly for beginning students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very small font in paradigms at the end of the book; difficult for students at the introductory level • Language used for explanations is difficult for beginners

Bartelt, A.H. *Fundamental Biblical Hebrew*. St Louis, MO: Concordia, 2002. (\$32)

<i>About the author</i>	Dr. Barlelt is professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia University in St-Louis, Missouri
<i>Purpose of textbook & Audience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a basic understanding of grammar, including vocabulary, morphology, and syntax • To facilitate the reading of elementary to intermediate level biblical texts with the aid of a lexicon
<i>Content & Format</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each chapter treats one or more grammatical features followed by a short vocabulary list, a summary of the chapter's key points, and practice exercises • The explanations are short, concise, and to the point
<i>Terminology for major verb forms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Qatal</i> = 'Perfect (aspect)' ('Afformative verb form') • <i>Yiqtol</i> = 'Imperfect (aspect)' ('Preformative verb form') • <i>Wayyiqtol</i> = 'Imperfect <i>waw</i> consecutive' (Preterite) • <i>Weqatal</i> = 'Perfect <i>waw</i> consecutive'
<i>Practice Exercises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hebrew to English and English to Hebrew exercises
<i>About the verbal system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces weak verbs before derived stems • Verbs are treated early in the book
<i>Use of Biblical text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The biblical text is introduced to students in chapter 1
<i>Paradigms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete verbal paradigms at the end of the book
<i>Related website & software</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • --

<i>Additional comments</i>	<p><i>Strengths:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The verbal system, including the <i>wayyiqtol</i>, is introduced early in early chapters, and therefore facilitates the translation of biblical texts early in the first semester of instruction • The instructions are short, clear, and to the point, and are accompanied by a number of clearly laid out examples • Explains the ‘preterite’ verb form used in the <i>wayyiqtol</i> and gives a brief explanation of the origin of the form (p.61) • Good explanation of significant verbal sequences (p.65-66) • Interesting information on ‘hendiadys, masoretic accents <p><i>Weaknesses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A hardcover 6” x 8” book is difficult to use, especially when doing the exercises; a larger format would be helpful • Small print
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DeClaissé-Walford, Nancy. *Biblical Hebrew: an introductory textbook*. St-Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2002. (\$27.99 paperback)

<i>About the author</i>	Dr. deClaissé-Walford is associate professor of OT and biblical languages at the McAfee School of Theology, at Mercer University, in Atlanta, Georgia.
<i>Purpose of textbook & Audience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the basics of the language (phonology, morphology, syntax), with emphasis on tool-building rather than memorization • Designed for pastors / teachers who will use Hebrew as a tool for exegesis of the biblical text • “The goal of my work is to produce students who are able to and who will continue to consult and examine the Hebrew in their preaching, teaching, and studying of the Hebrew Bible.” (p.vii)
<i>Content & Format</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The book is both a teaching grammar and a workbook. • Each chapter includes simple explanations of grammatical points, followed by “Shortcuts” where the key points of the chapter are summarized, a vocabulary list, and practice exercises • The first appendix is an answer key for the practice exercises

<i>Terminology for major verb forms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Qatal</i> = ‘Perfect (aspect)’ • <i>Yiqtol</i> = ‘Imperfect (aspect)’ • <i>Wayyiqtol</i> = ‘Imperfect + <i>vav</i>-consecutive’ • <i>Weqatal</i> = ‘Perfect + <i>vav</i>-consecutive’
<i>Practice Exercises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the most part, the exercises are made up of very simple sentences composed by the author • No English to Hebrew exercises • Rare use of the biblical text for exercises
<i>About the verbal system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derived stems are introduced before weak verbs
<i>Use of Biblical text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genesis 1:1-8 is introduced in chapter 2 and revisited in chapter 7. The last two chapters of the book (chapters 19 & 20) include the text of Jonah 1, with short notes explaining some of the linguistic features.
<i>Paradigms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The third appendix includes a series of ‘Useful Charts’ (e.g. alphabet, vowels, noun forms, numbers, strong verbs, weak verbs)
<i>Related website & software</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • --
<i>Additional comments</i>	<p><i>Strengths:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanations are brief and to the point • The ‘Shortcuts’ section of chapters provides a clear summary of the new material <p><i>Weaknesses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is over-simplified • The author recommends using the <i>Langenscheidt’s Pocket Hebrew Dictionary of the OT</i> rather than a scholarly lexicon! • Practice exercises use mostly high frequency Hebrew vocabulary • A number of errors in the content (e.g. ‘negative particle לֹא appears before an imperfect’ rather than with a jussive [p.131]) • Minimal amount of information on syntax • Not sufficiently challenging for graduate level students • The parsing charts are inadequate for complete parsing of verb forms

<p>Brettler, M.Z. <i>Biblical Hebrew for Students of Modern Israeli Hebrew</i>. New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 2002. (\$55 hardcover)</p>	
<p><i>About the author</i></p>	<p>Dr. Brettler is the Dora Golding Professor of Biblical Studies and Chair of the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts.</p>
<p><i>Purpose of textbook & Audience</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The book addresses 2 types of students: a) those who have read some of the Bible in Hebrew, but have never received formal training in Hebrew grammar, and b) those who have studied Modern Israeli Hebrew (MIH) for at least one year, and wish to study biblical Hebrew. • Brettler treats BH and MIH as “two different languages—or at the very least, two substantially different dialects of the same language.” (p. ix) • The purpose of the book is to supplement a foundation of MIH or a basic knowledge of BH.
<p><i>Content & Format</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 1-7 treat phonology and chapters 8-25 treat morphology and syntax. • Each chapter includes the treatment of linguistic features followed by a vocabulary list and practice exercises. • Chapters are short, to the point, and void of clutter. • The main points of grammar are summarized in point form in a box. This facilitates the review of the chapter’s key points. • Two glossaries: Hebrew to English, and English to Hebrew
<p><i>Terminology for major verb forms</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong verb = ‘healthy verb’ • <i>Qatal</i> = ‘Perfect’ • <i>Yiqtol</i> = ‘Imperfect’ • <i>Weqatal</i> = ‘Converted perfect’ • <i>Wayyiqtol</i> = ‘Converted imperfect’
<p><i>Practice Exercises</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hebrew to English and English to Hebrew practice exercises • The exercises are properly spaced and leave enough room for translation and additional notes. • The parsing charts are easy to follow
<p><i>About the verbal system</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides good explanations regarding the differences between the verbal systems of MIH and BH • Treats the Qal of strong and weak roots before introducing the derived stems
<p><i>Use of Biblical text</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting in chapter 11, biblical verses are used in the practice exercises.

<i>Paradigms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The verbal paradigms are included within the chapters. There are no paradigms at the end of the book.
<i>Related website & software</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer key to exercises of chapter 20 at http://www.yale.edu/yup/pdf/Chapter_20.pdf Dr. Brettler's home page with numerous links to sites related to Hebrew and biblical studies
<i>Additional comments</i>	<p><i>Strengths:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a whole, the explanations are clear and concise. Beginning in chapter 13, the vocabulary list includes verbs in the Qal perfect, imperfect, participle, and imperative; this feature exposes students to 4 forms of the verb at one time Heavy use of biblical texts for translation exercises Five illustrations of 'wrong translations' when using the Modern Hebrew meaning of words in the translation of biblical passages <p><i>Weaknesses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of obsolete and unconventional terminology (e.g. 'converted' verbal forms, 'healthy' verbs) render the work less appealing. The parsing chart asks for the "tense" rather than the "verb form" (e.g. perfect, imperfect)

Ross, A.P. *Introducing Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2001. (\$27.99 hardcover)

<i>About the author</i>	Dr. Ross is Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at the Beeson Divinity School of the Samford University, in Birmingham, Alabama
<i>Purpose of textbook & Audience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide students with a proven system for parsing verbs, solidify the material through intensive inductive review based on Scripture, prepare students for advanced studies by introducing the basic elements of syntax, the guidelines for interpretation, and the critical apparatus of the BHS.
<i>Content & Format</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons 1 to 6 treat orthography and phonology in detail. Lessons 7 to 40 deal with morphology and syntax. Lessons 41 to 54 include an inductive and deductive study of the linguistic features (morphology and syntax) of Genesis 2-4 and 12-16. Following the 54 lessons is a section of "Lessons at-a-glance", where an outline of each chapter is provided. The book includes Hebrew-English and English-Hebrew glossaries.
<i>Terminology for major verb forms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Qatal</i> = 'Perfect (tense)' <i>Yiqtol</i> = 'Imperfect (tense)' <i>Wayyiqtol</i> = 'Preterite + waw consecutive'

<i>Practice Exercises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English to Hebrew translation exercises from lessons 1 to 35. • Hebrew to English translation exercises from lessons 1 to 40. • Chapters 41 to 54 include an analysis of linguistic elements of the biblical text, and a “review of grammar and syntax”.
<i>About the verbal system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derived stems are introduced before the Weak verbs. • Treats the Perfect and Imperfect as ‘tenses’.
<i>Use of Biblical text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Official) use of biblical text begins in Lesson 25. Lessons 1-24 include created sentences for the Hebrew to English exercises.
<i>Paradigms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The paradigms at the end of the book include only attested forms.
<i>Related website & software</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • --
<i>Additional comments</i>	<p><i>Strengths:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interesting brief general introduction to the Semitic languages. • Chapters are short, and explanation of linguistic features is clear and to the point • Informative introduction to ‘masoretic notes’, ‘critical apparatus’, ‘basic poetic features’, ‘elements of syntax’ (chapters 41 to 54) • ‘Lessons at a glance’ are helpful for instructor’s planning and for students’ review of material before exams <p><i>Weaknesses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late introduction of the biblical text for exercises
<p>Pratico, G.D. and M.V. Van Pelt. <i>Basics of Biblical Hebrew</i>. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001. (Hardcover Grammar \$29.39 + Paperback Workbook \$16.09)</p>	
<i>About the author</i>	<p>Dr. Pratico is Professor of Old Testament and Director of the Hebrew Language Program at the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, in Massachusetts Dr. Van Pelt is Assistant Professor of Old Testament at the Reform Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi</p>
<i>Purpose of textbook & Audience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to cover the basics of phonology, morphology, and syntax for a one year course • There are 3 parts to <i>Basics of Biblical Hebrew</i>: a (reference) grammar, a workbook, and a CD-ROM

<i>Content & Format</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grammar is accompanied by a workbook of exercises and a CD-ROM (see <i>Practice Exercises</i> for more information on the workbook; see <i>Related website & software</i> for more information on the CD-ROM) • At the end of each chapter of the grammar, a vocabulary list is provided, followed by a brief “exegetical insights” or “biblical-theological reflections” written by pastors, youth leaders, graduate students, and professors • Each chapter includes a ‘summary’ of the new material and a section for ‘advanced information’ for inquisitive students • The last chapter of the grammar (chapter 36) introduces students to the Masorah, the critical apparatus of the BHS, textual criticism, and a list of additional reference works for further study
<i>Terminology for major verb forms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Qatal</i> = ‘Perfect’ • <i>Yiqtol</i> = ‘Imperfect’ • <i>Weqatal</i> = ‘Converted perfect’ (Pratico & Van Pelt acknowledge the controversies surrounding this terminology, but decided to use it nonetheless since “it is descriptive for the beginning student and represents a helpful point of departure for the study of these very important but complex concepts.” [Grammar-p.192]) • <i>Wayyiqtol</i> = ‘Converted imperfect’
<i>Practice Exercises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All practice exercises are in the workbook and correspond to the respective chapters of the grammar • The pages of the workbook are perforated and three-hole punched so that assignments may be given to the course instructor upon request, and the pages may be kept in a three-ring binder • The workbook includes more assignments than necessary, giving the instructor more choices for homework • Hebrew to English and English to Hebrew exercises
<i>About the verbal system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak verbs introduced before derived stems • Verb charts appear within chapters and at the end of the grammar
<i>Use of Biblical text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The biblical text is used for examples throughout the grammar, and is introduced in chapter 5 of the workbook for translation practice
<i>Paradigms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verb paradigms appear at the end of the grammar in a format that is typical of many grammar of biblical Hebrew

<p><i>Related website & software</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The accompanying CD-ROM includes “a number of verb charts in color, a link to the Hebrew flashcard program FlashWorks™ and the full answer key to the workbook exercises.” (p.ix) • The following website provides additional information for interactive learning: http://basicsofbiblicalhebrew.com/ • An additional CD with 400 color charts and overheads that are keyed to chapters of the grammar can be purchased through the website for \$19.95.
<p><i>Additional comments</i></p>	<p><i>Strengths:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both the grammar and the workbook are very thorough and cover all the basic elements of phonology, morphology, and syntax well • Chapter 23 of the grammar provides a good introduction to Syntax • The CD-ROM includes abundance of helps for instructors and students • The website is visually appealing, easy to navigate, and very informative • The ‘grammar’ can be added to the list of traditional reference grammars in addition to functioning as a teaching grammar • Workbook is excellent with its multitude of exercises taken directly from the biblical text • Workbook leaves sufficient space for assignments; straightforward and void of clutter <p><i>Weaknesses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian terminology, ‘exegetical insights’, and interpretation limit the audience (on the other hand, it teaches Christian students early in their learning of Hebrew to connect the linguistic details to the contexts in which they appear) • The grammar is too intensive for a beginning student to self-teach or proceed on his/her own
<p>Rocine, B.M. <i>Learning Biblical Hebrew: a new approach using discourse analysis</i>. Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000. (\$27.30 paperback)</p>	

<i>About the author</i>	Bryan Rocine is Associate Pastor at the Living Word Family Worship Center in Syracuse, NY.
<i>Purpose of textbook & Audience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed for a one year course requiring 300 hours of study time • By the end of the course, students will have read 1000 verses from the Hebrew Bible • The book is intended to teach the Hebrew language using principles of discourse analysis right from the beginning • The textbook is designed to be used with or without an instructor, but mostly for independent study • Uses an interactive approach where the student and the text are in continuous dialogue • Exposes students to basics of biblical exegesis • The purpose for using only the biblical text in examples and exercises keeps the lessons relevant, and increases the student’s confidence in his/her ability to read the Hebrew Bible • “The goal in this course is to keep the student as involved with actual text as possible.”
<i>Content & Format</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first module (Lessons 1-12) focuses mainly on the linguistic features of Historical Narratives (Rocine uses Longacre’s designations for types of discourse: 1) Historical narrative, 2) Predictive narrative, 3) Instructional discourse, 4) Hortatory discourse, and 5) Procedural discourse) • The second module (Lessons 13-26) introduces the linguistic features found in the direct speech of Predictive narratives, Instructional discourse, Hortatory discourse, and Historical narratives. • Each lesson introduces a biblical verse (or part of a verse) and teaches elements (morphology and syntax) of the Hebrew language inductively, in the order in which the features occur in the text (e.g. Lesson 1 introduces Gen 2:18a and explains the form and function of the <i>wayyiqtol</i>) • Students learn to parse verbs in Lesson 1 (root, stem, form, person, gender, number, function, meaning, using the verb וַיֹּאמֶר) • Chapters introduce biblical verses, provide explanations of linguistic features, the inductive treatment of syntactical features, and assignments. • Every chapter begins with “<i>What we already know</i>”, reviewing material covered in previous lessons

<i>Terminology for major verb forms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Qatal</i> = ‘Qatal’ • <i>Weqatal</i> = ‘Weqatal’ • <i>Yiqtol</i> = ‘Yiqtol’ • <i>Wayyiqtol</i> = ‘Wayyiqtol’
<i>Practice Exercises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each lesson includes assignments based on the material covered in the lesson, and biblical texts for translation • No English to Hebrew exercises • No memorization of paradigms is required until the second Module (Lesson 13ff.)
<i>About the verbal system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first lesson introduces the <i>Wayyiqtol!</i>
<i>Use of Biblical text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces the biblical text in Lesson 1 and uses the biblical text for instruction until the end of the book
<i>Paradigms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete verb paradigms are included at the end of the book
<i>Related website, software</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • --
<i>Additional comments</i>	<p><i>Strengths:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new material covered in every chapter is clear, brief, and is accompanied by examples that are easy to follow • Students are immersed in the biblical text from the beginning of the course • Sound and solid explanations for elements of grammar and syntax • Emphasizes ‘how the text works’ rather than studying features independent from their function in context • Footnotes throughout with bibliographical information • Provides a bibliography at the end of the book for further reading in discourse analysis • Using terms such as the <i>qatal</i>, <i>yiqtol</i>, <i>wayyiqtol</i>, <i>weqatal</i> simplifies the identification of forms, and avoids confusing the students with issues related to ‘tense’ and ‘aspect’ • The function of verbal forms is contextual <p><i>Weaknesses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unless an instructor is familiar with the basics of discourse analysis, the book may be difficult for an instructor to use in the classroom • The book could easily be used for 3 or 4 semesters, with additional portions of biblical text • Minimal use of Hebrew poetry

Dobson, J.H. <i>Learn Biblical Hebrew</i> . Dallas, TX: Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) International, 1999. (\$25 paperback)	
<i>About the author</i>	Rev. Dobson teaches Greek and Hebrew at the St-Deniols Library in north Wales.
<i>Purpose of textbook & Audience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to build basic vocabulary, and to provide an understanding of the structure of biblical Hebrew in its various contexts (prose & poetry) • Designed to be used for self-learning, in groups, or with an instructor • At three lessons per week, the whole book should be covered in two months
<i>Content & Format</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Format is cluttered and difficult to follow • Uses an inductive method throughout • Teaches the functions of verb forms before their designation • Includes simple illustrations to help learn concepts, use of prepositions, and vocabulary
<i>Terminology for major verb forms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaks of functions rather than form: “<i>Forms which indicate definite or completed action in past, present or future time [perfective] . . . forms which indicate the next step in a continuing narrative . . . forms which indicate continuing, uncompleted, or indefinite action in past present or future time [imperfective] . . . forms indicating a previous action, state, or situation . . . forms indicating an action, state, or situation during which something else takes place in past or present time.</i>” (p.89) • <i>Qatal</i> = ‘Perfective’ or ‘Suffix conjugation’ • <i>Yiqtol</i> = ‘Imperfective’ or ‘Prefix conjugation’ • <i>Wayyiqtol</i> = ‘Wa-Prefix conjugation’
<i>Practice Exercises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses creative ideas (e.g. crossword puzzles, word searches, mimes) • Memorization of Hebrew verses
<i>About the verbal system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several verb forms are introduced in Lesson 3 (Perfect, Imperfect consecutive) using common roots
<i>Use of Biblical text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses biblical text starting in Lesson 1 • Memorization of short passages of Scriptures in Hebrew
<i>Paradigms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete verbal paradigm at the end of the book
<i>Related website & software</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes a series of cassettes that include a review of the material from each lesson (for lessons 1 to 10), and introduces key points to be covered in the next lessons • The recordings help students with pronunciation, and with the reinforcement of material already learned

<i>Additional comments</i>	<p><i>Strengths:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages the oral reading of biblical verses in each chapter • Heavy use of the biblical text for examples and assignments, as early as lesson 1 • Verbs are introduced in early lessons and focus on function rather than form (“<i>Do not try to confine it within the prison of English grammatical terms, or it may laugh and run away from you.</i>” p.44) • Introducing the function of verb forms rather than their grammatical designation increases the students’ ability to translate for meaning at first glance, rather than having to go through a set of grammatical features in order to find meaning • Brief translation and exegetical notes at the end of chapters <p><i>Weaknesses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Layout of material is not very good or appealing to the eye • Most of the imperfect consecutives are translated with “<i>And . . .</i>”
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Bornemann, R. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1998. (\$36.50 paperback)

<i>About the author</i>	Dr. Bornemann is Professor Emeritus of Old Testament and Hebrew at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
<i>Purpose of textbook & Audience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The book has 2 parts: <u>Part I</u> – (Chapters 1-15) “Intro to BH” is designed for a 4-week intensive course that covers basic material for students who wish to read simple biblical texts; not designed for those who wish to do further studies in the language. Intended to expose students to the nature and structure of the language, to lexica and concordances, to basic vocabulary, to textual problems, and to commentaries. • <u>Part II</u> – “Continuing BH” presents an outline of 1 Kings 17-19 (Elijah narrative) followed by a summary of BH grammar and syntax, without exercises.
<i>Content & Format</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lessons of Part I include information on grammatical points, a vocabulary list, and translation assignments. • The lessons of Part II are presented in the format of a reference grammar, without exercises.
<i>Terminology for major verb forms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Qatal</i> = ‘Perfect’ • <i>Yiqtol</i> = ‘Imperfect’ • <i>Wayyiqtol</i> = ‘Vav consecutive imperfect’ • <i>Weqatal</i> = ‘Vav consecutive perfect’

<i>Practice Exercises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English to Hebrew exercises from lessons 6 to 12. • Hebrew to English exercises from lessons 6 to 13. • Part II has no practice exercises!
<i>About the verbal system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Perfect and Imperfect are identified with an aspectual system. Bornemann comments on the differences between the function of verb forms in Modern Hebrew and in biblical Hebrew (p. 55-56)
<i>Use of Biblical text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As early as Lesson 1, students practice reading portions from the biblical text and are asked to identify features (e.g. nouns, verbs).
<i>Paradigms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paradigm of the strong verb only followed by a synopsis of the features of weak verbs.
<i>Related website & software</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • --
<i>Additional comments</i>	<p><i>Strengths:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 15 includes an interesting introduction to ‘scribal errors’, emendations, <i>ketib / qere</i>, and the systems of accents. <p><i>Weaknesses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not recommended for graduate level students

Additional Recently Published Works

Arnold, Bill and John Choi. *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003

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Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publ., 2002

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Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999

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Putnam, F.C. <i>A Cumulative Index to the Grammar and Syntax of Biblical Hebrew</i> . Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996
<i>Traditional Teaching Grammars of BH</i>
Ben Zvi, E. <i>Readings in Biblical Hebrew: An Intermediate Textbook</i> . New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 1993.
Kelley, P. <i>Biblical Hebrew: an Introductory Grammar</i> . Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992
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Kittel, B.P., V. Hoffer, and R.A. Wright. <i>Biblical Hebrew: a Text and Workbook</i> . New Haven, CN: Yale University Pres, 1989
Seow, L. <i>A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew</i> . Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1987
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<i>Additional comments</i>	•

Buth, Randall. *Living Biblical Hebrew for Everyone*. Jerusalem: Jerusalem Perspective, 1999. \$169 for books and CDs.

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<i>Related website & software</i>	•
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