Materials on Biblical Hebrew
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For digital helps for exegesis of Hebrew Bible see http://ScriptureWorkshop.com/bh/x/library/.
For bibliography on the Hebrew Bible see http://ScriptureWorkshop.com/bibliography/.

BIBLES FOR READING AND STUDY (for other versions see Text Criticism below)

(BHQ) Biblia Hebraica Quinta: Genesis, ed. Abraham Tal (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2015);
Deuteronomy, ed. Carmel McCarthy (2007); Judges, ed. Natalio Fernández Marcos (2012);
Minor Prophets, ed. Anthony Gelston (2010); Proverbs, ed. Jan de Waard (2008);

(BHS) Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, 5th ed. (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997).

Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia: A Reader’s Edition, eds. Donald A. Vance, George Athas, and
Yael Avrahami (Hendrickson Publishers, 2015). This edition has an awkward system of
referring to verb parsing. The user who needs parsing help will find the format in the
Hendrickson version a major hassle (Zondervan version suggested).

(Crossway, 2012). This diglot has several advantages, esp. the blank space for notes on
the bottom of the ESV pages.


Parallel Bible: Hebrew/English. (Hendrickson, 2007).

A Reader’s Hebrew Bible, eds. A. Philip Brown, Bryan W. Smith (Zondervan, 2008). This
edition provides a running Hebrew-English dictionary (and parsing of binyan/stem in the
case of verbs) at the bottom of each page to assist with terms not learned in first year
biblical Hebrew courses.

Tablet versions of Hebrew Bible (for Hebrew and English side-by-side format WTS Hebrew
Bible from Olive Tree [free] and ESV from Olive Tree [free])

Tanak (Jerusalem: Koren, 2005).

BEGINNING LEARNING GRAMMARS


Bergman, Nava. The Cambridge Biblical Hebrew Workbook: Introductory Level (Cambridge,
2005).


Cook, John A. and Robert D. Holmstedt. Beginning Biblical Hebrew: A Grammar and


Fuller, Russell T. and Kyoungwon Choi, Invitation to Biblical Hebrew: A Beginning Grammar
(Kregel, 2006).


(Broadman & Holman, 2009); D. Garrett, J. DeRouchie, Workbook (B&H, 2009).


Kittel, Bonnie Pedrotti, Vicki Hoffer, and Rebecca Abts Wright. *Biblical Hebrew, A Text and Workbook*, 2d ed. Rev. by Victoria Hoffer (Yale University Press, 2005); V. Hoffer, *Supplement for Enhanced Comprehension* (Yale, 2005); [also audio CD].

Lambdin, Thomas O. *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1971).


Vance, Donald R. *An Introduction to Classical Hebrew* (Brill, 2004).


**INTERMEDIATE LEARNING GRAMMARS**


**REFERENCE GRAMMARS**

Biblical Hebrew Bibliography


Williams  Williams, Ronald J. Williams’ Hebrew Syntax. 3d ed., rev. and expanded John C. Beckman (University of Toronto Press, 2007).

DICTIONARIES


TDOT  Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (Eerdmans).

TWOT  Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke (Moody, 2003)

Other dictionaries for scripture reading:


Holladay, William L. A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament (Eerdmans/Brill, 1988) [an abridgment of HALOT].

TEXT CRITICISM AND ANCIENT VERSIONS

[general]

Armerding, Carl. The Old Testament and Criticism (Eerdmans, 1983).


Vroom, Jonathan. “A Cognitive Approach to Copying Errors: Haplography and Textual Transmission of the Hebrew Bible,” Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 40.3 (2016): 259-279. This study explains that many text critical emendations based on alleged haplography/omissions (whether homoeoteleuton or homoeoarcton) need to be repealed since cognitive psychology has demonstrated reading is based on processing of entire words not sequential recognition of individual letters. This basic point is combined with analysis of how “working memory” functions when manually copying, when scribe turns back toward to place in the Vorlage where the scribe left off (referred to as “visuospatial sketchpad”); a scribe does not need to read through entire Vorlage to locate where he left off, but by use of working short-term memory turns back to the basic location (not a different column or six inches up or down in the same column) looking not at individual letters but looking for word(s). Thus, arguing for haplography requires demonstrating that there is a deceptively similar word(s) in the Vorlage at approximately the same vertical place in the same column. This effectively eliminates both arguing for omissions based on repetition of single letters, and also for arguments of large omissions (contra Lundbom’s extravagant use of haplography based in a majority of cases on single letters to argue for LXX as botched derivative, see 275). Vroom’s essay includes visual illustration and examples.


**[MT text criticism]**


(BHS) *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 5th ed. (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997).


Hendel, Ronald. *Steps to a New Edition of the Hebrew Bible*, Text-Critical Studies 10 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016). This book sets out to defend, once again, *HBCE*, the eclectic Hebrew Bible being published by SBL. See important review by Emanuel Tov (*RBL* 3/9/2017) at https://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/11532_12846.pdf. Tov emphasizes the gap between the theory for HBCE and what it is in practice. Tov stresses that textual criticism is subjective (*contra* Hendel). Tov says: “no one can change the fact that this is a subjective art as practiced by all of us” (5). Hendel says: “While Tov’s formulations are characteristically thoughtful and erudite, they are hampered by a commitment to a version of empiricism and scientism, common among philologists, that shies away from vigorous pursuit of the theoretical underpinnings of our disciplinary practices” (127, cited by Tov, emphasis mine). Tov replies: “The claim is clear, and I am speechless” (5). Hendel says he is contesting “insistence that textual criticism is an application of common sense to texts” (129, cited by Tov). Tov goes on beyond Hendel and offers critique of Fox’s initial volume of *HBCE* on Prov (if that is representative of the approach). Tov describes Fox’s stated goal as “this implies the printing of codex L with very few changes” and says “The reader thus has in his or her hands more or less the text of MT with an average of three changes per page” (5). Fox says: “It is very unlikely that there actually was a document that held the exact text of proto-M. … I wish to be clear that the text I have produced, however successful, never had physical existence. It is a construct. It can be defined as the proto-M *as it should have been*, the text the authors and editors wanted us to read” (4-5, emphasis original, cited by Tov). Tov refers to Fox’s goal of a hypothetical improved text as a “weakness” (6). Part of the problem with making a theoretical ideal text the goal
is sorting through variations/modifications to the original as author-scribal versus
copyist-scribal. In Fox’s AB commentary on Prov he says: “for Proverbs are by their very
nature highly mutable. Proverbial sayings undergo constant change, in both oral and
written transmission, and some of the changes are developments rather than mere errors”
(5, cited by Tov). On Fox’s HBCE Prov Tov says: “The reader is guided mainly by the
commentary and not by the eclectic text” (8). In wrapping up Tov says: “If other volumes
look like the present one, HBCE may well become a slightly improved form of MT
together with superb textual commentaries” (8).

(HUB) *The Hebrew University Bible, The Book of Isaiah*, ed. M. H. Goshen-Gottstein
(Jerusalem: Magnes, 1995); *The Hebrew University Bible, The Book of Jeremiah*, eds. C.

[DSS text criticism]
Abegg, Martin, Jr., Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest
Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English* (Harper San Francisco, 1999).
This inexpensive English translation also lists the main variants and thus functions as a
kind of index to the Dead Sea Scrolls biblical texts. The affordability and usefulness
make this ideal for personal library.
Martínez, Florentino García and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls, Study
Hebrew and English on facing pages.
Scrolls of the Judean desert with variants listed.

[LXX text criticism]
Aitken, James K., ed. *The T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint* (New York: Bloomsbury
T&T Clark, 2015).
Brooke, Alan England, and Norman McLean, eds. *The Old Testament in Greek according to the
text of Codex Vaticanus, supplemented from other uncial manuscripts, with critical
apparatus containing the variants of the chief ancient authorities for the text of the
Press, 1892).
*Historical and Theological Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming).
Joosten, Jan, *Collected Studies on the Septuagint: From Language to Interpretation and Beyond*
(Forschungen zum Alten Testament 83; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012).
__________. “The Vocabulary of the Septuagint and Its Historical Context,” in *Septuagint
Vocabulary: Pre-history, Usage, Reception* (ed. Eberhard Bons, Jan Joosten; Society of
Biblical Hebrew Bibliography

(NETS) *A New English Translation of the Septuagint, and Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under that Title*. Eds. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright. Oxford University Press, 2007. [http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/](http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/)


[SP text criticism]


Knoppers, Gary N. *Jews and Samaritans: The Origins and History of Their Early Relations*. Oxford University Press, 2013. (See chap 7 on textual issues of SP compared to LXX, MT, and Qumran witnesses. See note on Zahn 2015 below.)


Shoulson, Mark, ed. *The Torah: Jewish and Samaritan Versions Compared*. 2d ed. Evertype, 2008. This is not a critical edition, but a very helpful side by side on facing pages comparison of MT and SP.

Zahn, Molly M. “The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Scribal Culture of Second Temple Judaism,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 46 (2015): 285-313. [Zahn’s thesis is nearly identical to Knoppers 2013 chap 7 (pluriformity of pentateuchal texts in MT, LXX, SP, with DSS confirming ongoing scribal updating through mid-second temple period), though Zahn does not cite this book until p. 302, after which she regularly interacts with Knoppers. Zahn argues that scribal updating akin to SP preceded SP, and is evident in other traditions. Zahn’s essay offers numerous tables with side by side passages from SP, LXX, MT, and Qumran, with unpointed Hebrew and English translations in each case.]

**MASORETIC ACCENTS AND MASORETIC NOTES**

de Bruin, Wim M. *Isaiah 1-12 as Written and Read in Antiquity* (Sheffield Phoenix, 2013). [A study of ancient text division from Qumran to the Masoretes including petuchah and setumah (open and closed “paragraphs”), accents within verses (silluq, atnah, zaqef qaton, etc.), and sedarim for synagogue readings in the Palestinian cycle.]


Biblical Hebrew Bibliography


———. “Unit Delimitation and Exegesis: Isaiah 56 as an Introduction to the Theme,” in Ramond de Hoop, Marjo C. A. Korpel, and Stanley E. Porter, eds., The Impact of Unit Delimitation on Exegesis (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2008), 1-28


POETRY


Biblical Hebrew Bibliography


Freedman, David Noel. “Prose Particles in the Poetry of the Primary History,” in Biblical and Related Studies Presented to Samuel Iwry (ed. Ann Kort and Scott Morschauser; Eisenbrauns, 1985), 49-62. (Freedman demonstrates that in the eleven substantial poems embedded within the Primary History [Gen-2 Kgs], are marked by the virtual absence of common prose particles [אַשֶּׁר, אֵת] and reduced use of the definite article [ה]. This observation may be combined with the use of 1 in poetry only when necessary [see Miller 2007], and the comments on poetry in Balentine 2007, esp. 345-47.)


Rendtorff, Rolf. The Old Testament: An Introduction (trans. John Bowden; Fortress, 1985), 77-128. (Rendtorff offers sensible and straightforward introduction to the “reciprocal relationship” between textual genre and setting in life [Sitz im Leben] [see 77-128]. The collections of biblical Hebrew poetry function within the life settings of worship, prophecy, and wisdom, and all that these setting infer.)


Schnittjer, Gary E. The Torah Story (Zondervan, 2006), 178-180.

Biblical Hebrew Bibliography

van Wolde, Ellen, ed. Narrative Syntax and the Hebrew Bible (Brill, 2002).

STANDARD BIBLICAL HEBREW (SBH)/LATE BIBLICAL HEBREW (LBH) (DIACHRONIC STUDIES)


Hornkohl, Aaron D. *Ancient Hebrew Periodization and the Language of the Book of Jeremiah: The Case for a Sixth-Century Date of Composition* (Leiden: Brill, 2014). Hornkohl takes a thoroughgoing approach to evaluating the Hebrew of Jer against both so-called (early) classic biblical Hebrew (Gen-Kgs) and so-called late biblical Hebrew (Esther, Dan, Ezra-Neh, Chron, Eccles). He finds Jer as representing so-called transitional biblical Hebrew (cf. Isa 40-66 and Ezek). He also evaluates the relative diachronic language profile between the materials shared by the MT and LXX versions of Jer over and against the MT expansions. As the title suggests he finds Jer as transitional, fitting into the exilic period, with the MT expansion materials possibly representing slightly later transitional tendencies. See Dong-Hyuk Kim’s helpful critical review, *RBL* March 2016; [http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/9883_10929.pdf](http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/9883_10929.pdf).


**VOCABULARY ACQUISITION**


**OTHER MATERIALS**


Biblical Hebrew Bibliography


de Bruin, Wim M. Isaiah 1-12 as Written and Read in Antiquity (Sheffield Phoenix, 2013). [A study of ancient text division from Qumran to the Masoretes including petuchah and setumah (open and closed “paragraphs”), accents within verses (silluq, atnah, zaqef qaton, etc.), and sedarim for synagogue readings in the Palestinian cycle.]


Even-Shoshan, Abraham, ed. A New Concordance of the Old Testament, 2nd ed. (Baker, 1985) (0-8010-3417-5) (This edition has the scripture references converted to English and comes with a pamphlet entitled “Introduction to A New Concordance of the Old Testament” by John H. Sailhamer as well as other brief introduction for English readers.)

Fox, Everett. The Five Books of Moses (Schocken, 1995).


Biblical Hebrew Bibliography

Hoffman, Joel. *In the Beginning: A Short History of the Hebrew Language* (NYU Press, 2004). Clever presentation of selected aspects of developments in ancient Hebrew, like *maters lectiones*, aim at general readership. Some elements too clever (e.g., naming Abraham, Sarah, and the divine name of God).


**ARAMAIC**


**TARGUMIM**

*The Aramaic Bible* (Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier). This set features English translations of the main Palestinian targumim of the Pentateuch (Neofiti, PseudoJonathan) as well as Onqelos and Jonathan. This version helpfully presents translation in regular font and plusses in italics.


