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GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS OF VARIOUS BIBLICAL
HEBREW TEXTS ACCORDING TO A TRADITIONAL
SEMITIC GRAMMAR

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Richard Charles McDonald
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GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS OF VARIOUS BIBLICAL HEBREW TEXTS ACCORDING TO A TRADITIONAL SEMITIC GRAMMAR

Richard Charles McDonald

Read and Approved by:

Russell T. Fuller (Chair)

Terry J. Betts

John B. Polhill

Date _____

I dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Nancy. Without her support, encouragement, and love I could not have completed this arduous task. I also dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Charles and Shelly McDonald, who instilled in me the love of the Lord and the love of His Word.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BDB	F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. <i>Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . 1906. Reprint; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000.
LXX	Septuagint
NAV	New Arabic Version
NENA	North Eastern Neo-Aramaic dialect group
NJPS	Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures: The New JPS Translation according to the Traditional Hebrew Text
S-V	Subject-followed-by-verb clause
TB	Babylonian Talmud
V-S	Verb-followed-by-subject clause
1cs	First person common singular
1cp	First person common plural
2ms	Second person masculine singular
2mp	Second person masculine plural
2fs	Second person feminine singular
2fp	Second person feminine plural
3ms	Third person masculine singular
3mp	Third person masculine plural
3fs	Third person feminine singular
3fp	Third person feminine plural
3cp	Third person common plural

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PREFACE

I would like to express my thanks to Dr. Russell Fuller for his guidance in this project. His extensive knowledge of the biblical languages and his insightful help with Arabic served as an invaluable resource to me. I am also tremendously grateful for the time I was his Garrett Fellow. Serving as his assistant afforded me many opportunities to observe how he studies and teaches the biblical languages.

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I would also like to thank my in-laws, Larry and Carol Hurley. They have encouraged me in my studies and have made my time in school easier. Moreover, they have always offered a helping hand. In prepping our new house, fixing minor car problems, welcoming our foster child, they were available and have helped reduce my stress. Our visits to their Tennessee home have always been refreshing and relaxing.

I could not even have thought of entering this program without my family. My

mother and father, Charles and Shelly McDonald, instilled in me and my siblings the values of hard work and discipline early in life. They would not allow us to settle for half-way. I remember that as a small child I would observe my dad taking diligent notes in church; this example instilled in me a desire to be an active listener of the Word and not simply passive. My mom, who led my brother and me to Christ, has always reminded me of the simple trust in God and His Word.

Although we have always tried to be distinct from one another, I will always be proud of studying at SBTS alongside my twin brother, Danny. And our sister, Kelly, who always knew how to push my buttons, has always taught me unconditional love. I would be remiss if I failed to mention my sister-in-law, Angie, and my brother-in-law, Allan. And of course, mention should always be made of the best nieces and nephew a PhD candidate could ask for: Maddie, Libby, Emma, Sophie, and Evan.

Kendall, our foster child, certainly deserves gratitude. Although she was in our home for such a short time, Nancy and I are forever thankful that she was part of our family. She brought much joy and happiness to our home, and she is sorely missed. We pray for her well-being and for the day she accepts Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior.

Last, but certainly not least, is my wife, Nancy. Many times she encouraged me to stick with doctoral work when I was tempted to give up. I appreciate her passion for God's truth. I will spend a lifetime thanking her for her patience and support in this most difficult of tasks. Despite trying life situations, losing a foster child, and sheer weariness from a demanding PhD program, I will always be glad she was by my side. I love you, Pumpkin.

Richard Charles McDonald

Louisville, Kentucky

December 2014

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades the method of studying biblical Hebrew grammar has shifted. Since the beginning of biblical Hebrew grammatical studies, Jewish and Christian scholars have turned to Arabic grammar to inform their analysis. Many recent biblical Hebrew grammarians, however, are now employing modern linguistic theories to analyze Hebrew syntax.

Proponents of modern linguistic theories argue that the classical philological approach ultimately falls short of providing a satisfactory explanation of biblical Hebrew syntax.¹ Francis Andersen faults the classical philological method for failing to lay “an agreed theoretical foundation” that provides consistent categories and definitions necessary for grammatical study.² Geoffrey Khan writes, “Whereas grammars of the Semitic languages offer reasonably adequate descriptions of linguistic forms and their functions on the level of phonology and morphology, this is hardly the case with regard to many areas of syntax.” Although, he continues, Semitic grammars have documented and classified “various syntactic structures” found in Semitic languages, “the treatment of syntax is deficient . . . in the description and analysis of the functions of syntactic

¹The ‘classical philological approach’ refers to the traditional approach to the study of a language whereby grammarians would compare one language with other related languages. Furthermore, scholars would also consult native grammarians to determine how speakers of that language understood their own grammar and syntax. See Joshua Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew: An Introduction*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 2 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 1-4.

²Francis I. Andersen, *The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew*, Janua linguarum Series practica 231 (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1980), 18. See also Robert Dean Holmstedt, “The Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew: A Linguistic Analysis” (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2002), 45.

structures.”³ Christo van der Merwe echoes Khan, crediting the classical approach primarily for providing scholars with an understanding of biblical Hebrew morphology, but he faults the method for giving little syntactic information. Furthermore, van der Merwe argues that the classical philological approach offers no help in understanding the principles that determine which particular words and constructions are used to communicate.⁴

In a recent commentary series, the Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible, several authors incorporate the principles and theories of modern linguistics into their grammatical analysis. Dennis Tucker, author of the Jonah commentary in the series, notes the “discontent” scholars have with traditional biblical Hebrew grammars; because of this “discontent,” scholars have turned to modern linguistics for insight.⁵ Robert Holmstedt, author of the commentary on Ruth, states that the standard reference grammars are “inadequate” in describing both biblical Hebrew syntax and “the way that the grammar is manipulated for rhetorical effect.”⁶

The comments by the authors listed above raise an important question: is the traditional understanding of biblical Hebrew syntax truly “inadequate”? Does the classical philological approach provide enough syntactic information to clearly and

³Geoffrey Khan, *Studies in Semitic Syntax*, London Oriental Series 38 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), xxv.

⁴C. H. J. van der Merwe, “From Paradigms to Texts, New Horizons and New Tools for Interpreting the Old Testament,” *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 22, no. 2 (1996):169. See also Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jackie A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, Biblical Languages: Hebrew 3 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 20.

⁵W. Dennis Tucker, *Jonah: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible Series (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), 3.

⁶Robert D. Holmstedt, *Ruth: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible Series (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 3. He lists as the standard reference grammars: Gesenius-Kautzsch, Joüon-Muraoka, Waltke-O’Connor, and van der Merwe-Naudé-Kroeze. The authors of the Baylor Handbook series do not apply one particular linguistic model throughout all four volumes; rather, each author implements his own “particular linguistic approach.” Barry Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Bible Series (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008), 1.

effectively describe the syntactic and rhetorical functions of a clause in a particular biblical Hebrew text?

Thesis

Although many scholars today express dissatisfaction with traditional grammatical analysis, believing it now to be inadequate, this dissertation will demonstrate that the classical philological method still provides an effective, sound description of biblical Hebrew syntax.

Methodology

This dissertation contrasts modern linguistic methods with the traditional Semitic approach, arguing that the traditional Semitic approach is a secure paradigm for the study of biblical Hebrew grammar.⁷ Russell Fuller's forthcoming biblical Hebrew syntax provides the primary syntactic analysis for the traditional Semitic approach.⁸ Bandstra's commentary on Genesis, and Holmstedt's commentary on Ruth, serves as the bases of comparison with linguistic models. Textual critical problems are not addressed; the masoretic text serves as the base text. Literary issues, theological interpretation, or other similar matters for any given passage fall outside the scope of this dissertation.

Chapters 2 through 4 each focuses on one chapter from the Hebrew Old

⁷By 'traditional Semitic approach' the author means the comparison of biblical Hebrew with other Semitic languages, primarily Arabic. As chap. 1 will demonstrate below, Arabic served as the key to understand biblical Hebrew and other Semitic languages like Ugaritic and Akkadian. Phrases such as "Arabic grammar," "Arab grammarians," "native Semitic grammarians," "Arabic grammar," "classical philological approach" will be used interchangeably throughout this dissertation. These phrases indicate that true Semitic grammar often mirrors Arabic grammar. By 'native Semitic grammarians' the author does not mean any Semitic speaker. Rather, the term refers to natives speakers expert in their respective language and orthodox in their views of traditional Semitic (especially Arabic) grammar.

⁸Fuller's upcoming grammar was chosen because it is a more recent representation of Hebrew grammar based on traditional Semitic grammar. Like Gesenius-Kautzsch and Joüon-Muraoka, Fuller constantly appeals to Arabic grammar. Whereas Gesenius-Kautzsch and Joüon-Muraoka depart from traditional definitions of the clause and other aspects of traditional Semitic grammar (Joüon-Muraoka departs from the traditional definition of the Piel), Fuller's grammar is consistent with the Arabic grammatical tradition in these areas.

Testament (chap. 2—Gen 2; chap. 3—Gen 3; chap. 4—Ruth 1). Each chapter introduces and illustrates various traditional Semitic grammatical categories. When a category is first introduced, a relatively extensive definition is given and, if necessary, the Arabic definition and description of that particular category. Subsequent mentions of a particular grammatical category are shorter, and the reader is pointed back to the introduction of that category. Chapters 2 through 4 also interact with various biblical Hebrew linguists in order to compare and contrast their respective methodologies and conclusions with traditional Semitic methodologies and conclusions. The interactions with linguists are often limited to Bandstra and Holmstedt. Bandstra and Holmstedt's translations and analyses are scrutinized when they contradict traditional translations and syntax.

Each chapter introduces two or three major issues in which linguists have dramatically diverged from traditional analysis; for example, the claim that *היה* is a copula, the contention that participles are verbs, and the assertion that *לֵאמֹר* is not an infinitive construct when introducing direct speech. With each major issue, the scope broadens to other linguistic Hebraists. It is not possible to interact with every linguistic Hebraist or with every divergent view; generally those linguists who deal extensively in a particular issue are mentioned. These major issues serve to illustrate more clearly the contrast between the classical philological method and modern linguistic methods.

History of Research

This brief history highlights the emphasis placed on Arabic grammar by traditional Hebrew grammarians, and the shift towards modern linguistic methods by recent biblical Hebrew grammarians.

Arabic and Biblical Hebrew Grammar

From the inception of the study of biblical Hebrew grammar, grammarians based their studies on Arabic grammar. Jewish and early Christian grammarians have

acknowledged the relationship Hebrew has with its sister language and have greatly benefitted from the application of Arabic categories in their studies.

Early Jewish grammarians. The tenth century marks the beginning of Jewish Hebrew grammatical studies. Saadiah Gaon wrote his grammar, *Kutub al-Lugha*, and lexicon, *Argon*, to confront the low state of Hebrew among its speakers.⁹ In both his lexicon and grammar, Saadiah uses Arabic as his model, often using Arabic labels for the same categories found in Hebrew. For example, Saadiah employs Arabic labels for the vowels.¹⁰ Saadiah also follows the Arabic division of words into the categories of noun, verb, and particle.¹¹ Saadiah compares Arabic and Hebrew to highlight similarities or differences between the two languages in order to emphasize a certain point of grammar. For example, in his discussion on objects attached to verbs, he observes that Hebrew does not follow Arabic in attaching the first person singular, or plural, suffix to a verb in the first person — “I found myself,” “I taught myself.”¹² In employing Arabic grammar in the study of biblical Hebrew, Saadiah paved the way for future generations of biblical Hebrew grammarians.

Jewish grammarians subsequent to Saadiah continued to use Arabic grammar to shed light on biblical Hebrew. Around 1000 BC, Hayyūj developed the principle of the triliteral root, a principle found also in Arabic. Grammarians before Hayyūj argued for bilateral roots because not all verbs exhibited three root letters. Employing Arabic principles regarding weak verbs, Hayyūj developed his concept of “latent quiescent” and

⁹Solomon Skoss, *Saadia Gaon, The Earliest Hebrew Grammarian* (Philadelphia: Dropsie College Press, 1955), 58.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 58-59. Saadiah does assign non-Arabic labels for items such as the definite noun, the construct state, and the absolute state to name a few.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 11.

¹²Solomon L. Skoss, “A Study of Inflection in Hebrew from Saadia Gaon’s Grammatical Work ‘Katub al-Lughah’,” *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, n.s., 33 (1942-1943):191; Skoss, *Saadia Gaon*, 57.

stated the case for the triliteral root in Hebrew.¹³ Samuel ha-Nagid and Ibn Janāh, writing in Arabic, also produced grammatical works during this time. Their works often concentrated on Ibn Janāh's disagreements with Hayyūj, ha-Nagid's teacher.¹⁴ Dan Becker observes that Ibn Janāh makes about sixty references to Arabic in his Hebrew grammar, *Kitāb al-Luma'*.¹⁵ Moreover, Ibn Janāh states in his grammar that Arabic is very beneficial in understanding Hebrew and that he would not hesitate to compare the two languages.¹⁶

Toward the end of the eleventh century Ibn Barūn published his "thorough treatment" of similarities and differences between Hebrew and Arabic grammar and lexicography.¹⁷ Throughout his grammar, Ibn Barūn makes frequent references to Arabic. For example, he employs the Arabic label for definite and indefinite nouns, and he compares how the agreement between noun and adjective differs in Hebrew and Arabic.¹⁸ Ibn Barūn also highlights the similarity between Hebrew and Arabic regarding the imperative and the use of the alerting ה.¹⁹ Describing the absolute object as the "truest object," Ibn Barūn appeals to the analyses of Arab grammarians.²⁰ Furthermore, Ibn Barūn provides Arabic examples to support his description of the object in biblical

¹³Nasir Basal, "The Concept of Compensation (*'iwaḍ/ta'wīḍ*) as Used by Yehuda Ḥayyūj in Comparison with Sibawayhi," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 44, no. 2 (1999):227–29.

¹⁴William Chomsky, "How the Study of Hebrew Grammar Began and Developed," *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, n.s., 35 (1944-1945):284, 285.

¹⁵Dan Becker, "Linguistic Rules and Definitions in Ibn Janāh's *Kitāb al-Luma'* (*Sefer ha-Riqmah*) Copied from the Arab Grammarians," *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, n.s., 86, nos. 3–4 (1996):276.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 275.

¹⁷Pinchas Wechter, *Ibn Barūn's Arabic Works on Hebrew Grammar and Lexicography* (Philadelphia: The Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, 1964), 3.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 25, 40-41.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 52.

Hebrew.²¹

Another group of Hebrew grammarians, the Karaites, produced grammatical works in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Although the Karaites worked separately from the Rabbanite scholars (Saadiyah, Ibn Janāh, etc.), the Karaites also applied Arabic grammar to the study of biblical Hebrew.²² 'Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf ibn Nūh, a prominent early Karaite grammarian, used Arabic terminology for the active participle. In his grammatical commentary on Psalm 118:5, he notes that some translate הַמַּצֵּר “the one who causes distress.” He writes, “(According to this view), the form is a *noun of agent*.”²³ In another early Karaite text, the author appeals to Arabic for the correct parsing and meaning of בָּרַךְ.²⁴ Furthermore, in a Karaite beginning grammar, the subject of a verb is called an “agent” (פֹּאעֵל), similar to Arabic grammar.²⁵ 'Abū al-Faraj Hārūn,

²¹Wechter, *Ibn Barūn's Arabic Works*, 52.

²²Geoffrey Khan contends that the Karaites also based their grammatical studies in the work of the Masoretes and Rabbinic tradition. Geoffrey Khan, *The Early Karaite Tradition of Hebrew Grammatical Thought: Including a Critical Edition, Translation and Analysis of the Diqduq of 'Abū Ya'qūb ibn Nūh on the Hagiographa*, Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 32 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 5.

²³Khan, *Early Karaite Tradition of Hebrew Grammatical Thought*, 98-99, 332-33. The ‘noun of agent’ —אָסַם אַלפֹּאֵעֵל—is the Arabic term for the active participle: اِسْمَاءُ الْفَاعِلِ ('ismā'u l-fā'ili “the noun of the agent”). Likewise, Ibn Nūh labels the passive participle ‘noun of patient’ (אָסַם אַלמַפְעוּל) (ibid., 98, 178-79). Arab grammarians label the passive participle اِسْمَاءُ الْمَفْعُولِ ('ismā'u l-maf'ūli “the noun of patient”). See W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language: Translated from the German of Caspari and Edited with Numerous Additions and Corrections*, 3rd ed., ed. W. Robertson Smith and M. J. de Goeje (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 1:§229. Khan observes that Ibn Nūh always translates a ‘noun of agent’ into Arabic as a participle “rather than a verbal form, since he believes the distinction between a participle and finite verb should be expressed in the interpretation of the text” (Khan, *Early Karaite Tradition of Hebrew Grammatical Thought*, 99). Ibn Nūh, in his translation of active participles, follows the Arab grammarians’ distinction between the participle and the verb. Furthermore, an anonymous Karaite beginning Hebrew grammar also uses Arabic terminology for the participle. Nadia Vidro, *A Medieval Karaite Pedagogical Grammar of Hebrew: A Critical Edition and English Translation of Kitāb al-'Uqūd fī Taṣārīf al-Luġa al-'Ibrāniyya*, Cambridge Genizah Studies Series 6 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 129, 290-91.

²⁴Geoffrey Khan, *Early Karaite Grammatical Texts*, Masoretic Studies 9 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 80. Khan posits that the author of this text is not Saadiyah Gaon, but a grammarian named Sa'īd who “he, as well as his commentator, must have been Karaites close to the circle of Ibn Nūh” (ibid., 17).

²⁵Nadia Vidro, “A Karaite Tool-kit for Teaching Hebrew Grammar,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 64, no. 1 (2013):107.

another prominent Karaite grammarian, argued for the infinitive as the basic verbal form based on the Arabic term for infinitive, *maṣdar*.²⁶ In his grammar *al-Kitāb al-Kāfī fī al-Luġa al-ʿIbrāniyya*, ʿAbū al-Faraj makes numerous comparisons to Arabic. For example, he compares the use of לְ to differentiate the future from the present use of the imperfect in biblical Hebrew, and the use of אֵיכָּה before the verb, with similar phenomena in Arabic. Al-Faraj also uses Arabic categories and terminology to describe *mafʿūl* in biblical Hebrew. Because Hebrew dropped the case endings, al-Faraj notes that the *mafʿūl* in biblical Hebrew “is only possible to adduce . . . in the form that they have come down to us” in order to compare the forms in Hebrew “that correspond to the *mafʿūl muṭlaq* and its other categories according to the terminology of the Arabic grammarians.”²⁷

Biblical Hebrew grammarians in the twelfth century continued to promulgate the works of the Rabbanite scholars Saadiah, Hayyūj, ha-Nagid, and Ibn Janāh. The grammarians of the twelfth century wrote their works in Hebrew, making Hebrew grammar more accessible to non-Arabic speaking Jews of Western Europe.²⁸ Abraham Ibn Ezra wrote many commentaries and works on Hebrew grammar in this period, often quoting Saadiah.²⁹ David Ẕimḥi also published his influential grammar during this time. As with Ibn Ezra, Ẕimḥi did not develop new grammatical principles, but rather made the older grammatical works clearer and more concise, primarily the works of Hayyūj and

²⁶Geoffrey Khan, “ʿAbū al-Faraj Hārūn and the Early Karaite Grammatical Tradition,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 48, no. 2 (1997):319.

²⁷Geoffrey Khan, María Ángeles, and Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, *The Karaite Tradition of Hebrew Grammatical Thought in its Classical Form: A Critical Edition and English Translation of al-Kitāb al-Kāfī fī al-Luġa al-ʿIbrāniyya by ʿAbū al-Faraj Hārūn ibn al-Faraj*, Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 37 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 40, 44, 156. Khan defines *mafʿūl* as “verbal complement.” See also Aharon Maman’s observations of ʿAbū al-Hārūn’s use of Arabic. Aharon Maman, “An Eleventh-Century Karaite Hebrew Grammar,” *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 101, no. 3 (2011):469-70.

²⁸David Téné, Aharon Maman, and James Barr, “Linguistic Literature, Hebrew,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, ed. Fred Skolnik, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2007), 13:34.

²⁹Chomsky, “Study of Hebrew Grammar,” 282.

Ibn Janāh.³⁰ However, Ẕimḥi's analysis remains consistent with Semitic grammar, as in his description of the absolute object and the disagreement in number and gender between subjects and verbs.³¹ David Téné credits these grammarians, and other grammarians of this era, for saving Hebrew grammar "from oblivion" and setting the pattern for Hebrew grammatical expression that is found in many of the grammars that followed.³²

More recently, Isaac Jerusalmi, retired Professor of Bible and Semitic Languages from Hebrew Union in Cincinnati, produced grammatical works for his biblical Hebrew students.³³ In his preface to *The Story of Joseph*, Jerusalmi notes that Arabic is "the noblest of all Semitic languages and our most natural model, worthy of our constant study and steady imitation."³⁴ Jerusalmi acknowledges that since Saadia Gaon Arabic has served as the paradigm for biblical Hebrew grammar:

From Sa'adia Gaon al-Fayyūmī and on, Jews, with their knowledge of Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic, have been officially on record as founders and expounders of comparative Semitics.³⁵

Jerusalmi provides many Arabic examples, demonstrating the similarity between various biblical Hebrew and Arabic constructions.³⁶ Commenting on Genesis 37:4, he labels

³⁰William Chomsky, *David Ẕimḥi's Hebrew Grammar (Mikhlol): Systematically Presented and Critically Annotated* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1952), 9.

³¹*Ibid.*, 341-42, 345-47. Regarding the absolute object, see Wechter, *Ibn Barūn's Arabic Works*, 52.

³²Téné, Maman, and Barr, "Linguistic Literature, Hebrew," 13:34.

³³These works are available to the wider public.

³⁴Isaac Jerusalmi, *The Story of Joseph (Genesis 37; 39-47): A Philological Commentary*, 2nd rev. ed., Auxiliary Materials for the Study of Semitic Languages 1 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1981), v.

³⁵*Ibid.*, ii.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 8, 9. The examples on these two pages are a small sampling of the many Arabic examples given.

לְשֹׁלֹם the adverbial accusative, a similar grammatical construction in Arabic (*hal*).³⁷ He appeals to Arab grammarians in his analysis of Genesis 42:6 to illustrate how an adverbial accusative construction is similar to a construction with a circumstantial *vav*.³⁸ In Genesis 41:40, Jerusalmi argues that הַבְּטִיחַ is “a classical example” of the accusative of specification, an adverbial accusative found in Arabic (*tamyīz*).³⁹

Saadia Gaon had established a pattern of comparative philology that his successors also employed. Arabic served as the model for Hebrew grammatical analysis and would continue to do so as Christians began to write their own biblical Hebrew grammars.

Christian grammarians. According to James Barr, no influential Christian Hebraist existed in the centuries between the time of Jerome and the sixteenth century. This does not mean Christians were ignorant of Hebrew during that time. Christians had gleaned the Hebrew they knew from Jewish works, but Christian Hebraists “contributed little or nothing” to the study of Hebrew grammar.⁴⁰ With the Reformation’s emphasis on original sources, Christians began to show interest in biblical Hebrew.

³⁷Jerusalmi, *The Story of Joseph*, 8. See also pg. 116.

³⁸Ibid., 116.

³⁹Ibid., 102. In his work on biblical Aramaic, Jerusalmi also bases his grammatical analyses on traditional Semitic grammar. Isaac Jerusalmi, *The Aramaic Sections of Ezra and Daniel: A Philological Commentary*, Auxiliary Materials for the Study of Semitic Languages 7 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1982), 16, 17, 26, 42, 48, 55, 58, 128, 136. Joshua Blau also contends that comparative Semitic studies is the most effective method for the study of biblical Hebrew (Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew*, 2-4, 13-16). It appears that Blau does not grant priority to Arabic; rather, he considers all Semitic languages equally. For example, he contends that the use of the infinitive absolute to strengthen a verb in biblical Hebrew is not the same construction found in Arabic due to the difference in word order. Blau posits that the absolute object in biblical Hebrew is most likely similar to Ugaritic (ibid., 215). Much of Blau’s works deal with morphology and phonology, though his syntactic analyses largely follow traditional Semitic grammar. For example, he asserts that the participle in biblical Hebrew has not been incorporated into the verbal system (ibid., 225-26; cf. Joshua Blau, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, Porta Linguarum Orientalium: Neue Serie 12 [Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1976], 82). Furthermore, he describes the Piel as intensive and acknowledges casus pendens constructions (Blau, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 52, 110; Blau, *Phonology and Morphology*, 229).

⁴⁰Téné, Maman, and Barr, “Linguistic Literature, Hebrew,” 13:34.

Johann Reuchlin is the first major Christian grammarian of note, publishing his grammar in 1506. Reuchlin first learned Hebrew from a Jewish physician, Jacob Jehiel Loans, and later received lessons from Rabbi Obadiah Sforno.⁴¹ Reuchlin's grammatical works depended on the works of older Jewish grammarians, especially Kimḥi.⁴² While Reuchlin and other early Christian grammarians relied on Jewish grammars, they wrote their biblical Hebrew grammars into Latin and other European languages. Jewish grammatical labels, therefore, gave way to more familiar terms. For example, certain standard terms used in modern grammars can be attributed to Reuchlin, such as the "absolute state."⁴³

While many grammarians who followed Reuchlin merely reproduced the works of their Jewish counterparts, Schultens played an important role in reinstating the classical philological method.⁴⁴ Schultens strongly emphasized the application of Arabic to elucidate difficulties in biblical Hebrew.⁴⁵ In his dissertation, "Dissertatio theologico-philologica de utilitate linguae Arabicae in interpretanda sacra lingua," he demonstrates how difficult Hebrew words could be understood when compared to Arabic cognates.⁴⁶

⁴¹S. A. Hirsch, "Johann Reuchlin, the Father of the Study of Hebrew among Christians," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 8 (1896):458, 460.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 461, 463.

⁴³Téné, Maman, and Barr, "Linguistic Literature, Hebrew," 13:55.

⁴⁴Prior to Schultens' work in Hebrew grammar, Johannes Buxtorf played an important role in educating Christians in biblical Hebrew. Buxtorf wrote influential grammars in biblical Hebrew, Syriac, and Aramaic (biblical, targumic, and talmudic). Stephen Burnett observes that Buxtorf's works indicate that he believed the Christian Hebraist must be familiar with Aramaic and rabbinical Hebrew in order to study Hebrew philology. Buxtorf did not incorporate Arabic into his studies because he did not know the language. Stephen G. Burnett, *From Christian Hebraism to Jewish Studies: Johannes Buxtorf (1564-1629) and Hebrew Learning in the Seventeenth Century*, Studies in the History of Christian Thought 68 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 116-17, 120, 127.

⁴⁵Téné, Maman, and Barr, "Linguistic Literature, Hebrew," 13:55. See Samuel David Luzzato, *Prolegomena to a Grammar of the Hebrew Language*, trans. Aaron D. Rubin (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2005), 43.

⁴⁶Stephen G. Burnett, "Later Christian Hebraists," in *From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, vol. 2 of *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation*, ed. Magne Sæbø

In his Hebrew grammar, *Institutiones ad fundamenta linguae Hebraeae*, Schultens makes numerous comparisons with Arabic in order to explain or illustrate various morphological principles. For example, he employs Arabic in his discussion on the Hebrew letters, the dagesh forte, the dual ending, and the personal pronoun אֲנִי.⁴⁷ Schultens follows traditional Semitic grammar by dividing his syntax into nouns, particles, and verbs; he explains that Hebrew grammarians follow Arabic grammar in this regard.⁴⁸ He describes the Piel as intensifying the Qal stem, according to traditional Semitic grammar.⁴⁹ Subsequent Christian grammarians followed Schultens' lead by employing Arabic, and eventually other Semitic languages, in their studies.

H. F. Wilhelm Gesenius' biblical Hebrew grammar, first published in 1813 and republished in many revised editions, employs the classical philological method. Gesenius describes the syntactic phenomena of biblical Hebrew by comparing them with other occurrences in biblical Hebrew and in her "sister languages."⁵⁰ For example, he looks to Arabic to explain the possible origin of the Hebrew interrogative הֲ.⁵¹ He also compares the use of the infinitive absolute as an absolute object in biblical Hebrew with the Arabic *maṣḍar*.⁵² Furthermore, he argues that biblical Hebrew still employs the nominative, accusative, and genitive cases, although most case endings are no longer

(Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 792.

⁴⁷ Albert Schultens, *Institutiones ad fundamenta linguae Hebraeae: quibus via panditur ad ejusdem analogiam restituendam & vindicandam: in usum collegii Demostici*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Johannem Luzac, 1756), 38, 77, 174, 226.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 156.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 265.

⁵⁰ E. Kautzsch, ed., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 28th ed., trans. A. E. Cowley, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), §3f.

⁵¹ Ibid., §100i.

⁵² Ibid., §113h n1.

extant.⁵³ Kautzsch, in his twenty-eighth edition of Gesenius' grammar, appeals to Arabic to support the claim that Hebrew still exhibits the function of accusative, even though a noun functioning as an accusative may lack the case ending.⁵⁴ Consistent with Arabic grammar, he describes the perfect as indicating completed action and the imperfect as indicating continuous or incomplete action.⁵⁵

Eduard König and G. H. Ewald, experts in Arabic and Hebrew, employ Arabic categories in their analysis of biblical Hebrew.⁵⁶ For example, König describes 'specification' as one function of the accusative. After giving some examples from biblical Hebrew, König compares this phenomenon to Arabic grammar. He notes, with specific reference to Ezekiel 7:17 (תִּלְכְּנָה מָיִם), that the Arab grammarians rightly call this accusative *tamyẓun* (specification) and not an accusative of object.⁵⁷ Furthermore, he emphasizes how the Arabic *maṣdar* functions as the absolute object of biblical Hebrew.⁵⁸ Consistent with early Jewish grammarians, König describes the Piel as having an intensive/extensive meaning.⁵⁹ Ewald also makes numerous comparisons between Hebrew and Arabic when, for example, he explains the Hebrew article, the existence and use of the accusative, and the use of the infinitive absolute.⁶⁰

⁵³E. Rödiger, ed., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 14th ed., trans. T. J. Conant (New York: D. Appleton, 1846), §87. See also Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §89a.

⁵⁴Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §118b.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, §106a, §107a.

⁵⁶See Friedrich Eduard König, *Historisch-kritisches Lehrgebaude der hebräischen Sprache* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1881-1897), 1:6.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 3:§328c. Cf. Ihab Joseph Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons Between Classical Hebrew and Classical Arabic: A Study Based on the Translation of Mohammad 'Id's Arabic Grammar* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008) 157.

⁵⁸König, *Historisch-kritisches Lehrgebaude*, 3:§329b.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 1:§23.

⁶⁰G. H. Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*, trans. James Kennedy, Ancient Language Resources (1891; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2004), 32, 43-48. It should be noted, however, that although Ewald uses Arabic to highlight various points of biblical Hebrew grammar,

Samuel R. Driver, in his influential work on the Hebrew verb, demonstrates how Arabic grammar informs his study of the Hebrew verb and, more generally, the study of biblical Hebrew syntax. For example, he compares the *vav*+volitive in biblical Hebrew and the *ف*+subjunctive in Arabic.⁶¹ Driver looks to Arabic to defend his claim that, in hypothetical clauses, imperfect verbal forms following an imperative are often jussive forms.⁶² Furthermore, Arabic informs Driver's discussion of apposition in biblical Hebrew.⁶³

This survey of Christian grammarians concludes with another well-known biblical Hebrew grammar, Paul Joüon's *Grammaire de l'Hébreu Biblique*. In his preface, Joüon states that familiarity with Arabic, Aramaic, and Syriac are important if the reader wants to better understand biblical Hebrew.⁶⁴ His description of certain functions of the noun is congruous with traditional Jewish grammar. For example, he describes the predicative accusative of state, a function of the accusative also found in Arabic

he criticizes grammarians who depend too much on native grammarians. For example, T. Witton Davies describes Ewald's dissatisfaction with Henry Thomas Colebrooke's work on Sanscrit poetry. Colebrooke bases his work on the writings of ancient Indian scholars on Sanscrit poetry, a method Ewald does not support. Davies also details Ewald's similar criticism of two prominent Arabists, Silvestre de Sacy and Georg W. Freytag. Ewald faults de Sacy and Freytag because they "had followed blindly the native grammarians." According to Davies, Ewald would have preferred that de Sacy and Freytag would study Arabic for themselves and then formulate their own conclusions. T. Witton Davies, *Heinrich Ewald, Orientalist and Theologian, 1803-1903: A Centenary Appreciation* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1903), 44-45. Cf. Walter Gross, "Is There Really a Compound Nominal Clause in Biblical Hebrew?," trans. John Frymire, in *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew: Linguistic Approaches*, ed. Cynthia L. Miller, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 23n12. Despite his position on the use of native grammarians, Ewald certainly recognizes the benefit of Arabic to illustrate biblical Hebrew grammar.

⁶¹S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew and Some Other Syntactical Questions*, Ancient Language Resources (1892; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 67n3.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 189.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 256-59.

⁶⁴P. Paul Joüon, *Grammaire de l'Hébreu Biblique* (Rome: Institut Biblique Pontifical, 1947), x.

grammar.⁶⁵ Joüon is consistent with Arab grammarians when he argues that the verb *היה* takes a predicative in the accusative case.⁶⁶ Furthermore, Joüon applies Arabic to explain the Hebrew finite verb with a *vav* prefix.⁶⁷ Joüon also follows traditional Semitic grammar by labeling the meaning of the Piel as intensive.⁶⁸

Arabic as the paradigm of biblical Hebrew grammar. Early in the history of biblical Hebrew grammar Arabic played an important role, an importance apparent even with Christian grammarians. Early Christian Hebrew grammarians followed their Jewish predecessors in using Arabic in their study of biblical Hebrew. Following the example of native grammarians provides a safeguard in the study of biblical Hebrew or any language. Mortimer Sloper Howell, in his voluminous Arabic grammar, argues in support of native Arab grammarians. He writes that

the learner should have recourse to the teaching of the native Grammarians, and eschew the unauthorized conjectures of foreign scholars. This method possesses 3 obvious advantages:—the native teachers are more likely to be safe guides than their foreign rivals; their works form a better introduction to the commentaries and glosses indispensable for the study of many works in Arabic literature; and their system of grammar must be adopted as the basis of communication with contemporary scholars of Eastern race.⁶⁹

Moreover, Howell explains that even non-Arabs who have mastered the Arabic language are considered to be on equal footing with native Arab grammarians. He notes that

the superficial objection that many of the old masters, like Sībawaih, AlFārisī, and AzZamakhshari, were foreigners has been anticipated by Ibn Khaldūn, who replies that they were foreigners only by descent, while in education and language they were on the footing of native Arabs.⁷⁰

⁶⁵Joüon, *Grammaire de l'Hébreu Biblique*, §126a. See especially n. 1 of §126a.

⁶⁶Ibid., §125w. See especially n. 2 of §125w.

⁶⁷Ibid., §115b-c.

⁶⁸Ibid., §52d.

⁶⁹Mortimer Sloper Howell, *A Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language: Translated and Compiled from the Works of the Most Approved Native or Naturalized Authorities* (Allahabad, India: North-Western Provinces and Outh Government Press, 1883-1911), 1:i.

⁷⁰Ibid. In his response to this dissertation, John A. Cook critiques the author's use of Howell's

Although Howell writes in regard to Arabic grammar, his principles still apply to biblical Hebrew. Jewish grammarians recognized the benefit of Arabic grammar and used the Arabic model and categories in biblical Hebrew grammar. The practice of Jewish scholars to look to Arabic grammar has and should serve as a “safe guide” for the learner of biblical Hebrew grammar.

Driver contends that a simple glance at the vocabulary and syntax of Arabic and biblical Hebrew reveals their common origin and their close relationship to one another.⁷¹ He goes on to add that neither Hebrew nor Arabic—nor any other Semitic language—can claim the status as the one language from which all other Semitic languages are derived. However, “they are the descendants of a deceased ancestor, whose most prominent characteristics, though with different degrees of clearness and purity, they all still reflect.” Although the Semitic languages have a common origin each language developed differently, one language retaining a particular grammatical feature while another discarding it. Despite their “uneven development,” unclear grammatical

and William Wright’s Arabic grammars. He writes, “the main sources the author cites [Wright and Howell] are NOT native Arab grammarians at all.” John A. Cook, external reader report of author’s dissertation, August 9, 2014. However, Howell and Wright are eminent Arabists and are considered “on the footing of native Arabs.” Furthermore, Howell and Wright are not simply providing their informed opinions on Arabic grammar; rather, they are continuing a grammatical tradition passed down by centuries of Arabic grammarians. In his detailed history of Arabic grammar, Howell provides a long list of Arabic grammatical works he used to write his own grammar (Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 1:xxvi-xxxviii). In the preface to his grammar, Wright also lists ancient and modern works on Arabic grammar by Arab grammarians he consulted in writing his work; he also consulted prominent European Arabists, such as Silvestre de Sacy (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:v). Howell’s dependence on Arabic grammatical tradition is illustrated by the numerous abbreviations interspersed throughout his grammar that refer to Arab grammarians; see for example Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 1:546-549. Wright’s dependence on this grammatical tradition is also evidenced by his constant recourse to phrases like “Arab grammarians say . . .” (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:\$7 Rem., \$8 Rem. b, \$12 Rem., \$15 Rem. b, \$23 Rem. a, \$24, \$29 Rem. b, \$35, \$36 Rem. a, \$38 Rem. e, \$75 Rem). See also Jerusalmi, *Story of Joseph*, 75; Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 133, 134, 157. Furthermore, in their modern Arabic grammar, Farhat J. Ziadeh and R. Bayly Winder reference “Orthodox Arabic grammarians,” indicating that they recognize an Arabic grammatical tradition. Farhat J. Ziadeh and R. Bayly Winder, *An Introduction to Modern Arabic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 20. Howell, Wright, Jerusalmi, ‘Id, Griess, Ziadeh, and Winder are demonstrating that they are not conveying mere grammatical opinions, but are basing their grammatical analyses on a long standing grammatical tradition.

⁷¹Driver, *Treatise*, 220.

features in one language may be retained in its original construction in another. This situation allows the grammarian to use one Semitic language to explain another “even when the relationship lies no longer in a direct line.”⁷² Arabic retains many features that help elucidate biblical Hebrew grammar.

Along with Howell’s and Driver’s assessments of Arabic, there are four additional arguments in support of Arabic as the paradigm for biblical Hebrew grammatical studies.

1. Arabic, in its morphology and phonology, is often closer to proto-Semitic than other Semitic languages, demonstrating the conservative nature of Arabic.
2. Arabic preserves the full case system for nouns and an extensive conjugation system for verbs.
3. Arabic inherently groups words syntactically. The system of accents in biblical Hebrew often groups words similarly. For example, in verbal clauses the verb and the agent are usually grouped together. In nominal clauses, the initiator is often separated from the announcement with a disjunctive accent.
4. Arabic is still a spoken language with a long history of native grammarians. Because of the existence of native grammarians, Arabic categories provide a sound basis to analyze biblical Hebrew.⁷³

⁷²Driver, *Treatise*, 220. See Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew*, 12.

⁷³Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 292. Chrys Caragounis makes a similar argument with regard to native grammarians in New Testament Greek studies. Caragounis, a native Greek speaker, contends that many New Testament Greek scholars—based on the supposed pronunciation of ancient Greek proposed by Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (1528)—have erroneously divided Greek into two periods: ancient and modern. He argues, “The advocates of this artificial division failed to consult the Greeks, who down to the close of the Middle Ages had continuously used and commented upon the writings of their forbears, and were, therefore, excellently equipped to speak to the feasibility of dividing Greek into ancient and modern.” Chrys C. Caragounis, *The Development of Greek and the New Testament: Morphology, Syntax, Phonology, and Textual Transmission* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 3. He goes on to write, “I considered it a service to my colleagues to apprise them of the existence of much relevant literature in Greek as well as of the fact that Greeks do not consider Greek a dead language, and furthermore, that they treat the entire history of Greek as phases of one and the same language. *Hardly anyone would demur if I state that the Greek perspective on the Greek language has at least as much right to be heard as any. More than that, I would venture to claim that it can contribute new dimensions and new perspectives that have been absent before*” (ibid., 12; emphasis added). Caragounis also demonstrates that a native Greek perspective cannot support Stanley Porter’s (and Kenneth McKay’s and Buist Fanning’s) claim that the Greek verb only expresses aspect and not time. Caragounis writes, “Such ponderous claims make it incumbent on me, both as a NT scholar with a keen historical and linguistic interest in Greek and as a user of the Greek language as my mother tongue, to critically examine the views advanced and the grounds on which they have been founded” (ibid., 316-17). He continues, “While a Greek would never deny or minimize the importance of Aspect, he would, at the same time, insist that the verb signals not only

Arabic is ideally suited to provide sound and accurate descriptions of biblical Hebrew grammar.

Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Biblical Hebrew Grammar

From the mid-seventeenth century, Christian biblical Hebrew grammarians began to take into account other Semitic languages. These newly discovered languages shed light on the development of biblical Hebrew, and scholars began to turn to them to provide answers for difficult grammatical issues in biblical Hebrew. As time progressed, these new Semitic languages began to replace Arabic as the paradigm for biblical Hebrew studies.

Akkadian. With the discovery of Akkadian, Paul Haupt claims that Semitic studies now have the “Sanskrit of the Semitic languages.”⁷⁴ Anticipating disagreements

aspect, but also time, and that the two are equally pronounced” (ibid., 317). In response to Porter’s claim that the Greeks misunderstood their own verb, Caragounis writes, “A language has no existence outside the group that speaks it. It is their means of communication with one another. The use of the language by the totality of its members (speakers), must, of necessity, represent all the uses (meaning-units) that the language is capable of. That is, the wealth of the language in forms, constructions, meanings, etc., must be in correspondence to the things that the group in its totality has expressed, or has ‘meant’ at different times. Theoretically it is possible that the potential of a language might include more possibilities, but if these hypothetical possibilities have never been realized or ‘meant’ in actual communication by anyone in the group, they are no part of the language. This means that the language can never ‘mean’ anything that anyone within the totality of its speakers has never ‘meant’ at some particular point of time. Nothing that has never been ‘meant’ by any of its speakers can be said to have objective existence in a language. *This applies to all languages without distinction.* In our case, it implies that the Greek language can never ‘mean’ anything that Greeks have never ‘meant’ by and through it. *Thus, we must lay down that, if a non-Greek claims to have found a use in the language which no member of the group has ever used or ‘meant,’ that ‘use’ is no valid part of the Greek language.* Conversely, if the Greeks claim that when they use their verbs they intend, ‘mean,’ and express both time and aspect, *a non-Greek has no justification for claiming that the Greek verb expresses only aspect*” (ibid., 325-26; emphasis added). Caragounis’ defense of native grammarians is applicable to the study of Arabic and biblical Hebrew. If Semitic grammarians contend that Semitic languages do not have a verbal form that expresses the copula “to be,” then linguistic Hebraists cannot label הוה as a copula (see Gen 3:1a in chap. 3). Furthermore, if Semitic grammarians do not describe the participle as a verb, then linguistic Hebraists must follow their lead (see Gen 2:10a in chap. 2, and Ruth 1:8d in chap. 4). Similar to Greek, Arabic has a long history of native grammarians and speakers, who provide sound and accurate categories for the study of Semitic languages. Furthermore, Jewish grammarians have for centuries based their studies on Arabic grammar, providing a sound method with which to study biblical Hebrew.

⁷⁴Paul Haupt, “Studies on the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages, with Special

concerning his claim, Haupt argues that the Akkadian Present (*iqátal*), along with the Ethiopic imperfect (*yěqátēl*), is the oldest Semitic verbal form. Therefore, he concludes that the “common Semitic Perfect,” also found in biblical Hebrew, is a later development. Haupt argues that if his conclusions can be established, then the “whole structure of Semitic morphology . . . will be simply overthrown” and all Semitic grammars will have need of revision.⁷⁵ Writing in the late nineteenth century, Haupt proclaims that Akkadian “is destined to become . . . the indispensable preliminary and necessary foundation” of the study of Semitic languages.⁷⁶

Scholars began to employ Akkadian to reconsider various aspects of biblical Hebrew grammar, especially the verbal system. In light of Akkadian, G. R. Driver concludes that the biblical Hebrew language is “an amalgam of several languages” and that the verbal system of biblical Hebrew “represents a conflation of several systems.”⁷⁷ Albrecht Goetze, in his article “The So-Called Intensive of the Semitic Languages,” defined the Akkadian D-stem (the Hebrew Piel) apart from the traditional Hebrew-Arabic definitions. He found that the Akkadian D-stem is “in parallelism with statives” of the B-stem (the Hebrew Qal).⁷⁸ He argues that this conclusion offers a “uniform explanation” of the D-stem verb.⁷⁹ Ernst Jenni continued Goetze’s study in his book, *Das hebräische Pi’el*, looking to Akkadian as the model to decipher the Piel.⁸⁰ Jenni concluded that the

Reference to Assyrian,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 10, no. 2 (April 1878):244, accessed August 21, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25196799>.

⁷⁵Haupt, “Studies on the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages,” 246-47.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 251.

⁷⁷G. R. Driver, *Problems of the Hebrew Verbal System*, Old Testament Studies 2 (Edinburgh; T. & T. Clark, 1936), v.

⁷⁸Albrecht Goetze, “The So-Called Intensive of the Semitic Languages,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 62, no. 1 (March 1942):6, accessed March 23, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/594095>.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 8.

⁸⁰Ernst Jenni, *Das hebräische Pi’el: Syntaktisch-semasiologische Untersuchung einer*

Piel does not have an intensive meaning; rather, the Piel expresses the coming about of a state indicated by the adjectival base stem.⁸¹ As scholars devoted more attention to Akkadian, Akkadian began to displace Arabic as the paradigm for biblical Hebrew grammar.

Ugaritic. The study of biblical Hebrew grammar also changed with the discovery of Ugaritic. W. F. Albright, in his review of C. H. Gordon's *Ugaritic Grammar*, hails the importance of Ugaritic for historical Hebrew grammar, saying that it "cannot be overestimated."⁸² Leo Deuel observed in 1965 that in many schools Ugaritic had replaced Arabic as "a linguistic basis" for biblical Hebrew.⁸³ "Few areas of Hebrew grammar," writes William Moran, "have remained unaffected" by the discovery and application of Ugaritic.⁸⁴

Scholars applied Ugaritic to many areas of biblical Hebrew grammar, such as the enclitic *mem*. Horace Hummel argues in his article that the discovery of the enclitic *mem* in Ugaritic gives evidence that it once was common in biblical Hebrew. The enclitic *mem* eventually fell out of use in biblical Hebrew only to be retained in poetry and "misconstrued or mispointed" by the Masoretes.⁸⁵ After listing occurrences of the enclitic *mem* in biblical Hebrew, he states that this feature in biblical Hebrew does not have the

Verbalform im Alten Testament (Zurich: EVZ-Verlag, 1968), 12.

⁸¹Jenni, *Das hebräische Pi'el*, 275.

⁸²W. F. Albright, review of *Ugaritic Grammar*, by Cyrus H. Gordon, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 60 (1941): 438.

⁸³Mitchell Dahood, *Ugaritic and the Old Testament*, *Analecta Lovaniensia Biblica et Orientalia* 4, vol. 42 (Gembloux, Belgium: Editions J. Duculot, 1968), 35; Leo Deuel, *Testaments of Time: The Search for Lost Manuscripts and Records* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), 242.

⁸⁴William L. Moran, "The Hebrew Language in Its Northwest Semitic Background," in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honor of William Foxwell Albright*, ed. G. Ernest Wright (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1961), 58.

⁸⁵Horace D. Hummel, "Enclitic *Mem* in Early Northwest Semitic, Especially Hebrew," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 76 (1957):85.

same “conjunctive force” exhibited by the Akkadian *–ma* since Ugaritic lacks this “conjunctive force.”⁸⁶ He goes on to argue that one cannot prove or disprove whether the Hebrew enclitic *mem* at one time indicated emphasis, or if it was a meaningless feature. The enclitic *mem*, Hummel concludes, does serve to indicate the age of a given text in biblical Hebrew.⁸⁷

Another Ugaritic scholar, John Huesman, reexamines the infinitive absolute in biblical Hebrew in light of Ugaritic and the Amarna Letters. First, because of his observations of the infinitive absolute in Ugaritic, Phoenician, and Amarna Akkadian, Huesman argues that the infinitive absolute in biblical Hebrew indicates a “finite action.”⁸⁸ Second, on the basis of his first argument, Huesman addresses a list of about fifty weak (not conversive) *vav*-perfects in biblical Hebrew that S. R. Driver categorizes as “isolated irregularities.” Huesman argues that these *vav*-perfects were mispointed and are in fact infinitive absolutes functioning as finite verbs in the past tense.⁸⁹

In other works in Ugaritic, scholars continue to reanalyze various aspects of biblical Hebrew grammar. E. A. Speiser claims that Ugaritic disproves the theory that the locative *he* in biblical Hebrew is “connected . . . with the Semitic accusative ending *–a*.”⁹⁰ Mitchell Dahood praises the discovery of Ugaritic because it, along with Arabic and Akkadian, “can bring to difficult passages grammatically impeccable analyses.”⁹¹ In his two-volume commentary on Psalms, Dahood seeks to use Ugaritic to “resolve”

⁸⁶Hummel, “Enclitic *Mem* in Early Northwest Semitic,” 85.

⁸⁷Ibid., 106-7.

⁸⁸John Huesman, “Finite Uses of the Infinitive Absolute,” *Biblica* 37 (1956):271.

⁸⁹John Huesman, “The Infinitive Absolute and the Waw+Perfect Problem,” *Biblica* 37 (1956):412.

⁹⁰E. A. Speiser, “The Terminative-Adverbial in Canaanite-Ugaritic and Akkadian,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 4, no. 2 (1954):108.

⁹¹Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms 1:1-50*, The Anchor Bible 16 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966), xxxviii.

grammatical problems found in the Psalter.⁹² This brief survey of works gives a small hint of the wide spectrum of topics covered by Ugaritic research.

Influence on Hebrew grammar. As time passed, scholars began to incorporate the conclusions from Akkadian and Ugaritic research into biblical Hebrew grammars. Generally, grammarians of the late nineteenth century include little, if any, Akkadian in their syntactic analysis of biblical Hebrew. In the twentieth century, however, grammarians increasingly employed Akkadian and Ugaritic.

One grammatical feature in particular highlights this progression: the Hebrew Piel. Many grammarians from Kimḥi to Schultens to those in the nineteenth century—such as Ewald, König, and Gesenius-Kautzsch—identify intensiveness as the primary meaning of the Piel.⁹³ Even in the early twentieth century, Joüon remains consistent with prior scholarship regarding the Piel.⁹⁴ Recently, however, grammarians have cast doubt on the intensive meaning.

Two grammars in particular take into consideration recent scholarship on the Piel. T. Muraoka, in his translation and revision of Joüon’s grammar, references works on Akkadian by Goetze and Jenni to inform his study of the Piel. He does not list ‘intensiveness’ as a possible meaning of the Piel, stating that to identify one overarching meaning for the Piel does “violence to all the evidence available.”⁹⁵ Muraoka goes on to add that the grammarian can only indicate several “distinct meaning categories” by which

⁹²Dahood, *Psalms 1:1-50*, xxxviii.

⁹³Chomsky, *David Kimḥi’s Hebrew Grammar*, §24b; Schultens, *Institutiones ad fundamenta linguae Hebraeae*, 256; König, *Historisch-kritisches Lehrgebäude*, 1:§23; Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §52f; Geo. Henry Aug. Ewald, *A Grammar of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*, trans. John Nicholson (London: Williams and Norgate, 1836), §232.

⁹⁴Joüon, *Grammaire de l’Hébreu Biblique*, §52.

⁹⁵Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. and rev. T. Muraoka, *Subsidia Biblica* 14 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000), §52. See also note 1 of that section.

to describe verbs in the Piel.⁹⁶ Bruce Waltke and Michael O'Connor also depart from the traditional analysis of the Piel. They argue that the traditional analysis is “awkward” and that the traditional grammarians could not reach a “fundamental consensus” on the meaning of the Piel.⁹⁷ Waltke and O'Connor base their discussion on the Piel primarily on Jenni's work.⁹⁸

Likewise, studies in Ugaritic have influenced recent grammarians to reconsider certain features, such as the locative ה. Grammarians as early as Ibn Barūn categorized the unaccented final *qamets he* as an accusative of place.⁹⁹ König and Ewald identify this particular ending as a remnant of the old accusative ending.¹⁰⁰ Gesenius-Kautzsch claims that this ending is “certainly and clearly” the preservation of the old accusative ending.¹⁰¹ Joüon follows the traditional understanding of the locative ה in the French edition of his grammar; however, Muraoka revises Joüon's original conclusion. Muraoka states that, in light of Ugaritic, scholars no longer categorize the locative ה as the remnant of the old accusative ending. Muraoka labels the locative ה as a “paragogic vowel” final *qamets he*.¹⁰² Waltke and O'Connor echo Muraoka, and assert that the final *qamets he* in biblical Hebrew is “a distinct adverbial suffix” identical to the adverbial suffix ה found in Ugaritic.”¹⁰³

⁹⁶Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §52.

⁹⁷Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 397.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*, 399.

⁹⁹Wechter, *Ibn Barūn's Arabic Works*, 51. Although Ibn Barūn does not specifically address the final *qamets he* ending, he does appear to assume the accusative function by his examples. For example, to illustrate the accusative of place he cites Gen 39:11: הַבַּיְתָה (ibid.).

¹⁰⁰König, *Historisch-kritisches Lehrgebaude*, 3:§330a; Ewald, *Grammar of the Hebrew Language*, trans. Nicholson, §262.

¹⁰¹Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §90c; see also §118b.

¹⁰²Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §93c.

¹⁰³Waltke and O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 185.

Akkadian and Ugaritic as a paradigm for biblical Hebrew grammar.

Traditional grammarians do see Akkadian and Ugaritic as useful in the study of biblical Hebrew, especially in the following three areas:

1. Akkadian and Ugaritic assist in the classical philological method by providing grammarians with more languages with which to compare the various Semitic languages.
2. Akkadian and Ugaritic are beneficial in lexicography.
3. Ugaritic especially proves valuable in the study of biblical Hebrew poetry and parallelism.

However, Arabic is the key language used in understanding Akkadian and Ugaritic. In his *Ugaritic Manual*, Cyrus Gordon advises the student of Ugaritic to know Hebrew and Arabic because the study of Ugaritic “leans so heavily on cognate phenomena.”¹⁰⁴

Moreover, Akkadian and Ugaritic lack native speakers and native grammarians, whereas Arabic has both, spanning over a thousand years. Arab grammarians still apply the same grammatical categories used in prior centuries. Furthermore, biblical Hebrew is closer to Arabic in syntax and morphology than it is to Akkadian. For example, some aspects of the Akkadian verbal system are unique to Akkadian, and placing the verb last in Akkadian clauses may reflect Sumerian influence.¹⁰⁵ Although Akkadian and Ugaritic are valuable for the study of biblical Hebrew grammar, they are still secondary to Arabic.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴Cyrus H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Manual*, *Analecta Orientalia Commentationes Scientifical de Rebus Orientis Antiqui* 35 (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1955), 2.

¹⁰⁵Arthur Ungnad, *Akkadian Grammar*, rev. Lubor Matouš, trans. Harry A. Hoffner, Jr., SBL Resources for Biblical Study 30 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), §100c.

¹⁰⁶Wright contends that Arabic, not Akkadian, best preserves the characteristics of proto-Semitic: “In some points the north Semitic tongues, particularly the Hebrew, may bear the greatest resemblance to this parent speech; but, on the whole, the south Semitic dialects, Arabic and Æthiopic,—but especially the former,—have, I still think, preserved a higher degree of likeness to the original Semitic language. The Hebrew of the Pentateuch, and the Assyrian, as it appears in even the oldest inscriptions, seem to me to have already attained nearly the same stage of grammatical development (or decay) as the post-classical Arabic, the spoken language of mediæval and modern times” (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:vi-vii).

Modern Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew Grammar

Modern linguistic Hebraists generally fault traditional grammars, especially those of the nineteenth century, for providing little help in regards to the syntax of biblical Hebrew. This critique finds its source in Ferdinand de Saussure, considered by many the father of modern linguistics. Saussure criticizes the comparative philological movement of the nineteenth century, specifically with respect to Indo-European language studies, because the method “failed to seek out the nature of its object of study.”¹⁰⁷ Comparative philology failed to determine the “meaning of their comparisons or the significance of the relations that they discovered.”¹⁰⁸ Saussure argues that the subject matter of linguistic study is all forms of human language: written or spoken.¹⁰⁹ One of the three main goals of linguistics, he argues, is to determine the universal principles of all languages and to “deduce the general laws to which all specific historical phenomena can be reduced.”¹¹⁰ Grammarians of biblical Hebrew eventually applied de Saussure’s critique to the study of Hebrew grammar, employing modern linguistics to inform biblical

¹⁰⁷Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, trans. Wade Baskin (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1959), 3. De Saussure explains that language is “a storehouse filled by the members of a given community through their active use of speaking, a grammatical system that has a potential existence in each brain, or, more specifically, in the brains of a group of individuals. For language is not complete in any speaker; it exists perfectly only within a collectivity.” He continues, “Language is not a function of the speaker; it is a product that is passively assimilated by the individual. It never requires premeditation, and reflection enters in only for the purpose of classification” (ibid., 13-14).

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 3-4. De Saussure credits Franz Bopp with creating the science of comparative philology. He writes, “To illuminate one language by means of another, to explain the forms of one through the forms of the other, that is what no one had done before him” (ibid., 2). De Saussure fails to recognize, however, that the Jews, beginning with Saadiah Gaon, used the comparative philological method in the study of biblical Hebrew centuries before Bopp. Jerusalmi writes, “From Sa’adia Gaon al-Fayyumi and on, Jews, with their knowledge of Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic, have been officially on record as founders and expounders of comparative Semitics” (Jerusalmi, *Story of Joseph*, ii). Furthermore, Albert Schultens introduced Christian Hebraists to comparative Semitics in his grammar in 1756, decades before Bopp’s work (see above). As other Semitic languages were discovered, the field of comparative Semitics grew. While Bopp may have initiated Indo-European comparative philology, he certainly did not create the science itself.

¹⁰⁹de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, 6.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

Hebrew syntax.

Over the past several decades, a number of linguistic Hebraists have expressed discontent regarding the classical philological method. Walter Gross questions the use of Arab grammarians in the study of biblical Hebrew. He argues that native Arab grammarians “lacked concepts of linguistic development” and that their grammatical studies extend “only through a few of its literary manifestations.” He criticizes the use of “Greco-Roman” labels for Arabic categories: “the correspondence of the one to the other is, at best, only partial.”¹¹¹ In his dissertation Robert Holmstedt argues that the classical philological method is helpful today only in providing new insights into the lexicography and historical grammar of biblical Hebrew; however, it cannot offer “new and significant” insights into the syntax of biblical Hebrew.¹¹² He praises “discourse-based” models that focus on “grammatical units larger than the sentence” and seeks to understand how particular linguistic features are used in biblical Hebrew.¹¹³ Christo van der Merwe echoes this sentiment towards traditional grammars. According to van der Merwe, the “state of affairs” of biblical Hebrew grammar is one in which more is known about its morphology than its syntax: little is known about the reasons why certain words and phrases were chosen to communicate.¹¹⁴ Writing on direct and indirect speech in biblical Hebrew, Cynthia Miller states that while traditional grammars discuss certain features of “reported speech,” they do not describe the syntax of each type of direct or indirect speech.¹¹⁵ Furthermore, Alviero Niccacci contends that traditional grammars

¹¹¹Gross, “Is There Really a Compound Nominal Clause in Biblical Hebrew?,” 22.

¹¹²Holmstedt, “The Relative Clause,” 45.

¹¹³Ibid., 46.

¹¹⁴Christo H. J. van der Merwe, “An Overview of Hebrew Narrative Syntax,” in *Narrative Syntax and the Hebrew Bible: Papers of the Tilburg Conference 1996*, ed. Ellen van Wolde, Biblical Interpretation Series 29 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 2.

¹¹⁵Cynthia L. Miller, *The Representation of Speech in Biblical Hebrew Narrative: A Linguistic Analysis*, Harvard Semitic Monographs 55 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 4.

cannot adequately analyze the biblical Hebrew verbal system because they focus on the sentence and not larger units of text.¹¹⁶ Because modern grammarians are dissatisfied with the traditional comparative-philological method, various linguistic models have been employed in the study of biblical Hebrew syntax.

Modern linguistic monographs. Numerous recent monographs on biblical Hebrew employ modern linguistic principles. A few notable works published in English are mentioned below to demonstrate the various models used to analyze different aspects of biblical Hebrew syntax.

Francis I. Andersen analyzes the biblical Hebrew verbless clause (1970) and the biblical Hebrew sentence (1974) by using the tagmemic model.¹¹⁷ As described by Andersen, tagmemics analyzes the relationship between various tagmemes in a given construction. He defines a tagmeme as a slot in a particular construction that performs a certain grammatical function. This slot contains any number of related words or phrases that can be substituted to perform the grammatical function.¹¹⁸ Andersen describes his use of tagmemic linguistics in the study of the biblical Hebrew sentence as “a taxonomy of Hebrew inter-clause constructions.”¹¹⁹

Cynthia Miller employs metapragmatics in analyzing reported speech in biblical Hebrew narratives. She explains that metapragmatics is based upon metalanguage, a more general term used by Alfred Tarski to “refer to a technical language

¹¹⁶ Alviero Niccacci, “On the Hebrew Verbal System,” in *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics*, ed. Robert D. Bergen (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1994), 118.

¹¹⁷ Francis I. Andersen, *The Hebrew Verbless Clause in the Pentateuch*, Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series 14 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), 25-27; Andersen, *Sentence in Biblical Hebrew*, 18-19.

¹¹⁸ Andersen, *Hebrew Verbless Clause*, 26; Benjamin Elson and Velma Pickett, *An Introduction to Morphology and Syntax* (Huntington Beach, CA: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1964), 57.

¹¹⁹ Andersen, *Sentence in Biblical Hebrew*, 19.

that describes or characterizes an object language.”¹²⁰ Miller cites Roman Jakobson who further defines metalanguage as the “reflexive use of natural language that describes or characterizes various aspects of language itself.”¹²¹ Miller and Jakobson contend that reported speech is one of two common uses of metalanguage. Miller argues that metapragmatics “further refines” Jakobson’s categorization of reported speech as one function of metalanguage: reported speech is metapragmatic in that it describes the “intentional, purposive, social behavior” and contextual aspects of an “original locution.”¹²² According to Miller, metapragmatics analyzes the original utterance (locution) of the speech made by the original speaker, the utterance (locution) of the one who reports the speech, and how these two locutions are put together in one instance of reported speech.¹²³

In his analysis of the verb in biblical Hebrew prose, Alviero Niccacci builds upon the text linguistic model as put forth by Harald Weinrich, a model that was later applied to biblical Hebrew in Wolfgang Schneider’s Hebrew grammar. Niccacci quotes Weinrich’s definition of text linguistics, pointing out that the goal of this method is to “describe all the elements of a language” and how these elements are used in written and oral communication.¹²⁴ The goal of his method is to identify “different sentence types, relationships among sentences, paragraphs, links among paragraphs and sections, and finally text structures.”¹²⁵ Weinrich, based on his study of “modern literary texts,” identifies two groups of verbal tenses: the first group functioning as “discourse” and the

¹²⁰Miller, *Representation of Speech*, 49.

¹²¹Ibid.

¹²²Ibid., 50.

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Alviero Niccacci, *The Syntax of the Verb in Classical Hebrew Prose*, trans. W. G. E. Watson, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series* 86 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 19.

¹²⁵Niccacci, “On the Hebrew Verbal System,” 118.

second group functioning as “narrative.”¹²⁶ With respect to the narrative tenses, Weinrich identifies three different aspects. The first aspect is “linguistic attitude,” or narrative/commentary. The second aspect is “emphasis,” or foreground/background. The third aspect is “linguistic perspective:” background or “anticipated information.”¹²⁷ In his study, Niccacci follows to some degree Schneider’s application of Weinrich’s study to the Hebrew verb.¹²⁸

John A. Cook, in his analysis of the biblical Hebrew verbal system, uses diachronic typology and grammaticalization theories.¹²⁹ In diachronic typology languages are classified according to a particular linguistic structure, such as tense-aspect-mood systems. Generalizations are then made “regarding the pattern of a given linguistic structure across languages.”¹³⁰ Because languages shift over time between structure types, diachronic typology also classifies languages according to shifts in types.¹³¹ Grammaticalization describes a process in which a particular word and its particular meaning “develops into an auxiliary word” and may continue to develop into a “grammatical marker.”¹³² For example, the simple past meaning of the biblical Hebrew *qatal* is a grammaticalized form developed from an original ‘resultative’ and ‘completive’ meaning.¹³³ Grammaticalization theories include the various principles of how linguistic

¹²⁶Niccacci, *Syntax of the Verb*, 19.

¹²⁷Ibid., 20.

¹²⁸Ibid., 19.

¹²⁹John A. Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb: The Expression of Tense, Aspect, and Modality in Biblical Hebrew*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 7 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 185.

¹³⁰Ibid., 185.

¹³¹Ibid., 186.

¹³²John Andrew Cook, “The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System: A Grammaticalization Approach” (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2002), 189-90; Lyle Campbell, *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 238.

¹³³Cook, “Biblical Hebrew Verbal System,” 209-10.

features become grammaticalized, taking into account “various cross-linguistic phenomena and universal tendencies in language change.”¹³⁴

Robert Holmstedt analyzes the relative clause in biblical Hebrew according to a particular model of generative linguistics: Chomsky’s Minimalist Program. As described by Holmstedt, this model understands any given language to be the expression of certain principles of the Universal Grammar. As described by Holmstedt, Universal Grammar is “the theory of the initial state” of language and its attributes.¹³⁵ The Universal Grammar comprises of “*principles* of language”; each particular language contains certain “parameters” that determine how it expresses the principles of the Universal Grammar.¹³⁶

Modern linguistics and biblical Hebrew grammars. Most of the works listed above tend to focus on one particular aspect of biblical Hebrew grammar. However, there are two notable biblical Hebrew grammars that have applied modern linguistic principles.

An Introduction to biblical Hebrew Syntax by Bruce K. Waltke and Michael O’Connor, which has quickly become a standard grammar, combines the classical philological approach and modern linguistics. They argue that biblical Hebrew is best understood when compared with other Semitic languages, as in the comparative philological method. However, they add that biblical Hebrew is also better understood “in light of languages in general.”¹³⁷ A person who desires to study biblical Hebrew, they claim, is expected to be familiar with both Semitic languages and modern linguistic

¹³⁴Cook, “Biblical Hebrew Verbal System,” 190-91.

¹³⁵Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 160.

¹³⁶Ibid. Italics are original.

¹³⁷Waltke and O’Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 44.

principles.¹³⁸

Waltke and O'Connor observe that traditional grammars focus on the level of the clause. These traditional grammars understand syntax as "the study of the use of individual words, phrases, and clauses."¹³⁹ They explain that linguists have recently expressed dissatisfaction with this limitation and have sought to broaden the limits of analysis to larger groups of sentences. Many linguists employ discourse analysis to determine the grammatical patterns of various types of discourse texts. For example, hortatory texts exhibit certain grammatical patterns which discourse analysis seeks to detail. Waltke and O'Connor argue for keeping the level of analysis at the clause, staying in line with traditional grammars.¹⁴⁰

Waltke and O'Connor do provide some analysis that one would find in traditional grammars. Similar to traditional grammars, Waltke and O'Connor have separate discussions of the nominative, genitive, and accusative in biblical Hebrew. While they state that cases are not used in biblical Hebrew, and make reference to works that argue against such a system in biblical Hebrew, they believe the case system "provides a convenient framework" for studying nouns.¹⁴¹ Moreover, they assign labels for particular functions consistent with traditional grammars, such as the accusative of specification.¹⁴² They also maintain the traditional understanding of the *vav*-perfect.¹⁴³ Furthermore, Waltke and O'Connor acknowledge the importance of comparative Semitic studies, and throughout their grammar references are made to various Semitic languages

¹³⁸Waltke and O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 44.

¹³⁹*Ibid.*, 53.

¹⁴⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*, 125. See also n. 1.

¹⁴²*Ibid.*, 173.

¹⁴³*Ibid.*, 525.

to highlight various aspects of biblical Hebrew grammar.¹⁴⁴

Despite these similarities with traditional grammars, Waltke and O'Connor's grammar departs from traditional grammars. Waltke and O'Connor do not present detailed discussions of various linguistic theories; however, the reader will find many references to modern linguistic works and applications of broad linguistic principles that Waltke and O'Connor believe inform biblical Hebrew grammar. For example, their discussion of the nominal (verbless) clause is based primarily on the works of Francis Andersen, who employs the tagmemic model.¹⁴⁵ Waltke and O'Connor also broaden the basis of comparison with biblical Hebrew from related Semitic languages to all languages of the world.¹⁴⁶ In keeping with this principle, they describe the Niphal in terms of ergativity, a concept Waltke and O'Connor claim is found in Basque and Eskimo languages.¹⁴⁷ While Waltke and O'Connor's grammar retains some features found in traditional grammars, their work begins to incorporate modern linguistic principles.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴Waltke and O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, xi.

¹⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 130.

¹⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 44.

¹⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 382.

¹⁴⁸To be fair, although this dissertation describes Waltke and O'Connor as shifting towards modern linguistic principles, some linguistic Hebraists fault them for following more traditional methods. As noted above, Holmstedt includes Waltke and O'Connor's work when he critiques standard reference grammars, labeling them as "inadequate" (Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 3). David A. Dawson argues that Waltke and O'Connor "blow hot and cold" on discourse analysis, and that their decision to focus on the clause makes their analysis unclear. David Allan Dawson, *Text-Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 177 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 25, 26. Although they use Waltke and O'Connor's grammar "extensively," van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze note that the focus of Waltke and O'Connor's grammar on the sentence as the largest unit "implies a narrow view of the knowledge of a language" (van der Merwe, Naudé, Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 21). It is odd that van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze fault Waltke and O'Connor for limiting their view of Hebrew on the level of the sentence, when van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze do the same. Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze admittedly limit their own grammar, keeping their analyses within the limits of the sentence. They state that their grammar is "fairly traditional" in its structure "for didactic reasons" (*ibid.*, 11). Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze adopt a "wide definition of what constitutes the knowledge of a language." First, the knowledge of Hebrew, they contend, "includes the ability to understand the organization (grammar) and meaning (semantics) of the language at the level of pronunciation, forms, phrases, clauses, sentences and texts" (*ibid.*; parenthetical statements original) Second, they continue, "it

What Waltke and O'Connor start, C. H. van der Merwe, Jackie A. Naudé and Jan H. Kroeze fully embrace. Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze write their intermediate grammar with the express purpose of helping their readers interpret biblical Hebrew. With this in mind, they limit their grammatical analysis to the level of the clause. However, they do introduce, when necessary, more recent findings from linguistic studies.¹⁴⁹ Various aspects of the authors' analyses include "existing knowledge of BH," and the structure of the grammar does not stray far from traditional grammars. However, the influence of modern linguistic principles is noticeable, particularly in their definition of the clause. As in Waltke-O'Connor, a nominal clause is defined as a clause without a verb, and a verbal clause is a clause that contains a verb. A clause in which a noun precedes a verb is not a nominal clause (the traditional Semitic definition), but it is rather the "fronting of a constituent" which has several semantic-pragmatic functions.¹⁵⁰ While the authors intentionally keep linguistic matters in the background, they concede that their own linguistic interests "played an unconscious role" in writing the grammar.¹⁵¹

also includes the ability to understand the use of the above-mentioned linguistic constructions (pragmatics and sociolinguistics)" (ibid.; parenthetical statement original). It appears, therefore, that their reference grammar focuses on the first part of knowing Hebrew (its 'grammar' and 'syntax'), structured for teaching purposes after traditional grammars. Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze state that they have plans for a second volume in which they will cover the second part of learning Hebrew ('pragmatics' and 'sociolinguistics') (ibid. See n. 149 below). Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze admit, then, that the traditional method still works, otherwise they would not have used it for "didactic reasons." Van der Merwe's, Naudé's, and Kroeze's need for a second volume demonstrates the impracticality of their system because they need supplemental volumes to explain their particular system. Van der Merwe's, Naudé's, and Kroeze's use of a traditional structure for didactic reasons indicates that their system does not teach well. As will be seen in the discussion of Robert Longacre's work below, linguistic methods that seek to describe units beyond the clause force paradigms upon the Hebrew text that fail to adequately and accurately describe the syntax of clauses and passages as a whole. Furthermore, a study that takes into account units larger than the clause is better left to commentaries and studies of entire biblical books, not a grammar (see Waltke and O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 54). The study of larger units of text cannot be undertaken until the relationship of clauses is understood.

¹⁴⁹Many linguistic concerns, such as the description and analyses of text types, "inter-sentence relationships," "speech acts and socio-linguistic conventions," are left for a "contemplated next volume" (van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 11).

¹⁵⁰Ibid., 336-37.

¹⁵¹Ibid., 11.

Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze fail to make comparisons between Arabic—or any other Semitic language—and biblical Hebrew in their analyses, the most evident shift from the classical philological method. Additionally, they make no mention of the benefit that Arabic, or any other Semitic language, has in explaining difficult grammatical issues in biblical Hebrew. For example, in their analysis of the Piel, they do not list intensiveness as a meaning of the stem, nor do they compare the biblical Hebrew Piel with identical forms in other Semitic languages.¹⁵² Modern linguistic principles serve as their model; this model is evident in the terminology employed throughout the grammar. For example, a clause with a fronted preposition may indicate that an “anterior construction is involved” and has a “discourse active referent.”¹⁵³ While the authors utilize “existing knowledge” of biblical Hebrew in their grammar, they have moved the study of biblical Hebrew further from its classical philological roots.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵²Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 79-81.

¹⁵³*Ibid.*, 254. Italics are original.

¹⁵⁴In the previous decade, B. M. Rocine published a linguistic-based introductory Hebrew grammar. The works of Niccacci and Longacre serve as the foundation of his beginning grammar. Rocine writes his grammar because other beginning grammars focus on “the parts and pieces” of the language without showing how they fit together in the text. B. M. Rocine, *Learning Biblical Hebrew: A New Approach Using Discourse Analysis* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000), v. Alongside the normal Hebrew paradigms, Rocine introduces the beginning student to discourse analysis and how it applies to biblical Hebrew. More recently, F. I. Andersen and A. Dean Forbes produced their linguistically informed grammar intended for intermediate and advanced biblical Hebrew students. Francis I. Andersen and A. Dean Forbes, *Biblical Hebrew Grammar Visualized*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 6 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012), xi. Andersen and Forbes apply their version of text-linguistics (or ‘renascent corpus linguistics’)—“the linguistic analyses of texts”—although they rely “on many of the insights and methods developed by modern linguists” (*ibid.*, 5). Andersen and Forbes fault traditional grammars for focusing too narrowly on the word: its phonology, morphology, and the division of words into “word classes” and the meanings of each word class (*ibid.*, 5, 334). Andersen and Forbes prefer to analyze biblical Hebrew on the level of the clause—‘phrase-structure grammar’—and develop rules for certain phrase structures; each particular phrase structure can be represented by a ‘phrase structure tree’ (*ibid.*, 6). For example, they note that Ronald J. Williams lists nine meanings of the preposition כִּי, which includes ‘comparison’ (*ibid.*, 335). Andersen and Forbes, instead of beginning with כִּי, “begin with clauses in which there is a ‘comparative’ clause immediate constituent (CIC)” (*ibid.*, 336). They then determine the “formal linguistic marks” of a ‘comparative’ clause, which is not located in the preposition כִּי “but in the whole construction in which something is compared with something else” (*ibid.*). Andersen and Forbes’s grammar is not listed above with Waltke-O’Connor or van der Merwe-Naudé-Kroeze because Andersen and Forbes’s grammar would seem to have a smaller audience. Their grammar applies a specific linguistic method with its own terminology; the reader of *Biblical Hebrew Grammar Visualized* would probably spend more time

The influence of modern linguistics on biblical Hebrew grammar.

Textlinguistics, or discourse analysis, has played a large role in the study of biblical Hebrew grammar. This particular method details the syntactic characteristics prevalent in various types of text. Robert Longacre, whose work is reviewed below, employs this method.

Longacre, in his influential work *Joseph: A Story of Divine Providence*, applies his textlinguistic method to the Joseph story in Genesis. Before he gives his analysis of the story, Longacre describes his verbal ranking system for various types of text. For example, Longacre develops for narrative texts a “verbal spectrum” that moves from “relatively dynamic” clauses to “relatively static” clauses.¹⁵⁵ A clause is placed higher or lower on the spectrum with respect to how the clause moves the narrative forward. Longacre also provides rankings schemes for clauses found in hortatory and predictive paragraphs.¹⁵⁶ The verbal ranking scheme for narrative texts is given below in table 1.¹⁵⁷

Longacre also identifies nine different paragraph types that may occur in any given discourse. These nine paragraph types (sequence, simple, reason, result, comment, amplification, paraphrase, coordinate, and antithetical) are structured differently relative to the type of discourse. For example, a sequence paragraph found in a narrative discourse will not necessarily resemble a sequence paragraph found in predictive discourse. Longacre then applies his verbal ranking scheme and paragraph analyses to the story of Joseph. Though Longacre appears thorough, his study is cumbersome and

learning the particular linguistic system than learning biblical Hebrew. Waltke-O'Connor and van der Merwe-Naudé-Kroeze are relatively simpler and clearer, and able to reach more students.

¹⁵⁵Robert E. Longacre, *Joseph: A Story of Divine Providence; A Text Theoretical and Textlinguistic Analysis of Genesis 37 and 39-48* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 78.

¹⁵⁶Longacre identifies another type of paragraph—expository—but does not provide a verbal ranking scheme for this type of paragraph. He argues that a need exists for more study on expository texts in the Hebrew Bible before a verbal spectrum can be developed (ibid., 111).

¹⁵⁷Ibid., 79.

difficult to follow.¹⁵⁸

Table 1. Longacre’s verbal ranking scheme for narrative texts.

Band 1: Storyline	1. Preterite Primary
Band 2: Secondary	2.1 Perfect initial (without <i>vav</i>) 2.2 Noun + perfect
Band 3: Backgrounded Activities	3.1 הָיָה + participle 3.2 Participle 3.3 Noun + participle
Band 4: Setting + terminus	4.1 Preterite of הָיָה 4.2 Perfect of הָיָה 4.3 Nominal clause 4.4 Existential clause with הָיָה
Band 5	5. Negation of verb clause

Describing the impetus of his analysis, Longacre notes that he “exploits” two clues regarding “Hebrew discourse structure” found in Gesenius-Kautzsch and elaborates on them in light of linguistic research.¹⁵⁹ First, he argues that Gesenius-Kautzsch’s description of the *vav*-consecutive as the “special narrative tense” supports discourse grammarians’ observation that every language prefers a particular tense to carry the storyline.¹⁶⁰ Second, he argues that the traditional Arabic definition of verbal and nominal clauses indicates that Arab grammarians “had a feel for the difference in discourse function” between the verbal and nominal clause. However, he does not believe the “grand dichotomy” between verbal and nominal clauses, as defined by Semitic grammarians, to be constructive. Longacre instead “absorbs” verbal and nominal clauses

¹⁵⁸In Longacre’s defense, Dawson contends that the complexity of Longacre’s work is evidence that his primary audience was linguists, not Hebraists (Dawson, *Text-Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew*, 64). In contrast to the cumbersome and often confusing analysis of Longacre, Dawson provides a clear and concise summary of Longacre’s methodology and conclusions.

¹⁵⁹Longacre, *Joseph*, 63.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., 62. See Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §142a.

into his verbal ranking system, and follows Kautzsch's redefinition of a clause with Subject-Verb word order. Verbal and nominal clauses are merely points along his verbal spectrum for narrative texts.¹⁶¹ Longacre's ranking scheme, however, is subjective. He ranks a הַנְּה + participle clause higher than a noun + participle clause, but provides no criteria for this hierarchy. His overall scheme ultimately depends on context, and not, as he argues, on the deviation from a "preterite primary" clause. Context, not a verbal ranking scheme, determines whether a clause provides supplemental material or the mainline of the narrative.

Longacre contends that, in narrative texts, the story is carried by preterite initial clauses: any clause that is not fronted by a preterite contains supplemental information. He argues, for example, that a noun+perfect clause (traditionally a nominal clause) indicates secondary or "preparatory" action.¹⁶² Hebrew narrative, however, can be carried by noun+perfect clauses. For example, noun+perfect clauses carry the narrative in the Joseph story (Gen 44:2b-3):

וַיַּעַשׂ כַּדְּבַר יוֹסֵף אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר:
הַבֹּקֶר אֹר וְהָאֲנָשִׁים שָׁלְחוּ הֵמָּה וְחַמְרֵיהֶם:
הֵם יָצְאוּ אֶת־הָעִיר לֹא הִרְחִיקוּ וַיּוֹסֶף אָמַר לְאִשְׁרֵי עַל־בֵּיתוֹ קוּם רִדְף אַחֲרֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים
וְהַשְׁגָּתָם וְאִמְרַת אֱלֹהִים לָמָּה שְׁלַמְתֶּם רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה:

¹⁶¹Longacre, *Joseph*, 78. Although Longacre dismisses the "grand dichotomy" between verbal and nominal clauses, Semitic grammarians greatly emphasized the differences between the two. In his Arabic grammar, William Wright notes that Arab grammarians "attach no small importance" to the distinction between verbal and nominal clauses (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§113). Kautzsch, despite rejecting the traditional definition, notes that the definition "is indispensable to the more delicate appreciation of Hebrew syntax" (Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §140e). Furthermore, Kautzsch admits that the traditional definition is "at least relatively correct," and "is often of great importance in Hebrew" (ibid., §140f). If such a distinction is of great importance to native Semitic grammarians, modern grammarians would be remiss to disregard such an important difference. The distinction between the two types of clauses lies on the focus of each clause. The nominal clause, beginning with the subject, focuses on the identity, description, or state of the subject. On the other hand, the verbal clause, beginning with the verb, centers on the action. This is the criterion by which Semitic grammarians differentiated clauses. Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax: A Traditional Semitic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, forthcoming), §38c. See Gen 3:1a and 3:7d in chap. 3.

¹⁶²Longacre, *Joseph*, 71. Arab and Jewish grammarians would reject this notion that noun+perfect clauses are secondary or preparatory.

And he did according to the word of Joseph, which he spoke. *The morning became light, and the men were sent, they and their donkeys.* They had gone out of the city, they had not gone far, *and Joseph said to him who was over his house, “Rise, pursue after the men. Then overtake them and say to them, ‘Why have you paid evil instead of good?’”*¹⁶³

Longacre ranks clauses beginning with וַיְהִי in the fourth band of his verbal scheme. He maintains that these clauses provide the setting of a narrative or they close the story. He supports this claim by stating that the verb היה (*be*), “is typically descriptive and depictive” and does not move the narrative forward.¹⁶⁴ This is a misunderstanding of the verb היה: the verb היה is a real verb depicting real action. Hebrew, as well as Arabic, does not have a verbal form that means “to be.”¹⁶⁵

Dismissing traditional grammatical categories, Longacre applies his particular linguistic model in order to describe biblical Hebrew narrative.¹⁶⁶ Longacre’s work is

¹⁶³According to traditional Semitic grammar, the nominal clause is employed in Gen 44:3 because the author wants to shift the focus momentarily on the brothers and not on their actions. The flow of the narrative is not interrupted and the actions depicted in v. 3 are not preparatory or secondary. Other examples of noun+perfect clauses carrying a narrative are Gen 1:2, 27; 4:4; Exod 1:7; Josh 6:24; Ruth 1:14. For a discussion on word order and narrative see Ruth 1:1b in chap. 4. See also Gen 3:1a in chap. 3.

¹⁶⁴Longacre, *Joseph*, 64.

¹⁶⁵This is evident in that the predicate of the verb היה is in the accusative (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§40, §122; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §125w; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13aa n44). See Gen 3:1a in chap. 3 above. Joüon, however, does argue for היה as copula “when one wishes to specify the temporal sphere of a nominal clause” (Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §154m; Ziadeh and Winder, *Introduction to Modern Arabic*, 75). According to traditional Semitic grammar, however, the verb היה means that someone or something existed, or that an event happened. While וַיְהִי may provide the setting of a narrative, it often depicts the occurrence of an event. In Ruth 1:1, for example, the verb היה relates an event. Ruth 1:1 reads, וַיְהִי בִּימֵי שְׁפֹט הַשֹּׁפֵטִים וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ וְיִלְדָּאִישׁ מִבֵּית לְחָם יְהוּדָה לְגֹר בְּשָׂדֵי מוֹאָב הוּא וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּשְׁנֵי בָנָיו: (“And it happened in the days of the judging of the judges, and a famine happened in the land. And a man from Bethlehem of Judah went to sojourn in the fields of Moab—he, his wife, and his two sons.”). In this verse, וַיְהִי indicates that a famine happened; the verb does not simply state that there was a famine. Contrary to Longacre, וַיְהִי may be used to move a narrative forward. For example, the two verbal clauses וַיְהִי־עָרֵב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר that occur throughout Gen 1 move the creation account from one day to the next day. Other examples include Judg 6:40; 11:29; 1 Sam 15:10; 2 Sam 3:1; 2 Kgs 3:27.

¹⁶⁶Longacre’s method repudiates the traditional understanding of clauses, leading him to place over Hebrew grammar an artificial and subjective verbal ranking system. A particular clause may or may not function in the role Longacre assigns it; ultimately context must determine whether or not a given clause serves in these functions. Moreover, Longacre’s assertion that noun+perfect clauses always represents secondary action in narrative texts does not always account for the evidence. He provides no criteria to determine how a הִנֵּה+participle clause outranks a noun+participle clause. His examination becomes too complex when he adds ranking schemes for hortatory and predictive texts. The traditional

indicative of how linguistic Hebraists approach biblical Hebrew grammar.

Modern linguistics as a paradigm for biblical Hebrew grammar. Due to their discontent with traditional grammars, linguistic Hebraists have altered the study of biblical Hebrew grammar:

1. Linguistic Hebraists rarely, if ever, avail themselves of native Semitic grammarians. Furthermore, even many references to other languages are through the research of other linguists, not native grammarians.¹⁶⁷
2. Linguistic Hebraists often place Arabic below Akkadian and Ugaritic, and some linguistic Hebraists appeal to non-Semitic languages more than Arabic. All languages of the world are capable of elucidating biblical Hebrew grammar; Arabic no longer holds a privileged position in biblical Hebrew grammar.¹⁶⁸
3. Linguistic Hebraists employ various and numerous linguistic models in order to explain biblical Hebrew grammar. Methods and models usually differ from one linguistic Hebraist to the next.¹⁶⁹

Semitic definition of clauses, however, provides a simpler and clearer analysis and is applicable in any text type.

¹⁶⁷For example, describing the choice between perfective or imperfective aspects with ‘gnomic expressions,’ Cook cites Östen Dahl’s observations on Slavic languages (Cook, “The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System,” 222). Holmstedt, discussing the issue of word order and the frequency of particular forms, refers to Matthew Dryer’s observations on the Auk dialect of Tlingit. Robert D. Holmstedt, “Word Order and Information Structure in Ruth and Jonah: A Generative-Typological Analysis,” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 54, no. 1 (2009):117-18. Khan develops his grammars for various Neo-Aramaic dialects through the lens of discourse analysis, not native grammarians. Geoffrey Khan, *A Grammar of Neo-Aramaic: The Dialect of the Jews of Arbel*, Handbuch der Orientalistik; Erste Abteilung: Der Nahe und Mittlere Osten (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 14; Khan, *Studies in Semitic Syntax*, xxxiv; Geoffrey Khan, *The Jewish Neo-Aramaic Dialect of Urmi*, Gorgias Neo-Aramaic Studies 2 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2008), xviii; Geoffrey Khan, *The Neo-Aramaic Dialect of Qaraqosh*, Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 36 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 20.

¹⁶⁸As mentioned above, Waltke and O’Connor describe the Niphal as ‘ergative,’ a concept found in Eskimo, Basque, and languages of European Georgia (Waltke and O’Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 382). They also appeal to Slavic languages to describe the Hebrew verbal system as an imperfective/perfective system (ibid., 348). Cook notes that the “majority position” that biblical Hebrew is a V-S language is called into question by the mere fact that most of the world’s languages are S-V: “SV languages outnumber VS languages by almost six to one. Thus, a priori, there is a better chance that BH is SV rather than VS” (Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb*, 235-36). Cynthia Miller-Naudé and C. H. J. van der Merwe cite Tsafiki—“a Barbacoan language spoken in the western lowlands of Ecuador”—to elucidate the particle הִנֵּה. Cynthia Miller-Naudé and C. H. J. van der Merwe, “הִנֵּה and Mirativity in Biblical Hebrew,” *Hebrew Studies* 52 (2011):59.

¹⁶⁹Van der Merwe explains that linguists who use functional approaches to grammar “commence with a hypothesis or theoretical frame of reference on specific linguistic notions and try to explain hitherto problematic Biblical Hebrew phenomena in terms of this hypothesis.” Linguists who use

Conclusion

Since its inception, Arabic served as the basis of the study of biblical Hebrew grammar. While Hebrew does not share all of the features of Arabic grammar, the description of biblical Hebrew grammar is benefitted by her sister language. Saadiah Gaon and those who followed him saw this benefit, and the use of Arabic grammar continued for centuries. It has not been until recently that biblical Hebrew grammarians have looked elsewhere for the basis of their analyses. With the advent of modern linguistic studies, the description of biblical Hebrew grammar has strayed further from its Semitic roots. This dissertation reintroduces the reader to a study of biblical Hebrew syntax based on a traditional Semitic approach.

generative approaches, “try to explain linguistic phenomena in terms of hypotheses concerning mankind’s inherent ‘language machine.’” Christo H. J. van der Merwe, “Discourse Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew Grammar,” in *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics*, ed. Robert D. Bergen (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1994), 17, 18. In his response to this dissertation, Cook critiques the author’s thesis, noting that the author pleads “that we reestablish the long-lost, pre-Akkadian days in which Arabic held ‘a privileged position in biblical Hebrew grammar’” (John A. Cook, external reader report of author’s dissertation, August 9, 2014). Elsewhere he asserts that the author offers as a paradigm for biblical Hebrew “a particular grammatical tradition originating among early Jewish and Arab grammarians and becoming codified by European scholars in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries prior to the discovery of Akkadian and the development of structuralist linguistics” (ibid.). Cook’s comments highlight two things. First, Cook apparently places Akkadian above, or on equal footing with, Arabic (see above). Second, Cook’s mention of structuralist linguistics demonstrates that he considers linguistics to be the paradigm for biblical Hebrew study. Cook’s comments clarify the stark difference between modern linguistic Hebraists and traditional Semitic grammar.

CHAPTER 2

GRAMMATICAL ANALYSES AND METHODOLOGICAL COMPARISONS BASED ON GENESIS 2:1-25

This chapter provides an example of a grammatical analysis of Genesis chapter 2 according to a traditional Semitic grammar. Many traditional Semitic grammatical categories and definitions are introduced that are used throughout the dissertation. The analysis does not proceed verse-by-verse but is more selective to allow for more detailed interactions with various linguistic views. Barry Bandstra's commentary on Genesis in the Baylor Press series serves as the primary basis of comparison; other linguistic Hebraists are mentioned when appropriate.

Grammatical Analysis

The division of verses into smaller sections typically follows the breaks marked by the stronger disjunctive accents *athnach*, *zaqeph*, and *tiphcha*. The divisions serve as a means for quick reference, and to break the verses into smaller, manageable parts.

2:4a [אֱלֹהִים תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ]

The account of the creation of man begins with a nominal clause. In biblical Hebrew there are two general clause types: verbal and nominal clauses. The distinction between the two types is essential not only in biblical Hebrew grammar but also in Arabic grammar.¹ The nominal clause consists of a subject—the initiator—and a predicate—the

¹W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language: Translated from the German of Caspari and Edited With Numerous Additions and Corrections*, 3rd ed., ed. W. Robertson Smith and M. J. de Goeje (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 2:§113; E. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 28th ed., trans. A. E. Cowley, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), §140e. The same distinction is made in

announcement. Arab grammarians call the initiator “that with which a beginning is made”: الْمُبْتَدَأُ (*al-mubtada’u*).² The announcement—الْخَبَرُ (*al-khabaru*)—describes or identifies the initiator. The nominal clause, therefore, focuses on the initiator.

The verbal clause, on the other hand, focuses primarily on the action of the verb. The subject of a verbal clause is the agent, الْفَاعِلُ (*al-fā’ilu*). While the agent is the doer of the action, the agent is not the focus of the verbal clause.³ Hebrew narrative is predominately carried by verbal clauses. Nominal clauses, on the other hand, are often used to introduce a new subject, topic, or story. A nominal clause in Genesis 2:4a begins a new account, the account of the creation of man.

In a verbless clause both the initiator and the announcement are in the nominative; however, some grammarians argue that the terms ‘nominative,’ ‘accusative,’ and ‘genitive’ are not sufficient for biblical Hebrew syntax. For example, Jan Kroeze argues for new terms to replace ‘nominative’ and ‘accusative,’ contending that the terms ‘nominative’ and ‘accusative’ refer primarily to particular case endings, which have dropped out of biblical Hebrew.⁴ Kroeze states that although an argument could be made for the accusative and nominative functions in biblical Hebrew through comparative Semitic philology, “that doesn’t help the student” because the student usually does not

modern Arabic; Farhat J. Ziadeh and R. Bayly Winder, *An Introduction to Modern Arabic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 23-24.

²This dissertation uses the International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES) transliteration system for Arabic.

³Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§113. The word order of the verbal and nominal clauses highlights the function of each clause. In the nominal clause the initiator is typically first, with the announcement following. In the verbal clause, the verb is first with the subject, or agent, following. A clause in which a subject precedes the verb is still a nominal clause and focuses on the initiator. For more on the word order of clauses see chap. 4 below. Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax: A Traditional Semitic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, forthcoming), §11b-c, §38.

⁴Jan H. Kroeze, “Alternatives for the Nominative in Biblical Hebrew,” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 46, no.1 (2001):33; idem., “Alternatives for the Accusative in Biblical Hebrew,” in *Studien zur hebräischen Grammatik*, ed. Andreas Wagner, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 156 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), 11.

know other Semitic languages and “can’t *see*” the accusative or nominative in biblical Hebrew.⁵ He adds that even among Semitic languages with case endings, the nominative, genitive, and accusative are not used in “exactly the same way.” For example, Kroeze explains that in Arabic the accusative follows the copula, whereas in other Semitic languages the nominative follows.⁶

Kroeze’s solution is to “differentiate between the morphological, syntactic and semantic aspects associated” with the nominative and the accusative functions.⁷ In the first part of this three-tiered analysis, Kroeze identifies any morphological markers that identify the accusative or the nominative. For the nominative, he observes that there are no morphological markers except in the pronouns (nominative *אֲתָהּ*; accusative *אֹתָהּ*; the genitive suffixes *ִי* - and *ִי*). Aside from the pronoun, word order determines the function of a noun in the nominative.⁸ As with the nominative, Kroeze notes that the accusative lacks morphological markers. The particle *אֵת* is used, however, to mark the direct object, and often the indefinite direct object and the “nominal adjunct.”⁹

Kroeze’s second level of analysis pertains to the structure of clauses with nouns in the nominative or accusative function: syntax.¹⁰ With regard to the nominative,

⁵Kroeze, “Alternatives for the Accusative,” 12. The italics are original to the quote. See also idem., “Alternatives for the Nominative,” 33.

⁶Kroeze, “Alternatives for the Nominative,” 33. Although he does not explicitly state so, by “other languages” he apparently includes biblical Hebrew. See for example his analysis of Gen 1:2 (ibid., 47). Contrary to Kroeze, Semitic languages *do* use cases similarly, as even the most basic comparison between Arabic and other Semitic languages demonstrates. A comparison between Arabic and biblical Hebrew reveals that although biblical Hebrew lacks the case *endings*, it still retains the case *functions*. Furthermore, Kroeze misunderstands the verb *היה*; see 3:1a in chap. 3 below.

⁷Kroeze, “Alternatives for the Accusative,” 12; idem., “Alternatives for the Nominative,” 33.

⁸Kroeze, “Alternatives for the Nominative,” 34-35.

⁹Kroeze, “Alternatives for the Accusative,” 12-15. A ‘nominal adjunct’ is called in traditional terms an ‘adverbial accusative.’ See his examples of nominal adjuncts (ibid., 22).

¹⁰Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jackie A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, Biblical Languages: Hebrew 3 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 367.

the subject of a verb is contained in the verb, or it may be explicitly stated by a noun or pronoun. The subject typically agrees with the verb in gender and number.¹¹ The vocative, or ‘addressee,’ is an “extra-clausal constituent” that is not joined to the main clause. The addressee, according to Kroeze, should not be regarded as the subject of a verb because it does not determine the person, gender, or number of a verb.¹² With regard to the accusative, the verb may directly govern a noun: a direct object, or in Kroeze’s terminology ‘complement.’ Verbs of answering, commanding, etc. may take two objects. Nouns which act adverbially, ‘nominal adjuncts,’ may be omitted or may provide additional information to the clause.¹³

The third level of analysis examines the meaning of the relationships of words in the nominative or accusative function with the rest of the clause: semantics.¹⁴ On this level, Kroeze identifies, for example, the function of a direct object as an affected or effected patient. Nominal complements may function as content, material, or location.¹⁵ Subjects may function as an agent, a positioner (or one who controls a state), processed (one who goes through a Process), force (a “non-controlling entity” that starts a Process), or zero (“an entity primarily involved in a State”).¹⁶

¹¹Kroeze, “Alternatives for the Nominative,” 36.

¹²Ibid., 40-41.

¹³Kroeze, “Alternatives for the Accusative,” 16, 18.

¹⁴See van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 365.

¹⁵Kroeze, “Alternatives for the Accusative,” 19, 21.

¹⁶Kroeze, “Alternatives for the Nominative,” 44. For the definitions of the nominative functions, see Simon C. Dik, *The Theory of Functional Grammar*, Part 1, *The Structure of the clause*, 2nd rev. ed., ed. Kees Hengeveld, Functional Grammar Series 20 (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1997), 114, 118. In their reference grammar, van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze do not employ the labels ‘nominative,’ ‘accusative,’ or ‘genitive’ because biblical Hebrew does not have case endings. In their glossary, they note that these labels are used in “languages that express grammatical relations explicitly” with endings. For the genitive they introduce Hebrew terms. A word in the absolute form is called נִפְרָד, and the relationship between words in a construct package is called סְמִיכוּת (“support”). The head noun is נִסְמָךְ (“supported”), and the noun following is the סִמָּךְ (“supporter”) (van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 191-92, 241-47, 247-49, 351, 358, 361). Waltke and O’Connor readily admit that the

It is not clear how Kroeze's analyses and suggestions contribute to the discussion of case in biblical Hebrew.¹⁷ Kroeze decries the terms 'nominative' and 'accusative' because students cannot "see" the nominative or accusative. In their place, he supplies idiosyncratic terms that lack historical usage or understanding: 'zero,' 'processed,' 'force,' 'positioner.' He relabels the accusative of direct object as "nominal complement" and the adverbial accusative as 'nominal adjunct.' The term 'vocative,' argues Kroeze, is inadvisable because it is "also the name of a case in Latin with distinctive endings." Kroeze submits, therefore, the new label 'addressee' in place of 'vocative.'¹⁸ In order for Kroeze's suggestions to be beneficial, the student must be aware that Kroeze is adopting a portion of Simon Dik's terms, and the student must have a working knowledge of functional grammar. This criticism is not limited to Kroeze; the same could be said for Bandstra. The student must be aware that Bandstra grounds his particular functional grammar model on M. A. K. Halliday's model. In his analysis of Gen 3:15, Bandstra throws in a litany of terms the student must learn.¹⁹

Kroeze's solutions do not make the situation any easier for the student of biblical Hebrew. Whether one prefers traditional terms or Kroeze's, the reader must depend on word order, context, or other indicators to determine the function of a word. The terms 'nominative,' 'accusative,' and 'genitive' still serve as helpful labels that accurately describe the phenomena in the text. These terms have their Arabic equivalents and have historical usage and understanding, even though the use of a case may at times

use of a case system "as a component of advanced Hebrew grammatical study" has come under scrutiny. However, they draw attention to the fact that "its usefulness as a tool of pedagogy and comparative study cannot be denied." Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 125n1.

¹⁷See Gen 2:14c for his view of the pronoun as copula and a refutation of his view. See Gen 3:1a regarding the verb *היה* as a copula.

¹⁸Kroeze, "Alternatives for the Nominative," 34n3.

¹⁹See Gen 3:15c in chap. 3 below.

vary. ‘Accusative’ is still an appropriate term because it describes a word governed by a verb directly (direct object, absolute object) or indirectly (adverb). Although the case endings have dropped out, the case *functions* are still prevalent in biblical Hebrew.²⁰

Case usage between Arabic and biblical Hebrew are virtually identical.

For example, the construct package in 2:4a—תֹּלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ—is the predicate, or announcement, of the nominal clause. The head noun in a construct package may be in the nominative, genitive, or accusative case, depending on its function in the clause.²¹ In 2:4a, the head noun תֹּלְדוֹת is in the nominative because it is the predicate of the verbless nominal clause; the two nouns הַשָּׁמַיִם and הָאָרֶץ are in the genitive. When compared to the same clause in Van Dyke’s Arabic translation of the Hebrew Bible, the same construction is used, and the relationship of the words are made explicit by the case endings:

هَذِهِ مَبَادِيُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

hādhihi mabādi’u as-samāwāti wāl-’arḍi

These (are) the beginnings of the heavens and the earth.

The head noun مَبَادِيُ (*mabādi’u*) has the nominative case ending *-u* because it is the announcement of the nominal clause. The two nouns السَّمَاوَاتِ (*as-samāwāti*) and الْأَرْضِ (*al-arḍi*) have the genitive case ending *-i* because they are in the genitive to the head noun.²² Arabic, with its extant case endings, provides a correct paradigm for understanding biblical Hebrew nouns.

The initiator of the nominal clause in 2:4a is the demonstrative pronoun הִוא. Because it is indeclinable, the pronoun is in the place of the nominative.²³

²⁰Russell Fuller provides a helpful hint in determining the case function of a Hebrew word: “As a general rule, if a word (noun) is not a subject of a verb, a genitive, a vocative, or a word in apposition to these, the word is in the accusative” (Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13a).

²¹Ibid., §12a;

²²The Modern Standard Arabic translation of the Old Testament—*The Book of Life*, or *The New Arabic Version* (NAV)—also has the same construction with the same endings.

²³The same is true of the pronoun هُوَ in Arabic.

Demonstrative pronouns—اسْمُ الْإِشَارَةِ (*ismu l- 'ishārati* “the noun of indication”)—always have a referent. The referent for the pronoun in 2:4a is the account of the creation of man in the following verses.²⁴ The announcement, תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ, provides the identity of the initiator: the following accounts are identified as the generations of the heaven and earth.²⁵

Construct packages are categorized by Semitic grammarians as ‘annexation’: the addition of one word to another. There are two types of annexation: proper and improper. In improper annexation, the genitive does not describe or define the head noun. Improper annexation—الإِضَافَةُ غَيْرُ الْحَقِيقِيَّةِ (*al- 'idāfatu ghayru l-haqīqīyati* “the improper annexation”), or الإِضَافَةُ غَيْرُ الْمَحْضَةِ (*al- 'idāfatu ghayru l-mahḍati* “the impure annexation”)—consists of two or more words brought together for ease of expression. In improper annexation, the words in construct do not form one conceptual unit. The head noun must be a participle or adjective, and the genitive functions in the place of an accusative of specification or an accusative of direct object to the head noun.²⁶ For example, Genesis 39:6 reads:

וַיְהִי יוֹסֵף יָפֶה-תֹּאֵר וַיְהִי מְרֻאָה:

Now Joseph became *handsome with respect to form* and *handsome with respect to appearance*.

In both genitive constructions the head noun is the adjective יָפֶה. In both instances the

²⁴Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§190d.

²⁵Much has been written on Gen 2:4 trying to determine if the verse should be placed with 1:1-2:3 or with the following verses. In BHS, paragraphs (פסקות *pisqot* or פרשיות *parashiyyot*) are marked either פ (“open,” פתוחה *petuḥah*) or ס (“closed,” סתומה *setumah*), depending on the line position of the new paragraph. Israel Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*, trans. and ed. E. J. Revell, The Society of Biblical Literature Masoretic Studies 5 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1980), #74. The section markers פ and ס were not lightly regarded by Jewish scribes and scholars. The *Sifre* to Deuteronomy instructs that scrolls mislabeling *petuḥah* and *setumah* should be thrown out. Jacob Neusner, trans., *Pisqaot One through One Hundred Forty-Three: Debarim, Waethanan, Egeḇ, Re'eh*, vol. 1 of *Sifre to Deuteronomy: An Analytical Translation* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 101. Gen 2:3 and 2:4 are separated by a closed paragraph; v. 4 should not be joined with v. 3 and the preceding section.

²⁶Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§75; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §12f. See Gen 2:9b below for a discussion on the accusative of specification.

adjective is followed by a noun specifying in what terms Joseph was handsome.

In contrast, proper annexation—*الإِضَافَةُ الْحَقِيقِيَّةُ* (*al-’iḏāfatu l-ḥaqīqīyatu* “the proper annexation”), or *الإِضَافَةُ الْمَحْضَةُ* (*al-’iḏāfatu l-mahḍatu* “the pure annexation”)—involves annexing two or more words to form one unit of meaning. For example, *דְּבָרֵי־יְהוָה* forms one unified thought; if the two words are separated they no longer form one concept.²⁷ In proper annexation the word in the genitive describes or defines the head noun. In the example *דְּבָרֵי־יְהוָה*, the words are not any particular words but the words of the Lord only.

The relationship between the head noun and its genitive in proper annexation may be understood by an implied preposition between the two words. The *ב* preposition indicates that the noun is a genitive of time or location. The *מִן* preposition is used for superlatives, partitives, or the genitive of material. For the genitive of possession and other various meanings, the *ל* preposition may be implied.²⁸ In Genesis 2:4a, the annexation is proper and a *ל* preposition may be implied between *תּוֹלְדוֹת* and *הַשָּׁמַיִם*: the generations *with reference to* the heavens.²⁹

When two genitives are governed by the same head noun, the head noun may or may not be repeated.³⁰ Although the head noun is not repeated in 2:4a, the last noun in

²⁷Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§75; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §12b.

²⁸There are instances in which the preposition is explicit. In 2 Sam 1:21 the *ב* preposition stands between the head noun and its genitive: *הָרִי בְּגִלְבָּעַ*. See also Gen 2:21c below for an explicit *מִן*.

²⁹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §12c-e. The rules laid out above for proper and improper annexation in biblical Hebrew are the same rules in Arabic. See Ihab Joseph Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons Between Classical Hebrew and Classical Arabic: A Study Based on the Translation of Mohammad ‘Id’s Arabic Grammar* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), 182-85; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§75-77.

³⁰See Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §128a; Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. and rev. T. Muraoka, *Subsidia Biblica* 14 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000), §129b. Examples in which the governing noun is not repeated are Gen 14:19; 27:28; Exod 22:21; 28:33. Examples in which the head noun is repeated are Gen 8:19; 24:53; 26:14; Exod 35:9; 2 Kgs 7:6.

the clause, **וְהָאָרֶץ**, is also in the genitive. The genitive **הָאָרֶץ** is in apposition to **הַשָּׁמַיִם**. The particular type of apposition is ‘conjunctive.’ Conjunctive apposition links two words that are in the same case; words in conjunctive apposition are typically joined by the particles **לֹא**, **אוֹ**, **וְ**, or **כִּי**.³¹ In 2:4a, both **הַשָּׁמַיִם** and **הָאָרֶץ** are in the genitive and are linked by the conjunctive *vav*.³²

2:4b [בְּהִבְרָאָם]

The infinitive construct with the **ב** preposition often expresses a temporal clause. Prepositional phrases often stand in the place of adverbial accusatives.³³

This particular prepositional phrase is literally translated “in the act of their being created.” The infinitive construct is not a verb but a verbal noun expressing a verbal action in the abstract. Arab grammarians call the infinitive **الْمَصْدَرُ** (*al-maṣḍaru* “the place whence anything goes forth, where it originates”) because it is from the infinitive they derive the finite verb.³⁴ Infinitives are not limited by person, number, and gender like the finite verb. The infinitive construct does not describe the origination of act of being created, and that action’s movement to completion, as a finite verb describes an action: “and he was created, and then . . .” Rather, the infinitive construct describes in the abstract the act itself of being created.³⁵

Because the infinitive construct has noun characteristics it may be in the place of a genitive, nominative, or accusative. In 2:4a, the infinitive construct is in the genitive to the **ב** preposition. If the infinitive construct has a suffix, the suffix may be either an

³¹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §25a.

³²See Gen 3:5e in chap. 3 regarding apposition.

³³Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §12a fn18. The same is true in Arabic. See Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§43.

³⁴Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§195.

³⁵Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §15. For a description of the reflexive Niphal see Ruth 1:3b in chap. 4 (ibid., §7a).

object or the subject of the infinitive. In 2:4a, the suffix is the subject of the infinitive construct.³⁶

2:4c [בְּיוֹם עָשָׂתָּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים]

As mentioned above, prepositional phrases often stand in the place of adverbial accusatives. The temporal clause in 2:4b consists of the ב preposition with an infinitive construct. Another means for temporal expression is the ב annexed to a temporal noun, like יום in 2:4c. Van Dyke’s Arabic translation highlights the accusative function of בְּיוֹם. Notice that يَوْمَ *yawma*—with the accusative ending -a—is an accusative of time functioning adverbially to the verb عَمِلَ ‘*amila*:

يَوْمَ عَمِلَ الرَّبُّ إِلَاهُ الْأَرْضَ وَالسَّمَاوَاتِ

yawma ‘amila ar-rabbu l-’ilahu l-’arda wās-samāwāti

On the day the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

The temporal clause in 2:4c adds more detail to the time in which God created the heavens and the earth. Bandstra, however, argues that the temporal clause in 2:4c modifies the verbal clause in 2:7.³⁷ For an explanation of his reasoning, and a refutation of his conclusion, see 2:4d below.

The day referred to by בְּיוֹם is further defined by the following infinitive construct עָשָׂתָּ. The proper name יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים is the subject of the infinitive construct. The infinitive construct also governs an object אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמַיִם (see 2:4d below). The typical word order when an infinitive construct has both a subject and an object is the subject follows the infinitive, and the object follows the subject.³⁸ As in 2:4b, the infinitive construct does not depict an event occurring (“God created”); rather, the infinitive construct describes the verbal action in the abstract (“the creating of God,” “the act of

³⁶Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §115; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §124g-j.

³⁷Barry Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Bible Series (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008), 118.

³⁸Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §115h.

God creating”).³⁹

2:4d [אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמַיִם:]

These two nouns are the accusatives of direct object to the infinitive construct עֲשׂוֹת. Word order and context make it clear that these two nouns are the objects, not the subjects of the infinitive construct.

Since the two accusatives are indeterminate, Bandstra states that perhaps שָׁמַיִם and אֶרֶץ “have not been defined or made known to the hearer.” He suggests that after the *athnach* in verse 4 the account of creation begins anew, starting back at the beginning of creation.⁴⁰ Indeterminate nouns typically introduce grammatically unknown people or things in biblical Hebrew narrative.⁴¹ Although אֶרֶץ and שָׁמַיִם do not have the article, they have been made known and defined to the reader earlier in verse 4. By using the indefinite terms Moses may be describing the matter or essence of heaven and earth. Or, Moses may view these terms as unique and, therefore, definite.⁴²

Bandstra’s contention that אֶרֶץ and שָׁמַיִם are unknown and undefined to the hearer or reader hinges on his emendation of the text. Bandstra argues that the temporal clause introduced by בַּיּוֹם does not modify the previous temporal clause in verse 4, but begins a new account. He translates verse 4 after the *athnach* as the first of five temporal/circumstantial clauses modifying the main verbal clause in verse 7. He revises the text by placing a period after the first temporal clause (at the *athnach*) and connecting the remainder of verse 4 with verse 5. His translation of verses 4 and 5 reads:

^{4a}These are the outcomes of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

³⁹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §15.

⁴⁰Bandstra, *Genesis I-II*, 119.

⁴¹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §33.

⁴²For example, שֶׁמֶשׁ often occurs with the article because it is unique. However, there are examples in which it does not have the article: Deut 4:41, 47; 33:14. In these examples שֶׁמֶשׁ is still considered definite because there is only one sun. In Ps 148:13 אֶרֶץ and שָׁמַיִם are still definite despite lacking the article.

^{4b}When in the day YHVH deity made earth and heavens, ⁵and before all of the bush of the field will be in the earth, . . . ⁴³

Bandstra goes against the masoretic accents. Furthermore, תולדות always refers to what is following, never to what is before.⁴⁴

2:5a [וְכָל שֵׁיטַת הַשָּׂדֶה טָרָם יְהוָה בְּאֶרֶץ]

Verse 5 begins with a nominal clause. In biblical Hebrew narrative, nominal clauses are descriptive. Moses uses the nominal clauses in verse 5, and in verse 6, to describe the condition of the earth before God created man.

The nominal clause in 2:5a has כָּל שֵׁיטַת הַשָּׂדֶה as its initiator. Unlike the nominal clause in 2:4a, this nominal clause has a verbal clause as the announcement: טָרָם יְהוָה בְּאֶרֶץ. Nominal clauses with verbal clauses as the announcement—compound nominal clauses—center on the initiator and its description, not on the action of the verbal clause. Compound nominal clauses are described as having “two faces” because they provide the description of the nominal clause and partake in the action of the verbal clause.⁴⁵ The accents often set the initiator apart in a compound nominal clause. In this

⁴³Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 118-19. Verse divisions ‘4a’ and ‘4b’ are not original to Bandstra. They were given to illustrate how he divides v. 4. The NJPS, NIV, and NRSV also follow this division. The NASB, ESV, and ASV, however, follow the masoretic division. See Ruth 1:4a in chap. 4 for a defense of the importance of the masoretic accents for biblical Hebrew syntax.

⁴⁴Scholars in general often emend the text in this manner to fit their particular theory of creation. In his response to this dissertation, John A. Cook critiques the author’s assertion that Bandstra emends the text in Gen 2:4-5. Cook writes, “This is a misunderstanding of source criticism; no emendation is going on.” John A. Cook, external reader report of author’s dissertation, August 9, 2014. However, in chap. 1, the author clearly states that the Masoretic Text will serve as the basis of analysis. Bandstra, however, clearly follows the emendation proposed in the BHS. The editors of BHS place Gen 2:4a before the *athnach* with Gen 1:1-2:3, beginning the new creation account with Gen 2:4b. Compare BHS with Aron Dotan’s *Biblia Hebraica Leningradensia* to notice the emendation. The Masoretes separate vv. 3 and 4 with an open paragraph (see n. 25 above); these two verses cannot go together. Furthermore, the *sof pasuq* dividing vv. 3 and 4 prevent Bandstra and the editors of BHS from placing these verses together, thus separating Gen 1:1-2:3 and 2:4ff. Moreover, the *sof pasuq* between vv. 4 and 5 demand that these verses remain separate. BHS’s and Bandstra’s emendation clearly goes against the Masoretic text; they base their speculations on their preconceived ideas of source criticism or their view of multiple creation accounts.

⁴⁵Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11c n4; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§120. The compound nominal clause is a type of casus pendens (see 2:14c below, and 3:12c in chap. 3, for a discussion on casus pendens).

particular clause, the *rebia* is the strongest disjunctive accent in the *zaqeph* segment, marking off the initiator.⁴⁶

The verb יִהְיֶה is preceded by the adverbial particle of time טָרָם. Verbal clauses invariably follow a Verb-Subject word order; however, the verb may have an object or adverb before it.⁴⁷ The particle טָרָם in 2:5a is functioning as an adverbial accusative of time: the shrubs had *not yet* come about in the fields.

Bandstra translates the verb יִהְיֶה as a future: “and before all of the bush of the field will be in the earth.” He contends that טָרָם is followed by a non-past finite verb; however, טָרָם typically occurs before a preterite.⁴⁸ Furthermore, the ancient translations clearly indicate that יִהְיֶה is in the past tense. Targum Onqelos reflects this understanding by rendering the preterite with a perfect:

וְכָל אֵילָנֵי חֻקְלָא עַד-לָא הָווּ בְּאַרְעָא

And all the trees of the field *had not yet existed* on the earth.

The LXX translates the preterite with the preposition *πρὸ* followed by an articular infinitive:

καὶ πᾶν χλωρὸν ἀγροῦ πρὸ τοῦ γενέσθαι ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς

And *before* all the green of the field *had come* upon the earth

The Vulgate expresses the preterite with the imperfect:

et omne virgultum agri antequam oreretur in terra

And *before* all of the thickets of the field *were sprouted* in the earth

The Van Dyke Arabic translation uses the negative particle *lām* with the jussive to negate the past action.⁴⁹

كُلُّ شَجَرِ الْبَرِّيَّةِ لَمْ يَكُنْ بَعْدُ فِي الْأَرْضِ

kullu shajari l-barriyyati lam yakun ba‘du fi l-’arḍi

And all of the trees of the earth *had not yet existed* in the earth

⁴⁶Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11b n2.

⁴⁷Ibid., §11uu. See Ruth 1:1b in chap. 4 below for a discussion on biblical Hebrew word order.

⁴⁸Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 116, 120; cf. Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §80e.

⁴⁹Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§12.

2:5b [וְכָל-עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה טָרַם יִצְמַח]

The analysis for this clause, and the critique of Bandstra's translation, is identical to 2:5a.

2:5c [כִּי לֹא הִמָּטִיר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל-הָאָרֶץ]

The particle **כִּי** introduces a causal clause, giving the reason why shrubs and herbs were not in the field. As in Arabic, particles do not have inherent meaning; it is not “independently intelligible.” The meaning of a particle must be derived from context.⁵⁰

The predicate **הִמָּטִיר** is a Hiphil perfect. Verbs communicate aspect, time, and mood. Aspect is the manner in which the author conceives verbal action: completed or continuous. The aspect of the perfect is completed action, which is indicated by the suffixed pronoun on the verbal root. For example, the verbal root **קטל** “killing” attaches the first person pronoun—**קטלתי** “killing, I,” or “killing completed by me”—to indicate completed action. Because the verb is followed by the suffixed pronoun, the perfect places the action in the forefront.⁵¹ The mood of the perfect in narrative is indicative. The context, particles, and adverbs serve to determine the tense of the perfect or

⁵⁰Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §1. The Hebrew definition of a particle is similar to that of the Arabic particle. A Karaite beginning Hebrew grammar defines a particle as “what expresses a meaning with reference to something else and does not imply time . . . which do not express a meaning unless you combine them with other words . . . The difference between a noun and a particle is that a noun conveys a meaning with reference to itself and a particle conveys a meaning with reference to something else.” Nadia Vidro, *A Medieval Karaite Pedagogical Grammar of Hebrew: A Critical Edition and English Translation of Kitāb al-‘Uqūd fī Taṣārīf al-Luġa al-‘Ibrāniyya*, Cambridge Genizah Studies Series 6 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 40-41 (translation Vidro’s). In Arabic, Mortimer Howell explains, the particle “is what indicates a meaning . . . in another . . . expression . . . i.e. is a word that indicates its meaning through the medium of something else. It is not independently intelligible, so as to be predicable of or predicable; but requires the addition of another matter.” Mortimer Sloper Howell, *A Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language: Translated and Compiled from the Works of the Most Approved Native or Naturalized Authorities* (Allahabad, India: North-Western Provinces and Outh Government Press, 1883-1911), 2-3:283. Howell’s grammar is divided into four volumes, printed in seven books. The first four books contain the first volume, with the page numbers running continuously through the four books; the fifth book contains the second and third volumes, the page numbers are continuous through the two volumes; and the sixth and seventh books contain the fourth volume, the page numbers are continuous through the two books. The volume numbers ‘2-3’ given in the citation refer to vols. 2 and 3 in bk. 5.

⁵¹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §2a. Arabic verbs also follow this pattern (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§94).

imperfect. The context of 2:5c indicates a past tense. The negative particle **לֹא** negates the perfect and the statement of fact made by the indicative mood.

The Hiphil is the causative stem of the Qal; however, not all verbs in the Hiphil are translated as causatives. For a verb to be translated as a Hiphil causative, the verbal root also typically occurs in Qal finite forms. Most denominative verbs, on the other hand, do not occur in the Qal, but rather in the Hiphil or Piel. As a denominative, the Hiphil of **מָטַר** derives its meaning from the noun **מָטָר**. Moreover, the Hiphil denominative does imply some causation: “cause to rain.”⁵²

2:6a [וַיֵּלֶךְ מִן־הָאָרֶץ]

Contrary to the perfect, which indicates completed action by suffixing pronouns to the verbal root, the imperfect indicates incomplete action by means of the preformative letters. The preformatives **אֵיתָן** are not pronouns but substitutes for pronouns, indicating that the aspect of the verb is incomplete. For example, **אֶקְטַל** “I, killing” or “I am killing.”⁵³ As with the perfect, context, particles, and adverbs must determine the tense of the imperfect. The context indicates that **יֵלֶךְ** is describing an action in the past and describes a frequentative action: “a mist would frequently go up from the earth.”⁵⁴

2:6b [וַהֲשִׁקָּה אֶת־כָּל־פְּנֵי־הָאָדָמָה:]

The *vav* on the perfect **וַהֲשִׁקָּה** can be either an energetic *vav* continuing the tense and aspect of the previous imperfect, or it can be a simple conjunctive *vav*. Context must

⁵²Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §7j. See Kautzsch for a list of other verbs in the Hiphil similar to **מָטַר**; Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §53g.

⁵³Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§94; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §2a.

⁵⁴The following are examples of the frequentative imperfect: Gen 29:2, 37:7; Exod 13:22, 17:11, 40:36; Deut 2:11, 20; Judg 11:40; 1 Sam 9:9, 16:23, 23:13; Job 1:5. Examples in biblical Aramaic include Dan 4:9, 4:16, 5:6, 7:10, 7:14-15. Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §4d.

determine how the *vav* on the perfect is functioning. In 2:6b the *vav* “converts” the perfect into the aspect and tense of יַעֲלֶה in 2:6a. The verb הִשָּׁקָה describes a frequentative action in the past: the mist would frequently, or repeatedly, water the face of the ground.⁵⁵

Bandstra argues that because the verbs in verse 6—יַעֲלֶה and הִשָּׁקָה—are “non-past tense” they may be implying the particle טָרַם from verse 5, continuing the “pre-creation” description from 2:4b. He translates verse 6 in the following manner: “and (before) a mist will rise from the earth and will water all of the surface of the ground.”⁵⁶

While negative particles may govern more than one verb, the ancient translations indicate that the verbs in 2:6b are frequentative. Targum Onqelos reads,

וַעֲנָנָא הָוָה סָלִיק עַל אֶרְעָא וּמִשְׁקֵי יָת כָּל אֲפִי אֲדַמְתָּא:

And the mist existed *in the status of one that would go up* upon the earth and *in the status of one that would water* all the face of the land.

The participles סָלִיק and מִשְׁקֵי are accusatives of situation to the verb הָוָה; the participles

⁵⁵Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §6a-d.

⁵⁶Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 116, 123. Bandstra aligns himself with those grammarians who contend that the biblical Hebrew verb primarily expresses time. He writes, “As we develop an analytic framework, tense turns out to be one of the core parameters of the Finite component of the Mood system. Our analysis distinguishes only past (wayyiqtol and qatal) from non-past (yiqtol and weqatal). Aspect, in so far as it is represented in the verbal system, is viewed here as a component of the Transitivity system, where it is viewed primarily as a feature of lexicon (root and stem), rather than a feature of the Finite component of the Mood system” (Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 34). Ibn Barūn defines a verb as a word that expresses “time and action.” Pinchas Wechter, *Ibn Barūn’s Arabic Works on Hebrew Grammar and Lexicography* (Philadelphia: The Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, 1964), 36. Kimḥi apparently views tense as primary in the verb as he categorizes the participle as the present tense. He also notes that the imperfect is used in the “past sense” after the particle אַז. William Chomsky, *David Kimḥi’s Hebrew Grammar (Mikhlol): Systematically Presented and Critically Annotated* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1952), 340. More recently, Joshua Blau defends tense as the primary mark of the biblical Hebrew verb. Joshua Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew: An Introduction*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic, vol. 2 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010) 189-92. Bandstra, however, appears to hold strictly to the “non-past” tense for the imperfect, as evidenced by his translation of Gen 2:6b (Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 34, 116, 123). Kimḥi and Blau, on the other hand, recognize that the imperfect describes frequentative action in the past (Chomsky, *David Kimḥi’s Hebrew Grammar*, 340; Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew*, 192). It could be argued that even if the verb primarily marks time, aspect is still in view. For example, the prophetic perfect is used for events that will occur in the future, but in the mind of the speaker the action is already completed. The completed action of the perfect explains why it is preferred over an imperfect for prophesied actions. Note Kimḥi’s comment on the prophetic perfect: “The Perfect is particularly common in place of the Imperfect in the prophetic style, where the event or action is imminent beyond any doubt in the mind of the speaker or writer *and is already regarded as accomplished*” (Chomsky, *David Kimḥi’s Hebrew Grammar*, 340; emphasis added).

also describe an agent in a continuous state.⁵⁷ The LXX renders the frequentative actions with imperfects:

πηγή δὲ ἀνέβαινεν ἐκ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐπότιζεν πᾶν τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γῆς.

And a spring *would go up* out of the earth and *would water* all the face of the earth.

The Vulgate uses an imperfect and a participle to describe the continuous action:

sed fons ascendebat e terra inrigans universam superficiem terrae

But a spring *would go up* out of the earth, *watering* all the face of the earth.

Moreover, the Van Dyke Arabic version has two imperfects following the verb *kāna*:

ثُمَّ كَانَ ضَبَابٌ يَطْلُعُ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَيَسْقِي كُلَّ وَجْهِ الْأَرْضِ

thumma kāna ḍabābun yaṭla ‘u mina l- ‘ardi wayasqī kulla wajhi l- ‘ardi

Then a mist *would go up* from the earth and *would irrigate* all of the face of the earth.

Wright explains that *كَانَ* followed by an imperfect is translated like the Greek

imperfect.⁵⁸ Arabic and the ancient translations do not support Bandstra’s analysis.

2:7a [וַיִּצְרֶה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם]

Biblical Hebrew has two types of articles: a definite article and a non-definite article. The definite article defines a particular person(s) or thing(s) from its genus. The non-definite article is used for nouns that are definite in themselves, like proper nouns (הִירְדֵּן). Non-definite articles on proper names are labeled ‘excessive articles.’⁵⁹ The non-definite article may also occur on a noun used as a proper name. For example, הַשָּׂטָן (“the adversary”) has become the proper name “Satan,” the article is the ‘article of

⁵⁷See Gen 2:7d regarding the accusative of situation, and Gen 2:10a regarding the participle. William Stevenson describes הִיה+active participle as a “compound perfect.” Stevenson states that the compound perfect may be “used to describe an act or state extending over a period of time.” William B. Stevenson, *Grammar of Palestinian Jewish Aramaic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), 59. However, the description of the participles in Gen 2:6 of Targum Onqelos (see above) is more accurate to Semitic grammar.

⁵⁸Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§9. Moreover, if more than one imperfect is used, *كَانَ* is needed only before the first imperfect.

⁵⁹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §33.

dominance.⁶⁰ The article on אָדָם in 2:7a is the article of dominance. As the first man in creation, Adam is referred to as “the man,” the man above all others. It could be argued that the article is the generic definite article indicating the entire class of mankind. The appearance of the 3ms suffix later in 2:7c (אָפִּיו, “his nostrils”) makes it more likely that Adam, the first created man, is in view.⁶¹

2:7b [עָפָר מִן־הָאָדָמָה]

The noun עָפָר is the second accusative of direct object to the verb וַיֵּצֵר. Some verbs may take two objects; as in Arabic, the two objects may be classified as ‘unrelated’ or ‘related.’ Related objects share the relationship of subject and predicate: the two objects may be converted into a nominal clause. Unrelated objects, on the other hand, are “in no way connected with” each other.⁶² Related objects are common for verbs of making, as in 2:7b. When the two objects are converted to a nominal clause, הָאָדָם is the initiator and עָפָר is the announcement: הָאָדָם עָפָר, “The man (is) dust.”

2:7d [וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה]

For a discussion on *wayyiqtol* verbs and word order, see Ruth 1:1b in chapter 4 below.

Bandstra maintains that the verb היה accompanied with the preposition ל “has the meaning *become*.”⁶³ While “become” is a good English translation for this

⁶⁰Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §36b.

⁶¹The LXX has τὸν ἀνθρώπον, and the Vulgate has *hominem*: neither are proper names. The first occurrence of the proper name Adam in the LXX is 2:16, and in the Vulgate 2:19. Targum Onqelos has אָדָם, which may be the proper name “Adam” or “man.” In his translation, Bernard Grossfeld translates the Aramaic אָדָם into the proper name “Adam.” He notes that from the moment Adam is created in Gen 1:27, Targum Onqelos treats אָדָם as “referring to an actual individual, hence Adam.” Bernard Grossfeld, *The Targum Onqelos to Genesis: Translated, with a Critical Introduction, Apparatus, and Notes*, The Aramaic Bible: The Targums, vol. 6 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 43n11.

⁶²Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§24. For an example of unrelated objects see Gen 37:23: the verb וַיִּפְשְׁטוּ has two unrelated objects: יוֹסֵף and בְּתֻלָּתוֹ.

⁶³Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 126.

construction, a more accurate analysis describes לְנֶפֶשׁ as a substitute for an accusative of situation.⁶⁴ The verb היה—a real verb, not a copula—takes an accusative.⁶⁵

The Arabic equivalent to the biblical Hebrew היה is the verb كَانَ (*kāna*). Like biblical Hebrew, *kāna* takes an accusative; Wright notes specifically that the accusative to *kāna* is adverbial.⁶⁶ He explains that the “general idea of existence”—as indicated by the verb *kāna*—“is in this case limited and determined” by the accusative. Take for example a verse from the Qur’an chapter 2:97:

مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ

man kana ‘aduwwan lijibrīla

Who exists *in the status of an enemy* to Gabriel?

See also chapter 3:93:

كُلُّ الطَّعَامِ كَانَ حِلالًا لِّبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ

kullu ṭ-ṭa ‘āmi kana ḥillan libanī ‘isrā’īla

All of the food existed *in the status of permitted* to the sons of Israel.

The words عَدُوًّا (*‘aduwwan*) and حِلالًا (*ḥillan*) describe the status in which the subjects of the verbal clauses exist; therefore, they are in the accusative.

Biblical Hebrew is similar to Arabic. The accusative after היה is typically the accusative of situation. The accusative of situation—الْحَال (*al-ḥalu* “the situation, condition”)—describes the situation, status, or condition of a noun.⁶⁷ This particular accusative answers the question “in what manner” with respect to the verb, or “in what condition or status” with respect to a definite subject or definite object.⁶⁸ The word in the accusative is typically a descriptive noun, an adjective or a participle, or an indefinite primary noun. A noun with an affixed כ or ל often stands in place of the accusative of

⁶⁴Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13ii.

⁶⁵See Gen 3:1a in chap. 3.

⁶⁶Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§122; Ziadeh and Winder, *Introduction to Modern Arabic*, 75.

⁶⁷Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§44c.

⁶⁸Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13z.

situation, often after the verb *היה*, as in 2:7d.⁶⁹ The verbal clause in 2:7d describes the state in which Adam existed: he existed *in the state of* a living being.

The adjective *חַיָּה* is in apposition to the noun *נֶפֶשׁ*. Appositives modify or restrict words; an appositive typically agrees in gender, number, case, and definiteness with the word it modifies. Adjectives, such as *חַיָּה*, that express apposition are termed ‘qualified’: descriptive nouns that describe the qualities of the modified noun. In 2:7d, man became not merely a soul, but a soul that lives: a living soul.⁷⁰

2:8a [וַיֵּטַע יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים גֶּן-בְּעֵדֶן מִקְדָּם]

The indefinite noun *גֶּן* functions as the accusative of direct object. The noun is indefinite because it is grammatically unknown; verse 2:8a is the first time *גֶּן* is mentioned in the narrative. Moses specializes, or limits, the indefinite *גֶּן* by the prepositional phrase *בְּעֵדֶן*.⁷¹ Moses does not refer to any garden, but a garden which is in Eden. The prepositional phrase *מִקְדָּם* (“from the east,” “eastward”) is substituting for the adverbial accusative of place.⁷²

2:8c [אֲשֶׁר יִצְרָא]

Like adjectives, relative clauses modify nouns: defining and explaining definite nouns and specializing indefinite nouns. Relative clauses make indicative statements about the modified noun; they do not express commands, wishes, or questions.

⁶⁹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13z, ii.

⁷⁰Ibid., §22, §23a. Biblical Hebrew is similar to Arabic with regards to apposition (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§136ff). See Gen 3:5e in chap. 3 below.

⁷¹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §33.

⁷²Targum Onkelos, the Vulgate, and Nahmanides translate *מִקְדָּם* temporally: “formerly.” Jacob Newman, *The Commentary of Nahmanides on Genesis 1-6:8*, Pretoria Oriental Series 4 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960), 66. The LXX, Rashi, NASB, KJV, ESV, and ASV translate *מִקְדָּם* locally: “from the east.” Rashi explains that the garden is in the eastern part of Eden. M. Rosenbaum and A. M. Silbermann, trans., *Pentateuch with Targum Onkelos, Haphtaroth and Prayers for Sabbath and Rashi’s Commentary: Genesis* (London: Shapiro, Vallentine & Co., 1946), 10.

Relative clauses are made up of nominal, verbal, or adverbial clauses. Each relative clause consists of a retrospective pronoun: a pronoun that points back to the antecedent noun.⁷³ The retrospective pronoun may be explicit or implicit; if the pronoun functions as the accusative of direct object it is typically omitted.⁷⁴ The relative clause in 2:8c consists of a verbal clause. The retrospective pronoun is implied: whom He had formed *him*.⁷⁵

2:9b [כָּל-עֵץ נְחָמֵד לְמִרְאָה וְטוֹב לְמַאֲכָל]

The participle נְחָמֵד is a qualifier appositive to the noun עֵץ. When a participle is in apposition to a noun, it functions similarly to an adjective. Appositive participles usually agree in definiteness with their antecedents.⁷⁶ Context must determine the aspect of a participle. The aspect of the participle in 2:9b is that of the perfect, describing an abiding quality of the tree.⁷⁷

The prepositional phrase לְמִרְאָה is in the place of an accusative of specification. The accusative of specification—الْتَمْيِيزُ (*al-tamyīzu* “the specification”)—is similar to an accusative of situation in that it limits another noun in a nominal clause, a subject and its verb, or an object and its verb.⁷⁸ Unlike the accusative of situation, which takes a descriptive noun, specification requires a primary noun. The accusative of specification answers the questions “in terms of what,” “by what specifically,” or “with respect to what.”⁷⁹ In 2:9b, לְמִרְאָה limits the preposition נְחָמֵד: every tree *desirable with*

⁷³Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §43.

⁷⁴Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §138b.

⁷⁵For a more extensive discussion of the biblical Hebrew relative clause see Gen 3:8a in chap. 3, and Ruth 1:7a and 1:8d in chap. 4 below.

⁷⁶Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §23f. See Gen 3:5e in chap. 3 regarding apposition.

⁷⁷Ibid., §16a. For a definition and explanation of the Niphal reflexive see Ruth 1:3b in chap. 4.

⁷⁸Ibid., §13jj; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§44.

⁷⁹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13jj.

respect to appearance.

2:9d [וַעֲץ הַחַיִּים בְּתוֹךְ הַגֶּן]

The garden was introduced in verse 8, where it was indeterminate. Because it is now grammatically known, גֶּן is marked with the article. The function of the article in 2:9d is the repetition use of the particular definite article. The repetition use of the definite article is for words previously mentioned in a narrative.⁸⁰

2:10a [וַנְהַר יֵצֵא מֵעֵדֶן]

Bandstra apparently views the participle יֵצֵא functioning as a finite verb. He translates this clause, “And a river *exits* from Eden.”⁸¹ In his analysis of the clause in 2:10a, Bandstra classifies the participle as: ‘Mood>Finite.’ In his introduction he describes ‘Finite’ as “the main verb of a clause.”⁸² He refers his readers to the works of Jan Joosten and Mark S. Smith regarding the participle.⁸³

Joosten argues that the participle is the present-tense form in biblical Hebrew. The “normal” expression of the present tense is the predicative participle: a verbless clause with a subject and a participle as the predicate.⁸⁴ In this construction Joosten

⁸⁰Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §34a.

⁸¹Bandstra, *Genesis I-II*, 130, 131 (emphasis added).

⁸²Ibid., 4, 131.

⁸³In his description of Gen 1:2 Bandstra explicitly states that he interprets the predicative participle as the main verb of the clause: וַיִּהְיֶה אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֵף עַל־פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם, “and a wind of deity *hovers* on the surface of the waters” (ibid., 41, 47; the translation is Bandstra’s, the emphasis is added). See also Jan Joosten, “The Predicative Participle in Biblical Hebrew,” *Zeitschrift für Althebraistik* 2 (1989):128-59; Mark S. Smith, “Grammatically Speaking: The Participle as a Main Verb of Clauses (Predicative Participle) in Direct Discourse and Narrative in Pre-Mishnaic Hebrew,” in *Sirach, Scrolls, and Sages: Proceedings of a Second International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ben Sira, and the Mishnah, held at Leiden University, 15-17 December 1997*, ed. T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde, *Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah* 33 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 278-332.

⁸⁴Joosten emphasizes that it is not the participle alone that expresses present tense, but the unit comprised of a subject and participle. Jan Joosten, *The Verbal System of Biblical Hebrew: A New Synthesis Elaborated on the Basis of Classical Prose*, in *Jerusalem Biblical Studies* 10 (Jerusalem: Simor Ltd., 2012), 230. For a discussion on Joosten’s arguments on aspect and the word order of nominal clauses with

contends that the participle “has taken its place, aside PC [perfect] and SC [imperfect], in the conjugational system.”⁸⁵

predicative participles see Gen 3:5a in chap. 3.

⁸⁵Joosten, “Predicative Participle in Biblical Hebrew,” 128. Muraoka also views the predicative participle as a temporal form: “Despite its distinct morphology and some aspects of its syntax, which set the participle apart from the imperfect and perfect, the participle needs to be considered as an integral part of the Hebrew tense system.” T. Muraoka, “The Participle in Qumran Hebrew with Special Reference to its Periphrastic Use,” in *Sirach, Scrolls, and Sages: Proceedings of a Second International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ben Sira, and the Mishnah, held at Leiden University, 15-17 December 1997*, ed. T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde, *Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah* 33 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 191. Although they maintain that the predicative participle is a temporal form, Muraoka critiques the Joüon-Muraoka grammar, stating that this work “is not yet completely free from the conventional” view that the participle is durative in aspect (ibid., 192; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §121a, c; Joüon, *Grammaire de l’Hébreu Biblique*, §121a, c). Concerning participial phrases like that found in Lev 23:10 (כִּי־תָבֹאוּ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם), Muraoka argues that “there is really nothing durative about” the participle in this verse. He also gives Deut 7:1 and 11:8 as examples for the non-durative participle (Muraoka, “The Participle in Qumran Hebrew,” 192). However, the participle may have the aspect of a perfect, as well as an imperfect. If a participle has the aspect of a perfect, it may indicate an abiding state (Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a). Wright explains that a participle with the aspect of a perfect “results from its use as a fixed immovable substantive” (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§230, 2:§7). Therefore, the participle נֹתֵן in Lev 23:10 (Muraoka’s example given above) may have the aspect of a perfect, indicating a substantive in an abiding state: “when you will come unto the land which I (am) One Who is a giver to you.” Smith claims that Driver’s comments on the “participle set in the present” may contain a “key” to understanding the predicative participle (Smith, “Grammatically Speaking,” 282). Driver writes: “When there is nothing to imply that the state denoted by the ptp. extends beyond the moment of speaking, the force of the phrase is as nearly as possible that of the true English present.” S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew and Some Other Syntactical Questions*, *Ancient Language Resources* (1892; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 167. Although Smith utilizes Driver’s comment as a “key” to understand the predicative participle, Driver argues elsewhere against the Hebrew predicative participle as present tense. For example, in his comments on 1 Sam 3:13 he notes that in Aramaic the first and second person pronouns “coalesce with the participle to form” the present tense. In biblical Hebrew, on the other hand, “the two parts are still distinct.” S. R. Driver, *Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel* (1913; repr., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), 43; Driver, *Treatise*, 169. Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze categorize the participle as a non-finite verbal form. They define non-finite verbal forms as those forms “that are not marked in terms of person [e.g. participles], or in terms of person, gender and number [e.g. the infinitive]” (van der Merwe, Naudé, Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 153). They later define the participle as a verbal adjective that may “function” as a verb when the word order of the clause is “subject + verb + other phrases” (ibid., 162). In their study on the nominal clause, Janet W. Dyk and Eep Talstra note that “a participle never became only a verb” in biblical Hebrew but upheld its “double potential,” namely its verbal and nominal potential. Janet W. Dyk and Eep Talstra, “Paradigmatic and Syntagmatic Features in Identifying Subject and Predicate in Nominal Clauses,” in *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew: A Linguistic Approach*, ed. Cynthia L. Miller, *Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic* 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 165. In another work, Dyk posits that the participle may be “reanalyzed” as the main verb of a clause and not a nominal predicate. She concludes, “For the participle to be able to undergo reanalysis and function as the main verb, there must be an absence of elements which would force a nominal analysis of the participle.” J. W. Dyk, *Participles in Context: A Computer-Assisted Study of Old Testament Hebrew*, *Applicatio* 12 (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1994), 136, 138. John A. Cook argues that participles are in the class of ‘adjectives’ because they are “encoded” like adjectives:

According to Joosten, the predicative participle is often used in biblical Hebrew to relate an action that is occurring at the “moment of speaking.”⁸⁶ The participle may express an action that took place in the past, or will happen in the future; however, with the use of the predicative participle the speaker represents the action as present.⁸⁷ For the predicative participle as present tense, he gives as an example 2 Samuel 18:27:

וַיֹּאמֶר הַצֹּפֶה אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֶת־מְרוֹצֵת הָרָאשׁוֹן

And the watcher said, “*I am seeing* the first runner.”

Joosten comments that the watcher is reporting “exactly his visual impressions” at the moment of speaking.⁸⁸ The participle, he concludes, is not expressing a state (a descriptive noun), but a verbal action.

According to Joosten, the participle as the present tense may also represent the historic present. He contends that an author may “become so involved in his story that he forgets, or ignores” how great the interval of time is between the event and the narration. Joosten goes on to say that the gap between “the ‘then’ of the story and the ‘now’ of the speaking situation is obliterated” and the narrator presents the event as if it were happening in the present.⁸⁹ He gives as one example Judges 11:34:

וַיָּבֹא יִפְתָּח הַמְצִפָּה אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וְהִנֵּה בָתוֹ יֹצֵאת לִקְרֹאתוֹ בְּתַפִּים וּבְמַחְלוֹת

“they appear in zero-copula, pronominal-copula, particle-copula, and verbal-copula predicates.” John Cook, “The Hebrew Participle and Stative in Typological Perspective,” *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages*, 34, no. 1 (2008), 9; John A. Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb: The Expression of Tense, Aspect, and Modality in Biblical Hebrew*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 7 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 224-28. See appendix 2 for a critique of Cook’s position. Waltke and O’Connor argue that the participle “does not function in Biblical Hebrew as a finite verb with a distinct time reference.” They do observe that the predicative participle does approach the imperfect, but it is different in that the participle describes “a durative circumstance” (Waltke and O’Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 624). Semitic grammar maintains that while the participle may take an object, it is still a verbal noun, not a verb (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§72; Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 1:1606; Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §116a; Driver, *Treatise*, 165).

⁸⁶Joosten, “Predicative Participle in Biblical Hebrew,” 129.

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸Ibid., 132.

⁸⁹Ibid., 142.

And Jephthah came to his home in Mizpah and behold, *his daughter is coming out* to meet him with timbrels and with dances.⁹⁰

Although he does not describe the participle functioning as the historic present, Bandstra's translation of 2:10a indicates that he is seeing the participle as the historic present: "And a river exits from Eden to water the garden."⁹¹

Although the English present tense may provide a smooth translation for the biblical Hebrew participle, the participle is not a present tense verb. The participle and the verb do share characteristics: tense, aspect, and voice. The tense of a participle is determined by context.⁹² Although the participle has verbal characteristics, it is a verbal *noun*.⁹³

According to traditional Semitic grammar, the participle "designates a person or thing, to which the verbal idea closely attaches itself and consequently remains unmovable."⁹⁴ The participle focuses on the person or thing in a fixed state, not on the action. The verb, on the other hand, centers on an action coming into being and the movement of that action. G. H. Ewald explains,

The participle does not represent the action as proceeding from a person (as the person of a verb does), but it represents a person (or thing) as that to which the action is to be attributed; the chief thing in it is the idea of the personal noun, to this

⁹⁰Joosten, "Predicative Participle in Biblical Hebrew," 143. The translation is Joosten's; however, emphasis is added.

⁹¹Bandstra, *Genesis I-II*, 130.

⁹²See Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §116d; Driver, *Treatise*, 166. Citing Ibn Ezra, David Kimḥi makes the observation that Arabic does not have a present tense (Chomsky, *David Kimḥi's Hebrew Grammar*, 340). A Karaite beginning Hebrew grammar explains that Hebrew does not have a present tense verbal form: "As to the present tense, it does not have a form specifically associated with it, as is the case with the past [perfect] and the future [imperfect]. Instead, the future verb form is extended (in grammatical function) to denote the present. . . . The present tense (meaning) requires a context word such as עֲתָה, אָז, or הֵנָּה" (Vidro, *Medieval Pedagogical Grammar of Hebrew*, 38-39). Joüon, on the other hand, argues that the predicate participle "has become, in Hebrew, a temporal form: it is like a substitute for the yiqtol" (Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, §121a).

⁹³Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a.

⁹⁴Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§72. See Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §116a; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a.

person, however, the action is simply ascribed as belonging to it.⁹⁵

While the imperfect may resemble the participle, Arab grammarians explain the idea of the imperfect as one of “constant renewal or repetition.” The participle, according to Arab grammarians, is the idea of “fixedness, immobility.”⁹⁶

Deuteronomy 3:20 illustrates the difference between the fixed state of a participle, and the origin and movement of a verbal action:

עַד אֲשֶׁר־יָנִיחַ יְהוָה לְאַחֵיכֶם כָּכֶם וַיֵּרְשׁוּ גַם־הֵם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
נָתַן לָהֶם בְּעֶבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן וְשִׁבְתֶּם אִישׁ לִירֻשָּׁתוֹ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לָכֶם:

Until when the Lord will give rest to your brothers as to you, and they—moreover, they—possess the land which *the Lord your God is One Who is a giver* to them beyond the Jordan. And you will return, each to his possession which *I have given* to you.

The participle נָתַן describes God as an *agent* Who gives land: God is in the state of a giver. In the relative clause at the end of the verse, on the other hand, the perfect נָתַתִּי expresses the origination of an act and its movement to completion. The verb focuses the reader on the *event* of God giving the land; although the Israelites did not have possession of the land, God communicates with the perfect of נָתַן that the giving of the land is completed.⁹⁷

Moreover, Kautzsch rightly notes that Genesis 2:10 illustrates the difference between a participle and an imperfect:

וְנָהָר יֵצֵא מֵעֵדֶן לְהַשְׁקוֹת אֶת־הַגֵּן וּמִשָּׁם יִפְרֵד וְהָיָה לְאַרְבָּעָה רָאשִׁים:

And a river (was) *one that would go out* from Eden to water the garden. And it *would divide* and it would become a quartet with respect to heads.

According to Kautzsch, the participle יֵצֵא is more static, describing the river in a “continuous uninterrupted stream.” The participle denotes the river as a doer: the river is

⁹⁵Geo. Henry Aug. Ewald, *A Grammar of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*, trans. John Nicholson (London: Williams and Norgate, 1836), 221. See also Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a.

⁹⁶Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§72n.

⁹⁷Other verses that illustrate the difference between verb and participle are Gen 9:6; Exod 20:18; Num 36:8; Deut 21:18; Judg 1:21. Even Modern Arabic views the participle as a noun, not as a verb (Ziadeh and Winder, *Introduction to Modern Arabic*, 75).

an agent that divides. The imperfect **יִפְרֹד**, on the other hand, describes an event; the river begins to divide and continues in the process of dividing. According to Kautzsch, the imperfect **יִפְרֹד** depicts the dividing of the river as “always taking place afresh.”⁹⁸

2:10d [וְהָיָה לְאַרְבָּעָה רָאשִׁים:]

Numerals consist of two parts: the numeral (or number), and the numerable (the thing counted). Often masculine numerables have feminine numbers (as in 2:10d), and feminine numerables have masculine numbers. Word order determines if the number is a substantive (a duo, a triad, a quartet, etc.), or if it is a semi-descriptive noun that functions as an adjective (two, three, four, etc.). When the number precedes the numerable, as in 2:10d, the number is a substantive and the numerable is an accusative of specification: a quartet *in terms of* heads.⁹⁹

2:11c [אֲשֶׁר-שָׁם הָיָה:]

This relative clause modifies and clarifies the antecedent from the previous clause in 2:11, **כָּל-אֶרֶץ הַחֲוִילָה**. The adverbial particle **שָׁם** may substitute for the retrospective pronoun when the antecedent is a noun of place.¹⁰⁰ Functioning as the retrospective pronoun, **שָׁם** defines the role of **הַחֲוִילָה** in the relative clause: the antecedent is the announcement of the nominal clause. Because the announcement is an adverbial phrase, it may precede the initiator.¹⁰¹

2:13a [וְשֵׁם-הַנָּהָר הַשָּׁנִי גִיחוֹן]

The ordinal number **שָׁנִי** is functioning as a semi-descriptive noun in qualifier

⁹⁸Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §107d.

⁹⁹If the numeral is in construct with the numerable, the numerable is in the genitive of specification. If the numeral follows the numerable, the numeral functions as an adjective (Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §29a-b).

¹⁰⁰Ibid., §21d.

¹⁰¹Ibid., §11gg.

apposition to הַנֶּהָר, matching the modified noun in definiteness. The *hireq yod* on the ordinal שְׁנִי is the *nisbah* ending. *Nisbah* النَّسَبَاتُ means “pertaining to” or “in relation to.” This ending is used to change nouns to adjectives; for example the noun מִצְרַיִם “Egypt” changes to מִצְרִי “Egyptian.” The *nisbah* ending also changes cardinal numbers to ordinal numbers: שְׁנַיִם “two” changes to שְׁנִי “second,” or more literally “pertaining to two.”¹⁰²

2:14c [וְהַנֶּהָר הַרְבִּיעִי הוּא פָּרַת:]

Some linguistic Hebraists view the independent pronoun הוּא as a copula. In his search for alternatives to the term ‘nominative,’ Kroeze maintains that the pronoun is a copula, giving Deuteronomy 4:35 as an example:

כִּי יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים

“Because the Lord *is* God”

Kroeze contends that הוּא as copula is “preferable” to the traditional casus pendens due to examples of the disagreement of הוּא with the subject or predicate of the nominal clause.

For example, הוּא does not agree in person with the 2ms pronoun in 2 Samuel 7:28:

אַתָּה־הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים

“You *are* God”

Kroeze emphasizes that 2 Samuel 7:28 is not translated like a casus pendens: “with regard to you, he is God.”¹⁰³

Cook briefly mentions the pronoun as copula in his article on the Hebrew participle and stative verb. He, like Kroeze, gives credence to the הוּא copula based on examples like 2 Kings 19:15, which is the exact construction of 2 Samuel 7:28. He also cites Lamentations 1:18 as another “possible” example of the copula pronoun:

צָדִיק הוּא יְהוָה

¹⁰²See Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§249; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §23j.

¹⁰³Kroeze, “Nominative,” 40. The translations of Deut 4:35 and 2 Sam 7:28, and the emphasis in each verse, are original to Kroeze.

“Righteous is Yhwh.”¹⁰⁴

Cook maintains that, unlike 2 Kings 19:15 and 2 Samuel 7:28, Lamentations 1:18 exhibits person and number agreement, making the example in Lamentations 1:18 “less certain.” He concludes, however, that the “pronominal copula analysis is *possible*”.¹⁰⁵

In his article on text critical issues in Leviticus 1:17 and 25:33, Holmstedt constructs a more detailed argument in favor of the third person pronoun as copula. Holmstedt bases his argument on the work of Charles N. Li and Sandra A. Thompson. According to Holmstedt, Li and Thompson contend that in many languages of the world the copula pronoun developed out of casus pendens constructions.¹⁰⁶ The anaphoric pronoun in casus pendens-type constructions ceases to refer back to its antecedent; “it *grammaticalizes*, moving from anaphoric device to copula marker.”¹⁰⁷ Holmstedt makes

¹⁰⁴Cook, “The Hebrew Participle and Stative,” 8. The translation of Lam 1:18 is Cook’s.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 10; italics are original. It should be noted that Cook’s article is a study on the participle, not the pronominal copula. Moreover, Cook contends that the validity of the pronominal copula theory “has no bearing” on his main argument. Cook was primarily cited here as an example of a grammarian who gives credence to the pronominal copula. Like Holmstedt below, Cook’s work indicates that he posits that non-verbal elements may function as copulas (see also Ruth 1:12c in chap. 4). Cook, who bases his analysis of the Hebrew participle on Leon Stassen’s study of intransitive predication, seems to follow Stassen regarding non-verbal copulas (ibid., 6; Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb*, 225). Regarding non-verbal copulas, Stassen writes, “we find languages in which encoding of predicate nominals requires an overt support item which cannot be classified as a full-fledged verb. Although these items function as a linking morpheme between subject and predicate in predicate nominal sentences, they typically lack the morphological features (such as PNG-marking, or tense-mood-aspect-marking) which distinguish the class of verbs in the language.” Leon Stassen, *Intransitive Predication*, Oxford Studies in Typology and Linguistic Theory (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 76 (parenthetical statement original to quote).

¹⁰⁶Li and Thompson write, “In many languages, equational sentences consist simply of two noun phrases. But in many other languages there is a morpheme which is not a NP and whose only function in such sentences is to ‘link’ these two NP’s. We will call the morpheme a copula. This copula can be a full-fledged verb, as it is in most Indo-European, Finno-Ugric, and Altaic languages, or it can fall short of being a true verb, as in some of the languages we are about to discuss.” They continue, “We will see that Mandarin, Hebrew, Palestinian Arabic, and Wappo are among the languages that have evolved a copula via the topic mechanism.” Charles N. Li and Sandra A. Thompson, “A Mechanism for the Development of Copula Morphemes,” in *Mechanisms of Syntactic Change*, ed. Charles N. Li (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1977), 420.

¹⁰⁷Robert D. Holmstedt, “The Nexus between Textual Criticism and Linguistics: A Case Study from Leviticus,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 132, no. 3 (2013):485. Holmstedt explicitly states that the pronoun ׀ is a “copular element”; he does not call it a verbal copula (see ibid.). Citing Regina Pustet’s definition of ‘copula,’ Holmstedt and Andrew Jones contend that a ‘copula’ could be any “element” that

the observation that in some languages—Mandarin Chinese, for example—the pronoun fully functions as a copula and “no longer functions as an anaphor in any environment.” In other languages—Modern Israeli Hebrew, Arabic, biblical Hebrew—the pronoun retains its anaphoric function while in some cases it functions as a copula.¹⁰⁸

Holmstedt identifies three lines of evidence that indicate the pronoun in casus pendens type constructions has begun to function as a copula in biblical Hebrew. First, Holmstedt argues that examples in which the pronoun does not fully agree with the hanging subject “provide strong evidence that the pronoun has been reanalyzed as a copula.” He cites 2 Kings 19:15 (see the discussion of Cook’s view at the beginning of 2:14c) and Joshua 13:14 (given below):

רק לְשִׁבְטֵי הַלֵּוִי לֹא נָתַן נַחֲלָה אֲשֵׁי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא נַחֲלָתוֹ

“Only to the tribe of Levi he did not give an inheritance; the fire offerings . . . of YHWH, the God of Israel, . . . (is/are) its inheritance”

In Joshua 13:14 the pronoun הוּא does not agree in number to the head noun אֲשֵׁי, demonstrating—according to Holmstedt—that the pronoun has “developed” into a copula.¹⁰⁹ Second, Holmstedt points to demonstrative pronouns in a casus pendens “or similar type” construction that have developed into copulas. For example, Genesis 27:21:

הַאֲתָה זֶה בְּנִי עֲשׂוֹ אִם־לֹא

links a subject and predicate. Robert D. Holmstedt and Andrew R. Jones, “The Pronoun in Tripartite Verbless Clauses in Biblical Hebrew: Resumption for Left-Dislocation or Pronominal Copula?”, *Journal of Semitic Studies* 59.1 (2014):58-59; cf. Geoffrey Khan, *Studies in Semitic Syntax*, London Oriental Series 38 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 50. Although they would not call the pronominal copula a verb, Holmstedt and Jones do bring the copula pronoun into the Hebrew verbal system. They write, “while the verbal copula appears to make the past and non-past semantics of the situation explicit, the copular pronoun is used to establish the present tense” (ibid., 61). Elsewhere they label the third person pronoun as “a present tense copular item” (ibid., 73; cf. a critique of Geoffrey Khan’s verbal pronominal copula theory in appendix 1). Traditionally, ‘copula’ has been understood to be a verb. See B. L. Gildersleeve and G. Lodge, *Gildersleeve’s Latin Grammar* (1894; repr., Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2009), §205, §206; Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), §917; Waltke and O’Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 72. The pronoun הוּא is not part of the verbal system. Semitic grammarians have observed the disagreement in person and number between the third person pronoun and the subject, and yet they still categorize the third person pronoun as a ‘separating pronoun.’

¹⁰⁸Holmstedt, “Nexus between Textual Criticism and Linguistics,” 485.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 486. The translation of Josh 13:14 is Holmstedt’s.

“You . . . (are) my son Esau, or no?”¹¹⁰

Third, Holmstedt contends that many Semitic languages employ the anaphoric or demonstrative pronoun as copula.¹¹¹ According to Holmstedt, these three lines of evidence make it clear that the pronoun functioned as a copula in biblical Hebrew. He suggests that the pronoun began to be “reanalyzed” in biblical Hebrew, though the pronoun was never fully grammaticalized.¹¹²

¹¹⁰Holmstedt, “Nexus between Textual Criticism and Linguistics,” 487. The translation of Gen 27:21 is Holmstedt’s.

¹¹¹Ibid., 488.

¹¹²Ibid., 490. The argument for the pronoun as copula is not a recent phenomenon. C. Albrecht argues in favor of the third person pronoun as copula in his 1888 article. C. Albrecht, “Die Wortstellung im hebräischen Nominalsatz,” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 8 (1888):250-51. Waltke and O’Connor are less clear on their view of the pronoun, though it appears they lean toward a copula function. When they first mention the third person pronoun, they describe the pronoun as a “*pleonastic* or *dummy* pronoun.” According to Waltke and O’Connor, the verbless nominal clause is a proper grammatical construction; therefore, the pronoun is redundant. However, they do maintain that the pronoun “effects” the relationship between the subject and predicate (Waltke and O’Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 131). Elsewhere in their grammar, Waltke and O’Connor note that the pronoun may function “in a copula role” or as a “so-called copula or pleonastic pronoun” (ibid., 297). Geoffrey Khan compares biblical Hebrew to Neo-Aramaic dialects to determine if the biblical Hebrew pronoun functions as a copula. He concludes that in biblical Hebrew the process of the pronoun developing into a copula has begun, though the pronoun has not “acquired the full complement of copula properties.” Geoffrey Khan, “Some Aspects of the Copula in North West Semitic,” in *Biblical Hebrew in its Northwest Semitic Setting: Typological and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Steven E. Fassberg and Avi Hurvitz (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press and Eisenbrauns, 2006), 158-60, 162, 170, 172-75 (see appendix 1 for a critique of his position). Others, however, disagree with the copula pronoun theory. Ewald explains that the pronoun “indicates” our ‘to be’ verb, but it is used “specially only when it is most necessary to separate the subject from the predicate, because both of these are *definite*” as in Deut 12:23 הַדֶּם הוּא הַנֶּפֶשׁ. Furthermore, he states that because הוּא always contains the predicate, it is used “quite correctly, along with one of a different person.” However, he does posit that the pronoun “gradually comes to be frequently used as the copula in other cases also, and to a very large extent, for instance, in Ecclesiastes; also with an indefinite subject” as in Jer 50:25 (בִּימֵי לֵאכָה הָיָא לְאִדְנִי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת). G. H. Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*, trans. James Kennedy, Ancient Language Resources (1891; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2004), 135-36 (italics are original). Driver, in reference to the 3mp pronoun in Gen 34:21, emphasizes that the pronoun is not a copula. He contends that הֵם אֶתָּנוּ “implies the copula, and is a complete sentence in itself” (Driver, *Treatise*, 268). More will be said regarding the implied copula below. Gesenius-Kautzsch state that the subject and predicate of a nominal clause are “as a rule” juxtaposed “without a *copula* of any kind” (Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §141f). Muraoka emphasizes in his translation of Joüon that the third person pronoun in nominal clauses “is not a mere ‘copula’ in the sense of the term as used in Indo-European grammars” (Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §154i). Muraoka contends elsewhere that “the existence of the copula in any Semitic language” cannot be proven. Moreover, Muraoka continues, even Modern Hebrew, “a heavily Europeanized language,” does not use the pronoun as a copula. Takamitsu Muraoka, “The Tripartite Nominal Clause Revisited,” in *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew: A Linguistic Approach*, ed. Cynthia L. Miller, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 1 (Winona Lake,

Holmstedt misunderstands the function of the third person pronoun. Arabic provides clear descriptions of how the pronoun functions in nominal clauses. Wright explains that in Arabic the third person pronoun is often placed between a definite subject and a definite predicate “to prevent any possibility of the predicate being taken for a mere apposition.” Arab grammarians label this function of the third person pronoun ضَمِيرُ الْفَصْلِ (*damīru l-faṣli* “the pronoun of separation”).¹¹³ Howell references another term, الدَّعَامَةُ (*ad-d‘āmatu* “support”), to describe this pronoun. He explains that the third person pronoun keeps the predicate of the nominal clause from “falling from the status” of announcement, “as the support in the house keeps the roof from falling.”¹¹⁴

For example, 1 Kings 18:39 reads:

الرَّبُّ هُوَ اللَّهُ

r-rabbu huwa l-llāhu

The Lord—He (is) God

IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 199. Tamar Zewi concludes her study on the tripartite nominal clause by stating that the third person pronouns do not function as a copula. Tamar Zewi, “The Definition of the Copula and the Role of 3rd Independent Personal Pronouns in Nominal Sentences of Semitic Languages,” *Folia Linguistica Historica* 17 (1996):52, <http://www.deepdyve.com/lp/de-gruyter/the-definition-of-the-copula-and-the-role-of-3rd-independent-personal-dsEzZ5EyO7> (accessed January 24, 2014 and January 31, 2014). Niccacci, in his chapter on the nominal clause, studies Deut 9:3 and five other verses “in order to prove that the ‘copula’ does not have a place in BH.” Alviero Niccacci, “Types and Functions of the Nominal Sentence,” in *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew: A Linguistic Approach*, ed. Cynthia L. Miller, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 228n46. Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze do not categorize pronouns as copulas (van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 252-53).

¹¹³Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§124. For a critique of Khan’s use of comparative Semitics in the study of the third-person pronoun, see appendix 1. Like Holmstedt, Khan has reinterpreted Semitic grammar in light of his particular linguistic model. Khan notes that the predicate following the pronoun is often indefinite; he therefore relabels the pronoun as copula. Khan fully recognizes that Arab grammarians address this issue. He writes, “In fact the Arab grammarians recognised that this pronoun, which they call the ‘pronoun of separation’ (*damīru l-faṣli*), may occur when the predicate nominal is not strictly definite, cf. Sīb. [Sībawayhi] I, 347.25ff.: *wa ‘lam ‘anna huwa la yaḥsunu ‘an takūna faṣlan ḥattā yakūna ba ‘dahā mu ‘arraḥatun ‘aw mā ‘aṣbaha lmu ‘arraḥata mimma ṭāla . . . naḥwa kayrun minka wamiṭluka*—‘Know that it is not correct for huwa to act as a separative unless it is followed by a definite noun or some noun with a long modifier, which is like a definite noun, such as *kayrun minka, miṭluka*.’ However, they still held that the essential function of the pronoun was to disambiguate.” Geoffrey Khan, *Studies in Semitic Syntax*, London Oriental Series 38 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 50. Although Sībawayhi accounted for the seeming discrepancy in definiteness between subject and predicate, Khan dismisses Sībawayhi and reinterprets Semitic grammar in light of discourse analysis.

¹¹⁴Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 1:546-47.

The third person singular pronoun *هُوَ* indicates that the nominal clause should be read as a statement and not as an apposition “the Lord God.” The Qur’an contains many examples of the separating pronoun. In chapter 9:67 the following construction occurs:

الْمُنَافِقِينَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

l-munāfiqīna humu l-fāsiqūna

The hypocrites—they (are) the ones who are defiantly disobedient

Notice that both words before and after the pronoun *هُمُ humu* are definite. The pronoun prevents the reading “the defiantly disobedient hypocrites.” The nominal clause in 9:67 is a statement, not apposition.¹¹⁵

The third person pronoun in biblical Hebrew functions in the same manner as in Arabic. The verbless clause with the separating pronoun makes an emphatic statement; the announcement is exclusively identified with the initiator. Take for example Genesis 9:18:

וְחָם הוּא אָבִי כְנָעַן

And Ham—he (is) the father of Canaan.

Ham is absolutely identified as the father of Canaan. Moreover, this nominal clause is a statement and not the appositional phrase “Ham, the father of Canaan.”¹¹⁶

Holmstedt, Cook, and Kroeze point to the lack of agreement between the pronoun and its referent as evidence that the pronoun is a copula. Whereas Holmstedt, Cook, and Kroeze view this as a problem to be solved, Semitic grammarians do not consider the lack of agreement between the subject and pronoun as a problem.¹¹⁷ Wright

¹¹⁵The Arabic translation of 1 Kgs 18:39 was taken from the Van Dyke version. Other examples from the Van Dyke version include Deut 4:39; 10:9, 17; 12:23; 1 Sam 4:8; Isa 33:6; Hos 11:5; Neh 8:10. Examples of the separating pronoun in the Qur’an also include 2:120, 121, 157, 177, 229, 254; 4:151; 5:17, 45, 47, 56, 72, 76; 6:71, 119; 7:8, 157, 178, 179; 9:10, 20, 23, 69, 72, 104, 111, 118; 10:64; 11:66; 14:18; 22:6, 11, 62; 24:50, 51; 40:39; 79:39, 41.

¹¹⁶Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11v. Other examples in biblical Hebrew include Gen 25:16; 36:8; Lev 23:2; Num 3:20, 21; Deut 10:9; 18:2; Josh 13:33; Isa 33:6; Hos 11:5.

¹¹⁷Kimhi simply states that the pronoun “agrees mostly” with the predicate (Chomsky, *David Kimhi’s Hebrew Grammar*, 347). For the difference of gender between the pronoun and the preceding subject in Arabic, see Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§152e. Moreover, biblical Hebrew verbs often disagree in number and gender with their subjects. For example, in Ruth 1:8 the masculine

notes that in Arabic the third person pronoun is used even if the subject is a first or second person pronoun.¹¹⁸ For example, 2 Samuel 7:28 reads:

أَنْتَ هُوَ اللَّهُ

'anta huwa allāhu

You (are) He—God¹¹⁹

A smoother translation of 2 Samuel 7:28 would read: “You are He Who is God!” In biblical Hebrew the third person pronoun also follows pronouns in the first or second person. Kautzsch notes that the third person pronoun “strengthens” the subject, as in Isaiah 43:25:

אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא מַחֵה פְּשָׁעֶיךָ

I, even I—He Who (is) One Who wipes out your transgressions

A smoother translation of Isaiah 43:25 would read: “it is I—I am He Who is the One Who wipes out your transgression.”¹²⁰

In biblical Hebrew and in Arabic pronouns do not always agree with their

verb עָשִׂיתָ has the feminine subjects of Ruth and Orpah. See Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §110k, §144a. The Arabic verb often disagrees with the subject with regard to gender and number (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§142-51). However, the disagreement between verb and subject is not a complication for Semitic grammarians. See also Ruth 1:1e in chap. 4.

¹¹⁸Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§124. See Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 1:546.

¹¹⁹Other examples in the Van Dyke version include 2 Kgs 19:15; Isa 37:16; 43:25; 51:10, 12; 52:6; Jer 14:22; Ps 44:4; Neh 9:6, 7; 1 Chr 17:26; 2 Chr 20:6. Examples in the NAV are 2 Sam 7:28; Isa 43:25; 51:12; 52:6; Ps 44:4; Neh 9:6, 7; 1 Chr 17:26. Wright footnotes that the third personal pronoun following a first or second personal pronoun is a “post-classical” construction (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§124). A search of the Qur'an for third person pronouns following pronouns in the first or second person yielded no results. The search was performed using the concordance and resources found on <http://corpus.quran.com>, accessed February 2, 2014 through February 5, 2014.

¹²⁰Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §141h; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §154i-j. Holmstedt also cites Lev 1:17 in support of his copular pronoun thesis: עֹלָה הוּא אִשָּׁה רִיחַ גִּיחַת לַיהוָה (Holmstedt, “Nexus between Textual Criticism and Linguistics,” 475ff). The pronoun הוּא in Lev 1:17 is not an anaphoric pronoun that has lost its referential function. It is not even a separating pronoun due to the fact that the initiator עֹלָה is indefinite. Usually the initiator and the announcement are definite for the pronoun to be a separating pronoun (see appendix 1 for situations which allow for an indefinite announcement to follow the separating pronoun). In Lev 1:17, the indefinite noun עֹלָה is the announcement of the nominal clause with the pronoun הוּא functioning as the initiator. The announcement may precede the initiator when the two cannot be confused, as when the announcement is indefinite and the initiator is definite (Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11hh). The clause beginning with אִשָּׁה in Lev 1:17 is in qualifier apposition to הוּא. See 3:5e in chap. 3 regarding apposition.

referents. For example, in chapter 18:19 of the Qur'an, the demonstrative pronoun does not agree with its referent with respect to gender:

فَأَبْعُدُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَذِهِ

fa-ib 'athū 'aḥadikum biwariqikum hādhihi

So send one of you with *this your silver coin*

The noun وَرِق (wariq) is masculine in form while the demonstrative pronoun هَذِهِ (hadhihi) is feminine. However, Arab grammarians offer an explanation for this seeming discrepancy. The noun وَرِق (wariq) is a 'broken plural'; according to Wright, broken plurals are "all of the *feminine* gender."¹²¹ However, broken plurals can be used as a masculine "only by a *constructio ad sensum*" as in 18:19 above.¹²² As Holmstedt points out, the pronoun in Leviticus 25:33 disagrees in gender with its referent:

כִּי בְתֵי עָרֵי הַלְוִיִּם הִוא אֶחָדָתָם

For the houses of the cities of the Levites—it (is) their possession

The pronoun הִוא is feminine and singular while its referent בְתֵי is masculine and plural. Kautzsch argues that while the pronoun emphatically resumes the subject, the pronoun is "attracted to the predicate" in gender and number. Kautzsch likely sees this attraction stemming from the pronoun connecting the subject and predicate.¹²³ In light of the subject-verb disagreement in Arabic and biblical Hebrew (see n. 117 above), the disagreement between the pronoun and its referent should be of no concern.¹²⁴

¹²¹Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§306 (emphasis original).

¹²²Ibid. (italics added). In Arabic there are two types of plurals: 'sound' and 'broken.' 'Sound plurals' are those plural words that retain the vowels and consonants of their respective singular forms (ibid., 1:§300). 'Broken plurals' are "more or less altered from the singular by the addition or elision of consonants, or the change of vowels" (ibid.). Sound and broken plurals also differ in meaning. Sound plurals refer to "several *distinct* individuals of a genus" (ibid., §306). Broken plurals, on the other hand, refer to a collective (ibid.). For other reasons why the pronoun may differ in gender with its antecedent, see Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§124; Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 1:546.

¹²³Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §141h, 145u. See also Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §149c. Both Gesenius-Kautzsch and Joüon-Muraoka provide various reasons why the pronoun may disagree with regard to gender with its antecedent. The Van Dyke Arabic translation of Lev 25:33 also has the female third person pronoun (هي *hiya*).

¹²⁴Holmstedt explains that the attraction of the pronoun to the predicate is explained by way of

Moreover, the ancient versions—especially the LXX and the Vulgate—
demonstrate that the pronoun is not a copula.¹²⁵ Take for example Deuteronomy 4:35:

אַתָּה הָרִאִיתָ לְדַעַת כִּי יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים אֵין עוֹד מִלְּבָדּוֹ:

You—you were shown to know that the Lord—He (is) God. (There is) none besides Him.

The LXX picks up the pronoun הוּא and renders it with οὗτος:

ὥστε εἰδῆσαι σε ὅτι κύριος ὁ θεός σου, οὗτος θεός ἐστίν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἕτι πλὴν αὐτοῦ.

Thus you to know that the Lord your God, *This One* is God, and there is not except Him.

The Vulgate translates הוּא with the emphatic *ipse*:

ut scires quoniam Dominus ipse est Deus et non est alius praeter unum

the demonstrative pronoun. Demonstrative pronouns, according to Holmstedt, connect with their referents in a manner different from anaphoric pronouns: demonstratives have a “spatial deictic nature.” Holmstedt applies Holger Diessel’s definition of this spatial deictic function: the “relative distance” of someone, something, or some place with respect to the “deictic center,” usually the location of the speaker. According to Holmstedt, the tendency of demonstratives to point to the predicate is due to this spatial deictic function. Therefore, Holmstedt posits that pronouns—as in Lev 25:33—that agree with the predicate rather than the subject are likely related to demonstratives. He concludes, since third person pronouns “may have had a demonstrative origin,” third person pronouns may have developed along the same lines of the demonstrative copula. He cites Gen 27:21 as an example of a demonstrative copula: הָאֲתָהּ הִיא בְּנִי עֵשָׂו אִם־לֹא. Holmstedt translates this clause: “You . . . (*are*) my son Esau, or no?” (Holmstedt, “Nexus between Textual Criticism and Linguistics,” 487). Holmstedt misunderstands the function of the demonstrative pronoun. In biblical Hebrew, demonstrative pronouns may serve either as the initiator of a nominal clause or in qualifier apposition to a noun. When the demonstrative הִיא is in apposition it often attaches the alerting *he*: הִיא לְמוֹעֵד הַזֶּה (Gen 17:21). See also Gen 7:1, 11; 12:7; 15:7; 18:25; Exod 1:18; 2:9; Deut 1:6. Substituting for substantives, demonstrative pronouns also function as the announcement or initiator of a nominal clause, as in Gen 5:1: הִיא סָפָר תּוֹלְדֵת אָדָם (Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §20c). Likewise, the Arabic demonstrative is not a copula; rather, it functions in apposition and as a substantive (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§136b). See 3:5e in chap. 3 regarding apposition. In interrogative statements, the demonstrative הִיא is usually attached to words “in a manner often not reproducible in Engl. idiom,” adding to the question “directness and force” (BDB, 261c). In Holmstedt’s example, Gen 27:21, the demonstrative הִיא is functioning not as a copula, but strengthens the interrogative statement that is introduced by the interrogative particle הֲ: “are you *really* my son Esau?” See Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §57; Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §136c. Joüon-Muraoka, however, notes that הִיא is added to interrogative words “without any notable change in meaning” (Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §143g). Compare the function of הִיא with the Arabic demonstrative pronoun هَـ (*dhā* “this”). Wright notes that the pronoun *dhā* is often added to the interrogatives مَنْ (*man* “who”) and مَا (*mā* “what”) “to render the interrogation more lively” (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§170). Moreover, the accents prevent the demonstrative in Gen 27:21 from functioning as a copula. In order for Holmstedt’s argument to work, the construction of Genesis 27:21 should be that of a casus pendens, according to his criteria. The accents for casus pendens follow a pattern different from that found in Holmstedt’s example of Gen 27:21 (see table 2 below). If the construction in Gen 27:21 was a casus pendens construction, a strong disjunctive accent would be expected on הָאֲתָהּ, grouping הִיא with the following words. Holmstedt’s own example fails to support his argument.

¹²⁵The Targums mirror the constructions in the Masoretic Text.

That you may know that God, *Himself* is God and there is not another except Him. The LXX and the Vulgate also translate the pronoun even if it disagrees in person with the pronominal subject. Consider Nehemiah 9:6:

אַתָּה־הוּא יְהוָה לְבַדָּךְ

You (are) He—the Lord alone.

Notice how the LXX translates the pronoun, demonstrating the emphasis of the statement:

Σὺ εἶ αὐτὸς κύριος μόνος

You are *He*, the Lord alone.

The Vulgate reads,

tu ipse Domine solus

You (are) He alone, O God.

The ancient versions give no indication that the pronoun הוּא—when it separates the subject and predicate in verbless nominal clauses—functions as a copula element. The ancient versions clearly reflect traditional Semitic syntax; the copula pronoun theory cannot be substantiated.

The pronoun הוּא in Genesis 2:14c is a separating pronoun, not a copula.¹²⁶

¹²⁶Bandstra's translation of this clause is correct: "And the fourth river, it is Perat." Bandstra does not label the pronoun as a copula. It appears that he sees the *casus pendens* construction in this clause, though he does not specifically label it so (Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 131, 138-39). Regarding the copula in Semitic languages, Ihab Griess—in personal conversations with Russell Fuller—explains that while Arabic does not have a *to be* verb, the copula is "under the surface." Personal conversation with Russell Fuller on February 12, 2014. In his analysis of the relevance of Arabic in biblical Hebrew grammar, Griess seems to indicate that pronouns and the verb הִיָּה are used as copulas. He writes, "This copula can be an obvious one, in the form of the verb הִיָּה, or an implied one in the form of a personal pronoun." He goes on to explain that these "copula pronouns" may function as a verb "because of the peculiar way in which the verb 'to be' is encoded in them in these particular types of structures" (Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 259). Fuller, who often confers with Griess regarding Arabic grammar, explains that Griess agrees with traditional Arabic grammar: pronouns are not copulas and Semitic does not have a copula verb. Fuller goes on to explain that Griess uses the term 'copula' in his analysis because he has the English reader in mind: many of these types of clauses are easily translated into English with "to be" (personal conversation with Russell Fuller on February 12, 2014). Like Griess, Ewald explains that the pronoun הוּא, in verbless nominal clauses, "indicates" the 'to be' verb (Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language*, trans. Kennedy, 135). Driver emphasizes that the pronoun is not a copula. In the example הוּא נַחֲלָתוֹ (Deut 10:9; 18:2), Driver stresses that הוּא נַחֲלָתוֹ "is a complete sentence; and the pronoun here merely resumes the subj. *with emphasis*." He continues, "the copula is not expressed by the pronoun, but is *understood*: in translating, however, it is generally convenient to drop the pronoun, and hence *the substantive verb seems to be its only representative*" (Driver, *Treatise*, 270; italics are original).

The pronoun הוּא separates the two definite nouns הַנֶּהָר and פֶּרֶת, indicating that the nominal clause is a statement and not apposition. More specifically, 2:14c is a type of casus pendens construction.

In casus pendens a noun is suspended and appears to be out of place with the following clause. The suspended noun is resumed in the following nominal or verbal clause. The verb of the verbal clause, or the noun of the nominal clause, according to Semitic grammarians, is “preoccupied” with the resumed noun/pronoun. Casus pendens, therefore, is labeled ‘preoccupation’; in Arabic the term is اِسْتِغَال (ishtighāl, “preoccupation”).¹²⁷ In 2:14c, the separating pronoun הוּא resumes the suspended substantive הַנֶּהָר הָרְבִיעִי. The proper name פֶּרֶת is “preoccupied” with the pronoun הוּא. The pronoun הוּא functions as the initiator of the second nominal clause הוּא פֶּרֶת, which in turn serves as the announcement of the entire casus pendens construction.

The accents corroborate the casus pendens construction and prevent the pronoun הוּא from being read as a copula. In a casus pendens construction, the suspended substantive is given the strongest disjunctive accent in the segment. In 2:14c (see table 2 below), the suspended substantive הַנֶּהָר הָרְבִיעִי is given the strongest disjunctive accent in the *silluq* segment: the *tiphcha*. The *tiphcha* separates the suspended substantive from הוּא פֶּרֶת, itself a nominal clause. The pronoun הוּא resumes the suspended substantive and functions as the initiator of the nominal clause. It is connected with its announcement פֶּרֶת with the conjunctive accent *merecha*; nominal clauses consisting of

¹²⁷Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 232-33; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §14; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §156a. The retrospective pronoun of casus pendens differs from the retrospective pronoun in a relative clause. The retrospective pronoun of relative clauses defines the role of the antecedent in the relative clause; the suspended noun and the retrospective noun/pronoun of casus pendens is an emphatic construction. Kautzsch warns his readers that casus pendens in biblical Hebrew syntax should not be understood as an anacoluthon. The “principal subject” is not “as it were, floating in the air.” Kautzsch contends that casus pendens are “to the Semitic mind . . . correctly formed as ordinary noun- and verbal-clauses” (Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §143c n2). Driver echoes the validity of the casus pendens construction in Semitic grammar. He argues that biblical Hebrew utilizes casus pendens to prominently highlight the subject by placing it at the forefront of the clause, and to avoid “an unwieldy sentence” (Driver, *Treatise*, 265).

two words are typically joined with a conjunctive accent.¹²⁸

Table 2. Accentual pattern in casus pendens

הוא פֶּרַת	וְהַנָּהָר הַרְבִּיעִי
Announcement of the entire nominal clause.	Subject of the entire nominal clause.
Separating pronoun הוּא: retrospective pronoun, pointing back to suspended noun; initiator of the second nominal clause. פֶּרַת: preoccupied with הוּא; announcement of the second nominal clause.	Suspended noun of casus pendens.

2:16c [אֶכֶל תֹּאכַל:]

The infinitive absolute often functions as the accusative of absolute object—*al-maf'ūlu l-muṭlaqu* (المَفْعُولُ الْمُطْلَقُ), or *l-maṣḍaru* (المَصْدَرُ).¹²⁹ It is absolute in that it does not limit the verb by a person or thing (direct object), and it does not limit the verb by time, place, or manner (adverbial accusative).¹³⁰ Ibn Barūn describes the absolute object as the “truest object” for it is the very action brought about by the subject.¹³¹

When the absolute object is undefined by adjectives and adverbs, it serves to

¹²⁸Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §14a n49.

¹²⁹Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§26; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13b.

¹³⁰Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13b.

¹³¹Ibn Barūn highlights the importance of the absolute object even in Arabic grammar: “Hence al-Mubarrad and other Arab grammarians consider it prior to all other objects” (Wechter, *Ibn Barūn’s Arabic Works*, 52). See also Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§195; Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 139-43.

emphasize, strengthen, or magnify, the verb.¹³² For example, chapter 56:4 of the Qur'an reads:

إِذَا رُجَّتِ الْأَرْضُ رَجًا

'idhā rujjati l-'arḍu rajjan

When the earth will be shaken a shaking

The absolute object رَجًا *rajjan* strengthens the idea of the verb. A smoother translation reads: "When the earth will be greatly shaken."¹³³ Also, the infinitive absolute strengthens the verb in Genesis 22:17:

פִּי־בָרַךְ אֲבִרְכֶךָ וְהִרְבֵּה אֲרַבֶּה אֶת־זֶרְעֶךָ

For a *blessing* I will *bless* you and a *multiplying* I will *multiply* your seed

A smoother translation reads: "I will greatly bless you and I will abundantly multiply your seed."¹³⁴

In Genesis 2:16c, אָכַל is the pure object brought about by the agent of the verb. The absolute object emphasizes its verb: "an eating you shall eat," or "you shall certainly eat." The Lord emphasizes that Adam may eat from all the trees of the garden.¹³⁵

2:17b [לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ]

In prohibitions such as this, the negative particle לֹא with the imperfect indicative is a stronger negation than אַל with the jussive. לֹא with the indicative demands

¹³²Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§26a; Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 1:140-41; Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §1311-q; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §123d; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13b,c, e. The absolute object also functions adverbially, explaining or illustrating the manner or quality of action. The illustrating absolute object is usually employed with other infinitive absolutes, participles, or adjectives (Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 140; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§26b; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13e-i).

¹³³See also 4:164; 80:25; 89:21 of the Qur'an.

¹³⁴See also Gen 16:10; 18:10; Exod 3:7; Num 13:30; 15:35.

¹³⁵The LXX expresses the absolute object of Hebrew with the dative: βρώσει φάγῃ. F. C. Conybeare and St. George Stock, *Grammar of Septuagint Greek* (1905; repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995), §61; Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, rev. ed., rev. Gordon M. Messing (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), §1577.

obedience.¹³⁶

2:17d [מֹת תָּמוּת:]

The absolute object מֹת emphasizes the verb: “you will absolutely die.”¹³⁷

2:18b [לֹא-טוֹב הֵיטָב הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ]

Bandstra categorizes the infinitival clause הֵיטָב הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ as an embedded clause. He writes, “Before being embedded, this clause would have been, *the human is to himself*, i.e. *the human is alone*.”¹³⁸ How this analysis contributes to the understanding of the nominal clause in 2:18b is not clear; the translation of the unembedded infinitival clause is not necessary. The infinitival clause is a substantival clause, which functions in the place of a genitive, accusative, or nominative.¹³⁹ In 2:18b, the substantival clause is functioning in the place of the nominative and is the initiator of the nominal clause: “*the existing of the man by himself* (is) not good.”¹⁴⁰

2:18c [אֲעֲשֶׂה-לּוֹ עֵצַר כְּנִגְדּוֹ:]

The verb אֲעֲשֶׂה is possibly a hidden cohortative, adding emphasis to the will and intention of the Lord. This verb could also be translated as a simple future indicative, but even this expresses to some degree the intention or volition of the Lord.

¹³⁶Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §42a.

¹³⁷The Van Dyke Arabic translation also emphasizes the verb with an absolute object: مَوْتًا يَمُوتُ (*mawtan yamūtu*). As in 2:16c, the LXX has the cognate dative: θανάτῳ ἀποθανείσθαι. The Vulgate has the cognate ablative: *morte morieris* (Conybeare and Stock, *Grammar of Septuagint Greek*, §61).

¹³⁸Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 146.

¹³⁹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §39.

¹⁴⁰In 2:18b the announcement לֹא-טוֹב precedes the initiator. The announcement must precede the initiator when the announcement is emphatic; the negative particle לֹא emphasizes טוֹב (Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11ff, §41g).

2:19e [לְרִאֲוֹת מִה־יִקְרָא־לּוֹ]

The ל + infinitive construct introduces a purpose clause, stating God’s intention for bringing the animals and birds to Adam. The verbal clause מִה־יִקְרָא־לּוֹ is a substantival clause functioning as the accusative of direct object to the infinitive construct.¹⁴¹

The interrogative pronoun מִה is the interrogative pronoun for things: “what name.” This pronoun may occur in the nominative, genitive, or accusative; in 2:19e, the pronoun is the accusative of direct object to the following verb.¹⁴² The prepositional phrase לּוֹ may be an improper object, substituting for an accusative of direct object.¹⁴³

2:19f [וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא־לּוֹ הָאָדָם נִפְשׁ חַיָּה הוּא שְׁמוֹ:]

The noun כָּל is in the nominative, functioning as the initiator of the nominal clause. The אֲשֶׁר clause is a substantival clause, standing in the place of the genitive to the noun כָּל.¹⁴⁴

Bandstra is correct that נִפְשׁ חַיָּה refers back to לּוֹ. But how can this conclusion be justified? A proper understanding of the accents enables the reader to correctly analyze the function of this phrase in the relative clause. The Masoretes often employed the accents to mark off parenthetical statements. A parenthetical statement is marked on the right by a subordinate accent, and is marked on the left by the subordinate’s

¹⁴¹As in 2:18b, Bandstra translates the verbal clause before it is embedded in the infinitival clause (Bandstra, *Genesis I-II*, 150). Again, this does not contribute to the understanding of the clause.

¹⁴²Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §56f, j. Blau emphasizes that the interrogative pronouns מִי and מִה are substantival, they “do not refer to a head but are the heads themselves” (Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew*, 185). Based on his examples, it appears that Blau labels the initiator of a nominal clause “head.” This coincides with Semitic grammar. Wright notes that when the Arabic interrogative pronouns مَنْ “who?” and مَا “what?” stand alone, they also take the nominative, genitive, or accusative cases (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§353).

¹⁴³A preposition with its genitive standing in the place of an accusative of direct object is called an ‘improper object’ (Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13s).

¹⁴⁴See Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §39; Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §138e; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §158l, m. See also Ruth 1:8d in chap. 4, for אֲשֶׁר as a substantival clause.

governing accent.¹⁴⁵ In 2:19f, the parenthesis is marked on the right by the *tebir*, and on the left by the *tebir*'s governing accent, the *tiphcha*:

וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא־לּוֹ הָאָדָם [גִּפְשׁ חַיָּה] הוּא שְׁמוֹ:

And all which the man called to it (*namely, the living things*)—it (is) its name

The nominal clause resumes with a separating pronoun הוּא, absolutely identifying the name given by Adam with the named animal.

2:20c [וְלֹא־מָצָא עֹזֶר כְּנַגְדּוֹ:]

The verbal clause is preceded by the prepositional phrase לֹא־מָצָא, placing the emphasis on Adam. The accents highlight the contrast by positioning the heaviest disjunctive accent of the *tiphcha* segment on מָצָא, the *zaqeph gadol*.¹⁴⁶ The *vav* introduces an adversative clause, contrasting 2:20b and 2:20c. Although Adam saw and named every living being, and saw that that every animal was paired male and female, he did not find anyone corresponding to himself.

Bandstra translates לֹא־מָצָא “and for the man.”¹⁴⁷ Although he is correct in that the prepositional phrase refers back to the same person in 2:20a, Bandstra’s translation requires a *qamets* under the *lamed*. Most likely מָצָא should be understood as the proper name Adam.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵William Wickes, *A Treatise on the Accentuation of the Twenty-one So-Called Prose Books of the Old Testament* (1970; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 42-43; Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, “Hebrew Accents,” in *Biblical Hebrew Syntax: A Traditional Semitic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, forthcoming), §9.C.2.

¹⁴⁶Wickes, *Accentuation of the Twenty-One So-Called Prose Books*, 47; Fuller and Choi, “Accents,” §9.A.1. See also Gen 24:21 and Num 14:32. A heavy disjunctive accent is also placed on the object when it precedes the verb: Gen 9:13; 2 Kgs 23:19.

¹⁴⁷Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 148, 153-54. However, in his analysis of the function of each word in the clause he renders the prepositional phrase “and to a human” (*ibid.*, 153). It is not clear how he moves from this to his final translation “for the man.” He does note on p. 154 that there is no article on מָצָא (*ibid.*, 154). The editor of Genesis in BHS, O. Eissfeldt, wants to emend the text to read מָצָא apparently to avoid the reading “to Adam.” But the text and the context make it clear that the particular individual—Adam, the first created human being—is in view.

¹⁴⁸This is how the LXX, Vulgate, NASB, KJV, ESV, NIV, and JPS translate the prepositional phrase. מָצָא does occur without the article when used as a proper name (Gen 3:17, 21). The ASV renders

The agent of the verb מַצֵּא is not clear. The agent could be יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים; in 2:19d the Lord brings the animals to Adam to see what he would name them. After all the animals passed before Adam, it was the Lord who saw that there was no helper for Adam.

However, the agent of the verb מַצֵּא in 2:20c may also be the indefinite personal subject: “It was not found for Adam.”¹⁴⁹ In English, for example, the indefinite subject is found in sentences like “*They* say an apple a day keeps the doctor away.” In Arabic and in Hebrew, the 3ms verb is often used when the subject is indefinite. For example, in Genesis 11:9 the subject is not known:

עַל־כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמָהּ בָּבֶל

Therefore, *one* called its name Babel.¹⁵⁰

The indefinite subject is more clearly expressed in biblical Hebrew and in Arabic with a definite or indefinite participle—of the same root as the verb—functioning as the agent.¹⁵¹

Chapter 12:10 in the Qur’an reads:

قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ

qāla qā’ilun minhum

One who says said among them¹⁵²

Likewise, in biblical Hebrew, Numbers 6:9 reads:

וְכִי־יָמוּת מֵת

And if *one who dies* dies¹⁵³

In the two examples above the participles are indefinite; Deuteronomy 17:6 provides an example with a definite participle:

עַל־פִּי שְׁנַיִם עֵדִים אוֹ שְׁלֹשָׁה עֵדִים יוּמָת הַמֵּת

Upon the mouth of two witnesses or three witnesses, *the one who dies* will be put to

the prepositional phrase “but for man,” the singular collective for mankind.

¹⁴⁹This is how the NASB, NIV, ESV, KJV, and ASV understand the verbal clause in 2:20c.

¹⁵⁰See also Gen 16:14; 19:22; Exod 15:23; 2 Sam 2:16.

¹⁵¹Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:132; Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §144d-e; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §155d.

¹⁵²See also 18:19; 37:51; 70:1

¹⁵³See also Amos 9:1.

death.¹⁵⁴

Most likely the verb **מָצָא** in 2:20c is a verb with an indefinite subject (the participle is implied): “but for Adam, (*a finder*) *did not find* a helper corresponding to him.”¹⁵⁵

In 2:20c the *vav*-consecutive chain is interrupted by the prepositional phrase **לְאָדָם**. To continue the past tense, completed action communicated by the previous *vav*-consecutives, the perfect of **מָצָא** is used to 2:20c.¹⁵⁶

2:21c [וַיִּקַּח אֶחָת מִצְלָעָיו]

The numeral **אֶחָד** functions more adjectivally than other numerals; however, it functions as a substantive when followed by the preposition **מִן**.¹⁵⁷ The numeral is the accusative of direct object to the verb **יָקַח**. The prepositional phrase **מִצְלָעָיו** is in proper annexation to **אֶחָת** with an explicit partitive **מִן**: “one from a rib of him.”¹⁵⁸

2:23b [זֹאת הַפַּעַם עַצָּם מַעֲצָמִי וּבָשָׂר מִבָּשָׂרִי]

The demonstrative pronoun **זֹאת** without the alerting **ה** often functions as the initiator of a nominal clause. Functioning as the initiator in 2:23b, **זֹאת** also refers back to **אִשָּׁה** in 2:22. The noun **פַּעַם** is functioning adverbially, expressing time in the nominal clause: “This, now.”

The article on **פַּעַם** is a definite article, of which there are two types: particular and generic. The particular definite article sets apart a noun from its class; the generic definite article refers to a group or class without singling out a certain individual from that group or class. The particular definite article is often used to refer to a noun that is

¹⁵⁴See also Num 15:4; Deut 22:8; 2 Sam 17:9; Isa 16:10; 28:4; Jer 9:23; Ezek 33:4.

¹⁵⁵This reading is supported by the LXX and Vulgate. Both versions have passive verbs: *εὐρέθη* and *inveniebatur*, respectively.

¹⁵⁶Notice that the nominal clause in 2:19f also breaks the *vav*-consecutive chain; it also uses the perfect of **הָיָה** to indicate past, completed action.

¹⁵⁷See Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §142d.

¹⁵⁸See Gen 2:4a above.

present to a speaker, as in Genesis 31:48:

וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן הֲגַל הַזֶּה עַד בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ הַיּוֹם

And Laban said, “*This heap*—a witness between me and between you *this day*.”

The article on גַּל is the definite article of presence because the heap is present and in the mind of the speaker, Laban. The article on יוֹם is also the particular definite article of presence. The article of presence is often used on nouns of time to indicate present time: “this day.” In Genesis 2:23b, the article on פָּעַם is the particular definite article of presence: “now.” Delitzsch comments on this clause: “When reviewing the animals the man found himself again and again disappointed, he fell asleep longing for a companion; his desire was now suddenly fulfilled.”¹⁵⁹

The main break of 2:23 falls on the appositive מִבְּשָׂרִי with the *athnach*. The logical placement of the main break would be after הָאָדָם, to set off the direct speech of Adam. However, the main break is often delayed to emphasize the speaker’s main point, rather than to set off the direct speech.¹⁶⁰ The placement of the *athnach* puts the weight on Adam’s statement that he has finally found one like himself.

2:25a [וַיְהִי שְׁנֵיהֶם עֲרוּמִים]

The numeral שְׁנֵיהֶם is a substantive in the nominative; it is the agent of the verb יָהִי. The adjective עֲרוּמִים is the accusative of situation: “and the two of them existed in the status of naked.” See Genesis 3:1a in chapter 3 below for more detail on הִיָּה and the accusative of situation.

¹⁵⁹Franz Delitzsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis*, trans. Taylor (New York: Scribner & Welford, 1889), 1:143-44. In contrast, Driver and BDB contend that the demonstrative pronoun זֶה refers to הַפָּעַם: “now at length.” BDB, 822a; S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis: With Introduction and Notes* (London: Methuen and Company, 1904), 43. But, as noted by Delitzsch, הַפָּעַם already has the idea of “now, this time” without the demonstrative (Gen 29:35; 30:20; 46:30) (Delitzsch, *New Commentary on Genesis*, trans. Taylor, 1:144).

¹⁶⁰Wickes, *Accentuation of the Twenty-One So-Called Prose Books*, 35.

2:25b [הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ]

This is a parenthetical statement, clearly identifying the agent of the verb שָׁנִיָּהֻם in 2:25a: “The two of them, namely the man [or Adam] and his wife, existed in the status of naked.” The parenthesis is marked off on the right by the *zaqeph* on עָרֹמִים, and on the left by the *athnach* on וְאִשְׁתּוֹ.¹⁶¹

וַיְהִיו שְׁנֵיהֶם עָרֹמִים [הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ] וְלֹא יִתְבַּשְׁשׁוּ:

And the two of them existed in the status of naked—*namely, Adam and his wife*—and they were not ashamed.

Conclusion

This chapter provided a grammatical analysis of Genesis chapter 2 according to a traditional Semitic grammar. Many comparisons with Arabic grammar were made to illustrate how Arabic informs and instructs biblical Hebrew grammar. Arabic categories such as the accusative of specification and other case functions were demonstrated to be legitimate categories for biblical Hebrew. Traditional Semitic terms ‘initiator,’ ‘agent,’ and ‘announcement’—terms used to describe nominal and verbal clauses—were introduced. Various uses of the Hebrew article were presented: the generic use of the definite article; the dominant use of the non-definite article. Moreover, the descriptions on the function of the accents were given to illustrate how they inform interpretation.

Chapter 2 also provided numerous interactions with various linguists to demonstrate how their methods misunderstand biblical Hebrew. Barry Bandstra’s commentary on Genesis provided the main source of interaction. In 2:4 the masoretic accents confirm that Bandstra’s division of verses 4 and 5 is not possible. In 2:6, Bandstra’s strict adherence to the non-past tense of the imperfect verb leads him to mis-translate the frequentative imperfect verbs. In 2:10, Bandstra also incorrectly explains that the biblical Hebrew participle functions at times as a finite verb. Bandstra’s conclusion led to a more expansive interaction with other linguists who argue in favor of

¹⁶¹See 2:19f above for another example of a parenthetical statement.

describing the participle as a finite verb. It was demonstrated that neither Arabic nor biblical Hebrew describe the participle in this manner; the Semitic participle is a verbal noun that describes a person or thing in a fixed state. Arabic also demonstrated the importance of knowing the case system—which is still extant in biblical Hebrew—and indicated the error of categorizing **וְהָיָה** as a copula. In each instance, Arabic provided the categories and definitions needed to clearly understand these issues in biblical Hebrew.

CHAPTER 3

GRAMMATICAL ANALYSES AND METHODOLOGICAL COMPARISONS BASED ON GENESIS 3:1-24

This chapter analyzes Genesis 3 according to a traditional Semitic approach. Like chapter 2, this chapter provides traditional categories and terms used to describe biblical Hebrew grammar, but it also includes interactions with biblical Hebrew grammarians who apply linguistic principles. Bandstra's commentary on Genesis continues to serve as the basis of comparison between the traditional approach and newer linguistic methods. The analysis of Genesis chapter 3 does not include all twenty-four verses. Verses are selected to highlight particular points of traditional Hebrew grammar, or to contrast traditional and linguistic methodologies/conclusions.

Grammatical Analysis

The division of verses into smaller sections typically follows the breaks marked by the stronger disjunctive accents *athnach*, *zaqeph*, and *tiphcha*. The divisions serve as a means for quick reference.

3:1a [וְהִנָּחֵשׁ הָיָה עִרּוֹם]

Bandstra describes the function of הָיָה as a “relational process,” a process that “sets up a relationship between two items.”¹ The relationship may be established by placing two nouns in juxtaposition, or by connecting the two nouns with הָיָה. The relational process may ascribe a quality to a noun, or provide the identity of someone or

¹Barry Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Bible Series (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008), 13.

something.² According to Bandstra's description, the nominal clause in Genesis 3:1a attributes the quality of "crafty" to the snake: the snake=crafty. Bandstra's analysis follows recent descriptions of the Hebrew nominal clause and the use of *היה*.

Recent linguistic Hebraists, such as Christo van der Merwe, Jackie Naudé, and Jan Kroeze, define the nominal clause as a verbless clause with an implied "to be" verb. In the glossary of their reference grammar, however, they also seem to imply that the nominal clause may include the copula *היה*.³ Bruce Waltke and Michael O'Connor also formally define nominal clauses as verbless clauses, and all of their examples of nominal clauses lack *היה*.⁴ In their discussion on apposition, they do seem to indicate that *היה* may be used to join a substantive and a noun.⁵ Waltke and O'Connor categorize *היה* as a

²Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 13.

³Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jackie A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, Biblical Languages: Hebrew 3 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 63, 356, 361. In their formal definition of 'nominal clause' they state that the copula "has to be inserted in English"; it appears that they are describing only nominal clauses without *היה* (ibid., 361). However, in their definition of "copula" they state that *היה* is "often omitted," indicating that it does function as a copula in nominal clauses (ibid., 356).

⁴Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 129-135. In fairness, older grammarians can also view *היה* as a copula. In his revision of Gesenius' grammar, E. Rödiger writes, "More seldom the copula is expressed by the substantive verb *הָיָה*." He gives Gen 1:2 as an example: "and the earth was (*הָיָה*) waste and empty." E. Rödiger, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 14th ed., trans. T. J. Conant (New York: D. Appleton, 1846), §141. In Kautzsch's revision of Gesenius, Kautzsch argues that a connection between the subject and predicate may be established "by the help of the verb *הָיָה*." He states that in Gen 1:2 the verb *היה* is used to describe a state which "might also appear in the form of a pure noun-clause." He notes that examples like Gen 1:2 "can scarcely be regarded as properly verbal clauses." Moreover, he claims that in later Old Testament books *היה* "comes very near to being a mere copula." E. Kautzsch, ed., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 28th ed., trans. A. E. Cowley, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), §141g, i. Heinrich Ewald states that *היה* "gradually comes to be employed somewhat more freely, for our verb *to be*." However, the verb "always remains far from being identical with our modern verb *to be*." Heinrich Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*, trans. James Kennedy, Ancient Language Resources (1891; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 136, 137. Paul Joüon views *היה* as a "copula with a temporal sense like the English verb *to be*" in verses like Gen 1:2. Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. T. Muraoka, Subsidia Biblica 14 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000), §154m. On the other hand, a more recent grammarian, Alviero Niccacci, writes, "the verb *hyh* is not a copula but a normal verb since its presence is not optional in a main sentence." Alviero Niccacci, "Simple Nominal Clause (SNC) or Verbal Clause in Biblical Hebrew Prose," *Zeitschrift für Althebraistik* 6, no. 2 (1993):216.

⁵Waltke and O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 228.

“dummy verb,” basing their conclusion on the work of John Lyons. The “dummy verb” is required in a verbless clause “to mark in the surface structure tense, mood, or aspect.”⁶

Cameron Sinclair expands on Waltke and O’Connor’s conclusions regarding הִיה. Sinclair argues that like the English “to be,” הִיה may have glosses “different from those associated with their uses as copulas.”⁷ Sinclair maintains that “being,” “occurring,” and “existing” are glosses that are needed when a clause with הִיה has no predicate, or a prepositional phrase replaces an “overt predicate complement.”⁸

In 3:1a, הַנֶּחֱשׁ הָיָה עָרוֹם is a nominal clause furnishing a description of הַנֶּחֱשׁ; however, linguistic Hebraists misunderstand the function of הָיָה. As mentioned in Genesis 2:7d in chapter 2, הִיה is not a copula verb like the English “to be,” or the Greek εἶμι.⁹ The verb הִיה does not make statements of “A=B in some way,” as the nominal clause implies; rather, the verb means “to exist, to happen.” The meaning of הִיה is not a mere gloss when “to be” does not work. “To be” is often helpful in providing a smooth English translation. However, the smooth translation “to be” does not reflect an accurate Semitic understanding of the verb.

The biblical Hebrew הִיה is virtually identical to the Arabic verb كان (*kāna*). *Kāna* is not an abstract or substantive verb that “unites the predicate with the subject of a nominal sentence, . . . but, like all other verbs, [it is] an attributive, ascribing to the

⁶Waltke and O’Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 72; John Lyons, *Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics* (Cambridge: University Press, 1971), 322-23.

⁷Cameron Sinclair, “Are Nominal Clauses a Distinct Clausal Type?,” in *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew: Linguistic Approaches*, ed. Cynthia L. Miller, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 52.

⁸Ibid., 53. For example, Jer 1:11, according to Sinclair, has a prepositional phrase as the predicate: וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי. Gen 1:5, however, does not have a predicate: וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר. He argues that these verses require the glosses “happening,” or “occurring” (ibid.). These “glosses” demonstrate that Sinclair must admit that הִיה as a being verb does not work. The simplest explanation is that הִיה is a real verb.

⁹W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language: Translated from the German of Caspari and Edited With Numerous Additions and Corrections*, 3rd ed., ed. W. Robertson Smith and M. J. de Goeje (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 2:§122.

subject the attribute of existence.”¹⁰ The verbs *kāna* and *היה* are real verbs that express real action: “to become,” “to exist.”¹¹ The predicate of *kāna* is not in the nominative; rather, the predicate is an adverbial accusative.¹² Moreover, the predicate of *kāna* is either an indefinite adjective or noun, or an indefinite participle.¹³ Take for example a verse from the Qur’an in chapter 76:17:

وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنْجَبِيلًا

wayus ‘qawna fihā kā’san kāna mizājuhā zanjabīlan.

“And they will be made to drink a cup; its mixture *exists in the status of* ginger.”

The subject of *kāna* in 76:17 is *مِزَاجُ* (*mizāhu* “mixture”), which is in the nominative (-u).

The predicate, which is in the accusative (-an), is the indefinite noun *زَنْجَبِيلًا* (*zanjabīlan* “ginger”). Furthermore, chapter 2:93 reads:

إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

‘in kuntum mu ‘minīna

“If you *exist in the status of* those who believe.”

¹⁰Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§122. Elsewhere Wright notes that *kāna* (Ethiopian *kōna*) “does not occur in Hebrew in the sense of *to be, exist, happen*, though it is so used in Syriac (rare) and Phœnician. The construction of the Æthiopic verb is the same as that of the Arabic; in the other Semitic languages, which have lost the final flexional vowels, the case of the predicate cannot be observed, but doubtless it was the accusative.—In Hebrew the radical כון retains its original signification of *to stand* . . . and the place of כָּן is supplied by הָיָה or הָיָה, Aram. הָוָה . . . of which the predicate must also be looked upon as in the accusative” (ibid., 2:§41 Rem. d). Ihab Griess notes that הָיָה is “the equivalent of the Arabic ‘كان.’” Ihab Joseph Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons Between Classical Hebrew and Classical Arabic: A Study Based on the Translation of Mohammad ‘Id’s Arabic Grammar* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), 87. William Wickes, concerning the predicate of היה writes, “In reality this word is, as we learn from the Arabic, in the *adverbial accusative*.” He points out that Job 30:29 (אֶחָא הָיִיתִי לְתַנִּים) “As a brother I existed to jackals”) is “rendered in the Polyglot Vers.” *أَخَا كُنْتُ لِوُلَادِ الْوُحُوشِ* (*‘akhan kuntu li ‘awlādi l-wuḥūshi* “As a brother I have become to the children of wild beasts”). Furthermore, he writes, Ps 122:2 (עַמְדוֹת הָיִי רַגְלֵינוּ) “As standers their feet exists.”) is similar to the Arabic phrase قَائِمًا كَانَ زَيْدٌ (qā’iman kāna zabdun “In the status of a stander Zaydun exists.”). William Wickes, *A Treatise on the Accentuation of the Three So-Called Poetical Books of the Old Testament*, (1970; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 44n16.

¹¹For example, Driver explains that הָיָה נַעַר is literally translated “(he) existed as a youth.” נַעַר is in the accusative (Driver, *Treatise*, 204 n3).

¹²Similar to Classical Arabic, *kāna* in Modern Arabic is not a copula and takes an accusative. Farhat J. Ziadeh and R. Bayly Winder, *An Introduction to Modern Arabic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 75. See also Driver, *Treatise*, 204 n3; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §125w n1; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§42, §122.

¹³Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§44 Rem. C.

In 2:93, the indefinite participle מְּמִינִין (*mu'minā* “believers”) is in the accusative case (-a).¹⁴

In biblical Hebrew, היה is a verb and it takes a predicate in the accusative.¹⁵

Like *kāna*, היה often takes an indefinite participle as its predicate. For example, Genesis 37:2 reads,

יוסף בן־שבע־עשרה שנה היה רעה את־אֶחָיו בְּצֹאן

Joseph, a son of seventeen years, *existed in the status of a man who shepherds* the sheep with his brothers.¹⁶

היה also takes an indefinite adjective or indefinite noun as its predicate. For example, in 1 Samuel 3:1, the word of the Lord is described as rare in Israel:

וְדִבְרֵיהוָה הָיָה יָקָר בַּיָּמִים

And the word of the Lord *existed in the status of rare* in those days.¹⁷

The predicate of היה is often a prepositional phrase, indicating that the predicate is in the place of the accusative.¹⁸ As the case endings were dropped, prepositional phrases after היה began to substitute for adverbial accusatives.¹⁹ Verses like

¹⁴There are many examples in the Qur'an that demonstrate the proper grammatical construction of clauses with *kāna*. The following examples occur first four chapters alone: 2:28, 31, 41, 65, 91, 98, 111, 140, 143, 184, 185, 196, 213, 248, 278, 282; 3:49, 67, 79, 93, 97, 103, 110, 139, 156, 159, 168, 175, 183; 4:1, 2, 6, 11, 12, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 43, 46, 47, 56, 58, 66, 72, 76, 86, 89, 92, 94, 96, 97. These examples include verses with indefinite nouns or participles in the accusative.

¹⁵Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax: A Traditional Semitic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, forthcoming), §13aa n44; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§41, §122; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §125w n1; Driver, *Treatise*, 161n3; Mortimer Sloper Howell, *A Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language: Translated and Compiled from the Works of the Most Approved Native or Naturalized Authorities* (Allahabad, India: North-Western Provinces and Outh Government Press, 1883-1911), 2-3:167.

¹⁶Other examples include Gen 1:6; 4:2; 21:20; Exod 3:1; Lev 13:45; 15:19; Num 14:33; Deut 28:29; Josh 9:21; Judg 1:7; 11:10; 16:21; 1 Sam 2:11; 2 Sam 3:6, 17.

¹⁷Other examples include Gen 10:8; 17:1; 24:41; 44:10; Exod 26:24; Lev 11:36, 44; Num 9:6; 15:40; 32:22; Deut 23:11; Josh 2:20; 2 Sam 6:22; 19:12; 22:24; I Kgs 9:8.

¹⁸Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13ii.

¹⁹Rödiger, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Conant, §87. Commenting on Gen 41:19 and 42:38, Isaac Jerusalmi notes that the ל “should not be taken too literally, because it has an *Adverbial* function and seems to ‘hide’ an Adverbial Accusative.” Isaac Jerusalmi, *The Story of Joseph (Genesis 37; 39-47): A Philological Commentary*, 2nd rev. ed., Auxiliary Materials for the Study of Semitic Languages 1

Exodus 4:4, clearly illustrate the actual meaning of היה.

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה שְׁלַח יָדְךָ וְאַחֲזוּ בְזַנְבּוֹ וַיִּשְׁלַח יָדוֹ וַיַּחֲזֶק בּוֹ וַיְהִי לְמִטָּה בְּכַפּוֹ:

And the Lord said unto Moses, “Stretch out your hand, and grasp its [the snake’s] tail.” And he stretched out his hand, and he seized it. And *it existed as a staff* in his hand.²⁰

The verb יהי in Exodus 4:4 is describing an event that occurred. The ל prepositional phrase substitutes for the accusative of situation, demonstrating that היה is a verb, not a copula.

Furthermore, Exodus 8:13 demonstrates that היה is a real verb, not a “dummy verb” or a copula:

וַיַּעֲשׂוּ כֵן וַיֵּט אֶהָרֹן אֶת־יָדוֹ בְּמִטָּהּ וַיִּדֹּ אֶת־עָפָר הָאָרֶץ וַתְּהִי הַכֶּנֶם בְּאָדָם וּבְבִהֵמָה
כָּל־עָפָר הָאָרֶץ הָיָה כְּנִים בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם:

And they did thus. And Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff, and he struck the dust of the earth. And *gnats came into existence* among man and among beast. All the dust of the land *became gnats* in all the land of Egypt.

In the clause after the *athnach*, the verb הָיָה is expressing an action: something *happened*. This clause is not equating the dust of the land with the gnats: all of the dust of the land=gnats. However, הָיָה is depicting the *event* of the dust becoming gnats in Egypt. In the verbal clause preceding the *athnach*, וַתְּהִי is not making the statement, “The gnats were in the land.” Rather, וַתְּהִי details the *event* of the coming into existence of the gnats. These two clauses are not making simple nominal statements, but detailing real action.²¹

Contrary to Bandstra, therefore, הָיָה in Genesis 3:1a is not establishing a “relational process.” The verb הָיָה is describing an event that took place; the indefinite adjective עָרִים is the adverbial accusative of situation, describing the condition in which the snake existed.

In biblical Hebrew, A=B statements are constructed not with היה, but with

(Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1981), 87, 138 (italics original).

²⁰Other examples of היה, followed by prepositional phrases, that demonstrate the meaning of היה include Gen 1:14; 2:10; 9:3; Exod 4:3; Lev 13:2.

²¹The NASB, ESV, KJV, ASV, and NIV translate הָיָה as “became.” The LXX uses the aorist of γίνομαι. Although γίνομαι takes a predicate in the nominative, it conveys an action more so than εἶμι.

verbless nominal clauses. For example, in Genesis 29:17 a verbless nominal clause furnishes a description of Leah's eyes:

וְעֵינֶי לֵאָה רַבּוֹת

And the eyes of Leah (were) weak.²²

In this clause no action is depicted, it is purely descriptive: Leah's eyes=weak. In Psalm 23:1 a verbless nominal clause furnishes the identity of the initiator of the clause:

יְהוָה רֹעִי

The Lord (is) my shepherd.

If Moses intended to make a purely descriptive statement about the serpent in Genesis 3:1a, he would have constructed the clause in the following manner:

וְהִנָּחֵשׁ עָרוּם

Now the snake (was) crafty.

The proper analysis of 3:1a is the clause is a compound nominal clause. The initiator is the definite noun הִנָּחֵשׁ. The initiator is labeled by Arab grammarians "that with which a beginning is made"; the nominal clause in 3:1a breaks the flow of the previous narrative to begin a new account.²³ The announcement of the nominal clause may be verbless, which is purely descriptive, or it may consist of a verbal clause. The announcement in the nominal clause of Genesis 3:1a is the verbal clause הָיָה עָרוּם: the snake existed in a cunning manner. The compound nominal clause in 3:1a has "two faces": it is descriptive, and yet it partakes in the action of הָיָה as well.²⁴ Genesis 3:1a is not making the statement snake=crafty, but it is describing the status or condition in which the snake existed.

²²Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11c.

²³Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§113.

²⁴Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §38d. See Gen 2:4a and 2:5a in chap. 2. Even in Modern Arabic grammar, noun-before-verb clauses are nominal clauses (Ziadeh and Winder, *Introduction to Modern Arabic*, 23).

3:1c [לֹא תֹאכְלוּ]

The negative particle לֹא with the imperfect indicative demands obedience: “you shall not eat.” This is in contrast with the negative particle אַל, which is softer and requests obedience: “please do not eat.”²⁵

3:2b [מִפְּרֵי עֵץ־הַגֵּן נֹאכְלוּ]

The prepositional phrase מִפְּרֵי עֵץ־הַגֵּן is placed before the verb for emphasis.²⁶ The accents also indicate emphasis by placing the heaviest disjunctive accent, the *tiphcha*, of the clause on the prepositional phrase. Eve is contrasting and emphasizing the trees from which they may eat, and the forbidden tree (Gen 3:3).²⁷

Although the verb is preceded by a prepositional phrase, the clause is a verbal clause. Objects, adverbs, and prepositional phrases may precede finite verbs. However, if a noun as a subject precedes the verb, it is a nominal clause, as in 3:1a above. The clause in 3:2b focuses on the action of eating; the clause does not center on the agents of the verb, Adam and Eve.

3:3a [וּמִפְּרֵי הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹךְ־הַגֵּן]

The relative clause makes an indicative statement about its antecedent noun, clarifying the definite antecedent. In 3:3a, Eve is defining more clearly the identity of the forbidden tree. A relative clause may consist of a nominal, verbal, or adverbial clause. In 3:3a, the relative clause is an adverbial clause of place. In biblical Hebrew, as well as in Arabic, relative clauses have an explicit or implicit retrospective pronoun that refers back

²⁵Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §42a. The LXX reflects the strong negation with the double negative: Οὐ μὴ φάγετε.

²⁶*Ibid.*, §11uu.

²⁷Gen 3:3a also places a prepositional phrase, along with its relative clause, before the verb. It receives a *segolta*, a subordinate accent to *athnach*. The subordinate accent that stands furthest from its governing accent is the heaviest disjunction in the segment. The *segolta* in Gen 3:3 stands further from the *athnach* than the *zaqeph*, and is the heaviest disjunctive accent in the *athnach* segment. William Wickes, *A Treatise on the Accentuation of the Twenty-one So-Called Prose Books of the Old Testament* (1970; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 47.

to the antecedent. The retrospective pronoun determines the function of the antecedent in the relative clause.²⁸ In Arabic grammar, the retrospective pronoun is called الضَّمِيرُ الْعَائِدُ (الرَّاجِعُ) إِلَى الْمَوْصُولِ (*ad-ḍamīru l-‘ā’yidu*—or, *r-rāji‘u—‘ilā l-mawṣūli* “the pronoun which returns to, or falls back upon, the conjunctive noun”). The shorter name for this pronoun is الْعَائِدُ *al-‘ā’yidu* or الرَّاجِعُ *ar-rāji‘u*.²⁹

In Arabic and in biblical Hebrew the retrospective pronoun may be implied.³⁰ In Genesis 3:3a, an implied pronoun הוּא is the initiator, with the adverbial phrase as the announcement: “in the midst of the garden (is) it.”

3:3b [אָמַר אֱלֹהִים לֹא תֹאכְלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ]

The prepositional phrase, with its relative clause, in 3:3a is in a casus pendens construction; מִפְּרִי הָעֵץ is the hanging case. The 3ms suffix on the preposition מִמֶּנּוּ in 3:3b is the retrospective pronoun pointing back to the hanging case in 3:3a. The verb תֹּאכְלוּ is ‘preoccupied’ with the suffix on the preposition מִמֶּנּוּ. The disjunctive accent *segholta* in 3:3a separates the hanging case from the rest of the construction.³¹ The casus pendens construction is emphatic; Eve is emphasizing the forbidden tree. Furthermore, the use of מִמֶּנּוּ makes the emphasis stronger because it could have been left out; מִפְּרִי (see 3:3a) is itself emphatic because of its placement before the verb תֹּאכְלוּ.³²

3:4b [לֹא-מֹת תָּמָתוֹן:]

The negative particle לֹא is not the strong prohibition found in 3:1c and 3:3b;

²⁸Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §21a, §43b.

²⁹Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§175.

³⁰Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 71. Kautzsch notes that the retrospective pronoun may be omitted “when it would be a separate pronoun representing a nominative of the subject” in nominal clauses (Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §138b).

³¹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §14. See also Gen 2:14c in chap. 2.

³²*Ibid.*, §11uu.

rather, it is the negation of facts or statements. The statement in 3:4b is made emphatic, however, by the accusative of absolute object מות. When the infinitive absolute is not limited by adjectives or adverbs it usually emphasizes the verb as in 3:4b: “dying you will not die” or “you will surely not die.”³³

3:5a [כִּי יָדַע אֱלֹהִים]

Bandstra labels the participle יָדַע as a finite verb and translates it as the English present tense: “because deity knows.”³⁴ However, the biblical Hebrew participle is not a verb but a verbal noun describing the fixed state of a person or thing. Bandstra’s translation of Genesis 3:5a calls for the imperfect, not the participle: כִּי יֵדַע אֱלֹהִים. Bandstra’s translation communicates that God has begun to know and is in the process of knowing. However, the participle יָדַע describes God as in the state of knowing: God is One Who knows. In 3:5a there is no progression of action, the present tense is derived from the context. The grammatical construction in Genesis 3:5a furnishes a description of God; it does not relate a verbal action of God’s doing.

Jan Joosten contends that the predicative participle represents “an action as contemporary with the moment of speaking.”³⁵ Joosten does make a distinction in the kinds of present time that depends on word order; he posits that the difference in word order (Subject-Participle, or Participle-Subject) is “an opposition of aspect.”³⁶ If the word order is Subject-Participle, the clause conveys the ‘cursive present’; similar to the imperfect indicative in Greek, the ‘cursive present’ is “represented as a line contemporary

³³Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13c, §17e.

³⁴Bandstra, *Genesis*, 165, 175. Bandstra labels the participle “Finite > ptc ms.” According to his terminology, ‘Finite’ is part of the ‘Mood’ system and is the “main verb of a clause in BH that is congruent with the Subject in person, number, and gender” (ibid., 4). Commenting on מִשְׁחֵיָּהֶם in Gen 6:13, Bandstra writes, “The participle used as a Finite verb may signal imminent action” (ibid., 360).

³⁵Jan Joosten, “The Predicative Participle in Biblical Hebrew,” *Zeitschrift für Althebraistik* 2 (1989):129. See also Gen 2:10a in chap. 2.

³⁶Ibid., 130.

with the moment of speaking.” He notes that the main function of the Subject-Participle clause is “to represent an action as actually going on at the moment of speaking.” If the word order is Participle-Subject, the clause expresses the ‘constative present’; similar to the aorist indicative in Greek, the ‘constative present’ is “represented as a point simultaneous with the moment of speaking.” The main function of Participle-Subject clauses is “the expression of an action as present but not actually going on; the action is represented as a fact.”³⁷

According to Joosten’s criteria, the participle in Gen 2:10a (וְנָהָר יֹצֵא מַעְדָּן) is a ‘cursive present.’ Because Moses is describing something in the past, it is likely that Joosten would describe the participle as conveying the ‘historic present.’ He notes that the ‘historic present’ is used to relate “in a vivid way” a movement “which presents itself to a static situation.”³⁸ Based on his explanation, then, the participle in Gen 2:10a describes an action in the past that the speaker represents as ongoing, for vividness, at the time of speaking.

The participle in Gen 3:5a, on the other hand, is, according to Joosten’s criteria, a ‘constative present.’ The predicative participle יֹדֵעַ is not expressing an action ongoing at the moment of speaking, but an action “represented as a fact.”³⁹ Satan, therefore, is representing as fact that God knows Adam and Eve will know good and evil if they eat the fruit.

Genesis 2:10a in chapter 2 demonstrated that the participle is not a verb. The participle does express tense, but the tense is derived only from its context.⁴⁰ The aspect

³⁷Joosten, “Predicative Participle in Biblical Hebrew,” 130.

³⁸Ibid., 143.

³⁹Ibid., 130.

⁴⁰Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a. In Arabic the context also determines the tense of the participle. Wright explains that the time of a participle “can be deduced only from some other word in the sentence, which points to a specific time, from the nature of the thing or the character of the thought, or from the connection of the context. The nomen agentis [active participle] or patientis [passive

of the participle is also derived from context. Russell Fuller explains that when the participle describes an abiding activity, the participle is similar to the imperfect in aspect. When the participle describes an abiding state, the participle is similar to the perfect in aspect.⁴¹ When the participle is the announcement, or predicate, of a verbless nominal clause, the participle usually reflects the aspect of the imperfect; the participle as announcement is descriptive.⁴²

The issue of word order with predicative participles hinges on what the author/speaker wants to emphasize.⁴³ The order Subject-Participle is the normal word order for nominal clauses: because the announcement qualifies the initiator, the initiator is first.⁴⁴ In Genesis 2:10a, the clause demonstrates the normal word order for nominal clauses: the participle **וַיִּצְיָא** qualifies **וַיִּהְיֶה**, so the order is Subject-Participle. However, if the author/speaker wants to emphasize the participle, the participle as announcement is placed before the initiator.⁴⁵ In Genesis 3:5a, Satan emphasizes **וַיֵּדַע** by placing it before the initiator **וַיֹּאמֶר**: Satan stresses that God is a Knower that Adam and Eve will know good and evil if they eat the fruit.

Contrary to Joosten, the word order in clauses with predicative participles does not determine the aspect of the present tense. Context determines that **וַיִּצְיָא** in Genesis 2:10a is in the past tense.⁴⁶ Because **וַיִּצְיָא** expresses an abiding activity, the aspect is like the imperfect; more specifically, it is similar to the frequentative imperfect: “and a river

participle] *itself does not include the idea of any fixed time*” (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§73; emphasis added).

⁴¹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a.

⁴²Ibid., §16c.

⁴³See Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§113.

⁴⁴Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11x.

⁴⁵Ibid., §16i.

⁴⁶Ibid., §16a.

(was) one that would continually go out from Eden.”⁴⁷ In Genesis 3:5a, context determines that יָדַע is in the present tense. Because יָדַע expresses an abiding state, the aspect is more like the perfect, completed action with present and abiding results: “God is One Who knows and continues to know.”⁴⁸

3:5b [כִּי בַיּוֹם אָכַלְתֶּם מִמֶּנּוּ]

The כִּי particle introduces a substantival clause functioning as the accusative of direct object to the participle יָדַע in 3:5a. The substantival clause extends from 3:5b to end of the verse. The prepositional phrase בַּיּוֹם is substituting for an adverbial accusative of time. The infinitive construct אָכַלְתֶּם is in the genitive to בַּיּוֹם, limiting the prepositional phrase: “in the day of the eating of you.” The suffix on the infinitive construct is not the direct object, but the subject of the infinitive construct.⁴⁹

3:5c [וַנִּפְקְדוּ עֲיֵינֵיכֶם]

The *vav* on the perfect is energetic and “converts” the perfect to a future tense. This particular usage of the energetic *vav* + perfect may occur when it is the apodosis to a temporal clause.⁵⁰

The Masoretes often arrange the accents to break a sentence logically: dividing a temporal clause from a main verbal clause, an apodosis from its protasis, etc.⁵¹ In Gen 3:5 the logical placement of the *athnach* is on מִמֶּנּוּ, dividing the apodosis introduced by the first כִּי clause from the protasis introduced by וַנִּפְקְדוּ. However, the main break of the

⁴⁷See Gen 2:6b in chap. 2.

⁴⁸This aspect of the perfect is similar to the Greek perfect (Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §3h).

⁴⁹Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §115e; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §124g.

⁵⁰Cf. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §112oo.

⁵¹Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, “Hebrew Accents,” in *Biblical Hebrew Syntax: A Traditional Semitic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, forthcoming), §9.B.5.

sentence falls within the protasis, on the verb וַיִּפְקְחוּ. The Masoretes often delay the major pause in order to highlight the main emphasis of the sentence. In 3:5c, the position of the *athnach* emphasizes the opening of Adam and Eve’s eyes once they eat the fruit. Had the *athnach* been placed on כִּמְנוּ, the sentence would have simply divided the apodosis from the protasis. As it stands, however, Satan continues to twist the Lord’s words, emphasizing that God knows that Adam and Eve’s eyes will be opened, and they will not die, if they eat the fruit.⁵²

3:5d [וְהָיִיתֶם בְּאֱלֹהִים יֹדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע:]

The participle יֹדְעֵי is in the accusative of situation to וְהָיִיתֶם. The accusative of situation describes the state or condition of a person or thing.⁵³ The accusative of situation is generally a descriptive noun: an adjective or a participle.⁵⁴ The participle is ideally suited to function as an accusative of situation, as it depicts an agent in a habitual or continual state or activity. The participle as an accusative of situation is always indefinite, and “often resembles the aspect of the imperfect”: “And you will exist like God, *in the status of ones who abide as knowers of good and evil.*”⁵⁵

The nouns טוֹב and רָע are in conjunctive apposition: the conjunctive *vav* joins

⁵²Fuller and Choi, “Hebrew Accents,” §9.C.1.

⁵³See Gen 2:7d in chap. 2, and Gen 3:1a above.

⁵⁴Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13z.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, §16k, l; Franz Delitzsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis*, trans. Taylor (New York: Scribner & Welford, 1889), 1:153. It is also possible to translate בְּאֱלֹהִים “as gods.” This is how Targum Onkelos (כְּרַבְרַבִּין), LXX (ὡς θεοί), and the Vulgate (*sicut dii*) translate the phrase. Therefore, בְּאֱלֹהִים is in the place of the accusative of situation, with the participial phrase, יֹדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע, functioning adjectivally to בְּאֱלֹהִים: “you will exist in the status of gods, knowers of good and evil.” However, three things make “like God” the likely reading of Gen 3:5d. First, the placement of the *zaqeph* on בְּאֱלֹהִים makes it more likely that יֹדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע is functioning as an accusative of situation to וְהָיִיתֶם, rather than בְּאֱלֹהִים. Had the *zaqeph* been placed on וְהָיִיתֶם, then בְּאֱלֹהִים could be read as the accusative of situation. Second, הִיא often takes participles as accusatives of situation. Third, the context of Gen 3:22 gives stronger indication that בְּאֱלֹהִים should be translated “like God.”

two nouns that are in the same case.⁵⁶ The two nouns are in the genitive and function as the objects of the participle יָדָעִי. In Arabic grammar, two words in conjunctive apposition share the same meaning “to the point that they can make two independent clauses.”⁵⁷ In 3:5a וְרָע יָדָעִי טוֹב becomes two clauses: יָדָעִי טוֹב and יָדָעִי רָע.

3:6b [וַתִּתֵּן גַּם-לְאִשָּׁה עֵמָּה וַיֹּאכְלֶה:]

Bandstra argues that the particle גַּם refers back to “an earlier text notion.” In 3:6b he contends that the particle גַּם refers back to Eve taking the fruit, communicating to the reader that it has happened a second time.⁵⁸ However, the particle גַּם makes a strong statement about a noun, usually the following noun, as with לְאִשָּׁה. With the particle גַּם, Moses emphasizes that Adam was with Eve in the midst of her temptation.⁵⁹

3:7b [וַיֵּדְעוּ]

In 3:5e, the participle of יָדָע describes Adam and Eve as people in the fixed state of knowing good and evil. In contrast, the imperfect of יָדָע in 3:7b focuses on the action of Adam and Eve knowing that they are naked. In that moment, the action of Adam and Eve knowing began and was completed.

⁵⁶Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §25a.

⁵⁷Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 205. See also Gen 2:4a in chap. 2 regarding conjunctive apposition.

⁵⁸Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 181.

⁵⁹Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §153. BDB notes that גַּם emphasizes “sometimes the thought of an entire sentence, *but more usually the word immediately following*” (BDB, 169a. Emphasis added.). Muraoka, however, argues that the use of גַּם and other particles for emphasis is “often invoked rather irresponsibly as a facile panacea for textual or exegetical difficulties of all sorts.” For many emphatic particles, he states that the idea of ‘emphasis’ is not even called for by the context (Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §165g). However, the statement in 3:6b could have been made without the particle גַּם, so its placement in the clause is emphatic. Moreover, the context of 3:6 makes it evident that Adam’s presence is emphasized. The entire account of Eve’s temptation from 3:1 to 3:5 involves only the snake and Eve; Adam is not mentioned until Eve hands him the fruit.

3:7d [וַיַּתְּפְרוּ עָלָהּ תְּאֵנָה וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם חֲגֹרֶת:]

Gen 3:1a demonstrated that nominal clauses are often descriptive. Nominal clauses furnish a description of or an identity of the initiator. Verbal clauses, on the other hand, concentrate on the action, what the agent is doing or has done, and not on the description or identity of the agent.

A verbal clause consists of the *الفعل* (*al-fi‘lu* “the action” or “verb”) and the *الفاعل* (*al-fā‘ilu* “the agent”).⁶⁰ The agent is expressed by the explicit or implicit suffixed pronoun of the perfect or imperfect. The agent may also be identified by a word or words.⁶¹ If a word(s) in the nominative functions as the agent, it must follow the verb, otherwise the clause is nominal. The agent of the verbs *וַיַּתְּפְרוּ* and *וַיַּעֲשׂוּ* is the implied pronoun of the imperfect 3mp. The two verbal clauses point the reader’s attention to Adam and Eve sewing fig leaves and making garments.

3:8a [וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת-קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִתְּהִלָּה בְּגֶן]

Since the works of Albrecht Goetze and Ernst Jenni, many recent grammarians do not consider the Piel, Pual, or Hithpael to be intensive in meaning.⁶² The traditional view of the Piel, according to Waltke and O’Connor, is “awkward.” Basing their discussion on Jenni’s work, Waltke and O’Connor primarily view the Piel as factitive with originally intransitive Qal verbs, and resultative with originally transitive Qal verbs.⁶³ Bill Arnold and John Choi also express doubt regarding the traditional view of the Piel, contending that the Piel describes the “bringing about of a state.”⁶⁴ Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze simply list the factitive, resultative, and denominative as

⁶⁰Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§113.

⁶¹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §111l.

⁶²See chap. 1 for a discussion on Goetze’s and Jenni’s view on the Piel.

⁶³Waltke and O’Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 397, 399.

⁶⁴Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 42-43.

possible senses of the Piel. They assert that the Piel may share similarities with the Qal, but the Piel must be considered independently from other stems.⁶⁵

In Arabic and biblical Hebrew, grammarians have traditionally described the Piel as the intensive/extensive verbal stem.⁶⁶ Wright explains that in the intensive stem an action may be completed with “*great violence* (intensive), or during a *long time* (temporally extensive), or to or by a *number* of individuals (numerically extensive), or *repeatedly* (iterative or frequentative).”⁶⁷ Howell describes the Piel as “multiplying” the root of the verb.⁶⁸ According to Kautzsch the main idea of the Piel is “*to busy oneself*

⁶⁵Van der Merwe, Naudé, Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 80-81.

⁶⁶William Chomsky, *David Kimḥi's Hebrew Grammar (Mikhlol): Systematically Presented and Critically Annotated* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1952), 86; P. Paul Joüon, *Grammaire de l'Hébreu Biblique* (Rome: Institut Biblique Pontifical, 1947), §52a; Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §52f; Edward Lipiński, *Semitic Languages: Outline of a Comparative Grammar*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 80 (Leuven, Belgium: Uitgeverij Peeters en Departement Oosterse Studies, 1997) 382-83; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §7c. Joüon favors the intensive Piel; however, in his revision and translation of Joüon's grammar, Muraoka expresses doubt of the existence of the link between the doubled radical and the intensive meaning (Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §52a). Regarding the intensive meaning of the Piel, see also Joshua Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew: An Introduction*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 2 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 229. More recently, Jan Joosten argues for the intensiveness of the Piel, basing his work on N. J. C. Kouwenberg's work on the Akkadian D-stem. Kouwenberg revisits Goetze's article and argues, contra to Goetze, in favor of intensiveness. Kouwenberg labels the doubling of the second radical as an example of iconicity: a sign that communicates visually what it intends to communicate. N. J. C. Kouwenberg, *Gemination in the Akkadian Verb*, Studia Semitica Neerlandica 32 (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1997), 19. The gemination of the second radical originally expressed emphasis or intensification. The D-stem marks a “high transitivity” in contrast to the transitivity of the G-stem. The doubling of the transitive Akkadian D-stem primarily conveys a “plurality of various constituents of the sentence”: the action, subject, direct object, or indirect object (ibid., 117, 442-43). Joosten seeks to “corroborate” Kouwenberg's main arguments with the biblical Hebrew Piel, arguing for the intensification of the Qal by the Piel. Jan Joosten, “The Functions of the Semitic D stem: Biblical Hebrew Materials for a Comparative-Historical Approach,” *Orientalia* 67 (1998):204. Joosten also contends for iconicity, observing that iconicity “is a recognized linguistic reality” (ibid., 217). Joosten argues in favor of the traditional view of the Piel along the lines of diathesis. He asserts that the base stem has a “basic dichotomy”: a base root may be active or middle, or both. The Piel functions on the opposition of intensive:factive. The intensive Piel modifies the active base stem; the factitive Piel modifies the middle base stem (ibid., 204-05).

⁶⁷Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§40. Italics and parenthetical statements are original to the quote. In modern Arabic, the doubled second radical of Form II (Piel) indicates intensiveness (Ziadah and Winder, *Introduction to Modern Arabic*, 61).

⁶⁸Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 2-3:269.

eagerly with the action indicated by the stem.”⁶⁹ Rödiger explains that the Piel indicates intensity and repetition, the action being performed to multiple objects.⁷⁰ Joshua Blau contends that the intensity of the Piel is of quality (שָׁבַר “break,” שָׁבַר “shatter”) and of quantity (בָּתַר “cut one thing,” בָּתַר “cut several things”).⁷¹

Based on the traditional definitions given above, the examples linguistic Hebraists give in support of the resultative Piel actually illustrate intensiveness/ extensiveness.⁷² For example, Waltke and O’Connor maintain that the Qal of פָּרַשׁ denotes the action of spreading one’s hands, as in Exodus 9:29:

בָּצָאתִי אֶת־הָעִיר אֶפְרַשׁ אֶת־כַּפֵּי אֱלֹהֵינוּ

“When I have gone out of the city, I *will spread* (Qal) my hands to YHWH”

On the other hand, they contend that the Piel of פָּרַשׁ is the result of the action in the Qal, a “terminal *Aktionsart*” (Isa 65:2):

פָּרַשְׁתִּי יָדַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם אֶל־עַם סוֹדָר

“All day I *hold* my hands *outstretched* (Piel) to a rebellious folk.”⁷³

The Piel in Isaiah 65:2, however, illustrates that the action is extended temporally: the Lord stretches out His hands for an extended period of time, כָּל־הַיּוֹם. The action is intensified by extension as the Lord urges rebellious people to seek Him. In Exodus

⁶⁹Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §52f. Italics are original.

⁷⁰Rödiger, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Conant, §51.

⁷¹Joshua Blau, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, Porta Linguarum Orientalium: Neue Serie 12 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1976), 53. Parenthetical examples and translations are Blau’s.

⁷²The term ‘intensive’ indicates a more forceful action, or it may be a broader term that includes extensiveness.

⁷³Waltke and O’Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 406-07. The translations of Exod 9:29 and Isa 65:2 are Waltke and O’Connor’s. Waltke and O’Connor’s understanding of the Piel as describing “simple resultative” is incorrect. Semitic grammarians view ‘resultative’ as a reflexive notion found in the Niphal and Hithpael (Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §7a; Chomsky, *David Kimhi’s Hebrew Grammar*, 82; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§52, §53; Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 2-3:273; Wheeler M. Thackston, *An Introduction to Koranic and Classical Arabic: An Elementary Grammar of the Language* [Bethesda, MD: IBEX Publishers, 2000], 139-40). Waltke and O’Connor have confused the Piel with reflexive verbs (see Ruth 1:3b in chap. 4). Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze also use פָּרַשׁ to illustrate the resultative Piel. For examples they give Job 11:13 and Isa 65:2 (van der Merwe, Naudé, Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 80).

9:29, Moses spreads out his hands at one particular moment to end the plague of the hail.

According to Jenni, and Waltke and O'Connor, the oft-cited verb שבר is resultative in the Piel: “to make (to be) broken.”⁷⁴ Traditional Semitic grammar, however, states that the Piel of שבר depicts the intensification of the Qal: “to smash to pieces” rather than “to break.” The intensification of שבר by the Piel is particularly clear in contexts in which the object is smashed to a point that no part remains. For example, the context of God’s commands to Israel to destroy idol worship indicates that the objects of idolatry were to be obliterated, not simply put into a broken state. Deuteronomy 12:3 reads:

וְנִתְּצֶתֶם אֶת־מִזְבְּחֵיהֶם וְשִׁבְרֶתֶם אֶת־מַצְבְּתָם וְאֲשֵׁרֵיהֶם תִּשְׂרֹפוּן בָּאֵשׁ וּפְסִילֵי אֱלֹהֵיהֶם תִּגְדְּעוּן
וְאִבַּדְתֶּם אֶת־שְׁמָם מִן־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה:

And you shall tear down their altars, and you shall *smash to pieces* their pillars.
And their Asherim you shall burn with fire, and the images of their gods you shall
hew down. *And you shall blot out their name from this place.*

The objects of foreign worship were not to remain in Israel and were to be wholly destroyed. The action is intensified: the Israelites were commanded to smash the altars and the pillars until they were no more. Moreover, the action is also extended to many altars and pillars, not just one.⁷⁵ In contrast, the Qal of שבר in Leviticus 11:33 expresses the breaking of one object:

וְכָל־כֵּל־יִי־חָרָשׁ אֲשֶׁר־יִפֹּל מֵהֶם אֶל־תּוֹכוֹ כֹּל אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹכוֹ יִטְמָא וְאֹתוֹ תִּשְׁבְּרוּ:

And any earthenware vessel, which anything from them may fall into its midst—all
which is in its midst it is unclean, and *it you shall break.*

⁷⁴Waltke and O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 399; Ernst Jenni, *Das hebräische Pi'el: Syntaktisch-semasiologische Untersuchung einer Verbalform im Alten Testament* (Zurich: EVZ-Verlag, 1968), 182-83.

⁷⁵Commenting on Dan 2:13a, Jerusalmi highlights the “numeric extension” indicated by the doubled second radical of the Hithpaal stem. Dan 2:13a reads, וְדָתָא נִפְקֶת וְחִכְיִמְיָא מִתְקַטְלִין (“And the decree went out that the wise men (are) ones that are getting *killed one by one*”). Jerusalmi notes that מִתְקַטְלִין “with Doubled Second Radical conveys the notion of *numeric extension*”: “to be killed *one by one*.” Isaac Jerusalmi, *The Aramaic Sections of Ezra and Daniel: A Philological Commentary*, Auxiliary Materials for the Study of Semitic Languages 7 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1982), 55 (emphasis original).

The Piel of שבר, therefore, is not describing a result but an intensified action.⁷⁶

Arabic also demonstrates intensiveness in the Form II فَعَّلَ (*fa* “*ala*”).⁷⁷ In chapter 28:19 of the Qur’an, the base form (Hebrew Qal) describes the killing of one man:

يَمْوِسَىٰ أَتُرِيدُ أَنْ نَقْتُلَنِي كَمَا قَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا بِالْأَمْسِ

yāmūsā ’aturīdu ’an taqtulanī kamā qatalta nafsā bil-’amsi

“O Moses, do you intend that you will kill me as you killed a person yesterday?”

Both نَقَتْلَ (taqtula) and قَتَلْتَ (qatalta) describe the killing of one man. However, in chapter 7:141 the action is intensified and extended to many objects with the second form:

وَإِذْ أَنْجَيْنَاكَ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكَ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ يُقْتُلُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ

wa’idh ’anjaynākum min ’ālī fir’awna yasūmūnakum sū’a l-’adhābi yuqattilūna ’abnā’akum wayastahyūna nisā’akum

“And when we delivered you from the people of Pharaoh—they were tormenting you with respect to evil of torment. They were killing your sons and allowing to live your women.”

The second form verb يُقَتِّلُونَ (*yuqattilūna*) intensifies the action by extending the killing to many sons. Furthermore, in Deuteronomy 12:3 of the Van Dyke Arabic translation, the intensive form تُكَسِّرُونَ (*tukassirūna* “smash”) is used to translate the Hebrew שִׁבְרָתָם.

The Hithpael stem is the reflexive of the Piel and also expresses intensive/ extensive action. Likewise, in Arabic the Form V تَفَعَّلَ (*tafa* “*ala*”) is the reflexive of the Form II فَعَّلَ (*fa* “*ala*”). The ת of the Hithpael prefix, and the ت of the Arabic Form V

⁷⁶Arnold and Choi label the Piel of שבר as “frequentative.” They contend that verbs in the frequentative Piel describe a “multiple, repeated, or busy action.” This use of the Piel, they contend, may “take on the nuance” of intensiveness, but this nuance is for the most part difficult to identify (Arnold and Choi, *Guide to Syntax*, 45). However, the intensiveness of the Piel is often evident when the object is obliterated, as in the example in Deut 12:3 above. See also Exod 23:24; 34:13; Deut 7:4-5; 12:3; 2 Kgs 23:14. The LXX may also reflect the intensiveness of the Piel by adding a preposition to the verb. The prepositions, according to Herbert Smyth, indicate the completion of an action. For example, the preposition *ἐν* in composition indicates “intensity, continuance, or fulfillment.” Also, the preposition *ἐκ* denotes “fulfillment, completion, thoroughness, resolution.” Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), §1648, §1680, §1685.3, §1688.2. Admittedly, the LXX renders the Qal and Piel of שבר with the same verb: στυπρίβω.

⁷⁷See Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§40.

prefix, gives the reflexive idea to these two verbal forms.⁷⁸ Wright states that the Arabic *tafa* “*ala* has a second notion that is more common than the reflexive: the ‘effective.’ The passive, explains Wright, indicates that a person receives the action of another. The reflexive may also be the ‘effective,’ indicating that an act is performed on a person, or a state is effected in that person, whether that action/state is caused by another or by that person.⁷⁹ Howell explains this second notion of the *tafa* “*ala* form in this manner: it “denotes *affecting*, or *endeavouring to acquire*.”⁸⁰ The definitions of Wright and Howell illustrate the personal interest expressed by the ת and the ت.

In Genesis 3:8a, the Hithpael of הלך describes God walking throughout the garden. The action of the verb הלך is intensified by extending the action to every place in the garden. The ת of the Hithpael stem indicates that God was walking wherever it pleased Him.⁸¹ No matter where Adam and Eve hid, they would be found.

Bandstra incorrectly analyzes the clause בָּגַן לְרוֹחַ הַיּוֹם as an asyndetic relative clause modifying יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים. Relative clauses may omit the relative particle אֲשֶׁר. If the asyndetic relative clause consists of a nominal clause, the antecedent is typically an indefinite noun.⁸² The antecedent in 3:8a is definite: יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים. A relative

⁷⁸Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, §1:47; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §7b.

⁷⁹Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§48.

⁸⁰Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 2-3:261. Italics are original to the quote.

⁸¹Cf. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §54f. The extensiveness of the Hithpael of הלך is illustrated in Josh 18:4. In this passage, Joshua commands Israel to appoint men to walk throughout Canaan to provide a description of the land. In 1 Sam 23:13, David and his men left Keilah and “went wherever they could go” (NASB). See also Gen 13:17; Deut 23:15; 2 Sam 11:2. The Qal of הלך, however, generally describes linear motion. For example, in Gen 11:31, Abram and his family went from Ur to Haran. See also Gen 12:1, 5; 18:22; Exod 2:8. Howell explains that the ت of the *tafa* “*ala* form (and by implication the ת of the Hithpael) may depict a “*repeated action in a leisurely manner*” (Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 2-3:263. Italics original.). See Ruth 1:3b in chap. 4 for a discussion of the reflexive in Semitic grammar.

⁸²Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §43a. This is the rule in Arabic. A relative clause, without the relative particle, following an indefinite noun is called صِفَةٌ (*ṣifatun* “a descriptive or qualitative

clause with a definite antecedent usually requires **אֲשֶׁר**.

If Bandstra were correct, and the relative clause of 3:8a is asyndetic, one would also expect an explicit retrospective pronoun referring back to the antecedent. For example, the asyndetic relative clause in Genesis 24:22 has the retrospective 3ms suffix referring back to the antecedent **נָזַם**:

וַיִּקַּח הָאִישׁ נָזַם זָהָב בְּקַע מִשְׁקָלוֹ

And the man took a gold ring *which its weight (is) a beqa*.

In Isaiah 51:7 the retrospective pronoun is the 3mp suffix:

שִׁמְעוּ אֵלַי יְדְעֵי צְדָק עַם תּוֹרָתִי בְלִתָּם

Listen to me, knowers of righteousness, *a nation who in its heart (is) My law*.

The retrospective pronoun makes the relative clause evident.⁸³

The correct analysis of the participle **מִתְהַלֵּךְ** is that it is functioning as an accusative of situation.⁸⁴ The accusative of situation and the relative clause differ in that the relative clause is like an adjective, describing an inherent quality or attribute of a noun.⁸⁵ An accusative of situation, on the other hand, describes the role, state, or condition of a noun, or the manner of the action of a verb.⁸⁶ The accusative **מִתְהַלֵּךְ** in

sentence”) (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§172). See also Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §158b. Kautzsch argues that the presence of the particle **אֲשֶׁר** after an indeterminate antecedent serves to emphasize the indeterminate antecedent (Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §155d).

⁸³Again, this is the rule in Arabic. Wright notes that *ṣifatun* “necessarily contains” a retrospective pronoun (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§173). For a definition of *ṣifatun* see n. 82 above. The biblical Hebrew examples given above are of asyndetic relative clauses consisting of nominal clauses. There are instances of asyndetic relative clauses without a retrospective pronoun. Such cases are found when the relative clause is a verbal clause: the retrospective pronoun is the implied pronoun of the verb. For example, in Gen 49:27 the retrospective pronoun is the implied 3ms pronoun of the verb: **בְּנֵימִן זָאֵב יִטְרֹף**. See Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §158a-c; Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §155e-g.

⁸⁴See Gen 3:5e. The NASB, ESV, KJV, and ASV do not translate this clause as a relative clause. Each English translation could be understood adverbially. Even in his translation, Bandstra does not translate the clause as a relative clause but as an adverbial clause: “And they heard the voice of YHVH deity walking in the garden at the wind of the day” (Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 165, 185).

⁸⁵Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §43a.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, §13z.

3:8a describes the state of the voice of the Lord at the time Adam and Eve hear His voice: the voice was *in the status of* One Who is walking. The participle in this clause is not describing a characteristic of the Lord.⁸⁷

3:8c [וַיִּתְחַבֵּא הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים]

The verb **וַיִּתְחַבֵּא** appears to disagree in number to the nouns **וְאִשְׁתּוֹ** and **הָאָדָם**. However, **הָאָדָם** is the agent of the verbal clause, and it agrees with the verb in number and gender. If a Semitic verb has multiple agents, the verb often agrees in number and gender with the first agent.⁸⁸

3:10b [אֶת־קוֹלִי שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּגִן]

The direct object is placed before the verb for emphasis. When the object is placed before the verb, the particle **אֶת** is usually required.⁸⁹

3:10d [וַיִּתְחַבֵּא:]

The Niphal of **חָבֵא** in 3:10d and the Hithpael of **חָבֵא** in 3:8c both express reflexive action: “he got himself hid.” However, the **ת** of the Hithpael in 3:8c expresses Adam’s self-interest in hiding.⁹⁰

In verse 10, Adam gives an account of his actions with three verbal clauses. As mentioned in 3:7d, the verbal clause focuses on the action of the agent. Adam’s language in his response to the Lord’s question is different from his language later in verse 12. In verse 12, Adam uses nominal clauses, very descriptive and emphatic language, as he

⁸⁷See Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, §118n, p. Moreover, the participle **מִתְהַלֵּךְ** cannot be in apposition to **יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים** because the appositive and its noun are not in the same case. **יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים** is in the genitive to **קוֹל**, and **מִתְהַלֵּךְ** is in the accusative (Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §126a, b; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §22).

⁸⁸Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§150. See Ruth 1:1e in chap. 4.

⁸⁹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13n.

⁹⁰See Gen 3:8a regarding the Hithpael, and Ruth 1:3b in chap. 4 regarding the Niphal.

places the blame on Eve. In verse 10, however, Adam uses verbal clauses as he quickly recounts his actions to the Lord.

3:11b [מִי הִגִּיד לְךָ]

The interrogative particle **מִי** is used for persons. The particle **מִי** may occur in the nominative, accusative, or genitive.⁹¹ In 3:11b the particle is in the nominative, functioning as the agent of the verb **הִגִּיד**.

3:11d [הַמֶּן-הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לִבְלֹתִי אֲכַל-מִמֶּנּוּ]

The interrogative particle **ה** introduces a question that expects a positive, negative, or uncertain answer; context must determine what answer is expected.⁹² In 3:11d, the Lord expects Adam to answer in the positive: he did eat from the forbidden tree.

The relative clause defines the definite antecedent **הָעֵץ**: the tree concerning which the Lord commanded Adam. This particular relative clause has an explicit retrospective pronoun in the 3ms suffix on the **מֶן** preposition. The relative clause consists of a verbal clause.

The infinitive construct often explains a main verb, especially verbs of wishing, permitting, and allowing. The infinitive **אֲכַל** is in place of the accusative of specification because it clarifies and limits the verb.⁹³ The explanatory infinitive answers the question “in terms of what,” or “with respect to what.”⁹⁴ In 3:11d, the infinitive clarifies the relationship between verb and object: the Lord commanded Adam *in terms of* not eating from the tree. The infinitive construct is negated by **לִבְלֹתִי**.

⁹¹See n. 142 in chap. 2 above.

⁹²Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §56a.

⁹³See Gen 2:9b in chap. 2 above regarding the accusative of specification.

⁹⁴Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §181.

3:12b [הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי]

The noun הָאִשָּׁה is defined by the following relative clause. The retrospective pronoun determines the function of the antecedent in the relative clause. In 3:12b the implied retrospective pronoun indicates that the antecedent is the accusative of direct object: “who You gave *her* with me.” Moreover, the noun הָאִשָּׁה is in casus pendens, which is resumed in 3:12c below.

3:12c [הוּא נְתַנָּה-לִּי מִן-הָעֵץ]

As described in Gen 2:14c in chapter 2, casus pendens consists of a suspended noun that appears to be out of place with the following clause. The suspended noun is resumed in the following nominal or verbal clause. The verb of the verbal clause, or the noun of the nominal clause, according to Semitic grammarians is “preoccupied” with the noun or pronoun that refers back to the suspended noun. The retrospective pronoun of casus pendens differs from the retrospective pronoun in a relative clause. The retrospective pronoun of a relative clause defines the role of the antecedent in the relative clause; the suspended noun and the retrospective pronoun of casus pendens is an emphatic construction.⁹⁵

In 3:12c the pronoun הוּא resumes the noun אִשָּׁה, and yet הוּא is also suspended. The suspended words are resumed by the 3fs pronoun in נְתַנָּה. Adam’s language is highly emphatic as he tries to place the blame on his wife. This is in contrast to 3:10b where he quickly outlines his actions to the Lord. Bandstra’s translation and analysis fail to highlight the emphasis Adam places on Eve.⁹⁶ A more literal rendering that illustrates the urgency in Adam’s statement reads, “The woman—whom You gave to me—She! She gave to me from the tree! And I ate.”

⁹⁵Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §14a n48.

⁹⁶Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 187, 194-96.

3:13b [מה־זאת עֲשִׂיתָ]

Bandstra contends that the pronoun **זאת** refers back to Eve eating the fruit and that her deed is the “goal”—or in more traditional terms ‘direct object’—of the verb **עֲשִׂיתָ**.⁹⁷ However, one would expect an **אֲשֶׁר** before the verb if **זאת** functions as the direct object: **מה־זאת אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתָ [אתָה]**.⁹⁸

The pronoun **זאת**, without the alerting **ה**, is used as a demonstrative of time: “what now?”⁹⁹ Moreover, this construction is used to ask a rhetorical question to express surprise or wonder. The interrogative with the pronoun makes the question more “lively.”¹⁰⁰ The Lord is not surprised or taken off guard by Eve’s action, but the statement is one of exclamation.

3:14b [אָרוּר אַתָּה מִכָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה]

The indefinite passive participle **אָרוּר** is functioning as the announcement of the nominal clause. The initiator is the personal pronoun **אַתָּה**. The announcement is placed before the initiator for emphasis. As discussed in 3:5a above, the participle **אָרוּר** describes the abiding state of the serpent: “one who in the state of being cursed (are) you.”

⁹⁷Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 197, 616. This is how the ESV, KJV, ASV, NASB, and NIV render **מה־זאת**.

⁹⁸See Gen 44:5; 49:28; Exod 29:38.

⁹⁹The alerting **ה** is the non-definite excessive definite article, occurring on words that are already definite. This excessive article is labeled by Ibn Barūn an “alerting **ה**” which draws the attention of the reader to the word. Pinchas Wechter, *Ibn Barūn’s Arabic Works on Hebrew Grammar and Lexicography* (Philadelphia: The Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, 1964), 25. For the pronoun **זאת** as a demonstrative of time, see Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §136d; Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew*, 178. See also 1 Sam 10:11. Delitzsch also highlights the vividness of the statement made by the pronoun **זאת** in Gen 3:13b; however, he renders the statement “what is this” (Delitzsch, *New Commentary on Genesis*, trans. Taylor, 1:159).

¹⁰⁰Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§170; Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §136c, 148a. Joüon, however, notes that **זֶה** is added to the interrogative **מָה** “without any notable change in meaning.” His translation of Gen 3:13b is identical to that of Bandstra and the major English translations (Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §143g).

3:15c [הוא יִשּׁוּפֶךָ רֹאשׁ]

The pronoun הוא before the verb emphasizes the agent of the verb יִשּׁוּפֶךָ. In 3:15c and 3:15d, the independent pronouns serve to contrast the serpent and the seed of the woman. The clause in 3:15c is a compound nominal clause and is another example of casus pendens. The pronoun הוא is hanging, and the belated verb is preoccupied with the implied pronoun of the imperfect 3ms, which resumes the pronoun הוא.¹⁰¹

In 3:15c, the primary noun רֹאשׁ is in the accusative of specification. The accusative of specification is typically a primary noun. Without the accusative of specification the sentence would be unclear. The accusative of specification in 3:15c defines the relationship between the object (the 2ms pronoun, referring to the serpent) and the verb שׁוּף.¹⁰² The seed of the woman will bruise the serpent *in terms of* the head. If the accusative of specification had not been utilized, it would not have been clear where the seed of the woman would strike the serpent.

Bandstra's analysis of this clause illustrates the confusion modern linguistic principles introduce into the study of biblical Hebrew. Bandstra rightly recognizes that רֹאשׁ is not the object of the verb יִשּׁוּפֶךָ, but the location where the serpent will be struck. However, his description and labeling of the clause leaves one confused. He writes concerning 3:15c, "The structure of the clause suggests רֹאשׁ specifies the Scope: the snake will be struck on the head. The Scope of a material process is a circumstantial element, here the location of the blow, that is disguised as a Participant."¹⁰³

While his basic premise is evident, Bandstra's analysis is cluttered with unfamiliar words for a reader not versed in Bandstra's particular linguistic model. What exactly does Bandstra mean by "Scope," or "material process, or "Participant?"

¹⁰¹See Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §135a; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §14.

¹⁰²Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13jj.

¹⁰³Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 203.

Moreover, what does it mean for a Participant to be disguised? Attempts like Bandstra's to replace terms like 'nominative' and 'accusative' can only lead to more confusion for the biblical Hebrew student.¹⁰⁴ Bandstra's analysis illustrates that the retention of the labels 'nominative,' 'genitive,' and 'accusative' provides a simpler, clearer description of the grammar. Obviously Bandstra recognizes **ראש** is functioning adverbially; however his analysis would be more clear if he labeled it as an adverbial accusative.

3:15d [וַאֲתָה תִּשּׁוּפְנֵנוּ עֶקֶב:]

Bandstra fails to mention the energetic 3ms suffix on the verb **שׁוּף**. His translation of this clause indicates that he assigns no value to the energetic *nun*: "And you will strike them heel-wise."¹⁰⁵ Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze contend that the energetic *nun* "has no semantic value."¹⁰⁶ Waltke and O'Connor appear non-committal on the issue, merely stating that the "variety of uses leads many to contend" that the energetic endings do not express emphasis.¹⁰⁷ Even Joüon argues against the energetic meaning, claiming that the "energetic force is merely phonetic."¹⁰⁸

The emphasis of the *nun*—a remnant of a form similar to the Arabic energetic form *yaqtulanna* or *yaqtulan*—is evident particularly when it is placed in clauses with other emphatic constructions.¹⁰⁹ For example, the energetic *nun* suffixes are placed in

¹⁰⁴See Gen 2:4a in chap. 2.

¹⁰⁵Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11*, 199, 202, 203.

¹⁰⁶Van der Merwe, Naudé, Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 91.

¹⁰⁷Waltke and O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 518.

¹⁰⁸Joüon, *Grammaire de l'Hébreu Biblique*, §61f; idem., *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §61f.

¹⁰⁹Cf. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §48b, §58i, l; S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew and Some Other Syntactical Questions*, Ancient Language Resources (1892; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 240-42; Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew*, 172; Lipiński, *Outline of a Comparative Grammar*, §39.8, §39.11; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§19.

clauses with an emphatic imperative and the particle **נָא**. In Genesis 27:19, Jacob implores his father Isaac to eat the dinner prepared for him and then bless Jacob:

קוּם-נָא שֹׁבָה וְאָכְלָה מִצִּידִי בְעִבּוֹר תְּבָרַכְנִי נַפְשְׁךָ:

Please, rise! Sit! And please eat from my game so that your soul may *certainly bless me*.¹¹⁰

The energetic *nun* also occurs in strong prohibition statements that contain **לֹא** with an imperfect. The Lord strongly commands Israel not to eat the blood of an animal in Deuteronomy 12:24-25:

לֹא תֹאכְלֶנּוּ עַל-הָאָרֶץ תִּשְׁפְּכֶנּוּ בַּמַּיִם:

לֹא תֹאכְלֶנּוּ לְמַעַן יִיטֵב לָךְ וּלְבִנְיֶיךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ בִּי־תַעֲשֶׂה ה'יֵשֶׁר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה:

You *certainly shall not eat it*. Upon the earth you *shall certainly pour it out* as water. You *certainly shall not eat it* so that it will be good to you and your sons after you. For you will do the right in the eyes of the Lord.¹¹¹

In Numbers 23:25, a particularly strong prohibition consists of energetic *nuns* found alongside absolute objects emphasizing the **לֹא** + imperfect. In this verse, Balak is incredulous that Balaam would bless Israel on two separate occasions.

וַיֹּאמֶר בָּלָק אֶל-בִּלְעָם גַּם-קֵב לֹא תִקְבְּנֶנּוּ גַם-בִּרְךָ לֹא תִבְרַכְנֶנּוּ:

And Balak said unto Balaam, “*Moreover, cursing you absolutely shall not curse them! Moreover, blessing you absolutely shall not bless them!*”¹¹²

The energy provided by the energetic *nun* is also evident in its use in oath clauses. For example, in 1 Samuel 26:10 David swears that Saul will assuredly meet his proper end:

וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד חַי־יְהוָה כִּי אִם-יְהוָה יִגְפְּנוּ אוֹ-יָמוּ יָבוֹא וּמָת אוֹ בַּמִּלְחָמָה יֵרֵד וְנִסְפָּה:

And David said, “*As the Lord lives, indeed the Lord will certainly strike him*. Or his day will come and he dies, or in battle he will go down and he will be swept away.”

¹¹⁰See also Num 22:6; 23:13 (the imperative is read as an emphatic, but pointed as a normal imperative 2ms); 1 Sam 16:11 (without the particle **נָא**); 26:8 (with the cohortative rather than the emphatic imperative).

¹¹¹See also 2 Kgs 4:29.

¹¹²The intensity of the situation is made even more clear in Num 24:10 when Balak claps his hands in anger. Although energetic endings were not used in Num 24:10, the physical action coupled with the absolute object (**בִּרְכָה בִּרְךָ**) illustrates the energy in Balak’s speech. The same energy present in Num 24:10 is the same energy present in Num 23:25. Moreover, notice in Num 23:25 the use of the particle **גַּם**. Other examples with absolute objects and energetic *nuns* are: Exod 22:15; Deut 7:26; 13:10.

Also, in 2 Kings 3:14 Elisha vows before the king of Israel that were it not for Jehoshaphat, Elisha would not have visited Jehoram:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלִישָׁע חַי־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֲשֶׁר עִמָּדָתִי לִפְנֵי כִי לֹלִי פָנִי יְהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה אֲנִי נֹשֵׂא
אִם־אֲבִיט אֵלָיֶךָ וְאִם־אֶרְאֶךָ:

And Elisha said, “*As the Lord of Hosts lives*, Whom I stand before Him, that except the face of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, which I am a lifter, if I look upon you and *if I certainly see you*.”¹¹³

When the energetic *nun* is found in clauses that lack other emphatic constructions, the context often provides enough evidence of the energy provided by the *nun*. For example, the context of 1 Samuel 1:7 gives strong indications that the *nun* in תַּכְעֲסָנָה intensifies the action of the verb:

וְכֵן יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה מִדֵּי עֲלֹתָהּ בְּבֵית יְהוָה כִּן תַּכְעֲסָנָה וְתִבְכֶּה וְלֹא תֹאכַל:

And thus it would happen year after year as often as the going up of her to the house of the Lord, that she would *cause her to be thoroughly vexed*. And she would weep and she would not eat.

The intensity of Peninnah’s actions against Hannah is illustrated by the fact that it drove Hannah to weeping and to forgoing food. Peninnah would repeat her vexing every year they went to the Lord’s house: שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה. In Genesis 31:39, the energetic *nuns* give energy to Jacob’s statements as he confronts Laban:

טָרַפָּה לֹא־הִבֵּאתִי אֵלָיֶךָ אֶנְכִי אֶחֱטָא מִיָּדִי תִבְקֹשָׁנָה גָּנַבְתִּי יוֹם וּגְנַבְתִּי לַיְלָה:

Torn things I did not hide from you. I—I bore the full loss of them. From my hand you required them to the fullest whether I stole them by day or I stole them by night.

The context of Jacob’s defense reveals that Jacob was angry with his father-in-law and confronted him because he gave to Jacob Leah as a wife instead of Rachel (Gen 31:36). Once he approaches Laban, Jacob immediately begins to defend his integrity in all his dealings with Laban (Gen 31:36-42). In verse 39, Jacob emphasizes that he accepted full responsibility for the loss of any part of Laban’s flock, and that Laban required an exact repayment for those losses.¹¹⁴

¹¹³Other examples of the energetic *nun* in oath clauses are Josh 6:26; 2 Kgs 2:2, 4, 6.

¹¹⁴See also Judg 19:22 and 1 Sam 12:10 for other examples in which the context indicates that the energetic *nuns* add energy.

In addition to emphatic constructions and context, the certainty of the speaker's will in jussives and cohortatives is often conveyed with energetic *nuns*. For example, in Genesis 13:15 the certainty of the fact that the Lord will give Abram and his descendants the land of Canaan is illustrated by the energetic *nun*:

כִּי אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה רֹאֶה לְךָ אֶתְנַנָּה וּלְזֶרְעֶךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:

For all the land, which you are one who sees it, to you *I will most certainly give it*, and to your seed forever.¹¹⁵

There are several examples in which the energetic *nun* is found in promises made by the Lord to individuals. In Genesis 13:17, the Lord reiterates to Abram that He will certainly give him the land (אֶתְנַנָּה). In Genesis 21:13 and 18, the Lord promises Hagar to make (אֲשִׁימֵנו) Ishmael into a great nation. In Genesis 26:3, the Lord instructs Abraham to stay out of Egypt and to remain in Canaan, and He promises to bless him (אֲבָרְכֶךָ). In Joshua 1:5, the Lord promises Joshua that He will be with him as He was with Moses, and that He will not forsake him (אֲעֲזֹבֶךָ).

In Genesis 19:34, the energetic *nun* on the cohortative conveys the determination of Lot's two daughters to carry out their heinous act:

הַיּוֹם־שֶׁכִּבְתִּי אִמִּשׁ אֶת־אָבִי נִשְׁקְנוּ יַיִן גַּם־הַלֵּילָה וּבֹאִי שִׁכְבִּי עִמּוֹ

“Behold, yesterday I lay with my father. *Let us make sure to cause him to drink* wine this night, and go in and lie with him.”¹¹⁶

In Exodus 15:2b, Moses and the people of Israel express in song their determination to praise the Lord:

זֶה אֱלֹהֵי וְאֵלֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי וְאֶרְמָמְנֵהוּ

This (is) my God and I will praise Him; the God of my father, and *I will most assuredly extol Him*.

In Exodus 21:14, the gravity of the Lord's command to punish a murderer is emphasized

¹¹⁵The certainty expressed by the *nun* is made clear in Gen 15:8 when Abram asks how he will know that he will possess the land. The energetic *nun* is added to the verb יָרַשׁ, conveying the idea that there is no doubt the land is possessed. The verse is translated, “And he said, ‘O Lord God, how will I know that *I will without a doubt possess* the land?’”

¹¹⁶The cohortative is ‘hidden’ because of the 3ms energetic suffix. Context gives strong indication that נִשְׁקְנוּ is a cohortative. For hidden cohortatives see Jerusalmi, *The Story of Joseph*, 23, 24.

by the energetic *nun*:

וְכִי־יִזִיד אִישׁ עַל־רֵעֵהוּ לְהַרְגוֹ בְּעֶרְמָה מֵעַם מְזַבְּחִי תִקְחֶנּוּ לָמוּת:

And if a man acts presumptuously concerning his friend to kill him with craftiness, from My altar *you will without question remove him* so that he will die.¹¹⁷

The examples given above demonstrate the emphasis added by the energetic endings. Notice that the examples are all taken from direct speech. Energetic endings are expected in direct speech where speakers often exaggerate their speech to plead their case, insist the seriousness of their statement, etc. Energetic endings often stress the will or desire of the speaker.¹¹⁸ Narrative, however, is seldom emphatic, writers of narrative usually do not relate an account with emphasis. If emphasis is needed, narrative employs different constructions (word order, absolute object, particles, etc.) Therefore, the energetic suffix in Genesis 3:15d (תְּשׁוּכְנֶנּוּ) expresses the certainty of the serpent's action: the serpent *will certainly bruise* the heel of the woman's seed.

The compound nominal clause in 3:15d is similar to that in 3:15c. The noun עֶקֶב is in the accusative of specification. In light of 3:15c this clause is translated: "But as for you—you will certainly bruise Him with respect to heel."

3:16a אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה אָמַר הָרְבָּה אֲרֻבָּה
[עֲצָבוֹנָךְ וְהִרְגִּיד]

The infinitive absolute is the absolute object to the verb אֲרֻבָּה.¹¹⁹ The absolute object is emphasizing the verb: "increasing I will increase" or "I will certainly increase." The Hiphil of רבה is causative: "to cause to be many" or "to increase."

3:17c [אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לֵאמֹר]

The infinitive construct + ל is limiting the verb צִוִּיתִי by explaining the verb: "I

¹¹⁷Other examples of the energetic *nun* expressing the certainty of the will of the speaker are Gen 9:5; Exod 16:4; 21:14; Num 14:24; 18:10, 13; Judg 4:22; 9:28; 1 Sam 6:2; 11:1; 17:27; 18:21.

¹¹⁸Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §4r, s.

¹¹⁹See Gen 2:16c in chap. 2 and 3:4b above.

commanded you *by* saying.” This construction may be rendered in English: “I commanded you *by* saying.”¹²⁰

Cynthia Miller contends that לֵאמֹר, when it precedes direct speech as in 3:17c, is not an infinitive construct. When לֵאמֹר introduces direct speech, Miller maintains that the infinitival form has become “grammaticalized”—it has lost its original function as an infinitive—and has become a ‘complementizer.’¹²¹ She defines a ‘complementizer’ as a word or particle that links a complement to its “matrix clause.” A ‘complement’ is “a predication embedded within another predication (the matrix clause) where it functions as an argument (subject or object) of the matrix clause.”¹²² One can become mired down by the sheer volume of linguistic terminology, but it appears Miller designates ‘complement’ as a clause that functions as the subject or object to a main clause. This ‘complement’ is linked to its main clause by a word or particle, the ‘complementizer.’ Therefore, according to Miller, לֵאמֹר is a ‘complementizer’ that links direct speech to the main clause.

Miller maintains that לֵאמֹר is not an infinitive construct when it introduces direct speech because it does not follow typical infinitival syntax. Miller explains that infinitival syntax contains two types of constructions. First, the infinitive functions as a verbal complement, standing in a relationship to the main verb as the verb’s subject or object. She gives 1 Kings 11:40 as an example:

וַיִּבְקֶשׁ שְׁלֹמֹה לְהָמִית אֶת־יֶרְבֹּעַם

“Solomon sought *to* kill Jeroboam.”

¹²⁰Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §18f. Kautzsch argues that לֵאמֹר is used so often that it has “become stereotyped as an adverb” to introduce direct speech (Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §114o). While לֵאמֹר is used primarily to introduce direct speech, it is still an infinitive construct functioning in the same manner as other infinitive constructs.

¹²¹Cynthia L. Miller, *The Representation of Speech in Biblical Hebrew Narrative: A Linguistic Analysis*, Harvard Semitic Monographs 55 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 206.

¹²²*Ibid.*, 95. Parenthetical statements are original to the quote.

The infinitive **הָמִית** functions as the “objective verbal complement” to the verb **בָּקֵשׁ**.¹²³

Second, the infinitive functions as an embedded clause to mark purpose or result. She cites Leviticus 14:36b as an example:

וְאַחֵר כֵּן יָבֹא הַכֹּהֵן לִרְאוֹת אֶת-הַבַּיִת:

“And after that the priest will come *to see the house*.”

The infinitive **רְאוֹת** expresses the purpose of the verb **בּוֹא**.¹²⁴

Miller explains that both infinitival constructions share similar features. The infinitives in both constructions may govern an object with the marker **אֶת** or with a pronominal suffix. The two infinitival constructions may also govern adverbial or prepositional phrases. The only difference, Miller asserts, is the way in which the infinitive of each respective construction relates to the main verb, as described above.¹²⁵

Miller does claim that **לֵאמֹר** is a true infinitive in some instances. She notes that **לֵאמֹר** functions as the object of a verb in Genesis 26:7 and expresses purpose in Esther 6:4.¹²⁶ However, she denies that **לֵאמֹר**, when it introduces direct speech, explains the main verb.¹²⁷

Miller gives three arguments to demonstrate that **לֵאמֹר** is not a true infinitive when it introduces direct speech. First, she contends **לֵאמֹר** does not govern objects (as an independent noun or as a suffix), adverbial phrases, or prepositional phrases, and it is never paired with another infinitival clause.¹²⁸ Second, she insists **לֵאמֹר**, when it introduces direct speech, is not an embedded clause functioning as a gerund because there are cases in which it does not appear to explain the main verb. This is particularly true

¹²³Miller, *Representation of Speech*, 175. The translation and italics are Miller’s.

¹²⁴Ibid., 176. The translation and italics are Miller’s.

¹²⁵Ibid., 176-77.

¹²⁶Ibid., 179-80.

¹²⁷Ibid., 182. Cf. Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §114o.

¹²⁸Miller, *Representation of Speech*, 182.

when the main verb is not a speaking verb, or a ‘non-metapragmatic’ verb. She gives 1 Kings 16:16 as an example:

וַיִּשְׁמַע הָעָם הַחֲנִים לְאֹמֶר קִשֶׁר זִמְרִי וְגַם הִכָּה אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ

“The people in the camp heard the following information (lit., *heard saying*), ‘Zimri was treacherous and even killed the king.’”

In this example, Miller asserts that לְאֹמֶר cannot explain the main verb (“they heard by saying”) and it cannot express purpose (“they heard in order to say”).¹²⁹

Third, Miller argues that in clauses in which לְאֹמֶר introduces direct speech, the main verb may have an infinitival verbal complement other than לְאֹמֶר. She cites Joshua 18:8:

וַיָּקֻמוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיַּעַזְרוּ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶת־הַלְכִים לְכַתֵּב אֶת־הָאָרֶץ לְאֹמֶר
לָכוּ וְהִתְהַלְכוּ בָּאָרֶץ וְכַתְּבוּ אוֹתָהּ וְשׁוּבוּ אֵלַי

“So the men arose and went and Joshua *commanded* those going to map (lit., write) the land (*saying*), ‘Go and walk around the land and map it and return to me. . . .’”

Miller asserts that the infinitive לְכַתֵּב is the verbal complement to the verb יַעַזְרוּ; therefore, לְאֹמֶר cannot be the complement of יַעַזְרוּ.¹³⁰ Miller concludes that לְאֹמֶר, when it introduces direct speech, cannot be a real infinitive; rather, לְאֹמֶר has grammaticalized to a complementizer that links the direct speech to the main clause.

Miller’s arguments against לְאֹמֶר, when it introduces direct speech, are not convincing. With regard to her first argument, לְאֹמֶר—when introducing direct speech—does govern an object. Take for example 2 Kings 22:10:

וַיַּגֵּד שָׁפָן הַסֹּפֵר לְמֶלֶךְ לְאֹמֶר סֵפֶר נָתַן לִי חִלְקִיָּה הַכֹּהֵן

Shaphan the scribe declared to the king, *saying*, “Hilkiah the priest gave a book to me.”

Shaphan’s direct speech is a substantival clause: a clause that stands in the place of a

¹²⁹Miller, *Representation of Speech*, 184. The translation and parenthetical statement is Miller’s. Miller provides a table listing all of the verbs used with לְאֹמֶר. She divides the table into three sections. The first section contains ‘metapragmatic’ verbs, which lists speaking verbs that occur before לְאֹמֶר. The second section lists ‘psychological’ verbs that occur before לְאֹמֶר: verbs of trust, anger, fear, etc. The third section contains ‘non-metapragmatic/non-psychological’ verbs (ibid., 192-95).

¹³⁰Ibid., 185. The translation of Josh 18:8 is Miller’s. Her translation was given, as were the masoretic accents in the Hebrew verse, to support a later argument that she misreads this verse (see n. 141 below).

noun, functioning as a nominative, accusative, or genitive.¹³¹ The direct speech functions as the object to the infinitive לֵאמֹר.

Furthermore, contrary to Miller, לֵאמֹר in Leviticus 11:1-2a does govern a prepositional phrase:

וַיֹּדֶבֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר אֲלֵהֶם:
דַּבְּרוּ אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר

And the Lord said to Moses and to Aaron, *saying to them*, “Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, . . .”

According to Miller, when לֵאמֹר introduces direct speech, prepositional phrases identifying the addressee(s) occur before לֵאמֹר and are governed by the main verb. Because Moses and Aaron are identified as the recipients of the Lord’s direct speech earlier in 11:1, Miller holds that the prepositional phrase אֲלֵהֶם is redundant and “co-referential” to the previous two prepositional phrases. She concludes, then, that לֵאמֹר in Leviticus 11:1 is not a “true infinitive governing a following prepositional phrase.”¹³²

Miller’s argumentation is tenuous; her dismissal of לֵאמֹר in Leviticus 11:1 simply because the referents are mentioned twice appears arbitrary. If לֵאמֹר can govern a prepositional phrase in Esther 6:4, even though it introduces indirect speech in this verse, there is no reason לֵאמֹר cannot govern a prepositional phrase when it introduces direct speech. The simple matter of redundancy is a strained justification to reanalyze the infinitive construct. If לֵאמֹר in Leviticus 11:1 is not an infinitive construct because its prepositional phrase is co-referential with the previous prepositional phrases, then there is much in the Hebrew Bible to call into question. Prepositions are often repeated when used on more than one noun; however, no grammarian calls the repetition of prepositions

¹³¹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §39a.

¹³²Miller cites two other examples in which לֵאמֹר introduces direct speech and precedes a prepositional phrase: Gen 23:5, 14. She argues that the addressee, Abraham, is mentioned prior to לֵאמֹר in both verses, rendering לֵאמֹר redundant. Moreover, it appears Miller also discredits these examples because of a textual variance. Both the LXX and the Samaritan Pentateuch read לֹא instead of לוֹ, placing the negative particle at the beginning of the direct speech in vv. 6 and 14 (Miller, *Representation of Speech*, 183).

into question. When more than one word in a construct package depends on the same head noun, the head noun is often repeated. Nevertheless, the repetition of the head noun does not alarm grammarians. The simplest explanation of Leviticus 11:1 is that לֵאמֹר is an actual infinitive construct governing its own prepositional phrase.

In her second argument, Miller asserts that לֵאמֹר cannot be an embedded infinitival clause when it does not appear to explain the main verb, particularly when the main verb is a non-speaking/non-psychological verb. However, the examples Miller cites to support this argument in reality confirm לֵאמֹר, when it introduces direct speech, to be a true infinitive construct.

For example, with some main verbs, Miller notes that the direct speech introduced by לֵאמֹר “accomplishes the action described in the verb,” as in Genesis 19:15:

וַיֹּאצְאוּ הַמַּלְאָכִים בְּלוֹט לֵאמֹר קוּם קַח אֶת־אִשְׁתְּךָ וְאֶת־שְׁתֵּי בָנֶיךָ
הַנִּמְצָאִים פֶּן־תִּסָּפֵּה בְּעוֹן הָעִיר:

“The angels *urged* Lot (*saying*), ‘Get up! Take your wife and your remaining two daughters lest you be swept away in the iniquity of the city.’”¹³³

Miller states that the non-speaking verb אוֹץ may take an explanatory infinitive, but לֵאמֹר in this instance is not an infinitival complement. She proposes that

instead, the action of (trying to) hurry Lot and his family *was accomplished through speaking*. This subcategory of non-metapragmatic verbs approaches that of metapragmatic verbs in that *the quotation introduced with לֵאמֹר accomplishes the action described by the matrix verb*.¹³⁴

Miller comes close to describing לֵאמֹר as an infinitive construct functioning adverbially in Genesis 19:15. She simply moves the adverbial function to the quotation, not לֵאמֹר. Miller’s insistence that לֵאמֹר is not an infinitive construct precludes her from placing the adverbial function on לֵאמֹר. Contrary to Miller, לֵאמֹר explains the main verb by explaining *how* the angels urged Lot; they urged him *by saying*, “Arise and go!” The

¹³³Miller, *Representation of Speech*, 188. The translation and emphasis is Miller’s.

¹³⁴*Ibid.*, 188-89. Emphasis added.

direct speech is a substantival clause functioning as the object to **לֵאמֹר**.¹³⁵

In another category of non-speaking/non-psychological verbs, the verb describes an action that occurs alongside the direct speech, as in Genesis 47:15:

וַיָּבֹאוּ כָּל-מִצְרַיִם אֶל-יֹסֵף לֵאמֹר הִבֵּה-לָנוּ לֶחֶם וְלָמָּה נָמוּת נֶגְדְךָ כִּי אֲפִס כֶּסֶף:

“And all Egypt *came* to Joseph, *saying*, ‘Give us food! Why should we die in front of you because our money is used up.’”¹³⁶

Miller notes that one might suggest that **לֵאמֹר** is explaining the main verb: “they came in order to say.” She asserts, however, this analysis of Genesis 47:15 is not feasible because of examples like Exodus 5:14, in which subjects of main verbs are different from the speaker(s) of the direct speech introduced by **לֵאמֹר**:

וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׂטָרֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר-שָׂמוּ עֲלֵהֶם נְגִשֵׁי פְרֹעָה לֵאמֹר מִדּוּעַ לֹא כִלִּיתֶם חֶקֶכֶם לִלְבֹּן בְּתַמּוֹל שְׁלֹשׁ גִּם-תָּמוֹל גִּם-הַיּוֹם:

“The Israelite foremen whom the taskmasters of Pharaoh set over them *were beaten* (*saying*), ‘Why did you not complete your quota of bricks yesterday or today as previously?’”

According to Miller, **לֵאמֹר** in Exodus 5:14 is not explaining the main verb **יָבֹאוּ** because the speakers of the direct speech—the taskmasters—are different from the subjects of the passive verb—the Israelite foremen.¹³⁷

In response to Miller’s analysis of Exodus 5:14, infinitive constructs are used to explain passive verbs. In Deuteronomy 4:35, for example, the infinitive construct explains why Israel was shown the Lord’s wonders:

אַתָּה הָרָאִיתָ לְדַעַת כִּי יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים אֵין עוֹד מִלְּבָדּוֹ:

You—you *were shown so you would know* that the Lord—He (is) God. There is none besides Him.

Israel is the subject of the passive verb, but the Lord is the agent of the action.

Deuteronomy 4:35 demonstrates that it is feasible that **לֵאמֹר** in Exodus 5:14 and Genesis

¹³⁵The critique of Miller’s explanation of the third category of non-speaking/non-psychological verbs is similar to the critique of her explanation of the first category. Many of the occurrences of **לֵאמֹר** are in fact functioning adverbially.

¹³⁶Miller, *Representation of Speech*, 189. The translation and emphasis is Miller’s.

¹³⁷Ibid. The translation of Exod 5:14 and the parenthetical statement are Miller’s.

47:15 explains the main verb in each verse, even if the speaker of the direct speech is different than the agent of the main verb.¹³⁸ However, Miller's citation of Exodus 5:14 to demonstrate that infinitive constructs cannot explain passive verbs fails to prove her point. Infinitive constructs may also explain nominal statements.¹³⁹ The infinitive construct **לֵאמֹר** modifies and explains **נִגְשִׁי פְרָעָה** and not the passive verb **וַיִּבְנוּ**.

In her third argument against **לֵאמֹר**, Miller contends that **לֵאמֹר**, when it introduces direct speech, cannot be a verbal complement when another infinitive construct functions as the verbal complement to the main verb. Miller appears to say that a verb cannot have multiple infinitives functioning as verbal complements.¹⁴⁰ However, consider 1 Kings 3:7:

לֹא יָדַעְתִּי צֵאת וְבֹא

I did not know *going out or coming in*.

1 Kings 3:7 demonstrates that a main verb can take two infinitival verbal complements; it is possible, then, that **לֵאמֹר** is a complement to the main verb in Joshua 18:8.¹⁴¹

Miller appeals to metapragmatics to explain **לֵאמֹר** because **לֵאמֹר** does not function as she expects an infinitive construct to function. Miller seems to argue that **לֵאמֹר**, when it introduces direct speech, is unique; because it is unique, she reanalyzes **לֵאמֹר** as a complementizer. However, if **לֵאמֹר** is truly unique, then one would not expect it to function like other infinitive constructs. If **לֵאמֹר** is unique, not following typical

¹³⁸See also Lev 6:23; 16:10, 27. For impersonal clauses rendered, "It was said, saying" see Gen 22:20; 38:13, 24; Josh 2:2; 1 Sam 15:12.

¹³⁹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §18f.

¹⁴⁰Miller writes, "An infinitive functioning as a verbal complement bears a syntactic relation to the matrix verb as either subject or object" (Miller, *Representation of Speech*, 177). With respect to Josh 18:8 she writes, "The infinitive **לִכְתֹּב** is the complement of the verb 'to command'; **לֵאמֹר** *cannot possibly be understood as a verbal complement of the same matrix verb*" (ibid., 185; emphasis added.).

¹⁴¹However, in Josh 18:8 Miller incorrectly designates **לִכְתֹּב** as the verbal complement to the main verb **וַיִּצְוּ**. The accents indicate that **לִכְתֹּב** is to be read with **אֶת־הַלְלִים**; the infinitive construct and the participle are linked together by the conjunctive accent *little telisha*. The infinitive **לִכְתֹּב** explains the participle **הַלְלִים**: "the ones who are *goers to write the land*" (Miller, *Representation of Speech*, 185).

infinitival syntax, then Miller’s arguments are unnecessary. Just because **לֵאמֹר** acts differently from Miller’s expectations there is no reason to declare that **לֵאמֹר** is not an infinitive construct, or to speculate that it has “grammaticalized” into a “complementizer.” Instead of conjectures and speculations, it is best to view **לֵאמֹר**—in *every* occurrence—as an infinitive construct that introduces a substantival clause.

3:17d [לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ]

This verbal clause is a substantival clause functioning as the object to the infinitive construct **לֵאמֹר** in 3:17c. The negative particle **לֹא** with the imperfect indicative demands obedience.¹⁴² The 3ms suffix on the **מִן** preposition is the retrospective pronoun pointing back to the antecedent **הָעֵץ** in 3:17b.

3:17f [בְּעֶצְבוֹן תֹּאכַל־נָה]

The energetic 3fs suffix on **תֹּאכַל** communicates the unwavering will of the Lord: Adam will certainly eat from the ground by the sweat of his brow.¹⁴³

3:20b [כִּי הוּא הִיְתָה אִם כָּל־חַיִּי]

The independent pronoun **הוּא**, the initiator of the nominal clause, is emphatic since it is not needed due to the 3fs pronoun in **הִיְתָה**. BDB highlights the function of the pronoun by translating the clause, “for *she* (and no one else) was the mother of all living.”¹⁴⁴ The noun **אִם** is indefinite; however BDB, the NASB, ESV, KJV, NIV, and ASV translate it as a definite noun, “the mother.” In 3:20b, **אִם** is indefinite because it is the accusative of situation.¹⁴⁵ Typically the accusative of situation requires an indefinite

¹⁴²See 3:1c above.

¹⁴³See 3:15d above.

¹⁴⁴BDB, 215b; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §19f; Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §135a. See also Ruth 1:1e in chap. 4.

¹⁴⁵See 3:1a above.

descriptive noun: an adjective or participle. However, the accusative of situation may consist of a primary noun as long as it is indefinite. The clause is then rendered: “She—she existed in the status of mother of every living thing.”¹⁴⁶

3:22a [וַיֹּאמֶר | יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים הֵן הָאָדָם הָיָה כְּאֶחָד מִכֻּלּוֹ]

The particle הֵן is a particle of interjection, calling attention to something that is noteworthy, a surprise, or unexpected. It is often used in prose to point out something that demands action or informs a particular conclusion.¹⁴⁷ In 3:22a, the outcome of Adam and Eve’s sin leads the Lord to take action, expelling the couple from the Garden of Eden.

The numeral אֶחָד primarily acts as an adjective. Joüon notes that when אֶחָד is in the construct or precedes a preposition it functions as a substantive.¹⁴⁸ The prepositional phrase כְּאֶחָד is in place of the accusative of situation: “Behold, the man exists in the status of one from Us.”

3:22b [לְדַעַת טוֹב וְרָע]

The infinitive construct + ל is explanatory, clarifying the verb הָיָה in 3:22a: “Adam and Eve exists as one from Us *in terms of* knowing good and evil.” The noun טוֹב is the accusative of direct object to לְדַעַת. The noun רָע is in conjunctive apposition to טוֹב; the *vav* is the conjunctive *vav* linking two words in the same case. The noun רָע, therefore, is the accusative of direct object to לְדַעַת.

¹⁴⁶Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13z. Mohammad ‘Id notes that the word in the accusative of situation “has to be indefinite” (Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 151). On the other hand, Wright notes a few cases in which the word in the accusative may be definite (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§44).

¹⁴⁷See BDB, 243c; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §105d. Joüon and Kautzsch include הֵן under conditional clauses and not clauses of interjection. While the particle is used in conditional clauses, the context of Gen 3:22 lends towards an interjection like הִנֵּה (Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §167l; see also Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §159w).

¹⁴⁸Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §142b.

3:22c [וְעַתָּה | פְּרוֹשֵׁלַח יָדוֹ וְלָקַח גַּם מִעֵץ הַחַיִּים]

The particle *פֶּן* negates a purpose clause; it is typically attached to the imperfect in the subjunctive mood. In contrast to the indicative, which is a statement of fact, the subjunctive expresses an action that may or may not happen. The tense of the subjunctive is future, which easily lends toward a hypothetical situation. Literally translated, the negated purpose clause reads, “and now, with the intention that he may not stretch out his hand.”

The *vav* on *לָקַח* is energetic and continues the subjunctive mood and future tense of the preceding imperfect.¹⁴⁹ The energetic *vav* may be either logical (“and so”), or temporal (“and then”). The energetic *vav* in 3:22c is temporal, expressing actions in succession. The particle *גַּם* strengthens the statement *מִעֵץ הַחַיִּים*. The Lord makes a strong statement that the situation would be even worse if Adam took of the fruit of the tree of life.

3:24c [וַיָּאֶת לַחַט הַחֶרֶב הַמִּתְהַפֶּכֶת]

The Hithpael of *הִפָּךְ* extends the action of the Qal: “to turn over and over” rather than “to turn.”¹⁵⁰ The participle is in qualifier apposition to *הַחֶרֶב*.

Conclusion

Chapter 3 provided a grammatical analysis of Genesis chapter 3 according to a traditional Semitic grammar. Like chapter 2, the analysis interacted with Bandstra and other grammarians who apply modern linguistic principles. The analysis did not proceed verse-by-verse, but was more selective. Verses were chosen to highlight certain features of biblical Hebrew grammar, or to defend traditional analysis in light of modern linguistic arguments. Traditional descriptions of nominal and verbal clauses were given and illustrated in Genesis 3:1a and 3:7d. The Semitic understanding of the *ת* of the Hithpael

¹⁴⁹Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §119w.

¹⁵⁰Cf. Jdg 7:13; Job 37:12.

was explained in Genesis 3:8a, and the accusative of specification was introduced in Genesis 3:15c. In Genesis 3:1, the traditional understanding of היה was defended against current trends to translate the verb as a copula. In Genesis 3:5a, it was demonstrated that the tense and aspect of a participle is derived from the context; contrary to Joosten, the predicative participle is not a present tense verb. In Genesis 3:8 it was demonstrated that the Piel, and by extension the Hithpael, denotes intensiveness/extensiveness. In Genesis 3:17, Miller's arguments against לְאָמַר as an infinitive construct were shown to be incorrect. In each case the traditional Semitic analysis provides a clearer and more accurate description of the syntax.

CHAPTER 4

GRAMMATICAL ANALYSES AND METHODOLOGICAL COMPARISONS BASED ON RUTH 1:1-22

This chapter analyzes the grammar of Ruth 1:1-22 according to a traditional Semitic approach. Like chapters 2 and 3, this chapter provides traditional categories and terms used to describe biblical Hebrew grammar, but it also includes interactions with biblical Hebrew grammarians who apply linguistic principles. Robert D. Holmstedt's commentary on Ruth serves as the basis of comparison between the traditional approach and newer linguistic methods. The analysis of Ruth chapter 1 does not include all twenty-two verses. Verses are selected to highlight particular points of traditional Hebrew grammar, or to contrast traditional and linguistic methodologies/conclusions.

Grammatical Analysis

The division of verses into smaller sections typically follows the breaks marked by the stronger disjunctive accents *athnach*, *zaqeph*, and *tiphcha*. The divisions serve as a means for quick reference.

1:1a [וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם שֶׁפָּט הַשְּׂפָטִים]

Holmstedt argues that the verb *היה* does not take an 'accusative complement,' only 'nominal complements' or 'oblique complements.'¹ Contrary to Holmstedt, the verb *היה* does take an accusative. See the discussion of the proper function of *היה* in Genesis 3:1a in chapter 3, and Ruth 1:2c and 1:11d below.

¹Robert D. Holmstedt, *Ruth: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible Series (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 52.

1:1b [וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ]

Holmstedt contends that the “basic word order” in Biblical Hebrew is Subject-Verb (S-V). Holmstedt bases his definition of “basic word order” on Anna Siewierska’s definition: “stylistically neutral, independent, indicative clauses with full nouns phrase . . . participants, where the subject is definite, agentive, and human, the object is a definite semantic patient, and the verb represents an action, not a state or an event.”² According to Holmstedt, the S-V word order has “the greatest descriptive adequacy,” able to explain any deviation from this “basic” order.³

According to Holmstedt, variations from the basic S-V word order happen for different reasons. The word order may change, for example, because of the syntax of an interrogative clause. A verb may be “raised” to the front of a clause due to “trigger” words like *לֹא*, *אֲשֶׁר*, and *כִּי*.⁴ Clauses with a modal verb often reflect a V-S word order because modals, according to the definition of “basic word order,” are not indicative.⁵

If a clause exhibits a V-S word order and does not have a trigger word, the verb must “contain a Topic or Focus operator.”⁶ Holmstedt defines ‘Topic’ as “thematic information” that sets a scene or distinguishes one theme from other themes.⁷ ‘Focus’ is defined as “information contrasted with possible alternatives.”⁸ Holmstedt cites Ruth

²Robert Dean Holmstedt, “The Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew: A Linguistic Analysis” (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2002), 129; Anna Siewierska, *Word Order Rules*, Croom Helm Linguistics Series (London: Croom Helm, 1988), 8.

³Robert D. Holmstedt, “Word Order in the Book of Proverbs,” in *Seeking Out the Wisdom of the Ancients: Essays Offered to Honor Michael V. Fox on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Ronald L. Trowel, Kelvin G. Friebel, and Dennis R. Magary (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 152.

⁴Robert D. Holmstedt, “Word Order and Information Structure in Ruth and Jonah: A Generative-Typological Analysis,” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 54, no. 1 (2009):124, 125.

⁵*Ibid.*, 124; Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 139.

⁶Holmstedt, “Word Order and Information Structure,” 138.

⁷According to Holmstedt, ‘theme’ is defined as “old/known (or presupposed) information” in a narrative (Holmstedt, “Word Order and Information Structure,” 128).

⁸*Ibid.*; Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 10.

4:17 as an example of a Focus initial verb:

יָלַד בֶּן לְנָעֳמִי

A son was born to Naomi.

Holmstedt argues that the indicative verb יָלַד in Ruth 4:17 was moved to the front of the clause because it contains a Focus operator, highlighting the fact that despite all odds a son is born to Naomi.⁹

In his search for the basic word order in Genesis, Ruth, Jonah, and Proverbs, Holmstedt disregards clauses that begin with the *wayyiqtol* forms. Holmstedt states that it is “methodologically precarious” to include the *wayyiqtol* when determining basic word order due to *wayyiqtol*’s morphological form.¹⁰ The *wayyiqtol* “skews the data towards a VS analysis.”¹¹ Holmstedt goes on to posit that a statistically dominant form may be due to a certain text type, and “clause type frequency must be qualified appropriately and may not represent the basic word order in the grammar of that language.”¹²

Holmstedt dismisses *wayyiqtol* and its V-S word order, maintaining that *wayyiqtol* is moved to the front of the clause due to a trigger particle. He bases his argument on the “traditional” understanding that the doubling of the *yod* represents an assimilated particle.¹³ Although Holmstedt is unsure of what particle assimilated into the

⁹Holmstedt, “Word Order and Information Structure,” 128, 138; idem., *Ruth*, 10, 16. Gen 21:7 exhibits a V-S word order: וַתֹּאמֶר מִי מָלַל לְאַבְרָהָם הַיִּנְיָקָה בָּנִים שָׂרָה (And she said, “Who would have said to Abraham, ‘Sarah has suckled sons?’”). Holmstedt dismisses the V-S word order of the הַיִּנְיָקָה verbal clause as a “more pragmatically influenced word order,” because it could be argued that the V-S word order “reflects Sarah’s incredulity about her own ability to birth and suckle at ninety years of age” (idem., “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 141-42).

¹⁰Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 133.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Holmstedt, “Word Order and Information Structure,” 118.

¹³Ibid., 125. Holmstedt directs his readers to Waltke and O’Connor’s discussion of *wayyiqtol*, who abridge Péter Kustár’s survey of the debate. Bruce K. Waltke and M. O’Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 544-45. Holmstedt also cites a brief survey by Leslie McFall that lists a few of the various suggestions for the assimilated particle in *wayyiqtol*. For example, Albert Schultens contends that the doubled *yod* represents the ו+definite article. Hubert Grimme suggests that the dagesh forte designates ו+the particle ל. Leslie McFall, *The Enigma of the Hebrew Verbal*

preformative, and despite differing opinions regarding the assimilated particle, he asserts that “most hypotheses” agree that the unknown particle is a complementizer.¹⁴ Holmstedt

System: Solutions from Ewald to the Present Day, Historic Texts and Interpreters in Biblical Scholarship 2 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1982), 216-17. E. Rödiger notes that previous editions of Gesenius’ grammars argue that the verb הָיָה contracted with the imperfect; however, Rödiger contends in the fourteenth edition that the *vav*-consecutive on the imperfect is a “strengthened form of *Vav copulative*.” E. Rödiger, ed., *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, 14th ed., trans. T. J. Conant (New York: D. Appleton, 1846), §48b. More recently, David Testen argues for an “original ‘emphasizing’ particle *l” to explain the doubling of the first letter with the Arabic and Hebrew article. This same particle *l is at the heart of his understanding of the doubled preformative in *wayyiqtol*. By his own admission, Testen states that the particle *l cannot be “proved in the technical sense of the word” and that “incontrovertible empirical data” does not exist for this particle. He looks to problematic forms to serve as indications of the possibility of *l in biblical Hebrew; for example, the “riddle of the development of the article,” the verb לָקַח, and the puzzling form of the interrogative הָ in Leviticus 10:19 (הֲיִטֵּב). David D. Testen, *Parallels in Semitic Linguistics: The Development of Arabic la- and Related Semitic Particles*, Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 26 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 183-98. In his work on the Hebrew verbal system, John Cook states that Testen’s conclusion is “preferable syntactically” to explain the V-S word order of *wayyiqtol* clauses. John Andrew Cook, “The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System: A Grammaticalization Approach” (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2002), 257 (italics are original); John A. Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb: The Expression of Tense, Aspect, and Modality in Biblical Hebrew*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 7 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 258.

¹⁴In his dissertation Holmstedt admits that “we cannot be certain of the historical nature of the doubling in the *wayyiqtol* . . . whatever it was, it was a complementizer” (Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 153). In his commentary on Ruth, Holmstedt explains that the assimilated particle in *wayyiqtol*—“whatever the gemination . . . used to be (it is now unrecoverable)” —triggers the change in word order (Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 55). In a footnote in his dissertation, Holmstedt offers the suggestion that the doubling of the preformative is from an assimilated *nun*. In this particular footnote, Holmstedt observes that most grammarians highlight the fact that the doubled preformative preserves the original *patakh* of the conjunction. Holmstedt faults these grammarians for not explaining why the original *patakh* is preserved. Holmstedt attempts to answer the question “why” by positing that the doubled preformative is due to the assimilated *nun*, similar to the assimilated *nun* of the definite article (he cites Testen’s *Parallels in Semitic Linguistics*). The original conjunction, therefore, was הָ. Furthermore, Holmstedt contends, citing G. Hatav, the semantics of הָ, which is found only in narrative, is similar to the semantics of the definite article: “both serve to add specificity to the respective items.” The article refers to specific people or things in the narrative, while the “narrative verb refers to specific events/actions in the narrative” (Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 152-53n36). However, in Arabic and in biblical Hebrew, one characteristic that sets a noun apart from a verb is that the noun can take the definite article. The verb, on the other hand, cannot take an article. Ihab Joseph Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons Between Classical Hebrew and Classical Arabic: A Study Based on the Translation of Mohammad ‘Id’s Arabic Grammar* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), 21-24. The Karaites describe the Hebrew noun in the same manner. In a beginning grammar by an anonymous author, the Karaite grammarian notes that the interrogative הָ can be added to the “three parts of speech, i.e., the noun, the verb, and the particle. . . . But the definite article is used only with nouns.” Nadia Vidro, *A Medieval Karaite Pedagogical Grammar of Hebrew: A Critical Edition and English Translation of Kitāb al-‘Uqūd fī Taṣārīf al-Luġa al-‘Ibrāniyya*, Cambridge Genizah Studies Series 6 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 34-35 (The translation is Vidro’s, emphasis added). Holmstedt does not say הָ is a definite article, but it is “semantically similar” to the article. However, his explanation of הָ—“the narrative verb refers to specific events/actions in the narrative”—implies that a verb can be singled out from other verbs in the same way an article singles out an individual thing/person from other things/persons (Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 152-53n36). Verbs in Hebrew, and Arabic, cannot be

defines a ‘complementizer’ as a syntactic position which indicates “the head of the *complementizer phrase*,” any word that fills this position Holmstedt designates as ‘complementizer.’¹⁵ Due to the assimilated complementizer, the *wayyiqtol* is “triggered” and moves to the front of the clause. Holmstedt, therefore, does not take the *wayyiqtol* clause into consideration in his search for the basic word order.

Holmstedt’s analysis of the *wayyiqtol* is not convincing. Although various grammarians over the centuries sought to explain the doubling of the *yod* by an assimilated particle, this understanding is not necessarily correct. Arabic provides a simpler, and more likely, explanation for *wayyiqtol*.

Arabic has two conjunctions to express “and”: *wa* and *fa*. The conjunction *wa* is the simple conjunction “and.” The conjunction *fa*—حَرْفُ تَرْتِيبٍ (*harfu tartībin*, the “particle of classification”)—unites two words, indicating that the two words “immediately succeed or are closely behind one another.”¹⁶ The *fa* particle also joins two clauses, signifying that the latter clause succeeds the former in time or that the two clauses are “internally linked” (i.e. cause and effect relationship). The *fa* particle is usually rendered “and so” or “and then.”¹⁷ Paul Joüon describes the *fa* particle as the “energetic *et*” (energetic ‘and’).¹⁸

The biblical Hebrew ו seems to serve both functions. To express the simple ‘and’ (Arabic *wa*) the weak conjunctive *vav* is applied. On the other hand, the energetic

singled out in this manner; that function is assigned only to the article and nouns.

¹⁵Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 153, 153n40.

¹⁶W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language: Translated from the German of Caspari and Edited With Numerous Additions and Corrections*, 3rd ed., ed. W. Robertson Smith and M. J. de Goeje (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 1:§366.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. and rev. T. Muraoka, *Subsidia Biblica* 14 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000), §115b.

vav (Arabic *fā*) has the strong vocalization וַ to express succession.¹⁹ The *wayyiqtol* is not “triggered” but is following the normal syntax for verbal clauses.

Even if Holmstedt were correct, and the doubled preformative of *wayyiqtol* indicates an assimilated particle, *wayyiqtol* clauses would still be a verbal clause. The presence of a particle before a verb does not change the fact that the clause relates an action. If a particle, or an object, or an adverb precedes a verb, the clause remains a verbal clause. However, if the subject precedes the verb, then the clause is nominal.²⁰ The verb and the subject cannot switch word order without changing the meaning of the clause. Commenting on Genesis 37:3, Isaac Jerusalmi notes that the S-V clause וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל אָהֵב is properly translated “As for Israel, well/why he loved.” If the author had wanted to say “And Israel loved” he would have used a verbal clause: וַיֵּאָהֵב יִשְׂרָאֵל.²¹ The two clauses are not interchangeable. Biblical Hebrew does not have one base word order from which all irregularities are derived. Biblical Hebrew consists of two primary clause types—verbal and nominal—each with its own syntax and its own purpose.²²

According to Holmstedt’s statistics, the book of Genesis is comprised of 2,113

¹⁹The symbol וַ indicates the doubling of the tense indicator of the imperfect. In the perfect, the energetic *vav* is often evidenced by a shift of the accent to the ultima: וְקָטַלְתִּי versus וְקָטַלְתִּי. In several forms of the perfect and imperfect, however, the *vav*-consecutive is indistinguishable from the simple conjunctive *vav*. In these cases, Joüon rightly notes that context, syntax, and comparisons with Arabic aid in discerning between a simple or energetic *vav* (Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §115c). Joshua Blau posits that the doubling of the preformative in the imperfect preserves the original *patakh* of the conjunction, thereby marking the conjunction as energetic. Joshua Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew: An Introduction*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 2 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 190, 285-86. Joüon notes that the energetic form only occurs in situations of succession (Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §115c).

²⁰The verb in a nominal clause primarily functions as the announcement, furnishing a description of the initiator. See 2:4a in chap. 2 and 3:7d in chap. 3 above.

²¹Isaac Jerusalmi, *The Story of Joseph (Genesis 37; 39-47): A Philological Commentary*, 2nd rev. ed., Auxiliary Materials for the Study of Semitic Languages 1 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1981), 5.

²²Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax: A Traditional Semitic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, forthcoming), §38; Kyoungwon Choi, “An Analysis of Subject-Before-Finite-Verb Clauses in the Book of Genesis Based on Traditional Grammarians” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006), 142n10.

wayyiqtol clauses; as such, Holmstedt hesitates to incorporate the *wayyiqtol* in his study on word order.²³ However, the fixed word order of *wayyiqtol* clauses and its “overwhelming predominance” in Hebrew narrative should clue the reader that this is the basic word order for verbal clauses, and the preferred clause to relate narrative. A casual reading of biblical Hebrew narrative demonstrates that verbal clauses are ideally suited for narratives. Verbal clauses recount events, relate actions, and carry a narrative.²⁴

Holmstedt admits that only a few clauses in the book of Ruth follow his criteria for the S-V basic word order. His explanation for the sparse examples of S-V clauses in the book of Ruth is that narratives are “informationally complex.”²⁵ A more accurate description is that there are a large number of V-S clauses in Ruth because the *wayyiqtol* carries the narrative. Nominal clauses break the *vav*-consecutive chain usually to give an announcement about a noun or subject (Ruth 4:1), or to describe a person or thing (Ruth 4:18).²⁶ The book of Ruth has sparse examples of S-V clauses because V-S clauses—verbal clauses—are the predominant clause type in narrative.²⁷

²³Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 133n7.

²⁴Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §38c.

²⁵Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 12.

²⁶Nominal clauses may carry a part of a narrative (Gen 44:3). See also the discussion of Longacre’s work in chap. 1. Theoretically, an entire narrative could be carried by nominal clauses; however, according to Russell Fuller, Ihab Griess states that the narrative would be “too flat” (personal conversation with Russell Fuller on May 28, 2014).

²⁷The definitions of nominal and verbal clauses are, according to William Wright, “the constant rule in good old Arabic, *unless the desire to emphasize a part of the sentence be the cause of a change in its position*.” He also notes that Arab grammarians “attach no small importance” to the difference between the two clauses (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§113; emphasis added.). Biblical Hebrew grammarians also emphasize the importance of the nominal and verbal clause. Although rejecting these definitions, Kautzsch admits that they are “indispensable to the more delicate appreciation of Hebrew syntax.” He goes on to note that the difference between a verbal and nominal clause “involves fundamental differences in meaning.” E. Kautzsch, ed., *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, 28th ed., trans. A. E. Cowley, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), §140e. Ewald contends that the word order of verbal and nominal clauses are “of the highest importance and significance throughout the whole language: it is substantially carried out in the Arabic also, and is thus one of the most important peculiarities of the Semitic.” Heinrich Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*, trans. James Kennedy, Ancient Language Resources (1891; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 153.

The morphology of the verb also indicates the predominance of V-S clauses. In the perfect verbal form the verbal root precedes the pronoun: קָטַלְתִּי “killed, I.”²⁸ Hebrew is similar to Arabic in this regard: قَتَلْتُ *qataltu* “killed, I.”²⁹ Likewise, the imperfect exhibits verb-first word order: תִּקְטֹל “(in the process of) killing, she.” The preformatives of the imperfect are not pronouns, but substitutes for pronouns indicating the aspect of the imperfect.³⁰ The subject pronouns of the imperfect are explicit in the 2fs, 2mp/fp, and 3mp/fp forms; the other imperfect forms have an implied pronoun.³¹ The biblical Hebrew imperfect mirrors the imperfect of Arabic: أَقْتُلُ *’aqtulu* “(in the process of) killing, I.”³² Verbal morphology demonstrates that verb-before-subject is the primary word order in biblical Hebrew.

Arabic—classical and modern—confirms that the primary word order is verb-before subject. Wright explains that the most significant change in word order is when the subject comes before a verb. When the subject precedes the verb the clause ceases to be a verbal clause and is now a nominal clause.³³ Arabic permits an object or particle to precede the verb in a verbal clause; this does not change the nature of a verbal clause. Mohammad ‘Id writes, “For a genuine verbal sentence, the verb must precede and the subject follows. Thus, when we speak of ‘word order’ in the verbal sentence, it primarily

²⁸The perfect 3ms and 3cp have implicit pronouns (Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §2a, §3a).

²⁹Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§94. See Gen 2:5c in chap. 2.

³⁰Mortimer Sloper Howell, *A Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language: Translated and Compiled from the Works of the Most Approved Native or Naturalized Authorities* (Allahabad, India: North-Western Provinces and Outh Government Press, 1883-1911), 1:519; 2-3:11. See also Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 59-60; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:94.

³¹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §2a, §4. The imperative forms demonstrate that the preformatives of the imperfect are not pronouns. Once the preformatives are removed, the imperative is left with the verbal root, followed by the suffixed pronoun: קָטַלְ “kill, you.”

³²Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§94. See Gen 2:6a in chap. 2.

³³*Ibid.*, 2:§119.

concerns the position of the object,” which may precede the verb in a verbal clause.³⁴ In their grammar on modern Arabic, Farhat Ziadeh and Bayly Winder indicate that the verbal clause is the dominant clause type in Arabic and that “the verb always comes *before* its subject.”³⁵ Arabic grammarians give no indication that the nature of a verbal clause is affected by any particle or word preceding it, other than the subject. Arabic does not support Holmstedt’s S-V notions.

Furthermore, Holmstedt’s argument is made untenable by his analysis of verses such as Ruth 4:15:

כִּי כִלְתָּךְ אֲשֶׁר־אֶהְבֶּתְךָ יִלְדָּתוֹ

For your daughter-in-law, who loves you, she bore him.

According to Holmstedt, כִּי clauses typically trigger verbs to move to the front of the clause, altering the normal S-V word order. However, in Ruth 4:15 the noun כִּלְתָּךְ is at the front, not the verb יִלְדָּתוֹ. Holmstedt works around this difficulty by stating that “the Focus-fronted subject phrase” כִּי כִלְתָּךְ אֲשֶׁר־אֶהְבֶּתְךָ “is moved to its position after VS inversion, a move that results in a surface order of SV.”³⁶ In other words, Holmstedt seems to indicate that the members of the clause move twice. With such explanations, any grammatical description is possible. Holmstedt needlessly complicates biblical Hebrew.³⁷

³⁴Griess, *Syntactic Comparisons*, 131.

³⁵Farhat J. Ziadeh and R. Bayly Winder, *An Introduction to Modern Arabic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 23 (emphasis original).

³⁶Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 208-09.

³⁷In Ruth 1:14c, Holmstedt states that the S-V order of the clause וְרֹות דְּבָקָה בָּהּ is not basic; this is despite the fact that he has argued for a basic S-V word order for biblical Hebrew. Holmstedt makes this assertion about Ruth 1:14c because the clause, according to Holmstedt, is “Focus-marking,” or contrasting Ruth with Orpah (Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 10, 86). According to Holmstedt, and Siewierska, the S-V clause must be “stylistically neutral” (Holmstedt, “Word Order and Information Structure,” 116; Siewierska, *Word Order Rules*, 8). Therefore, the S-V order in Ruth 1:14c is not basic because it contrasts Ruth and Orpah. Furthermore, he argues that the particle כִּי causes a verb to move to the front of its clause (Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 12; Holmstedt, “Word Order and Information Structure,” 125). However, in the כִּי clause in Ruth 1:17, כִּי הִמָּנֹת יִפְרִיד בֵּינִי וּבֵינָהּ, the noun precedes the verb. Holmstedt argues that the noun “has been raised even higher than the verb” because it is contrasting “not with contextual alternatives, but with logical

The כִּי clause in Ruth 4:15 consists of a nominal clause, which places the focus on Ruth. Ruth is described in 4:15 as the one who bore Obed, the one who loves Naomi, and the one who is better to Naomi than seven sons. According to the women who are blessing Naomi, Naomi's restoration has been brought to fruition through Ruth. The correct analysis of the nominal clause in 4:15 is not double movement of clausal constituents; rather, the women bless Naomi with descriptive nominal clauses.

“Double movement” or “raising higher than” is unnecessary to describe word order in biblical Hebrew clauses. If an author or speaker wishes to convey an action, a verbal clause is used; if an author or speaker wishes to provide a description or the identification of an initiator, a nominal clause is used. The traditional Semitic definitions for nominal and verbal clauses, and the description of their respective functions, explain the word order in any clause—in narrative or poetry—simply and accurately.

1:1c [וַיֵּלֶךְ אִישׁ מִבֵּית לָחֶם יְהוּדָה]

The noun אִישׁ is indefinite because the man is grammatically unknown, being unknown to the reader. Indefinite nouns are nouns that refer to a class or a genus without singling out a particular member(s) of that class or genus. The indefinite אִישׁ means any

alternatives—those established solely from the shared knowledge of the speaker-listener outside of a particular discourse.” The noun הַמֶּנֶת is contrasted with any other reason why Ruth would leave Naomi (Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 92). It appears that Holmstedt must multiply the number of categories, and bend and stretch the syntax to force the text to fit his notions of how the syntax should be. The issue in biblical Hebrew clauses is not trigger words, but whether the author/speaker needs a verbal clause or a nominal clause to communicate the idea. Ruth 1:14c is basic nominal clause word order. The word order did not switch twice because of “Focus-marking.” Compound nominal clauses (nominal clauses in which the announcement is a verbal clause; see Gen 2:5a in chap. 2), as in Ruth 1:14c and 1:17, implicitly or explicitly express contrast. Wright explains that, in Arabic, the announcement of a compound nominal clause implicitly or explicitly contrasts with the announcement of another announcement, “having not the same predicate but a different or even an opposite one.” He gives as an example, زَيْدٌ مَاتَ وَعُمَرُ حَيٌّ (*zaydun māta wa 'umarū ḥayyā* “Zeid is dead, but Omar is alive.”) (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§119; see also Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §38d). In Wright's example, the nominal clause regarding Omar is contrasting with the nominal clause regarding Zeid. Holmstedt misunderstands the nature and syntax of nominal clauses; his arguments for triggers and constituent movement are *ad hoc*. See Ruth 1:14c below for a description of the syntax.

man without defining which man from that class.³⁸ Just as definite nouns are defined more precisely by adjectives or adverbial phrases—הָעֵץ הַגָּדוֹל “the tree, the great one,” “the great tree”—indefinite nouns may be specialized.

An indefinite noun may be limited, or clarified, without making the noun definite. For example, in 1:1c, the indefinite noun אִישׁ is specialized by the prepositional phrase מִבֵּית לָחֶם. A certain individual is meant—a man from Bethlehem—but that individual is still grammatically unknown. In verse 2, however, אִישׁ is made definite because he has been introduced to the reader and is now grammatically known: that man who was mentioned before, who is from Bethlehem, his name is Elimelek.³⁹

1:1e [הוא ואשתו ושני בָּנָיו:]

Holmstedt notes that the independent pronoun and the addition of other referents is “syntactically complex.” The difficulty for Holmstedt seems to arise from the pronoun הוא resuming אִישׁ, and the additional subjects—אִשְׁתּוֹ וּשְׁנֵי בָּנָיו—not matching the verb יָלַךְ in number.⁴⁰ The syntax of this clause is strange to English speakers, primarily with regards to the singular verb and multiple subjects. However, 1:1e follows typical Semitic syntax. Because the agent אִישׁ is separated from the additional subjects אִשְׁתּוֹ וּשְׁנֵי בָּנָיו by a prepositional phrase and an infinitival clause, the pronoun הוא is needed to resume the agent of the verb יָלַךְ.⁴¹ Moreover, because the pronoun resumes the subject אִישׁ, the pronoun is emphatic: “the man, he and his family (to the exclusion of others) went to Moab.”⁴² With regard to the disagreement in number between the verb

³⁸Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §33.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 57-58.

⁴¹See Gen 13:1; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §146c; Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 211.

⁴²This does not imply that others did not go to Moab, but that the author is focusing on Elimelek and his family, to the exclusion of others. See BDB, 215b; Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew*

and the subjects in 1:1e, it is typical for Semitic verbs to disagree with their subjects.⁴³

William Wright notes that when a verb has multiple agents, the verb will often agree with the nearest agent in gender and number.⁴⁴

The pronoun הוּא, and the nouns אִשְׁתּוֹ and שְׁנֵי בָנָיו, are in conjunctive apposition; the conjunctive *vav* links two or more words that are in the same case. The pronoun הוּא, and the nouns אִשְׁתּוֹ and שְׁנֵי are in the nominative, as they are the agents of the verb וַיֵּלֶךְ.⁴⁵ The Van Dyke Arabic translation demonstrates that these nouns are in the same case:

هُوَ وَأَمْرَأَتُهُ وَابْنَاهُ

huwa wa'amra'atu^uhu wa'abnā^{hu}

He and his wife and his two sons

In the noun וַאֲמֵרָאֲתֻהוּ (*wa'amra'atu^uhu*) the nominative ending *-u* stands between the noun and the 3ms suffix ֻ (*-hu*). In the noun וַאֲבְנָאֻהוּ (*wa'abnā^{hu}*) the dual nominative ending *-ā* stands between the noun and the 3ms suffix ֻ (*-hu*).

וְשֵׁם הָאִישׁ אֱלִימֶלֶךְ וְשֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ נַעֲמִי 1:2a
וְשֵׁם שְׁנֵי בָנָיו | מִחֶלּוֹן וּכְלִיזָן אֶפְרַתִּים
מִבֵּית לָחֶם יְהוּדָה]

Holmstedt remarks that there are two syntactically possible referents for the noun אֶפְרַתִּים. First, אֶפְרַתִּים may refer to the immediately preceding names מִחֶלּוֹן and כְּלִיזָן. According to this reading, only the two sons are identified as Ephrathites. Second,

Grammar, trans. Cowley, §135a; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §19f.

⁴³See n. 117 in chap. 2.

⁴⁴Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§150. Duncan Stewart notes that the verb “agrees with that subject which . . . is of the best person; the first person being better than the second.” Duncan Stewart, *A Practical Arabic Grammar* (London: John W. Parker, 1841), 231-32; Silvestre de Sacy, *Grammaire Arabe*, vol. 2, 3rd ed. (Tunis, Tunisia: Societe Anonyme de l’Imprimerie Rapide, 1905), §408. See also William Chomsky, *David Kimḥi’s Hebrew Grammar (Mikhlol): Systematically Presented and Critically Annotated* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1952), 347. Note especially Num 12:1, in which Aaron is a subject, even though the verb is feminine: וַתִּדְבֹר מֶרְיָם וְאַהֲרֹן. The verb תִּדְבֹר agrees in gender and number with the first agent, מֶרְיָם.

⁴⁵Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §25a. The 3ms suffix on אִשְׁתּוֹ is in the genitive; the noun and its 3ms suffix, בָּנָיו, are also in the genitive. See Gen 2:4a in chap. 2 above.

אֶפְרַתִּים may refer to the two sons, Elimelek, and Naomi. For the second option to work, Holmstedt asserts that אֶפְרַתִּים is the predicate of a “null-subject, null-copula” clause: “(they) (were) Ephrathites from Bethlehem of Judah.”⁴⁶ Holmstedt rightly identifies Elimelek, Naomi, and their two sons as the referents to אֶפְרַתִּים; however, as with 1:1c, the accents indicate that only one reading is possible.

The noun אֶפְרַתִּים is in apposition to the previous three nominal clauses. William Wickes notes that the accents typically keep together words in apposition, as in Genesis 4:1: אֶת־תִּנְיָה אִשְׁתּוֹ. The two nouns in apposition in Genesis 4:1 are kept together by the conjunctive accent *munach*. The entire appositional phrase in Ruth 1:2a is contained in the *zaqeph* segment.⁴⁷ Within the *zaqeph* segment, however, the main dichotomy is made by the *pashta*, separating the appositive אֶפְרַתִּים from the nominal clauses it modifies.⁴⁸ Wickes states that the appositive may be separated from its antecedent; this separation is often made when a “nominal expression” of several words is in place of a noun.⁴⁹

If an appositional phrase consists of long “nominal expressions,” Wickes notes that the accents will follow the general rules for dichotomy.⁵⁰ The main break of a segment is often postponed until the main point of a clause is made; anything following the main dichotomy supplements or qualifies the main statement.⁵¹ In Ruth 1:2a, the main dichotomy of the *zaqeph* segment is delayed until all the names of Elimelek’s

⁴⁶Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 60.

⁴⁷Wickes, *Accentuation of the Twenty-one So-Called Prose Books*, 53.

⁴⁸The *pashta* is the near subordinate to the *zaqeph*; the far subordinate of the *zaqeph* is the *rebia*. When both subordinates are present in the *zaqeph* segment, the *rebia* marks the heaviest disjunction. In the absence of the far subordinate, as in Ruth 1:2a, the near subordinate *pashta* marks the heaviest disjunction.

⁴⁹Wickes, *Accentuation of the Twenty-one So-Called Prose Books*, 53.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 32.

family are given; after the main break marked by *pashta*, the family members are qualified by the noun אֶפְרָתִים.

Holmstedt maintains that it is syntactically possible that אֶפְרָתִים refers only to Mahlon and Chilion. However, the three nominal clauses are all contained in the *pashta* segment, indicating that they are to be read together, and that they are all modified by אֶפְרָתִים. Wickes states that nouns “in the same construction and joined by” a *vav* are kept together by the accents.⁵² The *zaqeph* segment in 1:2a does not have its remote subordinate, *rebia*; therefore, *pashta* marks the heaviest disjunction in the *zaqeph* segment and governs all three nominal clauses. Within the *pashta* segment, the first nominal clause naming Elimelek is marked off by *pashta*’s remote subordinate, *pazer*, and its conjunctive accents. The second nominal clause is marked off by *pashta*’s near subordinate, *geresh*, and its conjunctive accents. The third nominal clause is immediately governed by the *pashta* and its conjunctive accents. The accents cannot allow אֶפְרָתִים to modify Mahlon and Chilion alone. See table 3 below for a summary of the accentual pattern in 1:2a.

Table 3. Accentual pattern of the appositional phrase in Ruth 1:2a

אֶפְרָתִים	וְשֵׁם שְׁנֵי־בָנָיו מַחֲלֹן וְכִלְיוֹן	וְשֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ נַעֲמִי	וְשֵׁם הָאִישׁ אֱלִימֶלֶךְ
Appositive: modifying all three nominal clauses.	Third nominal clause: governed by <i>pashta</i> and its conjunctives.	Second nominal clause: governed by <i>geresh</i> and its conjunctives.	First nominal clause: governed by <i>pazer</i> and its conjunctives.
	<i>Pashta</i> segment, governing the clauses modified by אֶפְרָתִים.		
<i>Zaqeph</i> segment, governing the entire appositional statement.			

⁵²Wickes, *Accentuation of the Twenty-one So-Called Prose Books*, 53. Italics are original.

1:2c [וַיְהִי־שָׁם:]

The particle שָׁם is an adverbial accusative of place, answering the question ‘where’ Elimelek and his family lived. The accusative of place may be specific—a common noun (house, village, etc.) or a place name—or it may be unspecified, indicating a general direction.⁵³ The accusative of place in 1:2c is unspecified, giving a general location in Moab where Elimelek and his family lived.⁵⁴ If a town name was given, the accusative of place would be specific.

Holmstedt labels שָׁם as an “oblique (i.e., non-accusative) complement” of the verb היה. According to Holmstedt, oblique complements are one type of verbal complement, another being an accusative complement (direct object).⁵⁵ Holmstedt restricts the accusative too narrowly. In Arabic and biblical Hebrew the direct object, absolute object, and adverbial object are in the accusative.⁵⁶ The particle שָׁם is in the place of an accusative, functioning adverbially to the verb היה. The particle שָׁם is similar to the Arabic particle تَمَّ (*thamma* “there”); *thamma* is not declinable, but as it functions adverbially it stands in the place of an accusative.⁵⁷ If the accusative of place were a noun, not a particle, it would be in the accusative case. For example, in Exodus 21:13, the noun מְקוֹם is in the accusative, indicating an unspecified place:

וְאִשֶּׁר לֹא צָדָה וְהֶאֱלִהִים אָנָּה לִידּוֹ וְשִׁמַּתִּי לָּהּ מְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יָנוּס שָׁמָּה:

And he who does not lie in wait, and God allows to fall to his hand, then I will appoint to you *a place* which he may flee to there.

Van Dyke’s Arabic translation of Exodus 21:13 demonstrates the accusative function: مَكَانًا

⁵³Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13v-w; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§44b.

⁵⁴Arab grammarians label the accusative of time or place اَلظَّرْفُ (*al-zarfu* “the vessel”) “because *time* and *place* are, as it were, the *vessels* in which the act or state is contained” (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§221, 2:§44).

⁵⁵Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 5, 61.

⁵⁶Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13a.

⁵⁷BDB, 1027a; Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 23, 143-44; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§362. Furthermore, تَمَّ (*thamma* “there”) has an accusative vowel, -a.

(*makānan* “place”), the accusative ending being *-an*.

وَلَكِنَّ الَّذِي لَمْ يَتَّعَمَدْ، بَلْ أَوْفَعَ اللَّهُ فِي يَدِهِ، فَأَنَا أَجْعَلُ لَكَ مَكَانًا يَهْرُبُ إِلَيْهِ

walkinna 'l-ladhī lam yata 'ammad, bal 'awqa 'a l-lāhu fī yadihi, fa 'anā 'aj 'alu makānan yahrubu 'ilayhi

But whoever does not do so deliberately, but the Lord causes (him) to fall in his hand, then I—I will make to you *a place* (which) they will escape to it.

Holmstedt defines ‘complement’ as a constituent that modifies verbs; even his “non-accusative” oblique complements modify verbs.⁵⁸ If a word or phrase is modifying a verb directly (object, etc.), or obliquely/indirectly (time, place, etc.), then the word or phrase is in the accusative. Arabic illustrates this, as shown in Exod 21:13.⁵⁹ Holmstedt’s analysis of נָשָׂם as a ‘non-accusative’ oblique complement is deficient.

1:3b [וְהַשָּׂאֵר הִיא וְשְׁנֵי בָנֶיהָ:]

As in 1:1e, Holmstedt argues that the pronoun הִיא is not the syntactic subject of the verb הַשָּׂאֵר; rather, הִיא is part of the compound noun phrase הִיא וְשְׁנֵי בָנֶיהָ. The syntactic subject of הַשָּׂאֵר is not expressed, according to Holmstedt, and the compound noun phrase “is an adjunct that was added to specify ‘who was left.’”⁶⁰ However, the pronoun הִיא emphasizes the implied 3fs pronoun of the verb.⁶¹ The *vav* on וְשְׁנֵי בָנֶיהָ is the conjunctive *vav*, marking conjunctive apposition.

When a second subject is added to a verb, and the first subject is only included in the explicit/implicit pronoun of the verb, the first subject must be resumed by a pronoun.⁶² In 1:3b, the subject of the reflexive verb, Naomi, is the implied 2fs pronoun of the verb הַשָּׂאֵר.⁶³ Because a second subject is added, the implied 2fs pronoun must be

⁵⁸Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 4.

⁵⁹Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 143-44.

⁶⁰Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 62.

⁶¹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §19h.

⁶²Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §146c.

⁶³Mortimer Howell explains that the subject of a passive/reflexive verb is not an ‘agent’

resumed by the independent pronoun הִיא.

As in 1:1e, Arabic exhibits the same syntax with pronouns and conjunctive apposition. Consider Van Dyke's translation of Ruth 1:3b:

وَبَقِيَتْ هِيَ وَأَبْنَاهَا

wabaqiyat hiya wa'abnāhā

And she remained—she and her two sons.

The pronoun هِيَ (*hiya*), though indeclinable, is in the place of the nominative. In the noun وَأَبْنَاهَا (*wa'abnāhā*), the dual nominative ending *-ā* stands between the noun and the 3fs suffix هَا (*-hā*). The two nouns are in conjunctive apposition.⁶⁴

The Niphal stem is the reflexive of the Qal or the Hiphil; the Niphal of שָׂאֵר is probably the reflexive of the Hiphil of שָׂאֵר, as שָׂאֵר does not occur in the Qal. With Hebrew active verbs (Qal, Piel, Hiphil), an agent performs an action on an object. In contrast, Hebrew reflexives express the result or effect of a Qal, Piel, or Hiphil action on its object; the object of the active verb becomes the subject of the reflexive verb.⁶⁵ Whereas the agent is in view with active verbs, the reflexive is “agentless.” The agent of a Hebrew reflexive verb is neither assumed, nor implied, in the mind of the speaker or author, even if the agent is known through context; only the state or effect is in view with the reflexive.⁶⁶

For example, in Judges 7:20 the agents שְׁלֹשֶׁת הָרָאשִׁים perform an action on the objects הַכַּדִּים:

וַיַּתְקֵנוּ שְׁלֹשֶׁת הָרָאשִׁים בְּשׁוֹפְרוֹת וַיִּשְׁבְּרוּ הַכַּדִּים

because the action is done to the subject; rather, he labels the subject of a passive/reflexive verb ‘pro-agent’ (Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 1:47).

⁶⁴Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 211.

⁶⁵Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 1:47. The pro-agent is the subject of the reflexive, but not necessarily the agent of action.

⁶⁶Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §7a; Chomsky, *David Kimhi's Hebrew Grammar*, 82; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§52, §53; Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 2-3:273; Wheeler M. Thackston, *An Introduction to Koranic and Classical Arabic* (Bethesda, MD: IBEX Publishers, 2000), 139-40.

And the three companies blew the trumpets, and *they broke the pitchers*.

The active verb **יִשְׁבְּרוּ** is performed by the agents, the three companies, and the action is extended to the vessels. However, if the author had described the result, the state of the vessels produced by the Qal action, with no regard as to who or what put the vessels in that state, he would have used a reflexive stem:

וַיִּתְקְעוּ שְׁלֹשָׁת הָרָאשִׁים בְּשׁוֹפְרוֹת וַיִּשְׁבְּרוּ הַכִּדָּיִם

And the three companies blew the trumpets, and the pitchers *got themselves broken*.

By using the Niphal of **שבר** the primary focus is on the effect of breaking, not on who broke the pitchers. In the Niphal form, agency is irrelevant.

In Ruth 1:3b, the Niphal of **שאר** is the reflexive of the Hiphil of **שאר**. This verbal clause expresses the fact that Naomi was placed into the state of remaining alone; no thought is given to the person(s) or thing(s) that put her into that condition. Literally translated, the clause reads, “And she got herself left behind—she and her two sons.”

1:4a [וַיִּשְׁאַן לָהֶם נָשִׁים מְאֻבִּיּוֹת]

The two nouns **נָשִׁים** and **מְאֻבִּיּוֹת** are in qualifier apposition.⁶⁷ In qualifier apposition a descriptive noun, or semi-descriptive noun, modifies another noun through apposition.⁶⁸ In Ruth 1:4a, the *nisbah* noun **מְאֻבִּיּוֹת** is a semi-descriptive noun modifying the antecedent **נָשִׁים**.⁶⁹

As mentioned in 1:2a above, the accents typically join two words that are in apposition.⁷⁰ The appositional clause in 1:2a, however, demonstrates that the appositive may be separated from its antecedent by a disjunctive accent. In 1:4a, the appositive is also separated from its antecedent by a disjunctive accent. The rules for accents are

⁶⁷See Gen 2:7d and 2:13a in chap. 2, 3:5e in chap. 3.

⁶⁸Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §23a.

⁶⁹*Nisbah* النَّسَبَاتُ means “pertaining to” or “in relation to.” See Gen 2:13a in chap. 2.

⁷⁰Wickes, *Accentuation of the Twenty-one So-Called Prose Books*, 53. See Gen 4:1: **אֶת־חַוָּה אִשְׁתּוֹ**.

general rules; for example, it is a general rule that the agent and its verb are joined by a conjunctive accent. However, the placement of accents may be determined by other considerations. For example, a major disjunctive may be delayed in order to emphasize a certain point. In Genesis 3:5c, the *athnach* is delayed, placed in the middle of the protasis, instead of between the apodosis and protasis, to highlight the fact that God knows Adam and Eve's eyes will be opened if they eat the fruit.⁷¹ Furthermore, appositives may have a disjunctive accent for musical considerations, at other times for emphasis. In Ruth 1:2a, the general rule for appositives was not followed because of the long antecedent. In Ruth 1:4a, the appositives are marked with a disjunctive accent because of the placement of the *rebia*.

Wickes notes that when a *zaqeph* clause consists of more than two words, and the main break of the clause falls on the second word before the *zaqeph*, the main break is marked by *pashta*. For example, in Genesis 2:10, the second word from the *zaqeph* is

וְנָהָר:

וְנָהָר יֵצֵא מֵעֵדֶן

And a river (was) a one that flowed from Eden.

The main break, however, may be marked by a *rebia* if, as Wickes explains, one of the words following *rebia* is 'long.'⁷² In Ruth 1:4a, the *rebia* designates the main dichotomy:

וַיִּשְׂאוּ לָהֶם נָשִׁים מֵאֲבוֹת

And they took to themselves Moabite women.

The *rebia* is allowed in this clause because מֵאֲבוֹת is considered 'long.'

Because the *rebia* is used in 1:4a, it functions as the main dichotomy in the *zaqeph* segment. Had the *rebia* not been placed on לָהֶם, and a conjunctive accent or an accent subordinate to *pashta* (*geresh*) been placed on לָהֶם, then *pashta* would have

⁷¹See Gen 3:5c in chap. 3 above.

⁷²Wickes defines a 'long' word as a word that has two or more vowels before the accented syllable. If the word has only one vowel preceding the accented syllable, the vowel must be a long vowel with a *metheg* and must precede a *shewa* (Wickes, *Accentuation of the Twenty-one So-Called Prose Books*, 62n4, 76-77).

marked the major disjunction in the segment, making the division of the apposition emphatic. As it stands, *pashta* is the weaker disjunctive in the *zaqeph* segment of 1:4a. Because *rebia* is the stronger disjunctive accent, it rejoins the two words in apposition (בְּאֵבֶרֶת וְנָשִׁים) even though they are marked with a disjunctive accent.

Many examples have been given above demonstrating that the accents play a large and important role in the study of biblical Hebrew syntax. In Ruth 1:2a Holmstedt relies on context and other factors to determine the syntax of the appositional statement; however, the accents clearly indicate the correct reading. In Genesis 2:4-5, the accents and the paragraph markers prevent Barry Bandstra from forcing the text to fit his particular reading.⁷³ In Genesis 2:14c, the accents demonstrate that the clause is a *casus pendens* construction and does not support the copula pronoun theory.⁷⁴ In Genesis 2:19e, the accents aid the reader in navigating an otherwise syntactically difficult verse.⁷⁵ In Genesis 3:5, the accents mark where the emphasis of the verse lies.⁷⁶ The accents also indicate that Cynthia Miller misreads a verse that she cites to support her arguments against לְאָמַר as an infinitive construct.⁷⁷ The misuse, or disuse, of the accents by these biblical Hebrew linguists, however, does not appear to stem from the principles of their respective linguistic methods.

This chapter, and the previous three chapters, have demonstrated how biblical Hebrew linguists have turned aside from traditional Hebrew grammar; however, it would not be fair to say that any one who holds to modern linguistic principles necessarily rejects the Masoretic accents. One linguist's attitude towards the accents may have more

⁷³See Gen 2:4d in chap. 2.

⁷⁴See Gen 2:14c in chap. 2.

⁷⁵See Gen 2:19e in chap. 2 above.

⁷⁶See Gen 3:6a in chap. 3.

⁷⁷Cynthia Miller misreads Josh 18:8, incorrectly categorizing an infinitive as a complement to the main verb rather than the preceding participle; see Gen 3:17c n. 141 in chap. 3.

to do with how the accents were taught in beginning Hebrew.⁷⁸ For example, it appears that Holmstedt acknowledges to some small degree the credibility of the accents. In Ruth 2:14, Holmstedt considers the accents as he determines the syntax of the verse.⁷⁹ On the

⁷⁸Lars Lode summarizes many Hebrew students' introduction to the Masoretic accents by stating many Old Testament scholars "both traditional and modern, do not pay much attention" to the accents: "The vast majority of us were taught not to pay any attention to them, or at most we have learned to recognize the middle of a verse by the accent *Athnach*, the upside-down v-shaped accent which occurs under the last word of the first half of the verse. Some of us have studied the Table of Accents inserted in our *Biblia Hebraica*, but few of us retain all their names, and rare are those who make constant use of the accents in their study and teaching—except for the rabbis." Lars Lode, "A Discourse Perspective on the Significance of the Masoretic Accents," in *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics*, ed. Robert D. Bergen (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1994), 155. The unfamiliarity of the accents is not limited to recent biblical Hebrew scholarship. S. R. Driver states that "experience tells me how liable they [the accents] are to be overlooked." He writes his chapter on the accents to "smooth the way" for those who "have not the time or inclination" to closely study the accents. S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew and Some Other Syntactical Questions*, Ancient Language Resources (1892; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 101n1.

⁷⁹Although Holmstedt briefly interacts with the accents in Ruth 2:14, his conclusion is incorrect. Ruth 2:14 may be read one of two ways. First, it may be read, "And Boaz said to her at the time of eating, 'Approach here and eat from the bread . . .'" Second, it may be read, "And Boaz said to her, 'At the time of eating, approach here and eat from the bread . . .'" The Hebrew, with accents, reads, וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ בָּעוּ לְעֵת הָאֶכֶל גְּשִׁי הֲלֹם וְאָכַלְתְּ מִן־הַלֶּחֶם וְסִבַּלְתְּ בַּחֲמִץ. Holmstedt asserts that לְעֵת הָאֶכֶל "is ambiguously placed," modifying either the main verb וַיֹּאמֶר or the verb גְּשִׁי in the direct quote. He argues that the accents "do little to clarify their own interpretation," since, as he claims, the *rebia* on הָאֶכֶל and the *geresh* on בָּעוּ are not "high level disjunctives." Holmstedt prefers the second reading, contending that the "narrative flow" indicates that Ruth has sat down to eat. What is more, Holmstedt asserts that the accents primarily function as marks for chanting and not for syntax; Holmstedt writes, "the טעמים mark prosody and not syntax . . . and so they are not strong support for any syntactic decision." (Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 132-33). Holmstedt dismisses *rebia* and *geresh* because they are not "high level disjunctives"; however, *rebia* and *geresh* are just as clear in marking the syntax of a clause as *athnach* and *zaqeph*. Furthermore, to separate the syntax from the chanting would render the text senseless. The liturgical purpose of the accents would be worthless if the accents do not mark the syntax. Israel Yeivin insists that the chanting and the syntax are closely tied together: "the chant is dependent on the text, and emphasizes the logical relationships of the words." Israel Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*, trans. and ed. E. J. Revell, The Society of Biblical Literature Masoretic Studies 5 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1980), #178. Holmstedt's view of the accents is misinformed; his analysis of Ruth 2:14 reflects his weak view of the accents. In many verses words could go with other words that follow or with words that precede them. Scholars usually depend on their own devices, but the accents reveal the syntax of clauses, and the *rebia* in Ruth 2:14 clearly indicates the correct reading. The *athnach* governs the clause introducing the direct speech and the direct speech, with the *zaqeph* marking the main break in the *athnach* clause. The two accents subordinate to *zaqeph* are *pashta* and *rebia*; the *rebia*, the remote subordinate accent to *zaqeph*, marks the main break in the *zaqeph* segment. Therefore, the verb וַיֹּאמֶר, with its agent and two prepositional phrases, fall under the domain of *rebia*: לְעֵת הָאֶכֶל cannot be separated from the preceding verbal clause. Contrary to Holmstedt, the correct reading is, "And Boaz said to her at the time of eating, 'Approach here and eat from the bread . . .'" (NASB, ESV, and ASV follow this reading). The prepositional phrase לְעֵת הָאֶכֶל modifies the verb וַיֹּאמֶר. See Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §15k.

other hand, his analysis of the first three verses of Ruth demonstrates he does not strictly follow the accents.⁸⁰ In his analysis of Genesis chapters 2 and 3, Barry Bandstra typically divides his clauses according to the Masoretic accents. However, he ignores the accents in his revision of Genesis 2:4-5.⁸¹

Lars Lode acknowledges the credibility of the accents and attempts to understand the accents through the lens of discourse linguistics. Lode lists three “deficiencies” of the traditional understanding of the accents. First, “it is rather cumbersome to learn the rules as to where to make the next cut.”⁸² Second, he notes that the accents do not always divide the verse syntactically or semantically. Third, the accents do not take into consideration units larger than the verse.⁸³

Regarding Lode’s first point, one should not be driven to force a foreign paradigm over the accents simply because the accents are too cumbersome. The masoretic tradition, however, is not concerned with modern notions of simplicity or complexity. The masoretic accents are not cumbersome but complex. The accents have a certain simplicity, dividing verses into its components. Yet, the system is genius because it works on many levels: varying the musical melody, marking emphasis, indicating the syntax and meaning, etc. Compared to many modern grammarians’ understanding of biblical Hebrew syntax, the accent system handed down by the Masoretes is simple.

Lode goes on to add that the Masoretic system “is rather awkward from a European point of view.” He continues, “Why have as many as eighteen disjunctive markers? After all, English can cope with seven . . . , eight if you count parentheses.”⁸⁴

⁸⁰See the analysis of Ruth 1:1-3 above.

⁸¹Barry Bandstra, *Genesis 1-11: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Bible Series (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008), 119. See chap. 2 above.

⁸²Lode, “Discourse Perspective,” 155.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid., 155-56.

Lode confuses modern punctuation with the musical chanting indicated by the accents. English punctuation marks may at times parallel the accents, but these are two very different systems. To Lode's second point, therefore, he is correct that the accents do not always break the verse according to the syntax. However, Lode should have been aware that when the accents do not indicate the syntax of a clause, they often mark the main emphasis of a clause. Lode's own reading of Israel Yeivin's work on the accents should have informed him of this fact.⁸⁵

And to Lode's third point, the paragraph markers ׀ and ׀ in BHS are concerned with larger units.⁸⁶ The accents, however, are concerned with indicating the relationship of words. Yeivin explains that the chanting of the text, while enhancing "the beauty and solemnity of the reading," was to make the text clear and intelligible to the hearer. Yeivin writes, "the chant is dependent on the text, and emphasizes the logical relationships of the words."⁸⁷ Lode cannot simply revise the masoretic system of accents simply because it does not conform to Western notions of punctuation.

Biblical Hebrew grammarians have traditionally held the masoretic accents in high regard. Gesenius-Kautzsch writes,

according to their original design they have also a twofold use which is still of the greatest importance for grammar (and syntax), viz. their value (a) as *marking the tone*, (b) as *marks of punctuation* to indicate the logical (syntactical) relation of

⁸⁵See Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*, trans. and ed. E. J. Revell, #178. Furthermore, the accents also break the verse according to musical considerations, often grouping words that do not go together or separating words that should be joined. Fuller notes that in Gen 4:1, קָוַל דָּמִי אֲחִי, the three words are in construct and should be joined syntactically. However, because of musical factors the first word is often marked with a disjunctive accent. In Gen 4:1, the first word of the construct chain is separated from the other two words by the disjunctive *yethib* (Fuller and Choi, "Accents," §1n8). Modern hymns also group words according to musical considerations, often going against normal syntax. For example, in the first verse of *The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want*, the lyrics "He makes me down to lie" are grouped with the first half of the verse, "The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll not want"; however, syntactically the words should be grouped with the second half of the verse, "In pastures green." William Whittingham et al., "The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want" (no. 50), in *The Hymnal for Worship and Celebration* (Waco, TX: Word Music, 1986).

⁸⁶See n. 25 in chap. 2.

⁸⁷Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*, trans. and ed. Revell, #178.

single words to their immediate surroundings, and thus to the whole sentence.⁸⁸

Wickes explains that the Hebrew name for accents demonstrates their importance:

Indeed their very name, טעמים, points to the importance attached to them in this respect: they were so called because they were considered really to indicate the 'meanings'.⁸⁹

G. H. Ewald observes that the accents and the syntax go hand-in-hand:

By further consideration and investigation in this way, there will always be found a beautiful harmony between the accentuation and the syntax, so that each may afford explanation and support to the other. Whether we start with the syntax, and come to understand it without knowing anything yet of the accentuation . . . , or proceed from the latter to the former, accurate investigation will always lead to the same result, so that he who has a correct understanding of the syntax, has already nearly mastered the accentuation also, and he who understands the latter will always find himself more easily at home in the former. But this is, at the same time, the highest praise that can be given to the accentuation.⁹⁰

In his treatise on the Hebrew verb, S. R. Driver explains why he inserts a chapter on the accents:

The purport of this chapter will not, it is hoped, be misunderstood. Some acquaintance with accents is indispensable to the Hebrew student: not only for the single object, with a view to which this account of them has been inserted here, but upon more general grounds as well: they frequently offer material assistance in unraveling the sense of a difficult passage; and the best authorities continually appeal to them, on account of their bearing upon exegesis.⁹¹

A. B. Davidson emphatically defends the study of the accents:

Some people may think any labour bestowed upon the accents ill-spent. But, surely, no labour is ill-spent which is spent upon the text of Scripture. And it must not be forgotten that accents and vowels are of the same authority, both having sprung entire from the head of the Masorete, and whoso condemns the one condemns the other. No doubt those whose condemnation falls so ruinously upon the accents, would dispense with the vowels as well. Would many of them feel the loss of dispensing with the consonants also? . . . And, indeed, every man in this or almost any other age, since the renascence of Hebrew learning, who has any claim to be regarded as a Hebrew scholar, has investigated the laws of the accents.⁹²

James D. Price emphasizes that the accents preserve the ancient and traditional

⁸⁸Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §15b. Italics are original to the quote.

⁸⁹William Wickes, *A Treatise on the Accentuation of the Three So-Called Poetical Books of the Old Testament*, (1970; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 3-4.

⁹⁰Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language*, trans. Kennedy, 293.

⁹¹Driver, *Treatise*, 101n1.

⁹²A. B. Davidson, *Outlines of Hebrew Accentuation: Prose and Poetical* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1861), iv.

understandings of the text:

The accents complement the grammar and the syntax of Hebrew, preserving the traditional understanding of the text, an understanding with roots in the deep recesses of antiquity. No serious expositor of Scripture should neglect such important keys to Biblical exposition.⁹³

Indeed, the importance of the accents was heralded long before these grammarians.

For centuries the Jews have given great attention to the accents and how they group words. The rabbis teach that the chanting of scripture goes as far back as Ezra.

The Babylonian Talmud (TB) Megillah 3a teaches that Ezra the scribe, in Nehemiah 8:8, taught the people the scriptures with the accents:

Has not R. Iḳa said in the name of R. Ḥananel who had it from Rab: What is meant by the text, *And they read in the book, in the law of God, with an interpretation, and they gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading?* ‘*And they read in the book, in the law of God*’: this indicates the [Hebrew] text; ‘*with an interpretation*’: this indicates the *targum*; ‘*and they gave the sense*’: this indicates the verse stops; ‘*and caused them to understand the reading*’: this indicates the accentuation, or, according to another version, the massoretic notes?—These had been forgotten, and were now established again.⁹⁴

Furthermore, the TB ‘Erubin 21b states,

Raba made this exposition: What [are the implications of] what was written in Scripture, *And besides that Koheleth was wise, he also taught the people knowledge; yea, he pondered, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs?* ‘*He [also] taught the people knowledge*’ implies that he taught it with notes of accentuation

⁹³James D. Price, *The Syntax of Masoretic Accents in the Hebrew Bible*, Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 27 (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1990), 9. Furthermore, Joüon-Muraoka writes, “A knowledge of the accents is sometimes important for grammar and also for interpretation” (Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §15k). Alexander Sperber, on the other hand emphatically denies the usefulness of the accents: “we arrive at the conclusion that *any assumption of the accents’ use for interpunction does not correspond to the facts.*” He continues, “*Thus, the accents have no importance whatsoever in our endeavor to interpret the Bible; just as the hexameter is irrelevant for the understanding of the text in Homer.*” Alexander Sperber, *A Historical Grammar of Biblical Hebrew: A Presentation of Problems with Suggestions to Their Solution* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966), 465 (italics original). Bruce Waltke and Michael O’Connor are more cautious in their assessment of the accents: “The variety of pronunciations among various Jewish communities signals that caution must be used in absolutizing any one accentual system, though the extreme neglect of traditional philology is not justified. At present it is best to consider the accents as an early and relatively reliable witness to a correct interpretation of the text.” Bruce K. Waltke and M. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 29-30.

⁹⁴Maurice Simon, trans., “Megillah,” in *The Babylonian Talmud: Seder Mo’ed*, ed. I Epstein (London: Soncino Press, 1938), 2.8:10. The verse quoted is from Neh 8:8. See also the comment in Gen Rabbah 36:8. H. Freedman, trans., *Genesis*, Midrash Rabbah (London: Soncino Press, 1951), 1:294.

and illustrated it by simile.⁹⁵

In TB Megillah 32a, those who do not read Scripture according to the accents are chastised:

R. Shefatiah further said in the name of R. Johanan: If one reads the Scripture without a melody or repeats the Mishnah without a tune, of him the Scripture says, *Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good* etc.⁹⁶

The accents were of such great importance that, according to TB Nedarim 37b, there were those whose occupation was to teach the accents.⁹⁷

Although the system of the accents may be strange to Western readers, with “cumbersome” rules, nevertheless, the accents are vital to an accurate understanding of biblical Hebrew syntax. This dissertation has demonstrated the usefulness and the need of the accents in translation and interpretation. The accents correct many of the mistakes in Bandstra’s and Holmstedt’s analyses.⁹⁸

1:4d [וַיָּשְׁבוּ שָׁם בְּעֶשֶׂר שָׁנִים]

As in 1:2c, the particle שָׁם is in the place of an adverbial accusative of place. The particle is indicating an unspecified place; the exact location of where Naomi and her family lived is not known.

1:6d [כִּי־פָקֵד יְהוָה אֶת־עַמּוֹ]

Holmstedt reemphasizes his contention that the normal word order in biblical

⁹⁵Israel W. Slotki, trans., ““Erubin,” in *The Babylonian Talmud: Seder Mo’ed*, ed. I. Epstein (London: Soncino Press, 1938), 2.3:151.

⁹⁶Simon, trans., “Megillah,” 2.8:194.

⁹⁷H. Freedman, trans., “Nedarim,” in *The Babylonian Talmud: Seder Nashim*, ed. I. Epstein (London: Soncino Press, 1936), 3.5:114-16.

⁹⁸For histories of the Masoretic accents, and the tradition of the accents dating back to the time of Ezra, see the introductions and references from the following works: Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, “Hebrew Accents,” in *Biblical Hebrew Syntax: A Traditional Semitic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, forthcoming), §1; Wickes, *Accentuation of the Twenty-One So-Called Prose Books*, 1-8; Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §15a-b; E. J. Revell, “The Oldest Evidence for the Hebrew Accent System,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 54 (1971-1972):214-22; Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*, trans. Revell, #176-77, #181-91; Davidson, *Outlines of Hebrew Accentuation*, iv-xiv; Price, *Syntax of Masoretic Accents*, 5-18.

Hebrew is S-V. He points out that verbs tend to move to the front of a clause when the clause is fronted by a “trigger word.” He bases his conclusion on the observation that “a high percentage” of V-S clauses have a particle—אֲשֶׁר, כִּי, etc.—in front of the verb. Most S-V clauses, he continues, are not fronted by a triggering constituent; therefore, the basic word order in biblical Hebrew is S-V.⁹⁹

The change in word order in Hebrew, and in Arabic, is not dependent on particles. If an author wants to depict an action, a verbal clause—with the verb preceding the subject—is used. If an author wants to furnish a description, a nominal clause—with the subject first—is used. William Wright comments, “This is the constant rule in good old Arabic [and biblical Hebrew], *unless the desire to emphasize a part of the sentence be the cause of a change in its position.*”¹⁰⁰

According to Holmstedt, if 1:6d did not have the trigger word כִּי, the clause would read:

יהוה פקד את־עמו

The Lord visited His people.¹⁰¹

However, the כִּי clause consists of a verbal clause because the author wants the reader to focus on the action: the Lord *visited* His people. The author could have easily placed יהוה before the verb, but this provides a description of the Lord: the Lord, He is One who visited His people.¹⁰²

⁹⁹Holmstedt, “Word Order and Information Structure,” 124.

¹⁰⁰Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§113. Italics added.

¹⁰¹Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 69.

¹⁰²There are many examples of כִּי clauses in which the subject or object precedes a verb. It is not clear how Holmstedt would handle these types of כִּי clauses. At least for כִּי clauses that follow a S-V word order, it seems he argues that the constituents move twice, from S-V to V-S, then back to S-V (see the critique of his analysis of Ruth 4:15 in 1:1b above). When the subject or object is first in כִּי clauses, the emphasis falls on the subject or object. See for example Gen 4:23; 15:13; 31:32; 34:7; 40:16; 50:17; Exod 16:6, 29; 22:20; 23:9; Lev 19:34; Num 10:29; 16:28; 21:28; Deut 5:15; 10:19; 15:15; 16:12; 23:8; 24:18, 22; 32:22; Josh 17:18; Judg 13:22; 16:20; 1 Sam 4:20; 10:19; 12:12; 2 Sam 3:18; 7:11; 15:8; 16:10; 1 Kgs 2:28; 11:34; 12:1; 14:11; 2 Kgs 2:2, 4, 6; Isa 1:2; 9:5; 12:5; 14:32; 22:25; 24:3; 25:8; 32:14; 33:22; 60:20; Jer 6:1, 15; 8:12; 13:15; 15:14, 17; 17:4; 28:16; 29:32; 46:15; 48:45; Ezek 2:5; 12:6; 15:5; 33:33; Hos 5:1;

1:7a [וְתֵצֵא מִן־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר הָיְתָה־שָׁמָּה]

Relative clauses must have a pronoun that connects the clause to the antecedent. According to Mohammad ‘Id, the retrospective pronoun—(الْزَائِدُ) (الرَّاجِعُ) الضَّمِيرُ الْعَائِدُ—the pronoun which returns to, or falls back upon, the conjunctive noun”)—links the relative clause and the antecedent “in a way that its absence dismantles the entire complex.”¹⁰³ The retrospective pronoun defines the syntactic role the antecedent takes within the relative clause.¹⁰⁴ In 1:7a, the particle שָׁמָּה substituting for a retrospective pronoun, defines the role of the antecedent הַמָּקוֹם as an adverbial accusative of place.¹⁰⁵ The retrospective pronoun is often implied when the relationship between the antecedent and the relative clause is unambiguous.¹⁰⁶

Holmstedt seems to indicate that the use of a retrospective pronoun is partly dependent on the verb in a relative clause. For example, in 1:7a שָׁמָּה is used because of the antecedent מָקוֹם, and because of the verb הָיְתָה.¹⁰⁷ However, the verb does not determine whether or not a retrospective pronoun is used; relative clauses require a retrospective pronoun, explicitly or implicitly. The verb may determine the function of the retrospective pronoun in the relative clause, but it does not determine whether or not it is used. In 1:7a, שָׁמָּה substitutes for the retrospective pronoun because the antecedent

6:6, 9; 8:6, 7; Joel 1:6, 19; 2:22; 4:8; Obad 18; Zeph 2:14; Zech 13:3, 5; Mal 2:14; Ps 3:6; 53:6; 69:36; 103:16; 116:7; 119:78; 135:4; Job 3:25; 15:31; 19:6; 29:11; 30:26; 39:15; Prov 2:6; 3:26; 4:3; 5:3; 8:7; 22:23; 24:2; 28:22; Eccl 10:4; Lam 1:5; Ezra 7:10; Neh 9:33; 12:29; 1 Chr 4:14; 5:2; 22:9; 28:10; 2 Chr 10:1; 15:6; 31:10.

¹⁰³Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 70. For the Arabic definition of ‘retrospective pronoun’ see Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§175.

¹⁰⁴Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §21a.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., §21d.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., §21a, d, §43b. See also Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §158g-k; Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §155c-n. Cf. Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 90-107, 283-89.

¹⁰⁷Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 70; Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 100-107.

is a noun of place, not because of the verb הָיְתָה.¹⁰⁸

1:8d [כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתֶם עִם־הַמָּתִים וְעַמְדִּי:]

According to Holmstedt, the article on הַמָּתִים is a “relative word,” although the antecedent of this supposed relative clause is not explicit. He translates the participle as a relative clause: “(those) who died,” “(those) who are dead.” Holmstedt builds his case for the article as relative marker on instances in which a definite participle modifies an indefinite noun.¹⁰⁹

For a participle to be attributive, it must match its antecedent in definiteness or indefiniteness. Because biblical Hebrew exhibits examples in which a definite participle follows an indefinite antecedent—הַמִּתְפָּרְצִים עֲבָדִים in 1 Samuel 25:10, for example—Holmstedt contends that another explanation must be sought to replace the traditional ‘attributive participle.’¹¹⁰ Holmstedt turns to a phenomenon generally found in the later biblical Hebrew books in which a particle, pointed like the article, is used as a relative marker.

The particle הַ can function as a relative marker; however, Holmstedt observes that seventeen out of eighteen occurrences in biblical Hebrew place the particle on the perfect verb. He goes on to note that most cases of the particle הַ as relative marker are found in later books (Ezra, 1 Chr, etc.), though there are “a number of occurrences” in earlier books (Gen, Ruth, etc.).¹¹¹ If, Holmstedt reasons, instances of the article as relative marker can be found in biblical Hebrew, then “we should investigate whether there are other heretofore unidentified environments” in which the article marks

¹⁰⁸Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §43b; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §158j.

¹⁰⁹Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 74.

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹¹Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 83.

a relative clause. In order to find other cases of the article as relative marker, Holmstedt turns to Modern Hebrew and the work of Tal Siloni.¹¹²

According to Holmstedt, Siloni argues that many languages have a morpheme that “qualifies” as a relative marker for certain types of clauses. This morpheme may be covert (as in French or English), or it may be overt as in Hebrew. Holmstedt explains that Siloni identifies this morpheme in modern Hebrew as a morpheme that looks and sounds like the definite article, but has a different function than the article.¹¹³ Siloni concludes that in modern Hebrew הַ is similar to the relative marker שֶׁ; he labels הַ a ‘semi-relative.’¹¹⁴

To explain why definite participles follow indefinite nouns, Holmstedt adopts Siloni’s הַ as semi-relative for biblical Hebrew. For example, the definite participle הָעֹלָה in Judges 21:19 follows the indefinite noun מִסְלָה:

הָנָה הַגִּיְהוֹה בְּשָׁלוֹ מִיָּמִים יָמִימָה אֲשֶׁר מִצְפוֹנָה לְבֵית־אֵל מִזְרָחָה הַשָּׁמֶשׁ
לְמִסְלָה הָעֹלָה מִבֵּית־אֵל שְׂכֶמָה וּמִנֶּגֶב לְלִבְנוֹהַ:

“See—the festival of Yhwh (is) at Shiloh from year to year, which is north of Bethel, on the east of a highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem.”¹¹⁵

Because the participle and its antecedent disagree in definiteness, Holmstedt argues that the participle cannot be attributive; the article on the participle introduces a relative clause. Holmstedt goes on to add that the semi-relative הַ helps explain similar constructions that have an indefinite noun with a definite adjective. For example, 1 Samuel 16:23 reads,

וְסָרָה מֵעָלָיו רוּחַ הָרָעָה

“And a spirit that (was) evil would depart from him”¹¹⁶

¹¹²Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 85.

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Ibid., 86.

¹¹⁵Ibid. The translation is Holmstedt’s.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 87. The translation is Holmstedt’s.

The definite participle הַרְעָה is the relative for the antecedent רֹיחַ. Holmstedt contends that categorizing הַ as a semi-relative prevents “stretching” the grammar to reconcile the disagreement between a definite participle and its indefinite antecedent.¹¹⁷

Holmstedt concludes that הַ as a relative marker resembles typical relative clauses in that, like אֲשֶׁר relative clauses, הַ relative clauses may have a covert antecedent (‘headless הַ relative’). Holmstedt defines a headless relative clause as one that “may lack an overt head,” as in Ezekiel 3:1:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בֶּן-אָדָם אֵת אֲשֶׁר-תִּמְצָא אֲכֹל

“And he said to me: Son of Man, eat (*e*) *what you find*.”¹¹⁸

Holmstedt cites Genesis 14:10 as an example of a headless הַ relative clause:

וַעֲמֵק הַשְּׂדִים בְּאֶרֶת בְּאֶרֶת חֲמֹר וַיָּנֻסוּ מֶלֶךְ-סְדֹם וְעַמְרָה וַיִּפְּלוּ-שָׁמָּה וְהַנִּשְׁאָרִים הָרָה נָסוּ:

“And the valley of Siddim had many tar pits and the kings of Sodom and Gomorah fled and they fell there and Ø (*those*) *who remained* fled to the hills.”

According to Holmstedt, the relative הַנִּשְׁאָרִים “makes clear” that the antecedent cannot be the kings of Sodom and Gomorah. The relative, then, must refer to the remaining three kings who accompanied the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 14:8); the antecedent is a ‘null head’ (marked by Ø). Holmstedt labels these types of relative clauses ‘headless.’¹¹⁹

Holmstedt goes to great lengths to defend his semi-relative הַ theory; however there are simpler explanations for attributive participles with indefinite antecedents, and headless relative clauses. First, the seeming lack of agreement in definiteness between attributive participles and their antecedents should not necessarily drive Holmstedt to search for another explanation. While definite participles and

¹¹⁷Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 87-88.

¹¹⁸Robert D. Holmstedt, “Headlessness and Extraposition: Another Look at the Syntax of אֲשֶׁר,” *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 27, no. 1 (2001):4. Holmstedt states that (e) marks the “covert head.” The translation and emphasis is original to Holmstedt.

¹¹⁹Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 88-89. The translation of Gen 14:10 is Holmstedt’s.

adjectives do follow indefinite antecedents, the antecedents may be considered definite in themselves. Driver notes that the antecedents that lack an article are often words that are considered familiar items, “which were felt to be sufficiently definite in themselves.”¹²⁰ For example, in Judges 21:19 (see above), the highway may very well be a road familiar to the reader; because of its familiarity *מסלה* lacks the article. Likewise, in 1 Samuel 16:23 (see above), *רוח* lacks the article, but it is clearly the same evil spirit mentioned in verse 14. Because there is only one evil spirit that tormented Saul—the evil spirit—no article is needed in verse 23.¹²¹

Furthermore, in Isaiah 7:20, Isaiah certainly has in mind a particular razor when he prophesies:

ביום ההוא יגלח אדני בתער השכירה בעברי נהר במלך אשור את־הראש ושער הרגלים
And in that day, the Lord will shave the head and hair of the feet with *the hired*
razor from beyond the river, namely the king of Assyria.

In Judges 16:27, the antecedent is “limited in virtue of its own character”:

ועלהגג בשלשת אלפים איש ואשה הראים בשחוק שמשון
And upon the roof (were) about *three thousand men and women seeing* in the
playing of Samson.

The antecedents to *הראים*—the nouns *איש* and *אשה*—are likely definite due to their limitation by *בשלשת אלפים*.¹²² Kautzsch contends that the definite attribute often follows an antecedent without the article in certain reoccurring phrases, such as “particularizing the gates . . . and courts.”¹²³ For example, Jeremiah has one gate in mind when he writes in

¹²⁰Driver, *Treatise*, 281.

¹²¹Ibid., 281-82; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11h. Holmstedt recognizes that some grammarians contend that the indefinite nouns are definite in themselves. However, Holmstedt asserts that these grammarians “miss the connection with the *haC*- [הַ] relative construction” (Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 87). However, the weight of the evidence in the LXX and the Targums indicate that Holmstedt misses the fact that these indefinite nouns are functionally definite. In the examples Holmstedt cites of indefinite-noun+definite-participle and indefinite-noun+definite-adjective constructions, the LXX and the Targums overwhelmingly translate the indefinite word as definite. It is evident that the translators of the LXX and the Targums saw these words as definite.

¹²²Driver, *Treatise*, 282.

¹²³Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §126w.

Jeremiah 38:14,

וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ צִדְקִיָּהוּ וַיִּקַּח אֶת־יִרְמְיָהוּ הַנָּבִיא אֲלָיו אֶל־מְבוֹא הַשְּׁלִישִׁי אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית יְהוָה

And the king Zedekiah sent, and he took Jeremiah the prophet to him, unto *the third entrance* which (is) in the house of the Lord.

The antecedent מְבוֹא is definite in itself, for Jeremiah does not refer to any entrance.¹²⁴ In biblical Hebrew, definite participles and adjectives do follow antecedents lacking the article; however, this seeming difficulty can be explained.¹²⁵ The lack of agreement in number, gender, and definiteness is not uncommon in Semitic. Holmstedt's conjecture of the relative הַ is unnecessary.

Second, Holmstedt's description of 'headless' relative clauses are better designated as substantival clauses. According to Holmstedt, a 'headless' relative clause is a relative clause whose antecedent is "syntactically real but phonologically null"; the antecedent is there but not seen.¹²⁶ For an example of a headless relative clause, Holmstedt cites Genesis 27:45:

עַד־שׁוּב אֶף־אֲחִיךָ מִמֶּךָ וְשָׁכַח אֶת אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתָ לוֹ

"until the anger of your brother subsides and he forgets *Ø* *what* (=the thing that) you did to him"¹²⁷

Holmstedt explains that *Ø* marks the position of the covert antecedent; the antecedent must be determined through context.¹²⁸ Other examples of headless relative clauses include those in which אֲשֶׁר is coupled with a preposition, as in Isaiah 2:8:

לְמַעַשֵׂה יָדָיו יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְאֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ אֲצַבְעֹתָיו

"to the work of (their) hands they bow down, *to Ø* (*the work/idols*) *that* (their) fingers have made"¹²⁹

¹²⁴See also 1 Kgs 7:8, 12; Ezek 9:2; 40:28; Zech 14:10.

¹²⁵David Kimḥi appears undisturbed by the lack of agreement in definiteness between antecedent and modifier. He simply states, "There are, however, numerous instances in which the article is omitted either in the substantive or in the modifier" (Chomsky, *David Kimḥi's Hebrew Grammar*, 355).

¹²⁶Holmstedt, "Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew," 71.

¹²⁷Ibid. Translation is Holmstedt's.

¹²⁸Ibid., 71-72.

¹²⁹Ibid., 75. Translation is Holmstedt's.

Headless relative clauses also follow “free-standing” prepositions, such as *עַן* in Joshua 14:14:

עַל־כֵּן הָיְתָה־חֵבְרוֹן לְכָלֵב בֶּן־יִפְנֶה הַקְנִזִּי לְנַחֲלָה עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה
 יַעַן אֲשֶׁר מָלֵא אַחֲרֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

“Because of this, Hebron became an inheritance for Caleb, son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, until this very day *because Ø (of the fact) that* he was fully after Yhwh, the God of Israel.”¹³⁰

Holmstedt fails to recognize, however, that in each of the examples cited, the *אֲשֶׁר* clause is functioning substantively. Again, Holmstedt’s notions are unhelpful.

The biblical Hebrew particle *אֲשֶׁר* functions in a manner similar to the Arabic relative pronoun *الَّذِي* *al-ladhī*. Wright explains that *al-ladhī* functions in one of two ways: as an adjective or as a substantive. When *al-ladhī* functions adjectively it is a relative clause and must agree with its antecedent with regard to gender, number, and case.¹³¹ For example, the Qur’an chapter 2:47 reads,

يٰۤاَيُّهَاۤ اِسْرٰٓءِيْلَ اذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِيۤ اَنْعَمْتُ عَلٰٓيْكُمْ

yābanī ‘is ‘rā ‘īla ‘udhkurū ni ‘matiya l-latī ‘an ‘amtu ‘alaykum

O sons of Israel, remember *my favor which I bestowed (it) upon you!*

The relative clause marked by *الَّتِي* (*l-latī* “which”) follows the definite antecedent *نِعْمَتِي* (*ni ‘matiya* “My favor”); the antecedent is made definite by the 1cs suffix. Likewise, Numbers 1:5 in the Van Dyke Arabic bible reads,

وَهٰذِهِۦ اَسْمَاءُ الرِّجَالِ الَّذِيْنَ يَّقِفُوْنَ مَعَكُمْ

wahādhihi ‘asmā ‘u r-rijālī l-ladhīna yaqifūna ma ‘akumā

And these (are) the names of *the men who they stand with you*.

The relative clause marked by *الَّذِينَ* (*l-ladhīna* “who”) functions adjectivally, modifying the definite antecedent *الرِّجَالِ* (*r-rijālī* “the men”).

Wright goes on to explain that when the relative pronoun *al-ladhī* functions

¹³⁰Holmstedt, “Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew,” 77. Translation is Holmstedt’s.

¹³¹In Arabic, there are two types of relative clauses: indefinite and definite. Definite relative clauses have a definite antecedent and must have the relative pronoun. Indefinite relative clauses have an indefinite antecedent and omit the relative pronoun. Biblical Hebrew generally follows this distinction (Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §43a-b; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§347, 2:§172, §174).

substantively, *al-ladhī* stands “in whatever case the preceding governing word requires, be it noun, verb, or particle.”¹³² In the Qur’an chapter 1:7, the relative pronoun stands in the place of the genitive to the head noun صِرَاطَ (ṣirāṭa):

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

ṣirāṭa l-ladhīna ‘an’amta ‘alayhim
the path (of) those You have bestowed favors on them

In chapter 3:72 of the Qur’an, the relative pronoun and its clause is in the place of the genitive to the prepositions بِ (bi “in”) and عَلَى (alā “on, upon”):

ءَامِنُوا بِالَّذِي أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَجْهَ النَّهَارِ

‘āminū bi l-ladhī ‘unzila ‘alā l-ladhīna ‘āmanū wajha n-nahāri
Believe in that which was revealed on those who believed at the beginning of the day.

Genesis 43:16 reads,

فَلَمَّا رَأَى يُوسُفُ بَنِيَامِينَ مَعَهُمْ، قَالَ لِلَّذِي عَلَى بَيْتِهِ

falammā ra ‘ā yūsufu banyāmīna ma’ahum, qāla lil-ladhī ‘alā baytihi
And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to he who (was) over his house

The relative pronoun and its clause is in the place of the genitive to the pronoun لِ (li “to”).

The relative pronoun *al-ladhī* may also be in the place of an accusative. For example, the Qur’an chapter 5:52 reads,

فَتَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ

fatarā l-ladhīna fī qulūbihim m-maraḍun
And you see those who in their hearts (is) a disease

The relative pronoun الَّذِينَ (l-ladhīna) is in the accusative to the verb فَتَرَى (fatarā).

Chapter 6:51 of the Qur’an reads,

وَأَنْذِرْ بِهِ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ

wa’andhir bihi l-ladhīna yakhāfūna
And warn with it those who fear

The relative pronoun الَّذِينَ (l-ladhīna) is in the place of the accusative of direct object to

¹³²Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§175. The substantive function of *al-ladhī* is similar to the interrogative pronouns مَنْ (man “who”) and مَا (mā “what”), which may stand in the place of the accusative, nominative, or genitive (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§170).

the verb وَأَنْذِرَ (*wa'andhir*). Moreover, the relative also functions as an accusative in Van Dyke's translation of Genesis 44:1:

ثُمَّ أَمَرَ الَّذِي عَلَى بَيْتِهِ

thumma 'amara l-ladhī 'alā baytihi

Then he commanded *those who were over his house*.

The relative pronoun الَّذِي (*l-ladhī*) is in the place of an accusative of direct object to the verb أَمَرَ (*'amara*).

Lastly, the relative pronoun may stand in the place of a nominative, as in Joshua 10:11:

وَالَّذِينَ مَاتُوا بِحِجَارَةٍ أَلْبَرَدٍ هُمْ أَكْثَرُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ قَتَلَهُمْ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلَ بِالسَّيْفِ

wal-ladhīna mātū biḥijāratī l-baradi hum 'aktharu mina l-ladhīna qatalahum banū 'isrā'īla bis-sayfi

And *those who died by the hailstones*—they (were) more than those who the sons of Israel killed by the sword.

The first occurrence of the relative pronoun وَالَّذِينَ (*wal-ladhīna*) in Joshua 10:11 is in the place of the nominative. In this construction it is the hanging case in a casus pendens construction; it is resumed by the pronoun هُمْ (*hum* “they”), which is the initiator of a nominal clause.¹³³ Furthermore, the Qur'an chapter 2:4 reads,

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ

wa'alladhīna yū'minūna bimā 'unzila 'ilayka wamā 'unzila min qablīka wabil'ākhirati hum yūqinūna

And *those who they are believing in what was sent down to you*, and what was sent down from before you, and in the Hereafter, they—they truly believe.

The substantival use of the relative pronoun *al-ladhī* is further supported by the function of مَا (*mā* “what”) in chapter 2:4 of the Qur'an. Wright explains that when *al-ladhī* functions substantively, it functions in the same manner as the relative pronouns مَا (*mā*) and مَنْ (*man* “who, what”).¹³⁴ In chapter 2:4 of the Qur'an, both وَالَّذِينَ (*wal-ladhīna*) and

¹³³The second occurrence of the relative pronoun in Joshua 10:11—الَّذِينَ (*l-ladhīna*)—is in place of the genitive to the pronoun مِنْ (*mina* “from”).

¹³⁴Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§347. The relative pronouns *mā* and *man* differ from *al-ladhī* in that they cannot be used adjectivally like *al-ladhī*. Furthermore, *al-ladhī* is always definite, while *mā* and *man* may be definite or indefinite (ibid., 2:§173 rem.A). See also Gen 2:19e n. 142 in chap. 2 above.

وَمَا (*wamā*) are functioning substantively: *wa'alladhīna* is in the place of the nominative and is in casus pendens, resumed by the pronoun هُمْ (*hum* “they”).¹³⁵ The pronoun *mā* is in the accusative to the verb يُؤْمِنُونَ (*yū'minūna* “believe”).

In biblical Hebrew אֲשֶׁר—similar to اَلَّذِي *al-ladhī*—may function adjectively as a relative clause, or substantively and stand in the place of a genitive, accusative, or nominative. The three examples Holmstedt cites in support for his headless relative clauses are explained by the substantival function of אֲשֶׁר. In Genesis 27:45, אֲשֶׁר is in the place of an accusative of direct object. In Isaiah 2:8, אֲשֶׁר is in the place of the genitive to the preposition לְ. In Joshua 14:14, אֲשֶׁר is functioning in the place of an adverbial accusative. The syntax of אֲשֶׁר—in the light of Arabic grammar—contradicts Holmstedt’s views of the semi-relative הַנֶּחֱמָד and headless relative clauses.

Holmstedt’s apparent difficulty with the definite participle is likely due to his view of the participle—according to Holmstedt, the participle encodes activity and not a quality.¹³⁶ Holmstedt misunderstands the nature of Semitic participles. As explained in Genesis 2:10a in chapter 2 above, the participle denotes a *person* or *thing* in a continuous action or habitual state.¹³⁷ Because the participle denotes an agent, not an action, it takes on characteristics of a noun: gender, number, definiteness. However, the agent takes part in the action of the verb, therefore the participle also shares verbal characteristics: aspect, governing objects.¹³⁸ While the participle denotes an agent partaking in an action, the participle is not a verb. The verb describes an action originating and its movement: an action beginning and continuously happening (imperfect), or an action beginning and

¹³⁵See Gen 2:14c in chap. 2 for more on casus pendens.

¹³⁶Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 74.

¹³⁷Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§230, 2:§72; Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 1:1606; Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §116a; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a.

¹³⁸Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a.

moving to completion (perfect). The verb has a point of origin.¹³⁹ The participle, on the other hand, describes an agent in an abiding state.¹⁴⁰

Because of the nominal nature of participles they may be used substantively, as **הַמֵּתִים** in Ruth 1:8d. The definite participle **הַמֵּתִים** describes Elimelek and his two sons as agents who are in the continual state of dead: “those who are in the abiding state of dead.”¹⁴¹ Moreover, as a substantive, **הַמֵּתִים** is the object of the preposition **עִם**.

1:11d [וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְאִנְשִׁים:]

As mentioned in 1:1a above, Holmstedt contends that the verb **הָיָה** does not take ‘accusative complements.’ He labels prepositional phrases that modify **הָיָה** ‘oblique complements, specifying “necessary details of location, manner, etc.”’¹⁴² However, prepositional phrases stand in the place of accusatives and modify verbs adverbially, a function of accusatives.¹⁴³ Many prepositions are former nouns in the accusative; these nouns were consistently used adverbially and later developed into prepositions.¹⁴⁴

The correct analysis of **לְאִנְשִׁים** is that it substitutes for an accusative of situation, describing the state or condition of a noun.¹⁴⁵ In Ruth 1:11d, **לְאִנְשִׁים** describes

¹³⁹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a.

¹⁴⁰In his analysis of **הַמֵּתִים** in Ruth 1:8d, Holmstedt states that recent research indicates that participles are “adjectives that encode an activity or event rather than a quality” (Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 74). Holmstedt cites the works of John A. Cook, who incorporates the participle in his description of the biblical Hebrew verbal system. John A. Cook, “The Hebrew Participle and Stative in Typological Perspective,” *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 34, no. 1 (2008):1-19; Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb*, 223-33. See appendix 2 for a critique of Cook’s position.

¹⁴¹Although a smooth English translation requires the word “who,” this does not indicate that the participle is part of a headless relative clause.

¹⁴²Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 5, 52, 79.

¹⁴³Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§21; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §12a n. 18.

¹⁴⁴Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew*, 170, 268, 283-84; Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §101a; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §103a.

¹⁴⁵Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §13ii. See also Gen 2:7d in chap. 2, and Gen 3:1a

the condition of Naomi's hypothetical sons: "That they may exist to you *in the status of* husbands?"

1:12c [כִּי אֶמְרָתִי יִשְׁׁלִי תִקְוָה]

Holmstedt states that the "existential predicator" **יִשְׁ** is not needed in this verbless clause to show possession. He contends that the clause could have easily read **תִּקְוָה לִי** or **לִי תִקְוָה**. In 1:12c, Holmstedt categorizes **יִשְׁ** as a copula, highlighting the non-existence of Naomi's hope.¹⁴⁶

Holmstedt does not provide an explanation for his assertion that **יִשְׁ** is a copula. He does point his readers to Joüon-Muraoka's "incomplete description" of **יִשְׁ** as copula. Joüon-Muraoka explains that **יִשְׁ**, and its negative **אֵין**, "are not simple copulas, but they add to the copulative notion that of existence, especially local."¹⁴⁷ In his description of participles as adjectives, John Cook gives examples of clauses with the particle **יִשְׁ**, labeling the particle a 'copula.' For example, he cites Judges 6:13:

בִּי אֲדֹנָי וַיֵּשׁ יְהוָה עִמָּנוּ וְלָמָּה מְצָאָתָנוּ כָּל־זֹאת

"Please, my lord, if Yhwh is with us, why has all this happened to us?"

He also cites Genesis 43:4:

אִם־יֵשֶׁד מְשַׁלַּח אֶת־אֶחָיו אֲתָנּוּ נִרְדָּה וְנִשְׁבְּרָה לָךְ אֶבֶל:

"If you are sending our brother with us, we will go down and buy food for you."¹⁴⁸

Basing his analysis on Leon Stassen's work, Cook asserts that non-verbal elements may function as a copula.¹⁴⁹

in chap. 3 above.

¹⁴⁶Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 80. In their work on the copula pronoun, Holmstedt and Andrew R. Jones indicate that other non-verbal "elements" may function as a copula; therefore, it is likely that **יִשְׁ** is a non-verbal "copular element." Robert D. Holmstedt and Andrew R. Jones, "The Pronoun in Tripartite Verbless Clauses in Biblical Hebrew: Resumption for Left-Dislocation or Pronominal Copula?", *Journal of Semitic Studies* 59, no. 1 (2014):58-59. See Gen 2:14c in chap. 2 above, especially n. 107.

¹⁴⁷Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §154k.

¹⁴⁸Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb*, 226, 228; idem., "Hebrew Participle and Stative," 8, 11. The translations are Cook's. The underlining is original to Cook.

¹⁴⁹Cook, "Hebrew Participle and Stative," 6, 7, 10, 11; idem., *Time and the Biblical Hebrew*

Hebrew, as well as Arabic, does not have a copula form. As described in Genesis 3:1a in chapter 3, statements that declare that A=B in some way are made with verbless nominal clauses. For example, in Genesis 29:17 a verbless nominal clause furnishes a description of Leah's eyes:

וְעֵינֶי לֵאָה רַבּוֹת

And the eyes of Leah (were) weak.

In Genesis 29:17, a one-to-one statement is being made: Leah's eyes=weak. No form of a copula is used in these constructions.

Moreover, **וְ** is a substantive meaning “being, substance, existence.”¹⁵⁰ The substantive **וְ** translates easily into English as “is, are, was, were,” but BDB stresses that it functions not “as a mere copula, but implying existence with emphasis.”¹⁵¹ Though they are not verbs, the particles **וְ** and **אֵין** are approaching verbal forms. The fact that they are approaching verbal forms is made manifest by that they may be followed by an accusative, indicating that the particles **וְ** and **אֵין** are not copulas. For example, 2 Kings 10:15 reads,

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הֲיֵשׁ אֶת־לִבְבְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל

And he said to him, “(Is) your heart right?”

Also, Haggai 2:17 reads,

וְאֵין־אַתֶּם אֱלֹהִים נְאֻם־יְהוָה

“But you (are not) to Me,” declares the Lord.¹⁵²

Ibn Barūn highlights the emphasis made by **וְ**, translating this substantive

Verb, 225-28; Leon Stassen, *Intransitive Predication*, Oxford Studies in Typology and Linguistic Theory (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 76. Also see n. 105 in chap. 2 for Cook's view of the copula pronoun.

¹⁵⁰BDB, 441b.

¹⁵¹Ibid., 441c.

¹⁵²Arabic has an identical word pair: the negative **لَيْسَ** (*laysa* “he does not exist”) and **أَيْسَ** (*'aysa* “he exists”). Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§182 Rem. a; Pinchas Wechter, *Ibn Barūn's Arabic Works on Hebrew Grammar and Lexicography* (Philadelphia: The Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, 1964), 98. Wright explains that the negative **لَيْسَ** (*laysa* “he is not”) is used as a negative particle, “stronger than **لَا** (*lā*) to deny some part of the sentence to which it is prefixed” (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§159). Moreover, in exceptive clauses **لَيْسَ** (*laysa*) takes an accusative (ibid., 2:§186). Wright notes that **أَيْسَ** (*'aysa* “he is”) is “unused” (ibid., 1:§182 Rem. a).

“yes, of course.”¹⁵³ Therefore, in Genesis 43:4, *וַיֵּשׁ* emphasizes Jacob’s existence as one who sends his son Benjamin to Egypt. The conditional clause could have read,

אם אתה מְשַׁלַּח אֶת־אֶחָיו אִתָּנוּ

If you (are) one who is a sender of our brother with us

However, as the verse stands, the clause is read, “If you are *without a doubt* one who is a sender of our brother with us.” The emphasis provided by *וַיֵּשׁ* is made even more clear when considered in the context of the verse. Joseph’s brothers cannot return to Egypt to buy more grain unless they bring Benjamin back to Egypt; if they fail to do so they would be put to death (Gen 42:18-20). In Ruth 1:12c, *וַיֵּשׁ* emphasizes the existence of the hope for a husband and sons for Naomi in her hypothetical question: “If I said, ‘Really and truly (there is) the existence to me hope.’”

The nominal clause in Ruth 1:12c, *וַיֵּשׁ לִי תִקְוָה*, is an assertion of existence or possession emphasized by *וַיֵּשׁ*.¹⁵⁴ A prepositional phrase, or an adverbial phrase, followed by an indefinite noun is an assertion of existence or possession.¹⁵⁵ The word order of the clause in 1:12c is required because the initiator is indefinite; if the initiator is indefinite, and the predicate is a preposition with its genitive, then the word order must be Predicate-Subject.¹⁵⁶ Contrary to Holmstedt, then, *לִי תִקְוָה* and *תִקְוָה לִי* are not interchangeable because they communicate two different meanings.

The phrase *תִקְוָה לִי* is a phrase, but not a sentence. This construction is a means by which possession is shown, but the head noun is kept indefinite. For example,

¹⁵³Wechter, *Ibn Barūn’s Arabic Works*, 98.

¹⁵⁴The nominal clause *וַיֵּשׁ לִי תִקְוָה* is functioning substantively as the direct object of the verb *אָמַרְתִּי*.

¹⁵⁵Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§115. Wright explains that if, in a verbless nominal clause, the predicate is a preposition with its genitive indicating *place*, then the clause is labeled *جُمْلَةُ ظَرْفِيَّةٍ* (*jumlatun zarfiyyatun* “a local sentence”) (ibid.). If the preposition indicates something other than place, as in Ruth 1:12c, then the clause is called *جُمْلَةُ جَارِيَّةٍ مَجْرَى الظَرْفِيَّةِ* (*jumlatun jāriyatun majrā z-zarfiyyati* “a sentence which runs the course of/follows the analogy of a local sentence”) (ibid.).

¹⁵⁶Ibid., 2:§127.

תקוֹתִי means “my hope”; in this construction “hope” is made definite by the 1cs suffix.

However, תִּקְוָה לִי means “a hope to me”; “hope” is kept indefinite and is not

particularized.¹⁵⁷ For example, 1 Samuel 16:18 reads,

וַיַּעַן אֶחָד מִהַנְּעָרִים וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה רָאִיתִי בֶן לְיִשִּׁי בֵּית הַלְחָמִי יָדַע נָגַן וְגִבּוֹר חֵיל וְאִישׁ מִלְחָמָה וְנָבוֹן
דָּבָר וְאִישׁ תָּאָר וַיהוָה עִמּוֹ:

Then one from the youths answered, and he said, “Behold, I have seen *a son of Jesse* the Bethlehemite—a knower of playing music, and mighty of strength, and a man of war, and one who understands a word, and a man of form. And the Lord (is) with him.”

Although he is described, the son to whom the youth is referring is unknown because the

noun is indefinite: בֶּן לְיִשִּׁי.¹⁵⁸ The youth could be referring to any one of Jesse’s

remaining sons. However, if the youth had said בֶּן־יִשִּׁי then he would be referring to a

particular son to the exclusion of others. The construction indefinite-noun+ל allows the

head noun to remain indefinite.¹⁵⁹

Holmstedt is not lost on the emphasis made by יֵשׁ in 1:12c.¹⁶⁰ However, the

¹⁵⁷Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §12r; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§92.

¹⁵⁸Although בֶּן is indefinite, it is specialized by the numerous descriptions given by the youth. ‘Specialization’ is a means by which an indefinite noun is limited without making it definite. So, in 1 Sam 16:18, the youth is narrowing the potential group of Jesse’s sons by describing him, but it is still not known who the son is the youth is describing (Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §33).

¹⁵⁹There are examples of nominal clauses in which the indefinite noun precedes the prepositional phrase. For example, Gen 43:23 reads שְׁלוֹם לָכֶם. Exod 28:43 has חֻקֵּת עוֹלָם לוֹ, and Exod 34:19 כָּל־פֶּטֶר רֶחֶם לִי. Wright indicates that there are times when the indefinite initiator may come first in a nominal clause. The indefinite initiator is first when the nominal clause is a wish, as in Gen 43:23. The examples in Exod 28:43 and 34:19 are permissible according to Wright because they are not technically indefinite. He writes, “*Indefinite* . . . is here to be taken in the sense [not only of not being defined by the article or the genitive of a defined word, but even] of *not having a genitive after it*” (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§127 [emphasis and brackets are original]; see also Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11h, i, j, dd; Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 1:112-14). According to Wright’s explanation, then, בֶּן in Ruth 1:12c cannot come first because it does not govern a noun in the genitive. However, חֻקֵּת עוֹלָם לוֹ of Exod 28:43 and כָּל־פֶּטֶר רֶחֶם לִי of Exod 34:19 may come first because the head nouns, although indefinite, govern a genitive (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§127). See also Gen 31:35; Judg 3:19; 6:23. Exod 22:2 is an example in which an indefinite initiator precedes a prepositional phrase: דְּמִים לוֹ. It could be argued, though, that perhaps דְּמִים is being emphasized (notice the absolute object preceding the verb in the next clause). Despite the exception in Exod 22:2, the general difference in meaning between תִּקְוָה לִי and תִּקְוָתִי still stands.

¹⁶⁰Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 80.

tendency of biblical Hebrew linguists to quickly jump to the conclusion that a particle or a pronoun is a copula indicates a top-down approach to the study of biblical Hebrew grammar. Reading their works, it seems that biblical Hebrew linguists begin their analyses with English translations of biblical Hebrew. Then, based on English renderings of Hebrew clauses, assertions are made regarding biblical Hebrew syntax. For example, in English **יש** easily translates as “there is/are”; therefore, **יש** is a copula.

While it is simplistic to say that linguists make grammatical assertions from English translations, they do import “observations” from other world languages into biblical Hebrew grammar.¹⁶¹ A more sensible approach would seem to be to study biblical Hebrew grammar *on its own terms*, in light of other Semitic languages and according to native grammarians, and then compare it to other world languages to see if certain aspects of the languages are shared. A study of biblical Hebrew grammar, in light of Arabic and other Semitic languages and according to native grammarians, indicates that there is no copula; therefore, **היה**, **הוא** and **יש** do not function as copulas, no matter how other world languages function. One cannot force paradigms from other languages onto biblical Hebrew if biblical Hebrew does not support that particular paradigm.

1:12d [גַּם הַיְיָתִי הַלַּיְלָה לְאִישׁ]

The noun **הַלַּיְלָה** is in the adverbial accusative of time, modifying the verb **הַיְיָתִי**. The final *qamats he* ending is a remnant of the old accusative ending *-a*.¹⁶² Arabic still retains the accusative ending: **الَّيْلَةَ** (*l-llaylatā* “tonight”).¹⁶³ Consider Van Dyke’s translation of Ruth 1:12d:

أَيْضًا بِأَنِّي أَصِيرُ هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةَ لِرَجُلٍ

¹⁶¹See the discussion of linguistics as a paradigm for biblical Hebrew in chap. 1.

¹⁶²Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, trans. Cowley, §90; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. Muraoka, §93g.

¹⁶³The accusative ending *-a* is for definite nouns; the accusative ending *-an* is for indefinite nouns.

'ayḏan bi- 'annī 'aṣīru hādhīhi *l-llaylata* li-rajuli

Also with me, will I attain it [my hope] *tonight* with regard to a man?

The article on לַיְלָה is the definite article of presence: this article is used for nouns present to a speaker. The article of presence is often used for nouns of time indicating the present: “tonight.”¹⁶⁴

1:13a [הֲלֵהָן | תִּשְׁכַּרְנָה עַד אֲשֶׁר יִגְדְּלוּ]

Holmstedt identifies the relative clause as a headless relative clause.¹⁶⁵

However, as explained in 1:8d above, אֲשֶׁר may function adjectivally (as a relative clause) or substantively (as a substantival clause), similar to the Arabic relative pronoun الَّذِي *al-ladhī*. In 1:13a, אֲשֶׁר is functioning as a substantival clause, standing in the place of a genitive to the preposition עַד.

1:13e [כִּי־יֵצֵאָה בִּי יְדִיָּהוּהָ:]

Holmstedt remarks that the כִּי clause in this verse is another example of the verb being “triggered” to the front of the clause by the particle כִּי.¹⁶⁶ However, see 1:1b and 1:6d above.

1:14b [וּתְבַכִּינָה עוֹד]

Holmstedt contends that in many languages adverbs are particularly important in determining phrase structures.¹⁶⁷ He goes on to add that עוֹד is especially important in biblical Hebrew due to the small number of adverbs in the language. For example, he notes that עוֹד may precede a verb, as in Exodus 4:6 and 1 Samuel 16:11. In Ruth 1:14b, the particle עוֹד follows the verb, indicating that the verb was triggered to the front of the

¹⁶⁴Wright explains that though the article is now determinative, the original demonstrative force is still found in words like الْيَوْمَ (*al-yawma* “today”), and by implication اللَّيْلَةُ (*l-llaylata* “tonight”) (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§345).

¹⁶⁵Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 82.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., 85.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., 86.

clause by the *wayyiqtol* form.¹⁶⁸ It is not exactly clear how עוד serves an important role for Holmstedt in phrase structure; perhaps it provides support to his constituent movement theory.

Adverbs usually follow a verb in a verbal clause, although they may precede the verb. The adverb is usually emphasized when it is placed before a verb. Objects and prepositional phrases may also precede a verb, usually for emphasis. However, a subject cannot precede a verb, otherwise the verbal clause would then be a nominal clause.¹⁶⁹ Ruth 1:14b offers nothing significant to the study of phrase structure except that it provides an example of normal verbal clause syntax.

1:14c [וַתֵּשֶׁק עֲרֹפָהּ לַחֲמוּתָהּ וְרוּת דָּבְקָה בָּהּ:]

The *wayyiqtol* chain is broken with a nominal clause: וְרוּת דָּבְקָה בָּהּ. In narrative, when a *wayyiqtol* chain is broken the reader should take note. Typically the flow of narrative is interrupted to provide an announcement to describe a person or situation, or to contrast the initiator of the nominal clause with something else in the narrative.¹⁷⁰ In Ruth 1:14c, the nominal clause furnishes a description of Ruth in order to provide a contrast to Orpah. The *vav* is the adversative *vav*.¹⁷¹

The accents for the nominal clause in 1:14c follow the pattern typical for nominal clauses. The heaviest disjunctive—the *tiphcha*—falls on the initiator רוּת. This accentual pattern causes the reader to pause on רוּת, alerting the reader that something will be said about her.¹⁷² This clause is not, “but Ruth clung to her.”¹⁷³ While this

¹⁶⁸Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 86.

¹⁶⁹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11uu.

¹⁷⁰*Ibid.*, §38e.

¹⁷¹*Ibid.*, §83c.

¹⁷²*Ibid.*, §11b n2; Fuller and Choi, “Accents,” §9.A.2.

¹⁷³This is how the NASB, NIV, ESV, KJV, ASV, and Holmstedt render the nominal clause in

translation picks up on the contrast, it does not put the necessary emphasis on Ruth. A more accurate translation of 1:14c would read,

And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, *but as for Ruth—she clung to her*.¹⁷⁴

1:16c [כִּי אֶל-אִשָּׁר תֵּלְכִי אֶלַי וּבְאִשָּׁר תֵּלִינִי אֵלַי]

Both prepositional phrases contain an אִשָּׁר clause that is functioning substantively; both אִשָּׁר clauses are in the genitive to their respective prepositions.¹⁷⁵ The prepositional phrases are placed before their verbs for emphasis. Ruth is stressing to Naomi that no matter where she goes, Ruth will follow: “For unto wherever you go, I will go. And in wherever you stay, I will stay.”¹⁷⁶

1:16d [עַמִּי עָמִי וְאֶלְהֵי אֱלֹהֵי:]

In Genesis 3:1a in chapter 3, it was explained that statements declaring “A=B in some way” are not made with the verb היה. Biblical Hebrew, as well as Arabic, use verbless nominal clauses to equate two things. Chapter 3:181 of the Qur’an reads,

وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ

wanaḥnu ’aghniyā’u

We (are) rich

This verbless nominal clause states that the speakers are equivalent to those who are rich: we=rich. In chapter 9:101 of the Qur’an, the writer states that Bedouins=hypocrites:

وَمِمَّنْ حَوْلَكُم مِّنَ الْأَعْرَابِ مُنَافِقُونَ

wamimman ḥawlakum mina l-’a’rābi munāqifūna

Ruth 1:14; Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 67.

¹⁷⁴Jerusalmi comments on a similar construction in Gen 37:3, which reads, וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֶהָב. Jerusalmi emphasizes that this clause is not read “and Israel loved. . .” The Hebrew for such a translation would read, וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל. The correct reading for Gen 37:3 is, “As for Israel, well/why he loved. . .” (Jerusalmi, *The Story of Joseph*, 5). Furthermore, the nominal clause in Ruth 1:14c is another example of casus pendens (Griess, *Syntactical Comparison*, 234-35). The resumptive pronoun is the implied 3fs pronoun of the verb דָּבַקָה; see Gen 2:14c in chap. 2. For Holmstedt’s analysis of Ruth 1:14c, see n. 37 above. The traditional Semitic understanding of nominal clauses provides a simpler and clearer analysis of the clause.

¹⁷⁵See 1:8d and 1:13a above.

¹⁷⁶Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11uu.

And from those around you from the Bedouins (are) hypocrites
Moreover, in Psalm 25:10, David declares that the ways of the Lord=lovingkindness and truth:

כָּל־אַרְחוֹת יְהוָה חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת

All the ways of the Lord (are) lovingkindness and truth.
In Genesis 41:26, Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams and states,

שִׁבְעַת פָּרֹת הַטֹּבֹת שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים

The seven good cows (are) seven years.
Joseph equates the seven fat cows with the seven good years: seven fat cows=seven good years.

Griess explains that when the predicate of the verbless nominal clause is indefinite, as in the first three examples above, the clause is descriptive.¹⁷⁷ When the predicate is definite, “the definiteness of the predicate in this case overlaps it with the subject to the point of *complete identification*. . . . It is a procedure of attributing the second component to the *being* of the definite first component.”¹⁷⁸ In Genesis 41:26, for example, the seven years are completely identified as the seven fat cows.

Ruth 1:16d consists of two verbless nominal clauses, and both predicates are made definite by the 1cs suffix. In both clauses Ruth is completely identifying herself with the Israelites and with the God of Israel: your people=my people, your God=my God. Ruth is wholly forsaking her old life in order to be with Naomi.

1:17b [וְשָׁם אֶקְבֵּר]

The Niphal of קִבֵּר is the reflexive of the Qal. Although the context may indicate the agent(s), the reflexive is not concerned with the agent(s) of the action. The reflexive denotes the effect, result, or state of the object of the active verb.¹⁷⁹ In 1:17b,

¹⁷⁷Griess, *Syntactic Comparisons*, 257; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11c.

¹⁷⁸Griess, *Syntactic Comparisons*, 257. Italics are original.

¹⁷⁹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §7a; Chomsky, *David Kimhi's Hebrew Grammar*, 82; Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§52, §53; Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic*

Ruth is the object of the active Qal of קבר; the Niphal expresses the result of the Qal of קבר: “there I will get myself buried.” The agent(s) who bury Ruth is not important, they are neither implied nor assumed by the reflexive form.

1:18b [כִּי־מְתַאֲמָצֶת הִיא לְלֶכֶת אִתָּהּ]

The Hithpael of אֲמַץ denotes an act performed on the subject or a state produced in the subject, whether by the subject or someone else.¹⁸⁰ The ת of the Hithpael often indicates personal interest.¹⁸¹ In 1:18b, the Hithpa’el of אֲמַץ describes Ruth as one who put herself in a strengthened state.

In this clause, the indefinite participle מְתַאֲמָצֶת functions as the announcement of a nominal clause. Since the participle as announcement is indefinite, the verbless nominal clause in 1:18b is descriptive. Moreover, the participle does not focus on the action of strengthening, but the agent who is strengthened, namely Ruth. Ruth is described as one who put herself in a strengthened state.

1:20d [כִּי־הִמְרָ שְׂדֵי לִי מְאֹד]

The accusative of absolute object is an infinitive absolute of the same root as the verb that it modifies. The absolute object often emphasizes the verb.¹⁸² The absolute object may be strengthened by the noun מְאֹד, as in Numbers 22:17:

כִּי־כָבֹד אֶכְבֹּדְךָ מְאֹד

And I will most certainly honor you, exceedingly so. However, the absolute object may be omitted and implied if the clause has the noun מְאֹד, especially if the verb is a stative or a *vav*-consecutive construct. In Ruth 1:20d, מֵרַר is

Language, 2-3:273; Thackston, *Introduction to Koranic and Classical Arabic*, 139-40.

¹⁸⁰Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§48; Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 2-3:261-62; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11b.

¹⁸¹Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §11b. See also Gen 3:8a in chap. 3.

¹⁸²See Gen 2:16c in chap. 2.

stative, and the absolute object may be implied: “For Shaddai has certainly exceedingly made me bitter.”

Conclusion

This chapter provided a grammatical analysis of Ruth 1 according to a traditional Semitic approach. Comparisons were made with grammarians who apply modern linguistic principles, primarily Robert Holmstedt, in order to demonstrate how a traditional Semitic approach provides a simpler, clearer, and more accurate analysis. In Ruth 1:1b it was argued that the overwhelming evidence of biblical Hebrew narrative fails to support Holmstedt’s assertion of the basic S-V word order. In Ruth 1:2a, the masoretic accents demonstrate that multiple possible readings of the clause is not plausible, contra Holmstedt. Traditional Semitic grammar illustrates that the definite participle in Ruth 1:8d cannot function as a headless relative clause as Holmstedt claims. The conclusions provided by linguistic methodologies do not deal with biblical Hebrew on its own terms, but often force Hebrew into foreign paradigms. Arabic grammar and grammarians provide the truest measure of the accuracy of biblical Hebrew grammar.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Although linguistic Hebraists are dissatisfied with traditional grammatical analysis, traditional Semitic grammar—primarily based on Arabic grammar and grammarians—still provides the most simple, clear, and accurate description of biblical Hebrew grammar. In this dissertation, analyses of Genesis 2 and 3, and Ruth 1 were provided to introduce traditional Semitic categories and descriptions. For example, in chapter 2, the Arabic case endings demonstrated that the terms ‘nominative,’ ‘accusative,’ and ‘genitive’ still serve as efficient and accurate labels in biblical Hebrew. In chapter 3, the traditional Semitic understanding of *היה* and *كان* makes it clear that *היה* is not a copula verb. In chapter 4, the masoretic accents provided clear direction in determining the correct syntax and word groupings of several verses.

Opportunities were also taken to contrast traditional analyses with those of modern linguists. Barry Bandstra’s commentary on Genesis and Robert Holmstedt’s commentary on Ruth (both from the Baylor *Handbook on the Hebrew Text* series) served as the main points of contact with modern linguists. Bandstra’s and Holmstedt’s conclusions were tested in the light of traditional Arabic and Hebrew grammar, and their conclusions were often found to be insufficient. For example, in chapter 2, Bandstra misses the frequentative function of the imperfect verb. In chapter 3, Bandstra misunderstands the syntax of asyndetic relative clauses. In chapter 4, Holmstedt wrongly labels a definite participle as a headless relative clause, and his conjecture of the primacy of S-V word order was refuted.

Other biblical Hebrew linguists were considered when certain significant

grammatical issues were examined. For example, in chapter 2 and appendix 2, Jan Joosten's and John A. Cook's views of the biblical Hebrew participle was shown to be inconsistent with Arabic grammar. In chapter 2, Jan Kroeze's idiosyncratic nomenclature was shown to add more confusion to the study of biblical Hebrew grammar than the historically significant terms 'nominative' and 'accusative.' In chapter 3, Cynthia Miller's contention that לְאמֹר, when it introduces direct speech, is not an infinitive construct was discredited from biblical examples.

The intention of this dissertation was not to disprove any particular linguistic theory; rather, this dissertation demonstrated that a number of conclusions of linguistic Hebraists are insubstantial and are contrary to traditional Semitic grammar. Biblical Hebrew grammarians who apply modern linguistic principles have divorced biblical Hebrew grammar from its Semitic foundation. As such, modern linguistic Hebraists have introduced a litany of new and often idiosyncratic terms for biblical Hebrew syntax, and a host of new readings of the text. Without Arabic grammar serving as a safe guide, grammarians have looked to other languages—Mandarin Chinese, Basque, and Shilluk, to name a few—to inform their analyses of biblical Hebrew.

With numerous linguistic methods often come contradictory opinions on biblical Hebrew syntax. The biblical Hebrew student finds a situation in which one must learn a particular linguistic method with its particular terminology. Reading the work of another linguist requires the student to learn a new linguistic system. With numerous linguistic methods come numerous and varied opinions on biblical Hebrew syntax.

However, from its inception biblical Hebrew grammar was studied in light of her sister language, Arabic. Saadiah Gaon, and Jewish grammarians after him, mined the riches of Arabic grammar to shed light on Hebrew. Early Christian Hebrew grammarians followed their Jewish predecessors, and continued to study biblical Hebrew against the backdrop of Arabic. While disagreements occur between traditional grammarians, they generally agree on major points of biblical Hebrew grammar. A student of biblical

Hebrew can move from the works of Gesenius-Kautzsch, to S. R. Driver, to Joüon-Muraoka with relative ease because Arabic is foundational to these grammars.

In the end, the crux of the issue lies in how one views native grammarians. Do native Jewish and Arab grammarians provide an adequate description of their respective languages? Or, are native grammarians ill-suited to provide a sufficient analysis of their language? This issue of the assessment of native grammarians is aptly summed up in the quotes of two grammarians. Mortimer Sloper Howell writes regarding Arabic grammar that

the learner should have recourse to the teaching of the native Grammarians, and eschew the unauthorized conjectures of foreign scholars. This method possesses 3 obvious advantages:—the native teachers are more likely to be safe guides than their foreign rivals; their works form a better introduction to the commentaries and glosses indispensable for the study of many works in Arabic literature; and their system of grammar must be adopted as the basis of communication with contemporary scholars of Eastern race.¹

Walter Gross is diametrically opposed to Howell's view. Commenting on the correspondence between Arabic grammatical labels and their "Greco-Roman grammatical counterparts" in biblical Hebrew grammar, he writes,

European philology, oriented toward linguistic history and comparative Semitic languages, thus encountered the native Arabic grammarians, all of whom had lacked concepts of linguistic development; who had investigated the language only through a few of its literary manifestations such as the Qur'ān, classical poetry, and the so-called Bedouin language; who had paid homage to a peculiar concept of analogy; and whose notions of grammar had been influenced by theological and juridical modes of thought.²

Modern speakers of Arabic would reject Gross' view. If medieval Arab grammarians are not well-suited then neither are modern Arab grammarians, when a simple comparison shows that they are identical.³ In fact, native grammarians—medieval and modern—are

¹Mortimer Sloper Howell, *A Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language: Translated and Compiled from the Works of the Most Approved Native or Naturalized Authorities* (Allahabad, India: North-Western Provinces and Outh Government Press, 1883-1911), 1:1.

²Walter Gross, "Is There Really a Compound Nominal Clause in Biblical Hebrew?," in *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew: Linguistic Approaches*, ed. Cynthia L. Miller, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 22.

³A comparison of modern grammars—such as, *An Introduction to Modern Arabic* by Farhat

ideally suited to describe their respective languages. Modern biblical Hebrew students would do well to look to them as their “safe guides.”

Ziadeh and Bayly Winder, and the grammatical explanations on corpus.quran.com—with older grammars demonstrates that medieval and modern Arabic grammatical descriptions are identical.

APPENDIX 1

EXCURSUS: GEOFFREY KHAN’S USE OF COMPARATIVE SEMITICS TO DEFEND THE COPULA PRONOUN THEORY

Footnote 112 in chapter 2 lists various grammarians who hold to a copula pronoun, one of whom is Geoffrey Khan. Khan argues for the copula pronoun, appealing to other Semitic languages to bolster his argument. However, traditional Semitic grammarians also defend their arguments regarding the resumptive pronoun on comparisons with other Semitic languages, primarily Arabic. Khan only alludes to native Semitic grammarians, choosing to reinterpret comparative Semitic data through his particular linguistic lens. Traditional Hebraists, on the other hand, look to native Semitic grammarians as the authority on Semitic grammar.

Khan conducts a comparative study to determine if the biblical Hebrew pronoun in verbless nominal clauses functions as a copula, building his case on a comparison with Modern Neo-Aramaic dialects. He asserts that Modern Neo-Aramaic is related to Hebrew and a comparison between the two languages “is likely to bring greater insight . . . than would a comparison with a totally unrelated language.”¹ Neo-Aramaic dialects, he contends, are related “genetically to certain forms of earlier literary Aramaic”; therefore, some Christian Neo-Aramaic dialects can inform the syntax of Classical Syriac. Furthermore, because biblical Hebrew was translated into Classical Syriac, Classical Syriac—with the insights gained from Neo-Aramaic—is likely to shed

¹Geoffrey Khan, “Some Aspects of the Copula in North West Semitic,” in *Biblical Hebrew in its Northwest Semitic Setting: Typological and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Steven E. Fassberg and Avi Hurvitz (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press and Eisenbrauns, 2006), 157.

light on biblical Hebrew grammar.²

Khan contends that the enclitic pronouns (what Khan labels ‘present copula’) in some dialects of the North Eastern Neo-Aramaic (NENA) group “correspond” to the inflection of present tense R3-*yod* verbs (see table A1 below).³ He notes that the enclitic pronoun in these dialects “has an inflection varying for persons and number and corresponds, in most respects, to the conjugation of verbs.”⁴

Table A1. Abridgment of Khan’s present copula and present tense verb conjugations⁵

		Jewish Sulemaniyya	Qaraqosh	Jewish Arbel
Enclitic Pronouns (Present Copula)	3ms	-y, -ye	-ilə	-ile
	2ms	-yet	-iyət	-wet
	1ms	-yena	-iyən	-wen
Present Tense of R3- <i>yod</i> verb <i>šty</i> “to drink”	3ms	<i>šate</i>	<i>šatə</i>	<i>šate</i>
	2ms	<i>šatet</i>	<i>šatət</i>	<i>šatet</i>
	1ms	<i>šatena</i>	<i>šatən</i>	<i>šaten</i>

In the dialects Turoyo and modern Mandaic—“Neo-Aramaic dialect groups adjacent to NENA”—Khan notes that the present copula “is clearly a pronominal element

²Khan, “Some Aspects of the Copula,” 158.

³Ibid., 159.

⁴Ibid., 158. Khan notes that the NENA dialects do have *hwy* verbs—“the descendant of the verb ‘to be’ in earlier Aramaic”—but that these verbs “express the future, subjunctive and imperative.” The enclitic pronouns, on the other hand, “expresses the indicative present of the verb ‘to be’” (ibid., 159).

⁵Ibid., 159.

rather than a verb” (see table A2 below).⁶ Khan posits that the pronouns in Ṭuroyo and modern Mandaic “corresponds” to the pronouns in Sryiac and Jewish Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic, “in which the present tense copula is pronominal.” Khan quotes two examples from the Syriac: “*’alāhā zaddīk-ū* ‘God is righteous’ (literally: God righteous-he), *’urhā da-šrārā ’alīšā-y* ‘The road of truth is painful’ (literally: the-road of-truth painful-it).”⁷ According to Khan, the pronouns *-ū* and *-y* in Syriac are present copulas.

Table A2. Abridgment of Khan’s pronominal paradigm for Ṭuroyo and modern Mandaic⁸

		Independent Pronoun	Enclitic copula
Ṭuroyo	3ms	<i>hūwe</i>	<i>-yo</i>
	2ms	<i>hat</i>	<i>-hat</i>
	1ms	<i>’uno</i>	<i>-no</i>
Modern Mandaic	3ms	<i>hūy</i>	<i>-ye</i>
	2ms	<i>at</i>	<i>-at</i>
	1ms	<i>an, anā</i>	<i>-nā, nan</i>

Khan notes six features of the NENA dialects that demonstrate how the pronoun has lost its pronominal properties and has adopted the “properties of verbal copula.”⁹ First, the third person pronominal element has become “generalized” throughout the paradigm, serving as the “base for inflections taken over from the present

⁶Khan, “Some Aspects of the Copula,” 160.

⁷Ibid., 161 (parenthetical statements are Khan’s).

⁸Ibid., 160, 161.

⁹Ibid., 162.

verbal paradigm.” According to Khan, this “generalization” of the third person pronoun indicates that the pronoun has lost “its original referential properties.”¹⁰ Second, the pronoun has cliticized, attaching to nouns and adjectives.¹¹ Third, the pronoun corresponds to the verbal inflection of R3-*yod* present tense verbs.¹² Fourth, the pronoun exhibits a “regular unmarked use.” Fifth, the third person pronoun is often paired with another pronoun functioning as the subject, often a first or second person pronoun. Sixth, the pronoun has a “distributional equivalence with the verbal copula *hwy*.”¹³

Khan posits that to the extent that the biblical Hebrew pronominal copula reflects these six features indicates the extent that the biblical Hebrew pronoun has shifted towards a “fully-fledged” copula.¹⁴ One feature biblical Hebrew shares with NENA dialects is that the third person pronoun has “generalized,” losing its “referential properties.” According to Khan, biblical Hebrew demonstrates this generalization of הוּא in examples in which הוּא disagrees in number with a first or second person pronominal subject.¹⁵ He also observes that the pronoun הוּא is often connected by a *maqquph* to the first or second person subject, indicating that the pronoun—like the pronoun in NENA dialects—has cliticized. He notes, however, that “this clitic status [in biblical Hebrew] is by no means a regular feature.”¹⁶ Furthermore, like NENA dialects, biblical Hebrew shows evidence of pairing the pronoun with a pronominal subject.¹⁷ Examples of

¹⁰Khan, “Some Aspects of the Copula,” 161.

¹¹For example, according to Khan, in Christian Qaraqosh the enclitic pronoun *-ilə* on the adjective *bāš* is a copula: *’əbrux bāš-ilə* “Your son *is* good” (ibid., 163).

¹²See table A1 above.

¹³Khan, “Some Aspects of the Copula,” 162.

¹⁴Ibid., 173.

¹⁵Ibid., 171-72, 173

¹⁶Ibid., 172-73.

¹⁷Ibid., 170-71, 173.

nominal clauses with הוּא followed by clauses with הִיא also indicates that the pronoun in biblical Hebrew has begun to shift towards a copula.¹⁸ He concludes that in biblical Hebrew the process of the pronoun developing into a copula has begun, although the pronoun has not “acquired the full complement of copula properties.”¹⁹

While Khan looks to other Semitic languages to inform his arguments, he reinterprets Semitic grammar to fit his notions of the copula pronoun. For example, Khan recognizes that Arab grammarians view the resumptive third person pronoun as a separating pronoun and not a copula. He is also aware that in situations in which the nominal predicate is indefinite, Arab grammarians still label the resumptive pronoun as a separating pronoun. However, Khan dismisses the Arab grammarians and labels the pronoun a copula.

Regarding clauses with a resumptive pronoun and an indefinite nominal predicate, he argues that the pronoun does not serve to differentiate between a modifier and a predicate. With or without the pronoun, the indefinite nominal can “only be interpreted” as a predicate.²⁰ For example, Khan cites a clause from al-Mas‘ūdī’s *Murūj al-dhahab* (III, 16.9):

wal‘andbīl huwa ṭā’irun ṣagīrun yakūna bi’arḍi lhind wassind

“The ‘andbil is a small bird which lives in India and Sind.”²¹

According to Khan, the pronoun *huwa* (“it”) does not determine whether *ṭā’irun ṣagīrun* (“a small bird”) is a modifier to *wal‘andbīl* (“the ‘andbil”) or a predicate because without the pronoun it is clear that *ṭā’irun ṣagīrun* is a predicate. Therefore, Khan determines that all occurrences of resumptive pronouns—traditionally labeled separating pronouns—

¹⁸Khan, “Some Aspects of the Copula,” 173.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Khan cites William Wright, Ibn Ya‘īš, and Sībawayhi. Geoffrey Khan, *Studies in Semitic Syntax*, London Oriental Series 38 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 49-50.

²¹The transliteration system is the same used by Khan, and the translation is Khan’s (Khan, *Studies in Semitic Syntax*, 49).

are copulas.

Khan misses the fact, however, that a nominal clause with a resumptive, or separating, pronoun may often be a casus pendens construction. In casus pendens, a separating pronoun may stand between a definite subject and an indefinite nominal predicate; the pronoun resumes the subject. The examples he cites of resumptive pronouns with indefinite predicates are illustrations of casus pendens. For example, see the analysis of *Murūj al-dhahab* III, 16.9 in table A3 below.

Table A3. Casus pendens construction of *Murūj al-dahab* III, 16.9²²

<i>wal'andbīl</i> “the ‘andbīl”	<i>huwa</i> “it (is)”	<i>ṭā'irun ṣagīrun yakūna</i> <i>bi'arḍi lhind wassind</i> “a small bird which lives in India and Sind.”
Initiator of the entire nominal clause.	Announcement of the entire nominal clause, itself a nominal clause.	
Suspended indefinite noun.	Separating pronoun, resuming the suspended noun <i>wal'andbīl</i> . Initiator of the second nominal clause.	<i>ṭā'irun ṣagīrun</i> : preoccupied with the preceding pronoun. Announcement of the second nominal clause.

Furthermore, despite *ṭā'irun ṣagīrun* lacking the article, Arab grammarians explain that indefinite nouns qualified by adjectives or “an expression equivalent to an adjective” approaches definiteness. Indefinite nouns approaching definiteness is called تَخْصِيسٌ *takhṣīṣun*.²³ The indefinite *ṭā'irun ṣagīrun* is modified by a relative clause—*yakūna*

²²Khan, *Studies in Semitic Syntax*, 49. The clause *yakūna bi'arḍi lhind wassind* is a relative clause to the indefinite antecedent *ṭā'irun ṣagīrun*. A relative clause can omit the relative pronoun if the antecedent is indefinite; the necessary retrospective pronoun is the implied pronoun of the verb *yakūna*. See Gen 3:8a in chap. 3.

²³W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language: Translated from the German of Caspari and Edited With Numerous Additions and Corrections*, 3rd ed., ed. W. Robertson Smith and M. J. de Goeje (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 2:§75 fn, §127 fn.

bi'arđi lhind wassind—which points back to the antecedent with the implied pronoun of the verb *yakūna*.²⁴ The separating pronoun followed by an indefinite predicate is admissible in Arabic syntax.

Moreover, Khan recognizes that a literal translation of clauses with “copula pronouns” renders the pronoun as a separating pronoun. He quotes from classical Syriac, “*'alāhā zaddīk-ū* ‘God is righteous’ (literally: God righteous-he), *'urḥā da-šrārā 'alīšā-y* ‘The road of truth is painful’ (literally: the-road of-truth painful-it).”²⁵ His literal translations reflect the separating pronoun, revealing an admission that the pronoun is not a copula. Similarly, Theodor Nöldeke labels the pronoun a copula; however, he recognizes the true nature of the pronoun: “First of all, the 3rd pers. pron. serves as such [as a copula], *being really a reference indicating or recalling the subject.*”²⁶ While they contend that the pronoun is a copula, Khan and Nöldeke in the end admit that the true function of the third person pronoun is a pronoun not a copula.

Khan also reinterprets Semitic grammar in his paradigm of R3-*yod* present tense verbs.²⁷ It is apparent that this paradigm is the paradigm for R3-*yod* participles: compare the Aramaic ms participle ܒܢܐ with the 3ms “present tense verbs” in table 4 above. Khan again reinterprets Semitic grammar: participles are not verbs but verbal nouns of the agent.²⁸

Khan’s dependence on NENA dialects to elucidate the separating pronoun in

²⁴Moreover, in this construction, the predicate *ṭā'irun ṣagīrun* is absolutely identified as *wal'andbīl*. In absolute identification the subject is “exclusively and completely” identified with the predicate; the subject and predicate are interchangeable. Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, “Hebrew Accents,” in *Biblical Hebrew Syntax: A Traditional Semitic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, forthcoming), §11v, §16h.

²⁵Khan, “Some Aspects of the Copula,” 161.

²⁶Theodor Nöldeke, *Compendious Syriac Grammar*, trans. James A. Chrichton (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2001), §311 (emphasis added).

²⁷Khan, “Some Aspects of the Copula,” 159. Also, see table A1 above.

²⁸See Gen 2:10a in chap. 2, Gen 3:5a in chap. 3, Ruth 1:7a in chap. 4, and appendix 2.

biblical Hebrew grammar is problematic. Although Khan gathers his textual data from native speakers of NENA dialects, his grammar of these dialects is not based on native grammarians. For example, he notes that he constructs his grammars on the dialects of the Jews of Arbel, Urmi, and Qaraqosh through the lens of discourse analysis.²⁹ Khan's grammars of these dialects, therefore, were developed through his own reading and understanding of these languages. In his study on the biblical Hebrew pronoun אֲנִי, Khan resorts to the NENA dialects because "a comparison with Neo-Aramaic . . . casts light on the earlier period by demonstrating that a certain type of proposed historical development is *at least possible*."³⁰ However, the historical development of the NENA dialects is not fully understood. On the back cover of his grammar of the dialect of Urmi, it is observed that some of the linguistic developments in Urmi "have come about due to its close contact over many centuries with the *non-Semitic languages of the region*."³¹ It is not clear to what extent other non-Semitic languages have influenced the pronoun in these dialects; dialects of the NENA group should be used cautiously in biblical Hebrew grammar studies.

Contrary to the NENA dialects, Arabic has a long history of native grammarians who have discussed the separating pronoun for centuries. A comparison between the NENA dialects and Arabic would likely demonstrate that the use of the pronoun in the NENA dialects mirrors that of Arabic. Just as Arabic was the key in unlocking Akkadian and Ugaritic, it is more likely that Arabic is the key to understanding the NENA dialects. Therefore, Arabic, not the NENA dialects, gives clarity to the

²⁹Geoffrey Khan, *A Grammar of Neo-Aramaic: The Dialect of the Jews of Arbel*, Handbuch der Orientalistik; Erste Abteilung: Der Nahe und Mittlere Osten (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 14; Khan, *Studies in Semitic Syntax*, xxxiv; Geoffrey Khan, *The Jewish Neo-Aramaic Dialect of Urmi*, Gorgias Neo-Aramaic Studies 2 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2008), xviii; Geoffrey Khan, *The Neo-Aramaic Dialect of Qaraqosh*, Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 36 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 20.

³⁰Khan, "Some Aspects of the Copula," 157 (*italics added*).

³¹Khan, *The Jewish Neo-Aramaic Dialect of Urmi*. *Italics added*.

separating pronoun in biblical Hebrew.

By reinterpreting Semitic grammar through discourse analysis, Khan reanalyzes the biblical Hebrew pronoun הוּא through the paradigm of the NENA dialects. Khan lists two factors that lead him to this conclusion. First, the pronoun הוּא often disagrees in number with first or second person pronominal subjects. Second, the pronoun הוּא often precedes an indefinite subject. Semitic grammar, however, allows for these “incongruences.” For example, Arabic often allows the pronoun هُوَ *huwa* to disagree with its subject, as in 2 Samuel 7:28:

أَنْتَ هُوَ اللَّهُ

'anta huwa allāhu

*You—He (is) God*³²

Hebrew also allows disagreement in number, as in Isaiah 43:25:

אֲנִכִּי אֲנִכִּי הוּא מַחֵה פְּשָׁעֶיךָ

*I, even I—He Who (is) One Who wipes out your transgressions*³³

In Aramaic the separating pronoun may also disagree with the pronominal subject in number, as in Daniel 2:38:

אַנְתָּהּ הוּא רִאשָׁה דִּי דְהָבָא

You—it (is) a head of gold

Furthermore, Arabic admits an indefinite predicate after a separating pronoun, as in the Qur'an chapter 11:19:

وَهُمْ بِآلَاءِ آخِرَةٍ هُمْ كَافِرُونَ

wahum bil- 'āakhirati hum kāfirūna

And they, in the Hereafter—they (are) disbelievers

Biblical Hebrew also places an indefinite predicate after a separating pronoun, as in Joshua 22:22:

³²Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§124; Mortimer Sloper Howell, *A Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language: Translated and Compiled from the Works of the Most Approved Native or Naturalized Authorities* (Allahabad, India: North-Western Provinces and Outh Government Press, 1883-1911), 1:546.

³³Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. and rev. T. Muraoka, *Subsidia Biblica* 14 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000), §154i-j; E. Kautzsch, ed., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 28th ed., trans. A. E. Cowley, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), §141h.

אֵל אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה אֵל אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה הוּא יָדַע

The true God, the Lord God, the true God, the Lord God—He (is) a Knower³⁴

Semitic grammarians are not concerned with Western notions of grammatical precision; these “incongruences” are permissible in Semitic grammar. Linguistic Hebraists should not force a foreign paradigm over Arabic or biblical Hebrew grammar to solve the incongruences of Semitic grammar.

³⁴S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew and Some Other Syntactical Questions*, Ancient Language Resources (1892; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 269.

APPENDIX 2

EXCURSUS: JOHN A. COOK'S VIEW OF THE PARTICIPLE

In his analysis of *הַמְּתִים* in Ruth 1:8d, Robert Holmstedt states that recent research indicates that participles are “adjectives that encode an activity or event rather than a quality.”¹ Holmstedt cites the works of John A. Cook, who incorporates the participle in his description of the biblical Hebrew verbal system, placing the participle in the class of ‘adjective.’² In Arabic, the participle is labeled a ‘verbal adjective’; William Wright explicitly states that the participle is an adjective derived from a verb.³ A distinction must be made, however, between Wright’s description of the verbal adjective and Cook’s placement of the participle in the class of ‘adjective.’

According to traditional Semitic grammar, the participle “designates a person or thing, to which the verbal idea closely attaches itself and consequently remains unmovable.”⁴ The participle focuses on the person or thing in a fixed state, not on the action. The verb, on the other hand, centers on an action coming into being and the

¹Robert D. Holmstedt, *Ruth: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible Series (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 74.

²John Cook, “The Hebrew Participle and Stative in Typological Perspective,” *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 34, no. 1 (2008):1-19; idem., *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb: The Expression of Tense, Aspect, and Modality in Biblical Hebrew*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 7 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 224.

³W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language: Translated from the German of Caspari and Edited With Numerous Additions and Corrections*, 3rd ed., ed. W. Robertson Smith and M. J. de Goeje (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 1:§229.

⁴Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§72. See E. Kautzsch, ed., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 28th ed., trans. A. E. Cowley, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), §116a; Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax: A Traditional Semitic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, forthcoming), §16a.

movement of that action. While the imperfect may resemble the participle, Arab grammarians explain the idea of the imperfect as one of “constant renewal or repetition.” The participle, according to Arab grammarians, is the idea of “fixedness, immobility.”⁵ The participle is the ‘noun of the agent.’

Cook begins his analysis of the biblical Hebrew participle by noting the “unevenness” of studies on the participle. He notes that older studies describe the “double nature” of the participle, in that it acts like a noun and a verb. Recent studies, he continues, depict the participle as an “intermediate” form between the noun and verb. The “intermediate” form of the biblical Hebrew participle is in contrast to the Modern Hebrew participle which, Cook notes, “is clearly either a noun or a verb.”⁶

Cook prefers to place biblical Hebrew participles in the class of ‘adjective.’ Cook explains that participles are adjectival in that “their adjectival character is demonstrated by their gender-number agreement morphology and attributive syntactic function.”⁷ Furthermore, like adjectives, the participle may function substantively as nouns.⁸ The ambiguity of the participle, according to Cook, arises when the participle is used as a predicate because the participle shares “morphological and morphosyntactic features with both the verbal and the nominal systems.”⁹ The main difficulty, according to Cook, comes from biblical Hebrew’s tendency for a “zero-copula strategy for nominal and adjectival predicates.” In other words, nominal and adjectival predicates often occur “unsupported” by a “an auxiliary or copular supportive item,” just as finite verbal forms are unsupported. He cites Jeremiah 33:22 to illustrate how the biblical Hebrew participle

⁵Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§72n.

⁶Cook, “The Hebrew Participle and Stative,” 1.

⁷Ibid., 2.

⁸Ibid., 3.

⁹Ibid.

acts like a noun and a verb:

אַרְבֶּה אֶת־זֶרַע דָּוִד עַבְדִּי וְאֶת־הַלְוִיִּם מְשָׁרְתִי אִתִּי

I will multiply the seed of David my servant and the Levites, my servants/who serve me/the ones serving me.

According to Cook, the participle מְשָׁרְתִי requires a “nominal analysis” because it is in the construct form, and yet it also requires a verbal analysis because it takes a direct object אִתִּי.¹⁰

Cook posits that the ambiguities expressed by the participle indicate that they should be classified as adjectives. According to Cook, the ambiguities of the participle “are representative of the sorts of ambiguities that characterize the word class of adjective in languages generally.”¹¹ Cook develops his argument for the participle as adjective, and the participle’s role in the verbal system, by applying Leon Stassen’s description of various constructions for intransitive predication.

According to Cook, Stassen provides four categories that describe how intransitive predicates are constructed. First, ‘event predicates’ are typically formed with verbs, and do not require a copula or auxiliary word. An example of the ‘event predicate’ is the sentence “John walks.” Second, the ‘class-membership predicate’ (“John is a carpenter”) is constructed via a “nominal strategy”; in this construction a non-verbal copula or a “zero copula” is used. Cook explains that the non-verbal copula is either a pronoun or particle. Third, for “locative expressions,” a “verbal support element” is employed; this verbal element is a copula marked with tense, aspect, modality, and person agreement. An example of the “locative expression” is the sentence “John is in the kitchen.” Fourth, property predicates (adjectives, etc.) do not have a construction that is specific to them; however, property predicates may use any of the previous three

¹⁰Cook, “Hebrew Participle and Stative,” 4-5; idem., *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb*, 223. The translation is Cook’s.

¹¹Cook, “Hebrew Participle and Stative,” 5.

constructions described above.¹²

Cook maintains that each of Stassen's predication categories can be found in biblical Hebrew. He cites Genesis 6:4 as an example of verbal predication:

הַנְּפִלִים הָיוּ בָאָרֶץ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם

"The Nephilim were in the land in those days."

2 Kgs 19:15 serves as an example of a nominal predication with a pronominal copula:

אַתָּה-הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים לְבַדָּךְ

"You are God alone"¹³

Cook goes on to note that prototypical biblical Hebrew adjectives (not participles or statives) may also follow one of the three types of predication. In Gen 29:31, the adjective is predicated with a 'zero copula' construction (Stassen's second category):

וְרַחֵל עֲקָרָה

"But Rachel (was) barren"

The adjective is also predicated with a pronominal copula (Stassen's second category) in Lam 1:18:

צָדִיק הוּא יְהוָה

"Yhwh is righteous"

Adjectives may also be encoded by the locative strategy (Stassen's third category) with a verbal copula, as in Gen 11:30:

וְתָהִי שָׂרִי עֲקָרָה

"Now Sarai was barren"¹⁴

According to Cook, unlike prototypical adjectives, biblical Hebrew participles can mark an event predication (Stassen's first category) as well as nominal and locative predications (Stassen's second and third categories). For example, Cook asserts 1 Kgs

¹²Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb*, 225-26; idem., "Hebrew Participle and Stative," 6. Cook cites Stassen's English examples for each construction. Leon Stassen, *Intransitive Predication*, Oxford Studies in Typology and Linguistic Theory (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 12.

¹³Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb*, 226-27. Translations and emphasis are Cook's.

¹⁴Ibid., 226-27. Translations and emphasis are Cook's.

13:1 encodes a event:

וַיִּרְבֹּעַם עֹמֵד עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ

“Jeroboam (was) standing beside the altar.”¹⁵

Whereas event predicates are typically encoded with verbs (Stassen’s first category), participles typically encode event predicates with null-copula or non-verbal copula constructions (Stassen’s second and third categories). Cook concludes, “the Participle represents a ‘nominal takeover’ of event predicates, whereby a nominal predicate encoding strategy is applied to event predicates, which are more prototypically encoded to the verbal strategy.” This “nominal takeover” of the participle in event predicates leads Cook to include participles in his study of the Hebrew verbal system. He cautions his readers, though, that “there is no evidence that the Participle stops being adjectival at any time in the history of Hebrew”; the participle “continues to be used in both nominal and verbal slots in the grammar.”¹⁶

Cook maintains that the predicative participle marks progressive-imperfective action. There is, according to Cook, semantic overlap between *yiqtol* and the participle as in Gen 37:15b-16a:

וַיִּשְׁאַלְהוּ הָאִישׁ לֵאמֹר מַה-תִּבְקֹשׁ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֶת-אָחִי אֲנֹכִי מִבְּקֶשׁ

“The man asked him, ‘What are you looking for?’ He said, ‘I (am) looking for my brothers.’”

According to Cook, the participle and imperfect in Genesis 37:15 and 16 are “in close juxtapositioning.”¹⁷ However, he continues, the participle, compared to *yiqtol*, is “a younger (progressive) gram developing along the same progressive-imperfective path.”¹⁸ The participle, therefore, communicates “an agent in the midst of an activity,” the time of

¹⁵Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb*, 227. Translations and emphasis are Cook’s.

¹⁶Ibid., 228.

¹⁷Ibid., 224. The translation and emphasis is Cook’s.

¹⁸Ibid., 230.

which is determined by context.¹⁹

In summary, Cook contends that the participle is not a verbal form, in contrast to Jan Joosten, who argues that the participle is a verbal form (see Gen 2:10a in chap. 2 above). The participle, according to Cook, is a grammatical construction (‘gram’) used in event predicates, which “are more prototypically encoded by the verbal strategy.”²⁰ The stative, in contrast, “represents an early nominal takeover that eventually developed into a verbal encoding.”²¹ Although the participle is not a verb, Cook proposes that it “plays a role” in the biblical Hebrew verbal system.²²

The biblical Hebrew participle, however, describes a quality or characteristic of an agent, it is not a verb (contra Joosten) nor is it a part of the verbal system. Cook cites Genesis 37:15b-16a (see above) to demonstrate what he considers semantic overlap between *yiqtol* and the participle. However, Wright explains that while the participle and the imperfect convey continuous action they are different:

The difference between them is, that the concrete verbal noun [the participle] designates a person or thing, to which the verbal idea closely attaches itself and consequently remains immovable; whilst the Imperfect, as a *verbum finitum*, expresses the verbal idea as movable and indeed in constant motion.²³

Furthermore, G. H. Ewald explains,

The participle does not represent the action as proceeding from a person (as the person of a verb does), but it represents a person (or thing) as that to which the action is to be attributed; the chief thing in it is the idea of the personal noun, to this person, however, the action is simply ascribed as belonging to it.²⁴

The imperfect and the participle convey two different ideas.

¹⁹Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb*, 230.

²⁰*Ibid.*

²¹*Ibid.*

²²*Ibid.*, 223, 228.

²³Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§72.

²⁴Geo. Henry Aug. Ewald, *A Grammar of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*, trans. John Nicholson (London: Williams and Norgate, 1836), 221. See also Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a.

Traditional Semitic grammar prevents Cook from claiming that the participle is part of the verbal system. For example, in 1 Kings 13:1, Cook explains that the participle עֹמֵד describes an event: וַיִּרְבֵּעַם עֹמֵד עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ. He translates this clause, “Jeroboam (was) standing beside the altar.” However, עֹמֵד describes Jeroboam, depicting him in an abiding state of standing: “and Jeroboam (was) one who was standing beside the altar.”²⁵ Furthermore, in his example Deuteronomy 31:3, the nominal clause consists of the emphatic separating pronoun:

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ הוּא עֹבֵר לְפָנֶיךָ

The Lord your God—He (is) *One who passes* before you.

Although action is present in the participle עֹבֵר, the participle is depicting the noun of the agent: God is One who passes by.

Cook also views the participle עֹבֵר in 1 Kings 20:39—functioning as the predicate of the copula וַיְהִי—as describing an event:

וַיְהִי הַמֶּלֶךְ עֹבֵר

“The king was passing by.”²⁶

However, עֹבֵר is functioning as an adverbial accusative of situation to the verb וַיְהִי: “the king existed in the situation of one who was in the continual state of passing by” (for a discussion on וַיְהִי taking an accusative see Gen 3:1a in chap. 3 above).

The tense of a participle can only be determined by the main verb of the clause or context.²⁷ In the example above, 1 Kings 20:39, the participle עֹבֵר is in the past because of the preceding verb וַיְהִי. Context also determines the tense of a participle. For

²⁵Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax: A Traditional Semitic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, forthcoming), §16. Furthermore, this construction is a situation clause. Participles are ideal for situation clause because they describe the agent in an abiding state or a continual activity. The *vav* is the *vav* of situation, and the action is contemporaneous with the action of the verb in the previous clause: וַהֲנֵה אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים בָּא מִיְהוּדָה בְּדִבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־בֵּיתֶאֱל. See *ibid.*, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §49b.

²⁶Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb*, 228.

²⁷Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§73; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a.

example, in Genesis 2:10, context determines that the participle יֵצֵא is in the past.²⁸

Furthermore, Joshua Blau explains that the participle “has not yet been absorbed into the verbal system in Biblical Hebrew.” He goes on to state that clauses in which the participle is functioning as the predicate “are ordinary nominal clauses,” evidenced by the fact that nominal clauses with participial predicates are negated not by לֹא—which negates verbal clauses—but rather by אֵין—which negates nominal clauses.²⁹ Consider Genesis 41:8:

וְאֵין־פֹּתֵר אוֹתָם לְפָרְעָה

And there was not *one who was an interpreter* of it for Pharaoh.³⁰

While the participle easily translates into English as a verb, the participle is not a verb, nor are they part of the verbal system. Even as predicates in verbless clauses, participles are similar to adjectives because they are descriptive of a person or thing. Predicate adjectives and participles easily translate into the present tense because they are predicates of nominal clauses. Nominal clauses, being descriptive, are usually in the present tense. The distinction between verbal and nominal clauses, and understanding the true nature of the participle in Arabic and Hebrew, prevents grammarians from including the participle in the biblical Hebrew verbal system.

²⁸See Gen 2:10a in chap. 2.

²⁹Joshua Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew: An Introduction*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 2 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 225-26.

³⁰Other examples include Gen 41:24, 39; Exod 5:11; 22:9; 1 Sam 26:12. Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §41z.

APPENDIX 3

RESPONSES TO THE EXTERNAL READER

John A. Cook served as the external reader for this dissertation. In his external reader report, Cook critiques the basic premise of this dissertation and many of its conclusions. Several questions raised by Cook were addressed in the main body of the dissertation where necessary, either by adding more citations, adding more argumentation, or by rewording an argument. In this appendix, four issues are addressed which the author deemed necessary to devote more space: the author's description of Arabic grammar, the Semitic understanding of the reflexive Niphal (Ruth 1:3b and 1:17b in chap. 4), the purpose and use of the masoretic accents (Ruth 1:4a in chap. 4), and casus pendens (Ruth 1:14c in chap. 4).

The Author's Description of Arabic Grammar

Cook makes a serious claim against the author's description of Arabic grammar. Cook states that the author essentially argues

that Biblical Hebrew should be treated as Arabic *according to Russell Fuller's understanding of Arabic grammar*. This is especially evident when the author *appeals to Russell Fuller's interpretation of Arabic grammarians* over and against alternative, independent readings of those grammars.¹

The author's thesis would be undermined if Cook was correct. However, the author appeals to an Arabic grammatical *tradition* in which Fuller, William Wright, Ihab Griess, Mortimer Howell, Farhat Ziadeh, and Mohammad 'Id stand.

The author approached Scott Bridger, a professor of Arabic and Islamic studies, to determine if the description of Arabic grammar in this dissertation is unique to

¹John A. Cook, external reader report of author's dissertation, August 9, 2014. Emphasis added.

Fuller or if it stands within the Arabic grammatical tradition. Having read the author's descriptions of Arabic grammar, Bridger writes,

Richard McDonald's dissertation submitted to the faculty of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary defends a long-standing approach to Hebrew grammar rooted in comparative Semitics. This is an approach that has been challenged recently on a number of fronts by scholars conversant in the theories and categories of modern linguistics and discourse analysis. The biggest challenge to the newer approaches, however, is the predominance of the traditional view that analyzes Biblical Hebrew grammar through the lens of Arabic grammar. This tradition was developed in the Middle Ages by Jewish grammarians (native Arabic speakers themselves) who relied on Arab grammarians and continues to be the exemplary paradigm for analyzing shared features among Semitic languages (Arabic, Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, etc.). Among the reasons for this is the fact that Arabic is widely regarded as a conservative language because it preserves grammatical structures and features that are viewed as paradigmatically Semitic. As far as I can tell, this was the most common view held by those under whom I studied at such institutions in the Middle East as: the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Bir Zeit University, the University of Jordan, the Fajr Center for Arabic Language in Cairo, and the University of Haifa. After reading through McDonald's dissertation and his analysis, he clearly stands within this established tradition. His detractors seemingly want to challenge these existing categories and the established norms so that Biblical Hebrew conforms to Indo-European grammatical classifications rather than viewing the language within the broader landscape of the Semitic family; a family that places Arabic at the head. By challenging these trends, McDonald's dissertation represents a clarion call for scholars of Biblical Hebrew to place a priority on cultivating an awareness of the resources that have been and continue to be available within the broader Semitic family, especially Arabic, before resorting to the modern trends of fashionable scholarship.²

To the extent that the descriptions in this dissertation accurately reflect Arabic grammar, the author and Fuller stand within the Arabic grammatical tradition.

The Semitic Understanding of the Reflexive Niphal

In Ruth 1:3b and 1:17b in chapter 4, the author argues that a traditional Semitic understanding of the reflexive Niphal indicates that the reflexive verb is agentless. With biblical Hebrew active verbs, an agent performs an action on an object. Reflexive verbs, however, express the result or effect of the active verb; the agent of a biblical Hebrew reflexive verb is neither assumed, nor implied, in the mind of the speaker or writer.³ This

²J. Scott Bridger, email message to author, October 14, 2014.

³Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax: A Traditional Semitic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, forthcoming), §7a.

understanding of the reflexive led to the following literal translation of Ruth 1:17b:

וְשָׁם אֶקְבֵּר

And there I will get myself buried.

Cook describes the literal translations of the reflexive in this dissertation as “strained.”

He goes on to write,

The author has misunderstood the reflexive voice in the most basic way: reflexive constructions are defined as those in which the agent and patient of the activity are identical. There is an overt concern to express agent in a reflexive construction, making it impossible to interpret these cases as reflexives since the patient lacks the ability to act as agent (i.e., inanimate pitcher, dead person).⁴

Semitic grammarians, however, define ‘reflexive’ differently. Arabic has a verbal form identical to the biblical Hebrew Niphal: اِنْفَعَلَ *’infa’ala*.⁵ Wheeler M.

Thackston clearly explains the reflexive stem:

The medio-passive [other grammarians say ‘reflexive’] Form VII [اِنْفَعَلَ *’infa’ala*] differs in signification from the true passive . . . *in that the agency of the action is completely disregarded in the medio-passive*. It is true that personal agents cannot be expressed in the true passive—nor, for that matter, with Form VII; nonetheless, the fact of there being an agent is inherent in the true passive. In a sentence such as *قُتِعَ رَأْسُهُ* (*quṭi’a ra’suhu*, “His head was cut off.”) the agency of an executioner—or at least an instrument such as a sword—is very much in the mind of the speaker, while in the medio-passive construction *اِنْقَطَعَ رَأْسُهُ* (*inqaṭa’a ra’suhu*, “His head got cut off”) the activity/passivity of the verbal notion does not pertain. What is of importance is the result, the fact that a head was severed from a body.⁶

Furthermore, William Wright states that the *’infa’ala* often demonstrates an “effective signification” (اِنْحَطَمَ *’inḥaṭama*, “to become broken, to break into pieces”), or it may imply “that a person allows an act to be done in reference to him, or an effect to be

⁴John A. Cook, external reader report of author’s dissertation, August 9, 2014.

⁵Mortimer Sloper Howell, *A Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language: Translated and Compiled from the Works of the Most Approved Native or Naturalized Authorities* (Allahabad, India: North-Western Provinces and Outh Government Press, 1883-1911), 2-3:273; W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language: Translated from the German of Caspari and Edited With Numerous Additions and Corrections*, 3rd ed., ed. W. Robertson Smith and M. J. de Goeje (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 1:§52; Wheeler M. Thackston, *An Introduction to Koranic and Classical Arabic: An Elementary Grammar of the Language* (Bethesda, MD: IBEX Publishers, 2000), 139-40.

⁶Thackston, *Introduction to Koranic and Classical Arabic*, 139. David Kimḥi notes that “some verbs in Nif’al bear no reference at all to an agent or performer of the action.” William Chomsky, *David Kimḥi’s Hebrew Grammar (Mikhlol): Systematically Presented and Critically Annotated* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1952), 82.

produced upon him (اِنْخَدَعَ 'inkhada 'a “to let oneself be deceived”).⁷

Moreover, Arabic has a form similar to the biblical Hebrew Hithpael: تَفَعَّلَ (*tafa* “*ala*”). Wright notes that the most common meaning for this form is ‘effective’: “the *effective* implies that an act is done to a person, or a state produced in him, whether it be caused by *another* or by *himself*.” For example, تَعَلَّمَ *ta'allama* means “to become learned.”⁸

Just as in Arabic, the biblical Hebrew reflexive Niphal and Hithpael disregard the agent and express the result of the action. Consider Genesis 37:35:

וַיִּקְמוּ כָל-בָּנָיו וְכָל-בָּנֹתָיו לְנַחֲמוֹ וַיִּמָּאן לְהַנְיֵחַם

Then all of his sons and his daughters rose to comfort him, but he did not allow *to get himself comforted*.

While the translation of Genesis 37:35 may sound strange, it accurately reflects the Semitic understanding of ‘reflexive.’

In response to the author’s examples of pitchers and a dead person as the subjects of reflexive verbs (see Ruth 1:3b and 1:17b in chap. 4), Cook writes, “There is an overt concern to express agent in a reflexive construction, making it impossible to interpret these cases [the author’s examples] as reflexives since the patient lacks the ability to act as agent (i.e., inanimate pitcher, dead person).”⁹ However, according to Semitic grammar, inanimate objects, etc. may be the subjects of reflexive verbs precisely because reflexive verbs describe the result and are not concerned with the agent.¹⁰

⁷Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§52, §53.

⁸Ibid., 1:§48 (italics original). Cf. Thackston, *Introduction to Koranic and Classical Arabic*, 174. Wright’s term ‘effective’ is what Thackston means by his statement that the result of the action is important in reflexive verbs.

⁹John A. Cook, external reader report of author’s dissertation, August 9, 2014.

¹⁰See the examples provided by the Arabic grammarians: a goblet (Thackston, *Introduction to Koranic and Classical Arabic*, 140); a flower (Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1:§52; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §7a). Mortimer Sloper Howell notes that the reflexive “is peculiar to *physical action and production of impression*, [because this *conjug.* is applied to denote *quasi-passivity*, i.e. *reception of impression*, which is more appropriate and congruous in what is *apparent to the eyes*, like *breaking and cutting and pulling*, . . .] (Howell, *Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*, 2-3:273).

Consider Numbers 16:31:

וַיְהִי כְּכַלְתּוֹ לְדַבֵּר אֶת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַתִּבְקַע הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר תַּחְתֵּיהֶם:

And it happened according to the completion of him to speak all of these words, and the *ground* which (was) under them *got itself split*.

In this example, the agent who split the ground (an inanimate subject) is of no concern; the Niphal תִּבְקַע expresses the result of the action: the ground got itself split.

Cook's critique of the author's description of the Niphal sharpens the difference in approaches to biblical Hebrew syntax. Arabic, because it has the same construct as the biblical Hebrew Niphal, should play a predominant role in determining the definition of the reflexive. The explanation offered in chapter 4 rests on the Arabic definition of 'reflexive.' Cook's definition, however, does not depend on Arabic grammar. While Cook's definition of 'reflexive' may be accurate for other languages, it is not the correct definition for biblical Hebrew. Cook is at complete odds with Semitic grammar. Arabic, having the same verbal forms as biblical Hebrew, provides a more sure and more accurate definition of 'reflexive.'

The Purpose and Use of the Masoretic Accents

In Ruth 1:4a of chapter 4, the author highlights the importance of the masoretic accents and their significance in marking the syntax of a clause. When the accents do not mark the syntax they often indicate the main emphasis of a clause, or the accents may group words due to musical considerations.

In footnote 79 the author interacts with Robert Holmstedt and his reading of Ruth 2:14. The author highlights Holmstedt's comments regarding the accents. Holmstedt states that the accents "mark prosody and not syntax . . . and so they are not strong support for any syntactic decision."¹¹ Contrary to Holmstedt, the author contends that the accents allow for only one possible reading for the words in dispute in Ruth 2:14.

¹¹Robert D. Holmstedt, *Ruth: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible Series (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 132.

Regarding the author's interaction with Holmstedt, Cook writes,

In a lengthy footnote the author engages Holmstedt's assertion that the accents do not primarily mark syntactic divisions, contending that "to separate the syntax from the chanting would render the text senseless. The liturgical purpose of the accents would be worthless if the accents do not mark the syntax" . . . It is unfortunate that the author has done no research on the accentuation system to discover that the primary function is in fact debated.¹²

Cook proceeds to point the author to Bezalel Elan Drescher's work, who argues that the main function of the accents is to mark prosody.¹³

However, Drescher states that while the accents' primary function is prosodic, "a prosodic representation is *based on syntax* and in some cases coincides with it."¹⁴

Drescher states that the accents and syntax often do not coincide: "where syntactic and prosodic representations diverge, phonology follows the prosodic structure."¹⁵ While the author may not fully agree with Drescher's arguments, he does agree with Drescher that when the accents do not mark the syntax they are concerned with the grouping of words.¹⁶

Of course, the experts in the field of masoretic accents acknowledge that the accents do not always follow the syntax. William Wickes acknowledges as much, noting,

The accentuators did not hesitate to make the strict rules for logical (or syntactical) division give way, when they wished to express *emphasis*, or otherwise give effect to the reading. . . .

. . . Even with what may seem to us its shortcomings and superfluities, it fixes the sense in a far more effective and satisfactory way than our modern system of

¹²John A. Cook, external reader report of author's dissertation, August 9, 2014. However, the author never states that the accents primarily marks syntax. In his critique of Lars Lode's view of the accents, the author writes, "Lode should have been aware that when the accents do not indicate the syntax of a clause, they often mark the main emphasis of a clause" (p. 154). Furthermore, in n. 85 of chap. 4 the author explains that the accents often go against the syntax for musical reasons. See also Gen 3:5c in chap. 3.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Bezalel Elan Drescher, "The Prosodic Basis of the Tiberian Hebrew System of Accents," *Language* 70, no. 1 (1994):6, 7-8, accessed August 26, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/416739>. Emphasis added.

¹⁵Ibid., 8.

¹⁶Ibid., 1, 7-8.

punctuation.¹⁷

Elsewhere he writes,

The question how the *position* of the dichotomy (main or minor) was fixed, has been already answered. It is found, where the main *logical* pause of the clause, or the rules for *syntactical* division require it. But, as has been pointed out, . . . there are many notable exceptions. I would here only once more remind the reader that we have to do with a system of *public recitation*, the main object of which (like that of all effective delivery) was to bring out and impress upon the minds of the hearers the full meaning of the Sacred Text. And I would add that unless we are prepared to recognise the utmost freedom in the application of the dichotomy, we shall never be able to explain to ourselves the accentual division.¹⁸

Consider Exodus 24:4:

וַיִּכְתֹּב מֹשֶׁה אֶת כָּל־דְּבָרֵי יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁכַּם בַּבֹּקֶר וַיָּבֶן מִזְבֵּחַ תַּחַת הָהָר וּשְׁתֵּים עָשָׂר מִצְבֹּה לְשִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord. And he rose early in the morning, and he built an altar under the mountain | and twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel.

In this example, the *athnach* (marked by | in the translation) separates the two objects: the altar and the twelve pillars. The logical place for the *athnach* is on יְהוָה, separating the first two verbal clauses from the last. By placing the main pause of the sentence between the two objects, the author focuses the reader on the altar and pillars.¹⁹

Notice the placement of the *athnach* in Genesis 22:10:

וַיִּשְׁלַח אַבְרָהָם אֶת־יָדוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הַמֶּאֱכָלֶת לְשַׁחֵט אֶת־בְּנוֹ:

And Abraham stretched out his hand, and he took the knife | to slay his son.

In Genesis 22:10, the logical place for the *athnach* is on יָדוֹ, separating the two verbal clauses. By placing the main pause on אֶת־הַמֶּאֱכָלֶת the author draws the readers attention to the fact that Abraham took up the knife.²⁰ Although the accents do not always mark the syntax, the meaning of the text is nevertheless clearly delineated by the accents.

The author interacts with Holmstedt in chapter 4 in order to highlight how

¹⁷William Wickes, *A Treatise on the Accentuation of the Twenty-One So-Called Prose Books of the Old Testament*, (1970; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 4. Italics original.

¹⁸Ibid., 31. Italics original.

¹⁹Ibid., 34.

²⁰See also Gen 4:14; 6:9; Exod 4:16; Dan 6:12.

Holmstedt dismisses the accents when determining the syntax of Ruth 2:14. Again, Holmstedt claims that the accents “mark prosody and not syntax . . . and so they are not strong support for any syntactic decision.”²¹ The author’s statement in footnote 79—“to separate the syntax from the chanting [of the text as marked by the accents] would render the text senseless”—indicates that the syntax and the chanting/phrasing cannot be separated.²²

Contrary to Cook, there is actually no debate concerning the primary function of the accents. The accents bring out the meaning of the text. In fact, the Hebrew word for the accents—טעמים—has the notion of “meaning” or “understanding.”²³ No one competent in the accents claims that they are merely markers for syntax, like punctuation marks. They are part of a chanting or musical system meant to focus on the meaning of the text. Sometimes the accents focus on the meaning best by going against the syntax; however, the meaning will not be obscured, but enhanced. Many hymns do the same thing; the phrasing of verses often go against the syntax due to musical reasons or to emphasize the meaning.²⁴ But like the masoretic accents, the syntax in hymns can only be disregarded if the meaning is not affected. In Ruth 2:14, of course, the accents and syntax must be consistent or the meaning is compromised.

The experts in the field recognize that the meaning of a text is compromised if the accents and syntax are not consistent. William Wickes, for example, who argues for *meaning* as the primary function of the accents, has chapters devoted to the syntactic importance of the accents. Moreover, he has a large appendix explaining the accents in

²¹Holmstedt, *Ruth*, 132.

²²Cf. Drescher, “The Prosodic Basis of the Tiberian Hebrew System of Accents,” 6, 7-8; Israel Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*, trans. and ed. E. J. Revell, The Society of Biblical Literature Masoretic Studies 5 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1980), #178.

²³Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York: The Judaica Press, 1985), 543b.

²⁴See n. 85 in chap. 4.

difficult passages, which he generally explains syntactically. In his volume on the poetic accents, Wickes praises those responsible for the accents for their understanding of Semitic syntax. Commenting on היה taking an adverbial accusative, he writes,

In reality this word is, as we learn from the Arabic, in the *adverbial accusative*. The passage from Job [Job 30:29] is rendered in the Polyglot Vers. أَخَا كُنْتُ لِأَوْلَادِ الْوَحُوشِ. And עֲמָדוֹת הָיָה רִגְלֵינוּ [in Ps 122:2] answers to قَائِمًا كَانَ رَبُّنَا (Wright, Arab. Gr. ii. p. 109). We see then in the accentuation a fine appreciation of the grammatical construction.²⁵

To disconnect the syntax and the accents as Holmstedt suggests would often make the chanting of the Hebrew Old Testament nonsense. It would certainly confuse Ruth 2:14.

Furthermore, Cook writes, “His [the author’s] defense of the syntactic character of the accent system amounts to no more than special pleading and appeal to tradition.”²⁶ The author does appeal to tradition, but so does Cook. To what else can we appeal when referring to the Hebrew Old Testament? Anyone who cites the Masoretic Text—its consonants, its vowels, and its accents—appeals to tradition, the masoretic tradition. Cook appeals to that tradition when it is convenient, and rejects it when it is not.

Casus Pendens

In footnote 172 of chapter 4, the author explains that the nominal clause in Ruth 1:14c is another example of casus pendens. Ruth 1:14c reads,

וְרוּת דִּבְקָה בָּהּ

But as for Ruth—she clung to her.

Cook writes in response, “According to such a claim, *every* clause with overt subject preceding the verb is a case of casus pendens . . . This is a preposterous and a grave

²⁵William Wickes, *A Treatise on the Accentuation of the Three So-Called Poetical Books of the Old Testament*, (1970; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 44n16. The Arabic transliteration for Job 30:29 is ‘akhan kuntu li ‘awlādi l-wuḥūshi (“As a brother I have become to the children of wild beasts”). Ps 122:2 with accents reads עֲמָדוֹת הָיָה רִגְלֵינוּ. The Arabic phrase similar to Ps 122:2 is transliterated is qā’iman kāna zaydun (“In the status of a stander Zaydun exists.”).

²⁶John A. Cook, external reader report of author’s dissertation, August 9, 2014. Italics original.

misunderstanding of casus pendens.”²⁷

According to Semitic grammarians, it is not preposterous that every clause in which a noun precedes the verb is a casus pendens construction. Farhat Ziadeh and Bayly Winder explain,

Nominal sentences have no verb by definition but only a subject and a predicate. However, it frequently happens that the predicate itself contains a verb. Thus, for instance, the sentence *The man came his father* would be a normal way of saying *The man’s father came*. In this case the word *man* is the subject of the nominal sentence, and the whole clause *came his father*, is the predicate. The clause [the predicate] itself is verbal (because it begins with a verb) and *father* is the subject of the verb. One may also say *The man came* where *man* is the subject and the clause *came* is the predicate. The clause [the predicate] is verbal with a verb and an understood subject referring back to *man*. In such nominal sentences the subject is used first for emphasis.²⁸

The last two sentences of Ziadeh’s and Winder’s quote corresponds with the description of a casus pendens clause.²⁹ Mohammad ‘Id notes that casus pendens can be “case-marked . . . as a subject (*mubtada*’) of a nominal sentence and *the following verbal clause as its predicate*.”³⁰ To label noun-before-finite-verb clauses ‘casus pendens’ is to follow traditional Semitic grammar.³¹

Ihab Griess notes that a typical casus pendens construction in Arabic, in which a noun precedes the verb, resembles the example in Genesis 34:8:

שְׁכֶם בְּנֵי חֲשֵׁקָה נָפְשׁוּ בְּבָתְּכֶם

Shechem, my son—*his* soul longs for your daughter.

²⁷John A. Cook, external reader report of author’s dissertation, August 9, 2014.

²⁸Farhat J. Ziadeh and R. Bayly Winder, *An Introduction to Modern Arabic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 23-24.

²⁹See Gen 2:14c in chap. 2.

³⁰Ihab Joseph Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons Between Classical Hebrew and Classical Arabic: A Study Based on the Translation of Mohammad ‘Id’s Arabic Grammar* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), 233 (emphasis added).

³¹See also Isaac Jerusalmi, *The Story of Joseph (Genesis 37; 39-47): A Philological Commentary*, 2nd rev. ed., Auxiliary Materials for the Study of Semitic Languages 1 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1981), 5. Cf. Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. and rev. T. Muraoka, Subsidia Biblica 14 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000), §156e n1.

In this example, שְׁכֶם בְּנִי is resumed by the 3ms pronoun on נִפְשׁ.³² However, Griess continues, the suspended noun may also be resumed by the implied pronoun of the verb, as in Genesis 37:3:

וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֶהָב אֶת־יוֹסֵף מִכָּל־בָּנָיו

Now Israel—*he* loved Joseph more than his brothers.

In Genesis 37:3, יִשְׂרָאֵל is resumed by the implied 3ms pronoun of the verb אֶהָב.³³ Isaac Jerusalmi explains that in casus pendens constructions like that in Genesis 37:3, the subject is emphasized, and at times indicates a switch in topics.³⁴

Semitic grammarians would view Cook's view of casus pendens as preposterous. Once again, Cook demonstrates the stark difference between linguistic methods and traditional Semitic grammar.

³²Cf. Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 2:§120.

³³Griess, *Syntactical Comparisons*, 234-35; Jerusalmi, *Story of Joseph*, 5.

³⁴Jerusalmi, *The Story of Joseph*, 5, 40, 42, 136.

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ABSTRACT

GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS OF VARIOUS BIBLICAL HEBREW TEXTS ACCORDING TO A TRADITIONAL SEMITIC GRAMMAR

Richard Charles McDonald, Ph.D.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014
Chair: Dr. Russell T. Fuller

Although linguistic Hebraists are dissatisfied with traditional grammatical analysis, this dissertation demonstrates that traditional Semitic grammar—primarily based on Arabic grammar and grammarians—still provides the most simple, clear, and accurate description of biblical Hebrew grammar. Chapter 1 illustrates the role of Arabic grammar in the study of Biblical Hebrew grammar. From the inception of biblical Hebrew grammatical studies, Jewish scholars drew from the insights of Arabic grammar. For centuries afterwards, Jewish and Christian Hebrew grammarians followed this method. In recent decades, grammarians have turned to modern linguistic principles, leading to a misunderstanding of various points of Biblical Hebrew syntax.

Chapters 2 and 3 analyze the syntax of select verses in Genesis 2 and 3, respectively. Barry Bandstra's Genesis commentary in the Baylor Press series serves as the main point of comparison between the traditional Semitic approach and the modern linguistic approach. Each chapter introduces typical categories and definitions of traditional Semitic grammar, and critiques Bandstra's analysis when it contradicts Semitic grammar. Both chapters discuss a few main grammatical issues; in these discussions, other linguistic Hebraists are taken into consideration. For example, chapter 2 argues that the terms 'nominative,' 'genitive,' and 'accusative,' are still valid grammatical categories

in biblical Hebrew syntax, contra Jan Kroeze. Chapter 2 also contends that the pronoun **הוא** is not a copula. Chapter 3 demonstrates that the Hebrew verb **היה** is not a copula but a real verb showing action, and that the energetic suffixes on the imperfect do, in fact, have semantic value and do show emphasis.

In chapter 4, the analysis shifts to Ruth 1. Robert Holmstedt's commentary on Ruth from the Baylor Press series serves as the point of reference. There are three main discussions in the chapter. First, the chapter outlines biblical Hebrew word order in opposition to Holmstedt's claim that the typical word order is Subject-Verb. Second, the chapter demonstrates that the masoretic accents are crucial for biblical Hebrew syntax. Third, the chapter critiques Holmstedt's theory that the particle **וְ** marks headless relative clauses. The remainder of the verses are utilized to highlight traditional analysis or to contradict Holmstedt.

Appendix 1 outlines Geoffrey Khan's use of comparative Semitics to defend his copula pronoun theory. The excursus contends that Khan reinterprets Semitic grammar through discourse analysis, and that his copula pronoun theory cannot be substantiated. Appendix 2 differentiates between the participle as a verbal adjective (the traditional Semitic definition), and John A. Cook's placement of the participle in the class of 'adjective.' This appendix maintains that the participle cannot be included in the biblical Hebrew verbal system. Appendix 3 responds to Cook's critiques regarding the author's Arabic descriptions, the analysis of the reflexive Niphal, the use of the masoretic accents, and *casus pendens*.

VITA

Richard Charles McDonald

EDUCATION

B.S. Geography, Louisiana State University, 1998

M.Div., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009

PUBLICATIONS

“The ‘Altar of the Lord Your God’ in Deuteronomy 16:21: Central Altar or Local Altars?” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 37, no. 4 (2013): 453-72.

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ORGANIZATIONS

The Evangelical Theological Society

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Professor’s Assistant, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004, 2006-2009

Garrett Fellow, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009-2014

Adjunct Faculty, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Spring 2012