

Chronicles, of which this text is a part, bear on his subject? Finally, doesn't freedom's possibility limit the effectiveness of a rationally expressed view of God and his acts and words?

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Waltke, Bruce K., and O'Connor, M. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990. xiii + 765 pp. \$37.50.

This massive book is a major achievement and advance in the study of classical (biblical) Hebrew. It is not difficult to understand for anyone who has had a good foundation in Hebrew—it is just detailed and comprehensive, an excellent reference work, as well as one worth careful reading as an intermediate or advanced grammar. The authors make good use of Semitic and other languages for the purpose of comparing forms and structures, helping readers to understand Hebrew. Their translations of Hebrew texts are most fruitful and idiomatic. They make excellent analyses, particularly concerning the verbal system; and their explication of grammar (its philosophy and categories) is outstanding. They are conversant with the recent books and articles in many languages in this field, as well as with the standard older works. Where scholars differ, they list them and state with whom they agree (e.g., at the top of p. 585 regarding the infinitive absolute). The format is open, clean, and attractive; the book is clearly organized, well marked to make it easy to use, and well bound to withstand years of usage.

The first three chapters of the introductory section—"Language and Text," "History of the Study of Hebrew Grammar," and "Basic Concepts"—are especially helpful in their compact presentation of useful background material. Most students need the review of grammatical terms found in chap. 4 as well. Chaps. 5-13 treat nouns; chaps. 14-19 cover adjectives, numerals, and pronouns; chaps. 20-28, verbal stems; and chaps. 29-40, verbal conjugations and clauses. A brief glossary and bibliography follow, then indexes of topics, authorities, Hebrew words, and scripture references.

The authors really advance the understanding of the Hebrew verbal system, long considered enigmatic, by their descriptions of what they term the "suffix (perfective) conjugation," the "prefix (non-perfective) conjugation," and the "*waw*-relative" (instead of *waw*-conversive or *waw*-consecutive) as used with each. They recognize and demonstrate the perfective aspect of the original short prefix conjugation with *waw*-relative (equivalent to the suffix conjugation without *waw*-relative or with *waw*-conjunctive) and the non-perfective aspect of the suffix conjugation with *waw*-relative (equivalent to the original long-prefix conjugation in all its usages).

Another point to be commended is the authors' careful use of nonsexist language in their text and translations. As one example among many, on p. 385, no. 15, for Gen 9:6 we read: "Whoever sheds human blood, by a human shall his blood be shed."

One can find very few typographical corrections, considering the size and complexity of this work. Examples of typographical errors are found on p. 19, where the first *t* of "Peshitta" should be *t*, and on p. 128, no. 9, where the Hebrew word for "princess" should begin with a *sin*, not a *shin*. There are other errors, but their scarcity is evidence of the careful editorial work that went into this volume.

In a few places a small further explanation might have been added. For example, in a footnote on p. 277 regarding Hebrew numbers, mention might have been made of Reckendorf's theory on numbers in Arabic in his *Syntaktischen Verhältnisse des Arabischen* (1898), which holds good for all the Semitic languages, as the phenomenon of the "chiastic concord" of the numbers must have arisen in Proto-Semitic. No better hypothesis seems to have arisen, and this one does appear plausible.

On p. 679, concerning the oath idiom, one might have expected a comparison with the oath idioms in treaties of contemporary ancient nations, in which the apodosis contains a list of the gods and goddesses called to witness the vow to do or not to do something and to apply a specific punishment in case the vow was broken. Israelite religion being monotheistic, that clause is usually omitted, but is hinted at in such passages as 2 Sam 3:35, where David says: "The Lord do such-and-such to me, and more too, if I do . . ." or "do not . . ." This omission of the result clause is what necessitates translating a positive oath as strongly negative and a negative one as strongly positive. In the NT, this Hebrew idiom underlies the Greek in Heb 3:11 and 4:3.

On p. 681, *qôl*, used in Cant 5:2 (with a disjunctive accent) for "Hark!" or "Listen!" (literally, "A voice!"), could be footnoted as occurring also in Gen 4:10; Isa 13:4; Jer 10:22; 25:36; 50:28; 51:54; and Zech 11:3 (cf. especially the RSV).

These and other minor points and suggestions that could have been made do not detract from the tremendous accomplishment of the authors. One can only admire the erudition and diligence that produced this valuable work.

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Yamauchi, Edwin. *Persia and the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1990. 528 pp. \$34.95.

This volume featuring the history of Persia from a biblical perspective is most refreshing. By taking seriously all ancient sources, including the