

Preface to the Third Edition

Changes in the Third Edition

This third edition changes *Williams' Hebrew Syntax* by clarifying it, by directing readers to other literature, and by updating the analysis.

The main goal of this edition is to **clarify** the text by expanding definitions, explaining examples, and subdividing sections. Because members of the target audience for this edition (students in a third-semester Hebrew class) often have modest vocabulary knowledge and parsing skills, most examples have been supplied with an interlinear translation as well as a smoother translation. In both translations, the words that illustrate the grammatical point are *italicised* or put in SMALL CAPS. Where deemed helpful, additional examples have been provided, and potentially confusing examples have been removed.

In this third edition, readers are also **directed to additional literature** and informed about **alternate terminology**. Wherever a point is covered in any of five other Hebrew intermediate or reference grammars (BHRG, GBHS, GKC, IBHS, and JM), footnotes point the reader to the appropriate section(s) in those grammars. Footnotes also point the reader to other relevant literature. Because the literature often differs greatly in its terminology and analysis, a cross-reference to another publication indicates that it discusses the same grammatical phenomena, but does not imply that it uses the same terminology or analyses it similarly. To reduce the size of the footnotes, the author-date citation method is used.

The grammatical analysis has also been **updated**. Most changes are made through footnotes that point the readers to alternate analyses. Occasionally, however, changes are made in the main body and noted in the footnotes.

These changes have lengthened the text, making it no longer 'an outline' (as prior editions were subtitled). For ease of reference, a separate outline is provided for free download at www.hebrewsyntax.org.

Continuity with the Second Edition

This third edition is committed to preserving Williams' grammatical analysis of the first two editions. As a result, this remains a traditional, sentence-level syntax that concentrates on the meanings of morphological categories. Although discourse-level analysis has much to offer to an understanding of issues such as verb conjugations and word order, the dust has not yet settled. Furthermore, thoroughly incorporating discourse-level analysis would likely require fundamental changes to the approach and organization of this grammar. Literature that is based on discourse-level analysis is, however, referenced regularly in the footnotes.

The outline and section numbers are unchanged, although sometimes they have been subdivided (e.g., §28a and 28b cover what was §28 in previous editions). Existing category labels have been retained, although sometimes only as alternate terminology. A table that cross-references page numbers from the second to the third edition is available for free download at www.hebrewsyntax.org.

Acknowledgements

Heartfelt thanks are due to many. Sue Cheng, Chad Hard, Jonathan Kline, Rob Morris, Jeane Noh, and the fall 2006 intermediate Hebrew class at Gordon-Conwell found errors and suggested improvements. Joel Baden and Robert Holmstedt provided pre-publication manuscripts of their work. Ani Deyirmenjjan, Siobhan McMenemy, and Richard Ratzlaff of the University of Toronto Press brought this to publication. Douglas Stuart supported this project from its inception, spent hours discussing syntax with me, proofread the manuscript, and tested it in his class. My wife Olivia took our family on vacation without me twice so that I could work. Thank you! Responsibility for changes made in this edition rests with me. Please report errors or suggestions at www.hebrewsyntax.org. לֹא לָנוּ יְהוָה. לֹא לָנוּ כִּי־לְשִׁמָּה תֵּן כְּבוֹד.

The first two editions of this textbook were dedicated to Theophile James Meek; this third edition is dedicated also to Ronald J. Williams (1917–1993). אֲשֶׁר־י אָדָם מֵצֵא חֶכְמָה וְאָדָם יִפְיֵק תְּבוּנָה. (Prov 3:13).

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3 March 2007