1. Hebrew and the Semitic languages

Hebrew is a Semitic language, attested since ca. 1100 B.C.E. as the language of the Israelites (also called Hebrews, later Jews). Ancient Hebrew died out as a spoken language in the 3rd century C.E., though it was retained in an unbroken chain for liturgical and literary purposes into the modern era. In the late 19th and 20th centuries, Hebrew was revived as a spoken language. It is used today as the national language of Israel. This chapter is devoted to ancient Hebrew, defined here as the period of ca. 1100 B.C.E. to ca. 300 C.E., with a particular emphasis on historical matters.

Semitists continue to debate the classification of the individual Semitic languages, but all agree that Hebrew falls within the Northwest Semitic (sometimes called West Semitic) group. In essence, Hebrew is but a dialect of Canaanite. Other dialects include Phoenician, Ammonite, Moabite, Edomite, etc., though Hebrew is by far the best attested.

For further details, see my companion article, “Ancient Hebrew Phonology” (Rendsburg 1997).

2. Variation within ancient Hebrew

The preceding comments imply that ancient Hebrew is a monolith, but in fact there is much variation within ancient Hebrew. Note especially the following:

A. Diachronically, we may distinguish Archaic Biblical Hebrew (ca. 1100–1000 B.C.E.), Standard Biblical Hebrew (ca. 1000–550 B.C.E.), and Late Biblical Hebrew (550–200 B.C.E.). The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls, known also as Qumran Hebrew, is a continuation of Late Biblical Hebrew, and is attested ca. 200 B.C.E.–70 C.E.

B. Ancient Hebrew had various regional dialects. Here we may distinguish Judahite Hebrew, used in Judah, whose capital is Jerusalem, versus Israeli Hebrew, an umbrella term that incorporates a variety of sub-dialects (Samarian, Galilean, Gileadite, etc.).

C. Ancient Hebrew also was characterized by diglossia. The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls are written in the literary standard. But departures

Author's Note: I am indebted to Gregg Serene and Clinton Moyer for their careful reading of an earlier draft of this article and for their corrections and suggestions that have been incorporated into this final version.
from the classical norm appear in the texts, and these phenomena serve as
evidence for the spoken or colloquial variety of ancient Hebrew. In late an-
tiquity, the colloquial dialect was utilized to record texts such as the
Mishna and related works, so that the term Mishnaic Hebrew is utilized for
the main written sources of the 3rd century C.E.

D. In addition to the above varieties of Hebrew attested in Jewish
sources, we should mention Samaritan Hebrew, used by the Samaritans, an
offshoot of the Jews attested since about the 5th century B.C.E., centered
around Shechem in the central hill country of Israel.

In presenting the morphology of ancient Hebrew, in the main I refer to
Standard Judahite literary Hebrew, i.e., the literary variety used in Judah
to 1000–550 B.C.E. But where the data permit us to witness distinct usages
in other varieties of ancient Hebrew, these will be noted. 1 Extremely rare
morphological variants are not discussed herein; instead, the standard ref-
cence grammars should be consulted.

Again, the reader is asked to consult the companion article for further
details (Rendsburg 1997).

In what follows, note the following abbreviations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BH</td>
<td>Biblical Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABH</td>
<td>Archaic Biblical Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBH</td>
<td>Standard Biblical Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBH</td>
<td>Late Biblical Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QH</td>
<td>Qumran Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSS</td>
<td>Dead Sea Scrolls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JH</td>
<td>Judahite Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IH</td>
<td>Israeli Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MH</td>
<td>Mishnaic Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SH</td>
<td>Samaritan Hebrew</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Pronouns

3.1. Personal pronouns

Like all Semitic languages, Hebrew has two sets of pronouns: free or inde-
pendent forms, and bound or suffixed forms. The former are used for the
grammatical subject, e.g., ‘lînî YHWH ‘I am Yahweh’. The latter are
suffixed to verbs as direct objects (e.g., hikkâhû ‘he hit him’), to nouns
to indicate possession (e.g., bânô his son), to prepositions as indirect
objects or as objects of the preposition (e.g., lô ‘to him’), and to various
adverbials (e.g., lôbô ‘he alone’).

3.1.1 Independent personal pronouns

The paradigm of the standard forms in BH is as follows:

1. We shall not, however, deal with Samaritan Hebrew in this article, except in one in-
stance for the sake of comparison. For a full description of Samaritan Hebrew, see Ben-
Hayyim 2000.

2. Throughout this article, for the sake of ease of production, I generally have dis-
ensed with the vowel signs within the Hebrew text; the Hebraist will know how to read
the material without the vowels. The vowels are given in my transliteration of the Hebrew
forms, but note that I have used the standard system employed by Hebraists, and not the
IPA system (this is true for the consonants as well as the vowels).
General comments:

- Hebrew is most unusual (not only within Semitic, but within languages of the world in general) in having two 1st common singular independent pronouns. In standard BH narrative prose, one can detect syntactic or stylistic criteria that determined which form was to be used (see Revell 1995). From a diachronic perspective, of the two forms, 'ynôkî is considered by most scholars to be the older; eventually it was replaced by 'ynî. Indeed, in the later biblical books and in the DSS, 'ynî predominates, and it is the only form attested in MH.

- A shorter form of the 1st common plural form occurs as 'ânû, apparently modeled after the singular form 'ânî. This form is attested once in the Ketiv (that is, the written form of the text) in the Bible in Jer 42:6, though the Qeri (that is, the manner in which the text is read, based on the oral reading tradition) uses the standard form 'anî. This shorter form predominates in QH and is the only form attested in MH.

- All of the 2nd person forms, both singular and plural, reflect the assimilation of -n—attested in other Semitic languages and reconstructed for proto-Semitic—to the following t. Thus, for example, proto-Semitic 2nd masculine singular 'anta (as in Arabic and Ge’ez) > 'attâh.

- The 2nd feminine singular 'att derives from older 'attî, attested in the Bible 7× in the Ketiv, especially in IH texts. We see here the force of morphological economy at work, since the manner of distinguishing the masculine and the feminine in proto-Semitic—the former with -a and the latter with -i—was deemed superfluous. One of the forms could do without the distinguishing final syllable; thus it was dropped in the feminine form (though vestiges remain, as indicated). Note that in Aramaic the opposite occurred, with the masculine -a dropping to create the form 'att for the masculine. MH utilizes the form 'att for the masculine, presumably under Aramaic influence.

- QH uses a longer form for the 2nd masculine plural, namely, 'attêmûh.3

- The Torah (or Pentateuch) regularly uses 'î and 'î to form a full form identical with the 3rd masculine singular, though it is read in the Qeri as hi' in line with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st common</td>
<td>'ânî; 'ânôkî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd masculine</td>
<td>'attâh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd feminine</td>
<td>'att</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd masculine</td>
<td>hû</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd feminine</td>
<td>hi'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Note that Qumran Hebrew does not include a Masorah or oral reading tradition indicating the pronunciation of the vowels. In vocalizing Qumran Hebrew herein, I simply have transferred the Masoretic system used in the Bible to the Dead Sea Scrolls texts, with all due recognition of the hazards inherent in such a practice.
the 3rd feminine singular form איה attested elsewhere. From the evidence of the Ketiv we postulate an original epicene form הוה. Later Hebrew speakers distinguished the two genders as they came in more regular contact with the neighboring dialects in Canaan (see Rendsburg 1982b).

• QH attests to the forms התא and התא for the 3rd singular forms, masculine and feminine respectively. I would vocalize these as הוה and היוה (and explain the spelling with א as an influence from the orthographic tradition represented by BH). These forms recall the proto-Semitic forms, attested in Ugaritic hw/huwa/ and hy/hiya/, Arabic huwa and hiya, etc. These DSS forms serve as an important reminder as to how variegated ancient Hebrew actually was. Moreover, notwithstanding what was stated above about the relationship between QH and LBH (2), we also must reckon with the former retaining some very archaic forms and/or reflecting a totally independent tradition from that presented by BH (see Morag 1988).

• In MH, the longer forms of the 2nd and 3rd plural pronouns do not occur. Instead, one encounters only the shorter forms µתת and µהן.

• In colloquial Hebrew, gender neutralization occurs in the 2nd plural and 3rd plural forms, thus µת and µה appear for the feminine in various instances in the Bible. This gender neutralization is visible especially in MH, though there the forms with nun, that is, µת and µה, occur more frequently, being used for both masculine and feminine. The usage of the forms with nun is most likely due to Aramaic influence.

• Although I have not included the forms in the chart, note that BH attests to a vestigial use of common dual pronouns when the antecedent is 'two' of something (see Rendsburg 1982a).

### 3.1.2. Suffixed personal pronouns

The paradigm of the standard forms in BH is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st common</td>
<td>µ- -י; µ- -ני</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd masculine</td>
<td>µ- -ק</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd feminine</td>
<td>µ- -ק</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd masculine</td>
<td>µה- -ח; µ- -וא; µ- -מ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd feminine</td>
<td>µה- -ח; µ- -מ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General comments:

• The two 1st common singular forms are distributed in the following manner: µ- -י is suffixed to nouns and certain prepositions; µ- -ני is suffixed to verbs and certain prepositions.

• The two 2nd feminine singular forms, the two 3rd masculine plural forms, and the two 3rd feminine plural forms are phonetic variants originating from the same proto-forms.
• By contrast, the 3rd masculine singular forms and the 3rd feminine singular forms contain true allomorphs. One set has forms with h, viz., masculine ו- -ה; י - -ו; י - -א (the latter two having evolved through elision of /h/); and feminine ו - -א, -הא. The other set has forms with n, viz., masculine ו - -א; feminine ו - -א. Set rules govern which of the forms, those with h or those with n, are utilized. Most striking is the fact that these allomorphs appear in some South Ethiopian languages as well, demonstrating that Hebrew inherited these forms from protosemitic (see Hetzron 1969).

• In QH, alongside the standard 2nd masculine plural and 3rd masculine plural appear the longer forms מה <-KMH>, and ממה <-HMH>, perhaps pronounced -kimma and -himma, respectively. Similar forms are attested in SH.

• The same gender neutralization noted above in colloquial Hebrew for the independent 2nd plural and 3rd plural forms occurs with the pronominal suffixes as well, with רכ - -ken and רכ - -hen (also רכ - -ן where appropriate) appearing for the feminine in various instances in the Bible. Again, this gender neutralization is visible especially in MH, though once more the forms with nun predominate; that is, רכ - -ken and רכ - -hen (also רכ - -ן where appropriate) are used for both masculine and feminine.

• As with the independent pronouns above, so with the pronominal suffixes here: I have not included the forms in the chart, but note that BH attests to a vestigial use of common dual pronouns when the antecedent is ‘two’ of something (see Rendsburg 1982a).

### 3.2. Demonstrative pronouns

The main set of Hebrew demonstrative pronouns, used for near deixis, distinguishes gender in the singular, but not in the plural. Accordingly, there are three forms: masculine singular ו-ז ‘this’, feminine singular והז ‘this’, common plural והז ‘these’, attested in BH and QH.  

A second feminine singular form, spelled either ו-ז or ו-ז ‘this’ occurs sporadically in the Bible and regularly in MH. This form is apparently the older of the two feminine singular forms; with the addition of the feminine suffix -א the newer form והז ‘these’ was created (with the ש- serving as vowel letter in the orthographic convention). Based on both comparative evidence (cf. Phoenician ז<Z>) and the distribution of the form in the Bible (see 2 Kings 6:19, Hosea 7:16), one may conclude that והז was retained especially in northern Israel.

MH attests to another common plural form, והז ‘these’. The form is most likely an analogical creation, the ending ג having been imported from the verbal system, where it serves to mark the plural in various forms.

The 3rd person independent pronouns are used as far demonstratives, that is, the equivalent of English ‘that’ and ‘those’. Thus, for example,
An entirely different set of pronouns is also attested, sporadically in BH, more commonly in MH, in all likelihood as colloquialisms: masculine singular hallézh, feminine singular hallézi, both of which can be shortened to halléz and in MH further are shortened to hallâh. The plural form of this set is attested only in MH: hallâlû. Nevertheless, this set must be quite old, as the forms are closely aligned with the Arabic determinative-relative pronoun series 'allaqî (masculine singular), etc.

### 3.3. Relative pronouns

ABH attests to two related relative markers ze and zu, more or less equivalent to ‘the one of’. At one time, these forms may have been distinguished by case (the former as genitive, the latter as nominative), but in the few actual occurrences of these forms no such distinction can be detected. These relatives clearly are related to the demonstrative pronouns (see above, 3.2).

SBH and QH utilize the indeclinable form še ‘that, which’ for the relative pronoun. Its etymological meaning is ‘place’, as determined by cognates in Akkadian and Aramaic.

A second form attested in the Bible is the prefixed form -še ‘that, which’, also indeclinable (though at one time it most likely was declined for case, as suggested by the Old Akkadian cognate and by the occasional alternate pronunciation ša in several biblical occurrences). From its distribution in the Bible, we may conclude that this form was characteristic of IH at first; later it penetrated to Judah and became commonly used in LBH. It occurs occasionally in QH and regularly in MH.

### 3.4. Interrogative pronouns

BH morphology includes two indeclinable interrogative pronouns: hì mâ ‘what’ for inanimate subjects, and rì mî ‘who’ for animate subjects.

### 3.5. Definite article

The definite article is hàn- (according to some scholars,зал-), derived from an old demonstrative element. It is prefixed to the noun. However, since vowelless nun <N> regularly assimilates to the following consonant, the actual form hàn- is nowhere directly attested. Accordingly, the resulting forms show gemination in the following consonant, e.g., *hadelet > halléz ‘the door.’ In cases where a laryngeal, pharyngeal, or /r/ follows, in which gemination cannot occur (see Rendsburg 1997: 70, 72), typically the quantity or quality of the vowel is affected, e.g., *hanâm > hââm ‘the people.’ When a uniconsonantal preposition (on which see below 6.2) precedes the definite article, the /h/ is elided, thus, e.g., with the preposition la- ‘to,’ *lohammayim > lamayim ‘to the water.’

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5. Thus, for example, it occurs at the beginning of the halléz forms discussed above at 3.2, with the /n/ assimilated.
4. Nouns

4.1. Gender, number, case

Nouns in Hebrew are distinguished for gender (masculine and feminine) and number (singular and plural, and in some instances dual). The old Semitic case system has broken down.

Masculine singular nouns are unmarked, e.g., רְמֹם pār ‘bull’. Feminine singular nouns typically are marked by one of two endings: -אֹ (<-at) or -ת. As noted, the former ending derives from an earlier form -at, retained in a few scattered nouns in the Bible. For the latter ending, because Hebrew phonology disallows consonant clusters at the end of a word, the suffixed -ת is always preceded by an anaptyctic vowel. Most feminine nouns in the Hebrew lexis use only one of the two endings, e.g., רְמֹהֵה rpָּהֵה ‘cow’ (with the first ending), רְמֹהֵה qatōret ‘incense’ (with the second ending, with -א as anaptyctic vowel). But in many cases the two endings co-exist in free variation with no apparent difference in meaning, e.g., רְמֹהֵה גָּדוֹר gosteret (Ezekiel 42:12 only), both meaning ‘wall, hedge’. Note, however, that many feminine singular nouns, especially those belonging to the basic vocabulary, also are unmarked, e.g., רְמֹה וָיַשׁ ‘earth’, רְמֹה שָׁמֶש ‘sun’, רְמֹה יָדֵד ‘tent-peg’, etc.

Most masculine plural nouns take the ending רְמֹ-יִנְיִים, e.g., רְמֹיִנְיִים pārim ‘bulls’; most feminine plural nouns take the ending רְמֹ-יִוְת, e.g., רְמֹיִוְת pārōt ‘cows’. But there are many exceptions to this rule, e.g., רְמֹה אֹבְּת abōt ‘fathers’, which naturally is masculine, and רְמֹה נָשִׁים nāsim ‘women’, which naturally is feminine. Apparently, the two plural endings originally designated classes of nouns, one of which came to be identified mainly with the masculine and one of which came to be identified mainly with the feminine. There is an absolute correspondence of these gendered suffixes when attached to adjectives; thus, for example, רְמֹה נָשִׁים נָשִׁים יָפֹת ‘beautiful women’ (Job 42:15).

The dual ending רְמֹ-יִוְי is suffixed to nouns standing for items that naturally occur in pairs, especially body parts, e.g., רְמֹי יָדְיִוְי yādyim ‘hands’ (singular רְמֹי יָד yād ‘hand’), and to nouns used for measurements of time, distance, etc., e.g., רְמֹה יָומָי yōmayim ‘two days’ (singular רְמֹה יָום yōm ‘day’).

We may also note that adjectives in Hebrew behave like nouns, that is, they too are marked for gender and number (see above for an example).

4.2. Definite and indefinite

As intimated above (see 3.5), the prefixed definite article ha- (with gemination of the first consonant in the noun, except where Hebrew phonological rules prohibit the gemination) indicates definiteness. There is no indefinite article, so that, for example, רְמֹי can mean either simply ‘hand’ or ‘a hand’. Sporadically in the Bible, especially in IH material, and more regularly in MH, the numeral ‘1’, masc. רְמֹו, fem. רְמֹה ahat (see below 7), serves as the indefinite article, thus, e.g., רְמֹה אַהֲתִים oi‘ehād, either ‘one man’ or ‘a man’, depending on the context.
4.3. Construct phrase

A very common usage in Hebrew is the construct phrase, in which two nouns are adjoined to express a genitive relationship, e.g., יִשְׂרָאֵל ‘Israel’ (used as a synonym, apparently, of נָבִי ‘prophet’). The first of the nouns is called by the Latin term nomen regens and the second is called the nomen rectum. Often the specific form of the nomen regens changes, as reflected in the slight alteration of יָד ‘hand’ to יָד in the expression יָד הַמֶּלֶךְ yad hammelek ‘the hand of the king’ (vowel shortening). More significant is the retention of the ending -at on feminine singular nouns in construct (that is, the usual shift to -a[ ] before vowels [see above 4.1] does not occur); thus, for example, מַלְכָּה Malka ‘queen’ but מַלְכַּת שֶׁבָּה Malkat Sheba ‘queen of Sheba’.

When a construct phrase is definite, the second element receives the definite article, thus, e.g., to use the above illustration once more, יָד הַמֶּלֶךְ yad hammelek ‘the hand of the king’.

When the construct phrase expresses the plural, it is the first element that appears in the plural form, though typically in modified form. Thus, for example, masculine plural nouns do not end in -im in the construct (cf. 4.1), but rather in -ay (derived from the old dual oblique ending -ay, and then imported for use with the masculine plural as well), e.g., בָּנָה יִשְׁרָאֵל bane israel ‘sons of Israel’. Feminine plural nouns in construct end in -at, like the non-construct form (see 4.1), but vowel reduction typically occurs in the first syllable, e.g., בָּנָות bannot ‘daughters’, but בָּנָה סְבוֹת baneis sotot ‘daughters of the king’ = ‘princesses’.

Oftentimes the construct phrase is used where other languages, such as English, might use the combination of noun plus modifier, thus, for example, הר הָאֹגֶדֶס har haqodesh, ‘the mountain of holiness’, the functional equivalent of ‘the holy mountain’.

When a construct phrase is modified by a possessive pronoun, the nominal element is attached to the nomen rectum, e.g., יַה הָמֹשׁ יָרָה יָד הַמֶּלֶךְ יַה Yeh Yadda melekh ‘mountain of his holiness’ = ‘his holy mountain’.

4.4. Noun patterns

Nouns appear in Hebrew, as in all the Semitic languages, in a variety of set patterns. The most basic vocabulary items (body parts, etc.) have two consonants, e.g., יָד ‘hand’, לֵב ‘heart’, שֵׁן ‘tooth’, קֹל ‘voice’, יִשָּׁר ‘man’, etc. A few nouns have only one consonant, e.g., פֶּה ‘mouth’, כָּל ‘sheep’.

Most nouns, however, appear in patterns that include three root letters. The basic patterns have no afformatives (prefixed or suffixed). Common patterns of this ilk include:

- CábáC, e.g., בָּעָר ‘cattle’, הֵר ‘mountain’, דָּבָר ‘word, thing’
- CábáC, e.g., יָאָד ‘tent-peg’, כָּבָד ‘liver’
- CábáC, e.g., גֵּפֶן ‘vine’, מלך ‘king’

Some patterns carry semantic weight, for example:
• CaCC& is used to denote professions, e.g., тabbâh ‘cook, butcher’,
  qaššat ‘archer, Bowman’
• CiCC& is used to denote bodily defects, e.g., ḍal lîlêm ‘dumb person
  (one unable to speak)’, ḏàg gîbbêm ‘hunchback’

More complex patterns are created by the use of preformatives and suffor-
matives. Some of these patterns are associated with specific semantic do-
 mains as well.

• For example, the related patterns CaCCâCeCet and CaCCâCat/CâCat,
feminine in gender as seen through the presence of the suffixed t (pre-
 ceded by the anaptyctic vowel, either -e- or -a-), connote diseases, e.g.,
  wwy wwelet ‘blindness’, lîlêm ‘wart’, yallepet ‘ringworm’,
  sapphat ‘rash’, etc.
• Or as another illustration, many nouns with prefixed -mV-
denote a
  place or a location, e.g., mibbûr ‘fortress’, migdûl ‘tower’,
  miqdûl ‘holy place, sanctuary’, mizbûh ‘altar’, mûlôn ‘lodging
  place’, etc.

The number of such noun patterns is extensive; only a sampling has been
presented here (for more detailed information see the standard reference
grammars).

5. Verbs

5.1. General introduction

The vast majority of verbs in Biblical Hebrew are built from a lexical root
consisting of three consonants, to which are added prefixes and suffixes in-
dicating person, number, and gender. Many of the most basic verbal roots
show clear indications of a biconsonantal origin, though over time they
have been accommodated to the triconsonantal norm. Such verbs include
n-l-n ‘give’, l-q-h ‘take’, ḏàg b-w- ‘come’, etc. The verb appears in two
conjugations, known as the suffix conjugation (SC) and the prefix conju-
gation (PC). As these terms indicate, the former is constructed by adding
suffixes to the verbal root, while the latter is constructed by adding prefixes
to the verbal root (though in some forms prefixes and suffixes are added).

These verbal roots, in turn, may appear in various verbal patterns ex-
pressing different meanings. For example, the root l-m-d means ‘learn’
in the basic pattern, known as Qal or Pa’al, but ‘teach’ in a derived pattern
known as the Pi’el (see below 5.7 for details).

6. I hasten to add that ‘leprosy’ is but a conventional rendering of רזע רזע sān‘at. Epi-
demiologists inform us that true leprosy—Hanson’s disease—was unknown in the ancient
Near East. The Hebrew term most likely refers to a variety of skin ailments.

7. Most BH grammars refer to the SC as the ‘perfect’ and to the PC as the ‘imperfect’.
These designations imply that the BH verbal system is aspectual and not tensed. I prefer to
see tense operative in the BH verbal system, but until this hotly debated question is
settled, it seems preferable to use the designations SC and PC, which describe the form
of the verb, regardless of the actual usage of the individual conjugations.
5.2. Suffix conjugation

The following chart presents the data for the SC of the basic stem or Qal stem, using the root שָׁמַר ‘guard, watch’ in the paradigm. Since the SC often indicates the past tense, I have glossed the individual forms accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st com.</td>
<td>שָׁמַר</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd masc.</td>
<td>שָׁמַר</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd fem.</td>
<td>שָׁמַר</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd masc.</td>
<td>שָׁמַר</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd fem.</td>
<td>שָׁמַר</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the 3rd masculine singular has no suffixes attached to it, thus it is simply שָׁמַר ‘he guarded’. This form often is used as the citation form in dictionaries, etc.

From the diachronic perspective, employing our knowledge of comparative Semitic, we can make the following comments. The original 1st common singular form most likely was -tû, whereas the original 2nd feminine singular form was -tî, a few vestiges of which still may be found in the Bible (see, for example, qamtî ‘you arose’, occurring twice in Judges 5:7). On the analogy of the 1st common singular pronoun forms (see above 3.1.1 and 3.1.2), which end in -i, the -tû suffix shifted to -tî. This created an ambiguity, since -tî now represented both 1st common singular and 2nd feminine singular. The latter accordingly shifted to -t, especially in light of the rule of morphological economy, since both 2nd singular forms do not require a final vowel to distinguish them (see above 3.1.1 regarding the independent pronoun).

In addition, the original 3rd feminine singular suffix was -at, while the original 3rd feminine plural suffix was -ah. The former shifted to -ah due to a phonological rule in Hebrew, which once more resulted in an ambiguity, since both the 3rd feminine and 3rd plural forms were now the same. The situation was resolved when the 3rd masculine plural form ending in -û came to serve for the feminine as well. Accordingly, שָׁמַר ‘they guarded’ became an epicene form. Note, however, that vestiges of both of the earlier forms appear in the Bible. The 3rd feminine singular suffix -at (also vocalized as -āt) occurs sporadically in IH, especially with the weak verbs of the IIIy class (see below 5.6). Furthermore, this is the standard form in MH, e.g., הָיָה hāyāh ‘she was’ (the SBH form is הָיָה hāyot ‘she was’). Similarly, the old 3rd feminine plural suffix -ah occurs sporadically in the Bible, especially in the Ketiv, as in 1 Kings 22:49 נִשְׁבָּרָה nišbrāh ‘the ships broke’, with the Qeri reading the SBH 3rd feminine plural SC form nišbrāh (note the ending -ā).

A number of points made above concerning the personal pronouns (3.1.1) are relevant here as well.

• As noted above, the case of the two 2nd singular SC forms parallels the situation of the two 2nd singular independent pronoun forms discussed...
above (3.1.1). That is to say, the masculine form ends in -tā, and the feminine form ends simply in -t, without a vowel following, a distinction that suffices for distinguishing gender.

• QH uses a longer form for the 2nd masculine plural, namely, the suffix הַמְתַּא *<-TMH> attached to the root, parallel to the QH 2nd masculine plural independent pronoun הָתִּמְתַּא *<TNH>, but examples are wanting in the DSS corpus.

• In colloquial Hebrew, gender neutralization occurs in the 2nd plural forms (as noted, it occurs in the 3rd plural forms throughout ancient Hebrew), thus the suffix נ-tem appears for the feminine in various instances in the Bible. This gender neutralization is visible especially in MH, though here it is the form with nun, that is, נ-ten, which predominates, being used for both masculine and feminine. The usage of the form with nun is most likely due to Aramaic influence (as was noted above with the pronoun forms; see 3.1).

• Dual forms occur vestigially with the SC verbs as well, though once more I have not included them in the paradigm (see Rendsburg 1982a).

5.3. Prefix conjugation

The following chart presents the data for the PC of the basic stem or Qal stem, once more using the root שָׂמַר 'guard, watch' in the paradigm. The PC is used in a variety of settings in BH prose and poetry; for simplicity’s sake, I have glossed the individual forms with the present tense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st com.</td>
<td>רְמַו</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd masc.</td>
<td>תִּפְרַוי</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd fem.</td>
<td>תִּפְרַוי</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd masc.</td>
<td>יְפִרַר</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd fem.</td>
<td>תִּפְרַר</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the 2nd masculine singular and 3rd feminine singular forms are identical. This ambiguity is found in proto-Semitic as well.

Three points may be noted:

• The 3rd feminine plural form was originally פְּרַוי pronoun יְפִרַר 'they guard', as may be determined from the comparative Semitic evidence, of which three examples remain in the Bible (Genesis 30:36, 1 Samuel 6:12; Daniel 8:22). Otherwise, the 2nd feminine plural form פְּרַוי הָתִּמְתַּא tišmōnah was imported, taking over the function of the 3rd person as well as the 2nd person.

• In colloquial Hebrew, as we have seen above with the personal pronouns (3.1.1) and the SC verb (5.2), gender neutralization occurs in the 2nd and 3rd plural, with הָתִּמְתַּא and פְּרַוי הָתִּמְתַּא יְפִרַר serving respectively for both masculine and feminine. This is seen most clearly in MH, in which the הָתִּמְתַּא tišmōnah form never occurs.
• As with the SC verbs, so with the PC verbs as well: the Bible attests to a vestigial use of dual forms, though I have not presented the data in the paradigm (see Rendsburg 1982a).

5.4. Prefix conjugation modal forms

Hebrew also includes certain modal forms distinguished by slight changes in the above PC paradigm forms.

The first person utilizes cohortative or coaxing forms with the addition of a suffixed ה- או-ה, thus, הדוהא ‘esmarah ‘let me guard’, ‘may I guard’, ‘I wish to guard’, etc., and הנשומרא ‘nismaroh ‘let us guard, ‘may we guard’, ‘we wish to guard’, etc.

The third person utilizes a special jussive form created by shortening the standard PC, but only where such forms allow for shortening. Such instances are limited to the Qal of certain weak verbs (see below 5.6), e.g., הנ ג également ‘may it be swept away’ (Job 20:28), shortened from the standard PC form הנ גל יגל ‘he/it is exiled/swept away’, and to the Hiph’il (see below 5.7), e.g., יקר ‘may he cut off’ (Psalms 12:4), shortened from the standard PC form יקר ‘he cuts off’. These forms also may be preceded by the negative particle לא ‘al ‘not’ to express a negative desire, e.g., לא ‘al ויהי ‘may (our hand) not be (upon him)’ (Genesis 37:27); cf. the standard PC form לא לוי ‘she/it is not’.

The corresponding second person jussive forms are used for negative commands after the particle לא ‘al ‘not’, e.g., לא ‘הלט ‘do not destroy’ (Deuteronomy 9:26), with the verbal form shortened from the standard PC form ‘הלט ‘you destroy’.

These modal forms are characteristic of SBH, the system begins to deteriorate in LBH and QH (that is, there is confusion between the modal forms and the standard PC forms), and the modal forms all but disappear in MH.

5.5. Imperative

Imperative forms occur in the 2nd person, and have the same pattern as the 2nd person PC forms, minus the prefixed ה- טו-ו, with necessary vowel readjustment. The paradigm for the Qal is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>masc</td>
<td>שמר</td>
<td>שמר</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fem</td>
<td>שמר</td>
<td>שמר</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As was the case with the PC, also in the imperative: gender neutralization arises in colloquial Hebrew in the plural, so that שלמר comes to serve for both the masculine and the feminine. In MH the form שלמר does not occur.

5.6. Verbal roots

As noted above (5.1), most verbs in Hebrew, as in all of Semitic, are built from roots comprised of three consonants. An example is the verb that we have used in the paradigms above, שלמר ‘guard, watch’.
Hebrew also includes a large number of weak verbs, in which one of the three root letters does not appear in all of the various individual forms. As noted above (5.1), many of these verbs are among the most basic vocabulary items of the language, suggesting biconsonantal origins; the same has been noted in the other Semitic languages.

The weak patterns are as follows:

1. 1st root letter nun <N>, e.g., נָס n-s-º ‘travel’, abbreviated as I

2. 1st root letter yod <Y>, e.g., יָס y-s-b ‘sit, dwell’, abbreviated as I

3. 2nd root letter yod <Y>, e.g., יָס y-s-y-s ‘sing’, abbreviated as II

4. 2nd root letter waw <W>, e.g., וָס w-s-w ‘arise’, abbreviated as II

5. 3rd root letter yod <Y> (commonly but incorrectly called 3rd root letter he <H>), e.g., יָב h-y-s ‘cry’, abbreviated as III

6. Geminate verbs, in which the 2nd and 3rd root letter is the same consonant, e.g., כָּב s-b-b ‘go around’, abbreviated as Ilgem. In verbs of this class, the 2nd and 3rd root consonant usually appears as a single long (geminated) consonant, e.g., the plural imperative form כָּב s-b-bº ‘they went around’.

7. Wholly anomalous verbs, such as לַמֵּד l-m-d ‘go’, with he <H> as the first root letter but which patterns as if it were a ly verb; and לַמֵּד l-m-d ‘take’, with lamed <L> as the first root letter but which patterns as if it were a ln verb.

The above descriptions of these weak verbs serve for SBH. Note the following developments in other varieties of ancient Hebrew.

a. Ily and Ilw verbs typically do not appear in the traditional Pi’el and Hitpa’el conjugations (for these designations, see below 5.7). The reason for this is that these conjugations require the gemination of the second root letter, which formally does not exist in verbs such as

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דְּרֵשׁ שֵׁגְ-רֵי ‘sing’ and מֵשׁ שֵׁגְ-רֵי q-w-m ‘arise’. In isolated cases in L BH and regularly in MH, however, these two verb classes do generate forms in the פֶּל and הֶנְפֶּל conjugations. In such cases the consonant יָד <Y> serves as the middle root letter (not only for the 11y class, but also for 11w class). An especially productive root in this regard is מְשָר q-y-m ‘establish’, derived from the previously cited root מְשׁ שֵׁגְ-רֵי q-w-m ‘arise’, with such specific forms as מְשׁ שֵׁגְ-רֵי q-y-m ‘he established’ (= the 3rd masculine singular SC פֶּל form) and מְשׁ שֵׁגְ-רֵי yitqayyəm ‘it must be confirmed’ (= the 3rd masculine singular PC הֶנְפֶּל form).

b. As noted above (5.2), the 3rd feminine singular SC form of the 11y class retains the original ending -אֲלֵי/אֲלָה sporadically in the Bible, especially in IH, and this form appears as the standard one in MH, e.g., הָיִית ‘she was’ (= the 3rd feminine singular SC Qal form).

c. In colloquial Hebrew in ancient times, verbs with third root letter שָׁלֵשׁ <ג>, abbreviated as 311, that is, with glottal stop as the third root consonant, merged with 11y verbs. This can be seen in several dozen cases in the Bible, and regularly in MH. Thus, for example, instead of SBH זָאֱלֲקָע qarənu ‘we read’ (= the 1st common plural SC form), in MH one encounters זָאֱלֲקָע qərēnu. The same phenomenon is known in colloquial Arabic, suggesting a parallel development in spoken Semitic languages (Rendsburg 1991).

5.7. Verbal patterns

The Hebrew verb appears in a variety of set patterns, known as בִּינְיָנִים, literally ‘constructions’, in Hebrew grammatical terminology. We have alluded to these patterns several times above. The names of the בִּינְיָנִים derive from the 3rd masculine singular SC form of the specific pattern, with the root פֶּל p-1 ‘do, make’ serving in the paradigm (as per Hebrew and ultimately Arabic grammatological tradition reaching back to the Middle Ages). There are seven main בִּינְיָנִים, as follows:

1. Pa-al, also known as the Qal, literally ‘light, simple’, serving as the most basic verbal pattern in the language.
2. Niph-al, a form that originally had reflexive meaning, but which came to be used as the passive of the Qal. Its main characteristic is the letter נ<נ prefixed to the root, visible in the SC, assimilated to the first root consonant in the PC.
3. Pefal, a second basic verbal pattern, often with a semantic nuance different from the corresponding Pa-al or Qal form, including, for example, factitive and denominative functions. Its main characteristic is the gemination or lengthening of the middle root letter.
4. Pu-al, the passive of the Pefal. It also bears the gemination or lengthening of the middle root letter, but has a characteristic u-vowel in the first syllable to mark the passive.
5. Hiph-il, the causative stem. Its main characteristic is the letter ה<ה prefixed to the root, visible in the SC, elided between two vowels in the PC.
6. Hoph'al or Huph'al, the passive of the Hiph'il. It bears the same traits as the Hiph'il, except that it has a rounded vowel, either o or u, to mark the passive voice.

7. Hitpa'el, the reflexive stem, serving especially as the reflexive of verbs in the Pi'el. Its two main characteristics are (a) the prefix hit-, visible in the SC, though the he <H> is elided in the PC, and (b) the gemination or lengthening of the middle root letter, as with the Pi'el and Pu'al.

Some verbal roots are attested in only one verbal pattern, for example, the Qal/Pa'al or the Pi'el. Most verbal roots, however, are attested in several verbal patterns. An example of a verbal root that is attested in six binyanim in the Bible is the root שָׁפָה q-d-s 'be holy'. The only verbal pattern in which this root fails to appear in BH is the Hoph'al/Huph'al; but since this pattern serves as the passive of the Hiph'il, one can safely assume that such a form existed in the Hebrew of biblical times, its absence from the corpus notwithstanding. Indeed, the Hoph'al/Huph'al of the root שָׁפָה q-d-s 'be holy' does occur in MH texts. Note the following meanings of the seven verbal patterns of this root, which can serve to illustrate the morphological and semantic distinctions indicated in the above list. The cited forms are the 3rd masculine singular SC ones:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pa'al</td>
<td>שָׁפָה qādaš</td>
<td>'be holy, be set apart'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niph'al</td>
<td>שֹׁפְּה niqdaš</td>
<td>'reveal oneself as holy'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pi'el</td>
<td>שָׁפָה qiddēš</td>
<td>'sanctify, set apart as sacred'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pu'al</td>
<td>שָׁפָה qiddaš</td>
<td>'be sanctified'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiph'il</td>
<td>שֹׁפְּה hiqdiš</td>
<td>'cause something to be holy' = 'devote, consecrate'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huph'al</td>
<td>שֹׁפְּה huqdaš</td>
<td>'be devoted, be consecrated'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hitpa'el</td>
<td>שֹׁפְּה hitqaddēš</td>
<td>'sanctify oneself, consecrate oneself'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Admittedly it often is hard to distinguish the meanings of the Pi'el and the Hiph'il of this root, notwithstanding the different English definitions presented above.

In MH one may note the following developments. The Pu'al pattern virtually disappeared, while the Hitpa'el SC was replaced in the main by a new pattern called the Nitpa'el. An example of the latter usage is הַקִּבְּרָה nittqabbālh kottubbātāh 'her wedding-contract was received', with the verb in the Nitpa'el 3rd feminine singular SC (Mishna Ketubbot 11:4).

5.8. Wayyiqtol and wawqatal forms

The term wayyiqtol refers to a specific form of the Hebrew verb that serves as the standard narrative tense to relate action that occurred in the past. It is built from the PC form, as may be seen from the inclusion of yiqtol in wayyiqtol, with the addition of the particle wa- (otherwise this is the conjunction ‘and’) and the gemination or lengthening of the pronoun marker (in this case the 3rd masculine singular -y-, thus -yy-). The origin of this form is debated by scholars, but a close parallel with the Egyptian iy wsd-n-f form used to narrate past action has been noted (Young 1953). If this relationship is accepted, then most likely the gemination or length-
ening of the pronoun marker is the result of a nun <N> that has assimilated to the following consonant. Note that in Egyptian n serves to mark the past tense, as, for example, in the simple past form sdm-n-f and in the previously cited iw sdm-n-f form.

The wayyiqtol form is especially prominent in prose texts, in which most storytelling in the Bible is narrated (poetry is reserved for other genres, such as hymns, laments, prophecy, proverbs, etc.). Thus, for example, note the following passage, one of thousands in the Bible that could be presented: wayyiktôh möšèh 'et hattôra'h hazzô't '(and) Moses wrote this Torah’ (Deuteronomy 31:9).

The wqatal form serves the opposite function: it refers to future time, especially a future action subsequent to another future action. A sample usage is umâd'yân mibbêt YHWH yêse' wohišqâh ‘and a spring from the house of Yahweh will come forth and will water’ (Joel 4:18), with the first verb in the regular PC with future indication and with the second verb in the wqatal form also pointing to the future.

Note that both the wayyiqtol and wqatal forms can only occur in sentence-initial or clause-initial position. Finally, note that Hebraists disagree on what to call these forms, with waw consecutive, waw conversive, waw inversive, and waw relative among the common designations.

5.9. Infinitives
Hebrew has two infinitive forms, known as the infinitive absolute and the infinitive construct. The Qal forms are, respectively, ŏmôr and ŏmôr, both meaning ‘to guard’ (once more using the root ŏ-m-r ‘guard’). The infinitive absolute appears only in this specific form and is used in only a few selected contexts, for example, to give emphasis to a following PC verb, e.g., ŏmôr yiômôr ‘he shall surely guard’. The infinitive construct is more frequent and operates more like the English infinitive. In addition, its form is variable; thus, it occurs frequently with uniconsonantal prepositions (on which see below 6.2) prefixed to it, e.g., lî ômôr ‘to guard’, and with suffixed personal pronouns, e.g., šômarî ‘my guarding’.

5.10. Participles
Hebrew participles formally are nouns, since they are declined only for gender (masculine, feminine) and number (singular, plural), but they tend to function mainly as verbs in various syntactic environments. In MH the active participle serves as a true present tense verb, though its morphology is unchanged.

The participle appears in two separate forms, one active and one passive. The paradigm for the active participle of the Qal is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sg.</td>
<td>ŕômar</td>
<td>ŕômarah/šômeret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pl.</td>
<td>ŕômarim</td>
<td>ŕômarot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The two feminine forms are free variants in BH, while MH prefers the second form given.

The paradigm for the passive participle of the Qal is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Ending</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>masc. sg.</td>
<td></td>
<td>šāmūr</td>
<td>'guarded'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fem. sg.</td>
<td></td>
<td>šemūr</td>
<td>'guarded'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masc. pl.</td>
<td></td>
<td>šāmūr</td>
<td>'guarded'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fem. pl.</td>
<td></td>
<td>šemūrōt</td>
<td>'guarded'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participles of the other verbal patterns, or binyanim, are marked with prefixed mem, e.g., P'el masculine singular mdabbēr 'speaking'. The only exception to this rule is the Niph'āl, in which the prefixed nun of the SC is imported into the participle, e.g., Niph'āl masculine singular niktāb 'written' (in passive voice because the Niph'āl generally serves as the passive).

6. Particles

6.1. Conjunctions

Hebrew has very few conjunctions. By far the most common is the form -w-w (thus the standard realization, though it is subject to change depending on the specific phonetic environment), which is attached as a proclitic to the main word, e.g., b[rhw wahr 'and the famine'. It serves a wide variety of coordinating functions, not only 'and' but also 'but', etc.

Additional conjunctions are ρ-gam 'also', wa-°ô 'or', and yk kî 'because, that'.

6.2. Prepositions

The main prepositions in Hebrew are proclitic uniconsonantal forms, namely, -l- 'to, for', -b- 'in, with, by', and -k- 'as, like'.

Other frequently occurring prepositions are min 'from', im 'with', et 'with', al 'on, upon', ad 'until', and el 'to, towards'. This last form is clearly related to the uniconsonantal prefixed form -l- 'to, for'.

A second form of נת occurred as the nota accusativi, or marker of the accusative, used especially when the direct object is definite, e.g., a'laya al'hem wayyur' elohim 'et ha'dōr 'and God saw the light' (Genesis 1:3). This morpheme typically takes the form 'ōt- before pronoun suffixes, e.g., 'ālēt 'ōt 'me', suggesting that it derives from an earlier form *'ōt. The pronunciation of the absolute form נת 'et presumably has been influenced by the preposition נת 'et 'with', mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

6.3. Particle of existence

Hebrew has a special particle of existence, namely, yēṣ 'there is, there are'. The form is indeclinable, though it can take suffixed personal pronouns. Sample usages are: yēṣ nābī baysa'ēl 'there is a prophet in Israel' (2 Kings 5:8); and yēm yešem 'ōśem hesed
‘if you (pl.) are doers of kindness’ = ‘if you (pl.) are to do kindness’ (Genesis 24:49).

6.4. Negative particles
The main negative particle in Hebrew is אַל alôª ‘no’, used in a variety of contexts, including legal prohibitions, e.g., יָדוֹ tîšâhôª ‘you shall not murder’ (Exodus 20:13).

Two other negatives are לא ‘(do) not’, used especially before jussive verbs to indicate a negative command, e.g., יָדוֹ jâlîlt laªal tejôª ‘do not send forth your hand’ (Genesis 22:12; see 5.4 above); and לא ‘(there is) not’ used to indicate the absence of something, e.g., יָדוֹ bôªajôª ‘there-was-not in-it water’ (Genesis 37:24). The latter form serves as the negative counterpart for the particle of existence יָדוֹ ‘there is, there are’ treated above (6.3).

6.5. Possessive particle -לôª sel- ‘of’
Possession is normally expressed by means of the construct phrase (see above 4.3). But Hebrew also developed a possessive particle -לôª sel-, more or less the semantic equivalent of English ‘of’, produced by combining the relative pronoun -ש, ‘that, which’ (see above 3.3) and the preposition -ל. This form is attested several times in the Bible and is standard in MH. The form can be prefixed to the following noun, e.g., יָדוֹ selûªelamlek ‘of the king’, or it can take the pronoun suffixes, thus, יָדוֹ selî ‘my’, יָדוֹ selîק ‘your’ (masculine singular), etc.

6.6. Adverbs
Hebrew has very few real adverbs. Among the basic ones we may point to -ז, az ‘then’, -זאו, attâh ‘now’, and -זא, sâm ‘there’.

A suffixed mem <M>, with one of two vowels, is attested as an adverbial ending when attached to selected nouns. The following forms take -זא: יָדוֹ mînîm ‘in truth’ (from יָדוֹ men ‘truth, trustworthiness’), יָדוֹ hînmîm ‘for nothing, in vain’ (from יָדוֹ hen ‘grace’; cf. Latin gratis), יָדוֹ yômîm ‘by day’ (from יָדוֹ yôm ‘day’), and יָדוֹ rèqîm ‘empty-handed’ (from יָדוֹ rèq ‘empty’). The following forms take -זא: יָדוֹ ptîlîm ‘suddenly’ (no noun יָדוֹ peta is attested, but cf. יָדוֹ peta ‘instant’, which most likely is the source of the adverbial form, with weakening of the ‘ayin to ‘aleph), and יָדוֹ silîm ‘day before yesterday’ (from יָדוֹ silô ‘three’; that is, today = day one, yesterday = day two, and the day before yesterday = day three).

Another postpositive element is the adverbial suffix יָדוֹ -לôª (unaccented), which functions mainly like the preposition ‘to’ when suffixed to nouns indicating places, but also is used in conjunction with other nouns. Examples of the former include יָדוֹ וְרָשָׁה ‘to the land’, יָדוֹ נֶגֶב ‘to the southland’, and יָדוֹ שָׁוְלָה ‘to Sheol’ (i.e., the netherworld). Examples of the latter are יָדוֹ מַלְּאכּ ‘in truth’ (cf. יָדוֹ מַלְּאך ‘in truth’ above); יָדוֹ hîlîlîh ‘to profanity’ (cf. Latin ad profanum), with the sense of ‘heaven forbid’; and יָדוֹ laylîh ‘tonight’ (though at a very early stage in the history of the Hebrew language this form came to mean simply ‘night’, thus throughout BH, with the original form יָדוֹ layîl ‘night’ restricted to poetry).
7. Numerals

Numerals are marked for gender (masculine, feminine) and agree with the noun being counted. However, as with most Semitic languages, for the numerals 3–10, the base forms serve for the feminine, and the forms with the feminine ending -aḥ (<-at) serve for the masculine. This phenomenon is sometimes referred to as “gender polarity.”

The individual forms are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>'echād</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>šnayim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>šlōšāh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>'arba'taḥ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>hămiššah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>sššah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>šib'yah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>šmōnāh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>tš'āh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>'āšārāh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the following specific points:

- The feminine form for ‘1’ is a rare instance of a d assimilating to the following consonant, though in this case it is the voiceless dental t, so the phenomenon is explicable. That is to say, feminine ‘1’ is formed by suffixing the feminine nominal ending -t to the masculine form for ‘1’ (actually the construct form, see further below), with the resultant development *aḥad + -t = *aḥat > *aḥatt > ‘aḥat (with mandatory simplification of consonantal gemination in word-final position).
- The words for ‘2’ are the only words in the language that commence with an initial consonant cluster, permissible because of the sibilant + sonorant combination in šnayim and the sibilant + stop in štayim (see Hoberman 1989). In addition, note that both forms include the nominal dual ending -ayim discussed above (4.1).
- Comparative Semitic suggests that the proto-Hebrew form of ‘5’ was hāmš (cf. Babylonian hamšat, Aramaic ḥamṣ, ħams or hamsa). Apparently the vowels of the attested Hebrew forms hāmiššah and hāmēš have been influenced by the vowels of the following forms for ‘6’, sššah and šš, with which they now “rhyme.”

The numeral ‘1’ functions as an adjective and therefore follows the noun that it modifies, e.g., ēdāh ‘one bull’. The numerals 2–10 listed above occur in apposition to the item counted, and can appear either before or after the item, e.g., šlōšāh ‘three bulls’ or šlōšāh ‘three bulls’ or šlōšāh ‘three bulls’. But in certain settings, for example, when the item counted is definite, the numerals appear in the construct form. The entire paradigm is not provided here; instead a single illustration will suffice: šlōšet hāpārim ‘the three bulls’.
The numerals from 11–19 are formed by combining the unit with special forms of the numeral ‘10’, e.g., šlōs šēš šēš (feminine). The decades do not distinguish gender. The numeral 20 appears as the “plural” of the numeral ‘10’, thus, ešrim ‘20’. The forms of 30–90 appear as the “plural” of the respective units: šalōsim ‘30’, abhâm ‘40’, etc.

Forms such as 25, 36, 47, etc., are created by combining the decade form, the conjunction -w- ‘and’ (6.1), and the unit form. The unit form agrees with the gender of the item counted. A sample illustration is ešrim wâhâmisâ ‘25’ (masculine), literally ‘twenty and five’.

The higher numerals in Hebrew are ḥamîm ‘100’, ’elep ‘1000’, and either ribbô or rabbâh, both meaning ‘10,000’. These numbers similarly are epicene.

Hebrew possesses ordinal numbers only for the numerals 1–10. They serve as adjectives, and therefore follow the noun, and do not reflect the so-called “gender polarity” visible for the cardinal numerals 3–10. The words for ‘first’ are built from the word râš ‘head’, thus rîśôn ‘first’ (masculine), and rîśōn ‘first’ (feminine). The forms for ‘second’ through ‘tenth’ are built from the corresponding cardinal nominal/adjectival form:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>šēnî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>šlîšî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and so on through:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>ʿāsîrî</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Corrigenda to “Ancient Hebrew Morphology”
Gary A. Rendsburg

p. 88, 3.1.2, chart: the first 3rd feminine singular transliteration should read -āh (with long ā), and the third one should read -nnāḥ (with superscript ḫ indicating the he, which serves as final mater lectionis in such forms)

p. 89, first bullet, line 4: correct -ah to –āh

p. 89, first bullet, line 5: correct -nnā to -nnāḥ

p. 92, bottom of page, first bullet: the accent mark should be an acute accent, not a grave accent.

p. 95, line 9 from bottom: the reference should be Genesis 30:38 (not v. 36).

p. 102, 6.5, line 7: correct šellamelek to šellammelek

p. 102, line 5 from bottom: ūomnaḥ should be ūomnāḥ.

p. 103, chart: correct ḥāmiššāḥ to ḥāmiššāḥ (with ā instead of ā)

p. 104, third paragraph: correct ʿešrim waḥāmiššāḥ to ʿešrim waḥāmiššāḥ (with ā instead of ā)