Chapter 4

Ancient Hebrew Morphology

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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 Israelian 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

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 antiquity, 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 ca. 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 reference 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:

BH	Biblical Hebrew	ABH	Archaic Biblical Hebrew
SBH	Standard Biblical Hebrew	LBH	Late Biblical Hebrew
QH	Qumran Hebrew	DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
JH	Judahite Hebrew	IH	Israelian Hebrew
MH	Mishnaic Hebrew	SH	Samaritan Hebrew

3. Pronouns

3.1. Personal pronouns

Like all Semitic languages, Hebrew has two sets of pronouns: free or independent forms, and bound or suffixed forms. The former are used for the grammatical subject, e.g., אני יהוה *ʾănî YHWH* 'I am Yahweh'. The latter are suffixed to verbs as direct objects (e.g., הכהו *hikkāhû* 'he hit him'), to nouns to indicate possession (e.g., בנו *bənô* his son'), to prepositions as indirect objects or as objects of the preposition (e.g., לו *lô* 'to him'), and to various adverbials (e.g., לבדו *ləbādô* 'he alone').[2]

3.1.1 Independent personal pronouns

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

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1. We shall not, however, deal with Samaritan Hebrew in this article, except in one instance 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 dispensed 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).

	Singular	Plural
1st common	אני *ʾǎnî*; אנכי *ʾānôkî*	אנחנו *ʾǎnaḥnû*
2nd masculine	אתה *ʾattāʰ*	אתם *ʾattem*
2nd feminine	את *ʾatt*	אתנה *ʾattēnāʰ*
3rd masculine	הוא *hûʾ*	המה *hēmmāʰ*; הם *hēm*
3rd feminine	היא *hîʾ*	הנה *hēnnāʰ*

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, אנכי *ʾānôkî* is considered by most scholars to be the older; eventually it was replaced by אני *ʾǎnî*. Indeed, in the later biblical books and in the DSS, אני *ʾǎnî* predominates, and it is the only form attested in MH.
- A shorter form of the 1st common plural form occurs as אנו *ʾǎnû*, apparently modeled after the singular form אני *ʾǎnî*. 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 אנחנו *ʾǎnaḥnû*. 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 *ʾanta* (as in Arabic and Geʿez) > *ʾattāʰ*.
- The 2nd feminine singular את *ʾatt* derives from older אתי *ʾattî*, 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 את *ʾatt* for the masculine. MH utilizes the form את *ʾatt* for the masculine, presumably under Aramaic influence.
- QH uses a longer form for the 2nd masculine plural, namely, אתמה *ʾattēmāʰ*.[3]
- The Torah (or Pentateuch) regularly uses הוא <HWʾ> for the 3rd feminine singular, in the Ketiv, suggesting a form *hûʾ* identical with the 3rd masculine singular, though it is read in the Qeri as *hîʾ* in line with

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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 היא <HYʾ> attested elsewhere. From the evidence of the Ketiv we postulate an original epicene form *hûʾ*. 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 הואה <HWʾH> and היאה <HYʾH> for the 3rd singular forms, masculine and feminine respectively. I would vocalize these as *hûwāʰ* and *hîyāʰ* (and explain the spelling with *ʾaleph* 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 אתם *ʾattem*, אתן *ʾatten*, הם *hēm*, הן *hēn*.

- In colloquial Hebrew, gender neutralization occurs in the 2nd plural and 3rd plural forms, thus אתם *ʾattem* and הם/המה *hēmmāʰ*/*hēm* 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, אתן *ʾatten* and הן *hēn*, 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:

	Singular	Plural
1st common	י- -*î*; ני- -*nî*	נו- -*nû*
2nd masculine	ך- -*kā*	כם- -*kem*
2nd feminine	ך- -*ēk*, -*āk*	כן- -*ken*
3rd masculine	הו- -*hû*; ו- -*ô*; יו- -*āw*; נו- -*nnû*	הם- -*hem*; ם- -*ām*
3rd feminine	ה- -*ah*, -*hā*; נה- -*nnā*	הן- -*hen*; ן- -*ān*

General comments:

- The two 1st common singular forms are distributed in the following manner: י- -*î* is suffixed to nouns and certain prepositions; ני- -*nî* 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 הו- *-h*; ו- *-ô*; יו- *-āw* (the latter two having evolved through elision of /h/); and feminine ה- *-ah, -hā*. The other set has forms with *n*, viz., masculine נו- *-nnû*; feminine נה- *-nnā*. 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 proto-Semitic (see Hetzron 1969).
- In QH, alongside the standard 2nd masculine plural and 3rd masculine plural appear the longer forms כמה- <-KMH>, and המה- <-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 כם- *-kem* and הם- *-hem* (also ם- *-ām* 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, כן- *-ken* and הן- *-hen* (also ן- *-ān* 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 זה *zeʰ* 'this', feminine singular זאת *zôʾt* 'this', common plural אלה *ʾēlleʰ* 'these', attested in BH and QH.[4]

A second feminine singular form, spelled either זה *zôʰ* or זו *zô* '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 *-t* the newer form זאת *zôʾt* was created (with the *ʾaleph* 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 זה *zôʰ* / זו *zô* was retained especially in northern Israel.

MH attests to another common plural form, אלו *ʾēllû* 'these'. The form is most likely an analogical creation, the ending *û* 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,

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4. In QH the feminine singular demonstrative typically appears with variant spellings, the most common of which is זואת <ZWʾT>, but this is simply an orthographic difference; the form and the pronunciation are the same.

האיש ההוא *hāʾîš hahûʾ* 'that man' (with the definite article [see 3.5] attached to both the noun and the demonstrative pronoun).

An entirely different set of pronouns is also attested, sporadically in BH, more commonly in MH, in all likelihood as colloquialisms: masculine singular הלזה *hallāze^h*, feminine singular הלזו *hallēzû*, both of which can be shortened to הלז *hallāz* and in MH further are shortened to הלה *hallā^h*. The plural form of this set is attested only in MH: הללו *hallālû*. Nevertheless, this set must be quite old, as the forms are closely aligned with the Arabic determinative-relative pronoun series *ʾalladī* (masculine singular), etc.

3.3. Relative pronouns

ABH attests to two related relative markers זה *ze^h* and זו *zû*, 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 אשר *ʾăšer* '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 -ש *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: מה *ma^h* 'what' for inanimate subjects, and מי *mî* 'who' for animate subjects.

3.5. Definite article

The definite article is *han-* (according to some scholars, *hal-*), derived from an old demonstrative element.[5] It is prefixed to the noun. However, since vowelless *nun* <N> regularly assimilates to the following consonant, the actual form *han-* is nowhere directly attested. Accordingly, the resulting forms show gemination in the following consonant, e.g., **handelet* > הדלת *haddelet* '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., **hanʿām* > העם *hāʿām* '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 *lə-* 'to,' **ləhammayim* > למים *lammayim* 'to the water.'

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5. Thus, for example, it occurs at the beginning of the *hallāz* 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., פר *pār* 'bull'. Feminine singular nouns typically are marked by one of two endings: -*ā^h* (< -*at*) or -*t*. As noted, the former ending derives from an earlier form -*at*, retained in a few scattered nouns in the Bible. As for the latter ending, because Hebrew phonology disallows consonant clusters at the end of a word, the suffixed -*t* is always preceded by an anaptyctic vowel. Most feminine nouns in the Hebrew lexis use only one of the two endings, e.g., פרה *pārā^h* 'cow' (with the first ending), קטרת *qəṭōret* 'incense' (with the second ending, with -*e*- as anaptyctic vowel). But in many cases the two endings co-exist in free variation with no apparent difference in meaning, e.g., גדרה *gədērā^h* (standard) and גדרת *gəderet* (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., ארץ *ʾ ereṣ* 'earth', שמש *šemeš* 'sun', יתד *yātēd* 'tent-peg', etc.

Most masculine plural nouns take the ending -ים *-îm*, e.g., פרים *pārîm* 'bulls'; most feminine plural nouns take the ending -ות *-ôt*, e.g., פרות *pārôt* 'cows'. But there are many exceptions to this rule, e.g., אבות *ʾ ābôt* 'fathers', which naturally is masculine, and נשים *nāšîm* '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, נשים יפות *nāšîm yāpôt* 'beautiful women' (Job 42:15).

The dual ending -ים *-ayim* is suffixed to nouns standing for items that naturally occur in pairs, especially body parts, e.g., ידים *yādayim* 'hands' (singular יד *yād* 'hand'), and to nouns used for measurements of time, distance, etc., e.g., יומים *yômayim* 'two days' (singular יום *yôm* '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, יד *yād* 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. אחד *ʾ eḥād*, fem. אחת *ʾ aḥat* (see below 7), serves as the indefinite article, thus, e.g., איש אחד *ʾ îš ʾ eḥād*, 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., איש אלהים *ʾîš ʾĕlōhîm* 'man of God' (used as a synonym, apparently, of נביא *nābîʾ* '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 *yād* 'hand' to יַד *yad* in the expression יד המלך *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 *-āʰ* [see above 4.1] does not occur); thus, for example, מלכה *malkāʰ* 'queen' but מלכת שבא *malkat šəbāʾ* '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, יד המלך *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 *-îm* in the construct (cf. 4.1), but rather in *-ê* (derived from the old dual oblique ending *-ay*, and then imported for use with the masculine plural as well), e.g., בני ישראל *bənê yiśrāʾēl* 'sons of Israel'. Feminine plural nouns in construct end in *-ôt*, like the non-construct form (see 4.1), but vowel reduction typically occurs in the first syllable, e.g., בָּנוֹת *bānôt* 'daughters', but בְּנוֹת *bənôt* in בנות המלך *bənôt hammelek* '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 הקדש *har haqqōdeš*, 'the mountain of holiness', the functional equivalent of 'the holy mountain'.

When a construct phrase is modified by a possessive pronoun, the pronominal element is attached to the *nomen rectum*, e.g., הר קדשו *har qodšô* '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., יד *yād* 'hand', לב *lēb* 'heart', שן *šēn* 'tooth', קול *qôl* 'voice', איש *ʾîš* 'man', etc. A few nouns have only one consonant, e.g., פה *peʰ* 'mouth', שה *śeʰ* '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:

- *CāCȧ̆C*, e.g., בקר *bāqār* 'cattle, herd', דבר *dābār* 'word, thing'
- *CāCéC*, e.g., יתד *yātēd* 'tent-peg', כבד *kābēd* 'liver'
- *CéCeC*, e.g., גפן *gepen* 'vine', מלך *melek* 'king'

Some patterns carry semantic weight, for example:

- *CaCCàC* is used to denote professions, e.g., טבח *tabbāḥ* 'cook, butcher', קשת *qaššāt* 'archer, bowman'
- *CiCCéC* is used to denote bodily defects, e.g., אלם *ʾillēm* 'dumb person (one unable to speak)', גבן *gibbēn* 'hunchback'

More complex patterns are created by the use of preformatives and sufformatives. Some of these patterns are associated with specific semantic domains as well.

- For example, the related patterns *CaCCéCet* and *CaCCáCat/CāCáCat*, feminine in gender as seen through the presence of the suffixed *-t* (preceded by the anaptyctic vowel, either *-e-* or *-a-*), connote diseases, e.g., עורת *ʿawweret* 'blindness', יבלת *yabbelet* 'wart', ילפת *yallepet* 'ringworm', ספחת *sappaḥat* 'rash', צרעת *ṣāraʿat* 'leprosy',[6] etc.
- Or as another illustration, many nouns with prefixed מ- *mV-* denote a place or a location, e.g., מבצר *mibṣār* 'fortress', מגדל *migdāl* 'tower', מקדש *miqdāš* 'holy place, sanctuary', מזבח *mizbēaḥ* 'altar', מלון *mālôn* 'lodging place', מקום *māqôm* '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 indicating 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 נתן *n-t-n* 'give', לקח *l-q-ḥ* 'take', בוא *b-w-ʾ* 'come', etc. The verb appears in two conjugations, known as the suffix conjugation (SC) and the prefix conjugation (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).[7]

These verbal roots, in turn, may appear in various verbal patterns expressing different meanings. For example, the root למד *l-m-d* means 'learn' in the basic pattern, known as Qal or Paʿal, but 'teach' in a derived pattern known as the Piʿel (see below 5.7 for details).

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6. I hasten to add that 'leprosy' is but a conventional rendering of צרעת *ṣāraʿat*. Epidemiologists 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 שמר *š-m-r* 'guard, watch' in the paradigm. Since the SC often indicates the past tense, I have glossed the individual forms accordingly.

	Singular			Plural		
1st com.	שמרתי	*šāmartî*	'I guarded'	שמרנו	*šāmarnû*	'we guarded'
2nd masc.	שמרת	*šāmartā*	'you guarded'	שמרתם	*šəmartem*	'you guarded'
2nd fem.	שמרת	*šāmart*	'you guarded'	שמרתן	*šəmarten*	'you guarded'
3rd masc.	שמר	*šāmar*	'he guarded'	שמרו	*šamərû*	'they guarded'
3rd fem.	שמרה	*šāmərah*ʰ	'she guarded'	שמרו	*šamərû*	'they guarded'

Note that the 3rd masculine singular has no suffixes attached to it, thus it is simply שמר *šāmar* '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 -*î*, 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 -*ā*ʰ. The former shifted to -*ā*ʰ 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, שמרו *šamərû* '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 III*y* class (see below 5.6). Furthermore, this is the standard form in MH, e.g., הית *hāyāt* 'she was' (the SBH form is היתה *hayətah*ʰ 'she was'). Similarly, the old 3rd feminine plural suffix -*ā*ʰ occurs sporadically in the Bible, especially in the Ketiv, as in 1 Kings 22:49 נשברה אניות *nišbərā*ʰ *ʾŏniyyôt* '(the) ships broke', with the Qeri reading the SBH 3rd feminine plural SC form *nišbərû* (note the ending -*û*).

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 תמה- <-TMH> attached to the root, parallel to the QH 2nd masculine plural independent pronoun אתמה *ʾattēmāʰ*. Presumably this was true for the corresponding 2nd feminine plural form as well, posited *תנה- *<-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 תם- *-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, תן- *-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 שמר *š-m-r* '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.

	Singular			Plural		
1st com.	אשמר	*ʾešmōr*	'I guard'	נשמר	*nišmōr*	'we guard'
2nd masc.	תשמר	*tišmōr*	'you guard'	תשמרו	*tišmərû*	'you guard'
2nd fem.	תשמרי	*tišmərî*	'you guard'	תשמרנה	*tišmōrnāʰ*	'you guard'
3rd masc.	ישמר	*yišmōr*	'he guards'	ישמרו	*yišmərû*	'they guard'
3rd fem.	תשמר	*tišmōr*	'she guards'	תשמרנה	*tišmōrnāʰ*	'they guard'

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 ישמרנה *yišmōrnāʰ* '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 תשמרנה *tišmōrnāʰ* 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 תשמרו *tišmərû* and ישמרו *yišmərû* serving respectively for both masculine and feminine. This is seen most clearly in MH, in which the תשמרנה *tišmōrnāʰ* 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- *-āʰ*, thus, אשמרה *ʾešmərāʰ* 'let me guard', 'may I guard', 'I wish to guard', etc., and נשמרה *nišmərāʰ* '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., יגל *yigel* 'may it be swept away' (Job 20:28), shortened from the standard PC form יגלה *yigleʰ* 'he/it is exiled/swept away', and to the Hiphʿil (see below 5.7), e.g., יכרת *yakrēt* 'may he cut off' (Psalms 12:4), shortened from the standard PC form יכרית *yakrît* 'he cuts off'. These forms also may be preceded by the negative particle אל *ʾal* 'not' to express a negative desire, e.g., אל תהי *ʾal təhî* 'may (our hand) not be (upon him)' (Genesis 37:27); cf. the standard PC form לא תהיה *lôʾ tihyeʰ* 'she/it is not'.

The corresponding second person jussive forms are used for negative commands after the particle אל *ʾal* 'not', e.g., אל תשחת *ʾal tašḥēt* 'do not destroy' (Deuteronomy 9:26), with the verbal form shortened from the standard PC form תשחית *tašḥît* '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 -ת *tV-*, with necessary vowel readjustment. The paradigm for the Qal is as follows:

	Singular			Plural		
masculine	שמר	*šəmōr*	'guard!'	שמרו	*šimərû*	'guard!'
feminine	שמרי	*šimərî*	'guard!'	שמרנה	*šəmōrnāʰ*	'guard!'

As was the case with the PC, also in the imperative: gender neutralization arises in colloquial Hebrew in the plural, so that שמרו *šimərû* comes to serve for both the masculine and the feminine. In MH the form שמרנה *šəmōrnāʰ* 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, שמר *š-m-r* '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., נסע *n-s-ʿ* 'travel', abbreviated as I*n*. In verbs of this class, (a) the *nun* assimilates to the following consonant in the PC (resulting in the gemination of the second root consonant), e.g., *yinsaʿ > יסע *yissaʿ* 'he travels'; and (b) the *nun* elides in the imperative, e.g., גש *gaš* 'approach!', from the root נגש *n-g-š*.

2. 1st root letter *yod* <Y>, e.g., ישב *y-š-b* 'sit, dwell', abbreviated as I*y*. In verbs of this class, the *yod* elides (a) in the PC, e.g., אשב *ʾēšēb* 'I sit', and (b) in the imperative, e.g., שב *šēb* 'sit!'

3. 2nd root letter *yod* <Y>, e.g., שיר *š-y-r* 'sing', abbreviated as II*y*. In verbs of this class the *yod* is non-consonantal; in most forms of the verb belonging to this class, it serves only to mark the long *î* vowel between the first and last consonants. For example, note the PC form ישיר *yāšîr* 'he sings'.

4. 2nd root letter *waw* <W>, e.g., קום *q-w-m* 'arise', abbreviated as II*w*. In verbs of this class the *waw* is non-consonantal; in most forms of the verb belonging to this class, it serves only to mark the long *û* vowel between the first and last consonants. For example, note the PC form יקום *yāqûm* 'he arises'.

5. 3rd root letter *yod* <Y> (commonly but incorrectly called 3rd root letter *he* <H>), e.g., בכי *b-k-y* 'cry', abbreviated as III*y*. In verbs of this class the *yod* does not appear in any of the standard forms, having been dropped via syncope. As an example note the 3rd common plural SC form *bakayû > בכו *bākû* 'they cried'.

6. Geminate verbs, in which the 2nd and 3rd root letter is the same consonant, e.g., סבב *s-b-b* 'go around', abbreviated as IIgem. 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 סבו *sôbbû* 'go around!'; though at times both consonants appear, e.g., the SC form סבבו *sābǝbû* 'they went around'.

7. Wholly anomalous verbs, such as הלך *h-l-k* 'go', with *he* <H> as the first root letter but which patterns as if it were a I*y* verb; and לקח *l-q-ḥ* 'take', with *lamed* <L> as the first root letter but which patterns as if it were a I*n* verb.

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

a. II*y* and II*w* verbs typically do not appear in the traditional Piʿel and Hitpaʿel 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

שיר *š-y-r* 'sing' and קום *q-w-m* 'arise'. In isolated cases in LBH and regularly in MH, however, these two verb classes do generate forms in the Pi'el and Hitpa'el conjugations. In such cases the consonant *yod* <Y> serves as the middle root letter (not only for the II*y* class, but also for II*w* class). An especially productive root in this regard is קים *q-y-m* 'establish', derived from the previously cited root קום *q-w-m* 'arise', with such specific forms as קים *qiyyēm* 'he established' (= the 3rd masculine singular SC Pi'el form) and יתקים *yitqayyēm* 'it must be confirmed' (= the 3rd masculine singular PC Hitpa'el form).

b. As noted above (5.2), the 3rd feminine singular SC form of the III*y* class retains the original ending -*at*/-*āt* sporadically in the Bible, especially in IH, and this form appears as the standard one in MH, e.g., הית *hāyāt* 'she was' (= the 3rd feminine singular SC Qal form).

c. In colloquial Hebrew in ancient times, verbs with third root letter *ʾaleph* <ʾ>, abbreviated as IIIʾ, that is, with glottal stop as the third root consonant, merged with III*y* verbs. This can be seen in several dozen cases in the Bible, and regularly in MH. Thus, for example, instead of SBH קראנו *qārāʾnû* 'we read' (= the 1st common plural SC form), in MH one encounters קרינו *qārînû*. 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 בנינים *binyanim*, literally 'constructions', in Hebrew grammatical terminology. We have alluded to these patterns several times above. The names of the *binyanim* derive from the 3rd masculine singular SC form of the specific pattern, with the root פעל *p-ʿ-l* 'do, make' serving in the paradigm (as per Hebrew and ultimately Arabic grammatological tradition reaching back to the Middle Ages). There are seven main *binyanim*, 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 *nun* <N> prefixed to the root, visible in the SC, assimilated to the first root consonant in the PC.
3. Pi'el, 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 Pi'el. 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 *he* <H> prefixed to the root, visible in the SC, elided between two vowels in the PC.

6. Hophʿal or Huphʿal, the passive of the Hiphʿil. It bears the same traits as the Hiphʿil, except that it has a rounded vowel, either *o* or *u*, to mark the passive voice.
7. Hitpaʿel, the reflexive stem, serving especially as the reflexive of verbs in the Piʿel. 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 Piʿel and Puʿal.

Some verbal roots are attested in only one verbal pattern, for example, the Qal/Paʿal or the Piʿel. 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 קדש *q-d-š* 'be holy'. The only verbal pattern in which this root fails to appear in BH is the Hophʿal/Huphʿal; but since this pattern serves as the passive of the Hiphʿil, one can safely assume that such a form existed in the Hebrew of biblical times, its absence from the corpus notwithstanding. Indeed, the Hophʿal/Huphʿal of the root קדש *q-d-š* '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:

Paʿal	קדש *qādaš*	'be holy, be set apart'
Niphʿal	נקדש *niqdaš*	'reveal oneself as holy'
Piʿel	קדש *qiddēš*	'sanctify, set apart as sacred'
Puʿal	קדש *quddaš*	'be sanctified'
Hiphʿil	הקדיש *hiqdîš*	'cause something to be holy' = 'devote, consecrate'
Huphʿal	הוקדש *huqdaš*	'be devoted, be consecrated'
Hitpaʿel	התקדש *hitqaddēš*	'sanctify oneself, consecrate oneself'

Admittedly it often is hard to distinguish the meanings of the Piʿel and the Hiphʿil of this root, notwithstanding the different English definitions presented above.

In MH one may note the following developments. The Puʿal pattern virtually disappeared, while the Hitpaʿel SC was replaced in the main by a new pattern called the Nitpaʿal. An example of the latter usage is נתקבלה כתבתה *nitqabbəlāʰ kətubbātāh* 'her wedding-contract was received', with the verb in the Nitpaʿal 3rd feminine singular SC (*Mishna Ketubbot* 11:4).

5.8. Wayyiqtol *and* wəqatal *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 *iw sḏm-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 *sḏm-n-f* and in the previously cited *iw sḏm-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: ויכתב משה את התורה הזאת *wayyiktōb môšeʰ ʾet hattôrāʰ hazzôʾt* '(and) Moses wrote this Torah' (Deuteronomy 31:9).

The *wəqatal* form serves the opposite function: it refers to future time, especially a future action subsequent to another future action. A sample usage is ומעין מבית יהוה יצא והשקה *ûmaʿyān mibbêt YHWH yēṣēʾ wəhišqāʰ* '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 *wəqatal* form also pointing to the future.

Note that both the *wayyiqtol* and *wəqatal* 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, שמור *šāmôr* and שמר *šəmōr*, both meaning 'to guard' (once more using the root שמר *š-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., שמור ישמר *šāmôr yišmōr* '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., לשמר *lišmōr* 'to guard', and with suffixed personal pronouns, e.g., שמרי *šomərî* '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:

masc. sg.	שומר	*šômēr*	'guarding'
fem. sg.	שומרת/שומרה	*šômərāʰ/šômeret*	'guarding'
masc. pl.	שומרים	*šômərîm*	'guarding'
fem. pl.	שומרות	*šômərôt*	'guarding'

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:

masc. sg.	שמור	*šāmûr*	'guarded'
fem. sg.	שמורה	*šemûrā*ʰ	'guarded'
masc. pl.	שומרים	*šəmûrîm*	'guarded'
fem. pl.	שומרות	*šəmûrôt*	'guarded'

The participles of the other verbal patterns, or *binyanim*, are marked with prefixed *mem* <M>, e.g., Piʿel masculine singular מדבר *mədabbēr* 'speaking'. The only exception to this rule is the Niphʿal, in which the prefixed *nun* of the SC is imported into the participle, e.g., Niphʿal masculine singular נכתב *niktāb* 'written' (in passive voice because the Niphʿal generally serves as the passive).

6. Particles

6.1. Conjunctions

Hebrew has very few conjunctions. By far the most common is the form -ו *wə-* (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., והרעב *wəhārāʿāb* 'and the famine'. It serves a wide variety of coordinating functions, not only 'and' but also 'but', etc.

Additional conjunctions are גם *gam* 'also', או *ô* 'or', and כי *kî* 'because, that'.

6.2. Prepositions

The main prepositions in Hebrew are proclitic uniconsonantal forms, namely, -ל *lə-* 'to, for', -ב *bə-* 'in, with, by', and -כ *kə-* 'as, like'.

Other frequently occurring prepositions are מן *min* 'from', עם *ʿim* 'with', את *ʾēt* 'with', על *ʿal* 'on, upon', עד *ʿad* 'until', and אל *ʾel* 'to, towards'. This last form is clearly related to the uniconsonantal prefixed form -ל *lə-* 'to, for'.

A second form of את *ʾēt* occurs as the *nota accusativi*, or marker of the accusative, used especially when the direct object is definite, e.g., וירא אלהים את האור *wayyarʾ ʾĕlôhîm ʾet hāʾôr* 'and God saw the light' (Genesis 1:3). This morpheme typically takes the form *ʾôt-* before pronoun suffixes, e.g., אותי *ʾôtî* 'me', suggesting that it derives from an earlier form **ʾāt*. The pronunciation of the absolute form את *ʾēt* presumably has been influenced by the preposition את *ʾēt* 'with', mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

6.3. Particle of existence

Hebrew has a special particle of existence, namely, יש *yēš* 'there is, there are'. The form is indeclinable, though it can take suffixed personal pronouns. Sample usages are: יש נביא בישראל *yēš nābîʾ bəyiśrāʾēl* 'there is a prophet in Israel' (2 Kings 5:8); and אם ישכם עשים חסד *ʾim yeškem ʿôśîm ḥesed*

'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 לא *lôʾ* 'no', used in a variety of contexts, including legal prohibitions, e.g., לא תרצח *lôʾ tirṣāḥ* 'you shall not murder' (Exodus 20:13).

Two other negatives are אל *ʾal* '(do) not', used especially before jussive verbs to indicate a negative command, e.g., אל תשלח ידך *ʾal tišlaḥ yadəkā* 'do not send forth your hand' (Genesis 22:12; see 5.4 above); and אין *ʾên* '(there is) not' used to indicate the absence of something, e.g., אין בו מים *ʾên bô mayim* 'there-was-not in-it water' (Genesis 37:24). The latter form serves as the negative counterpart for the particle of existence יש *yēš* 'there is, there are' treated above (6.3).

6.5. Possessive particle -של *šel-* 'of'

Possession is normally expressed by means of the construct phrase (see above 4.3). But Hebrew also developed a possessive particle -של *šel-*, more or less the semantic equivalent of English 'of', produced by combining the relative pronoun -ש *še-* 'that, which' (see above 3.3) and the preposition -ל *lə-* (see above 6.2). 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., שלמלך *šellamelek* 'of the king', or it can take the pronoun suffixes, thus, שלי *šellî* 'my', שלך *šelləkā* 'your' (masculine singular), etc.

6.6. Adverbs

Hebrew has very few real adverbs. Among the basic ones we may point to אז *ʾāz* 'then', עתה *ʿattāh* 'now', and שם *šām* '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 -*ām*: אמנם *ʾomnām* 'in truth' (from אמן *ʾōmen* 'truth, trustworthiness'), חנם *ḥinnām* 'for nothing, in vain' (from חן *ḥēn* 'grace'; cf. Latin *gratis*), יומם *yômām* 'by day' (from יום *yôm* 'day'), and ריקם *rêqām* 'empty-handed' (from ריק *rêq* 'empty'). The following forms take -*ôm*: פתאם *pitʾôm* 'suddenly' (no noun *פתא *petaʾ* is attested, but cf. פתע *petaʿ* 'instant', which most likely is the source of the adverbial form, with weakening of the *ʿayin* to *ʾaleph*), and שלשום *šilšôm* 'day before yesterday' (from שלש *šālôš* 'three'; that is, today = day one, yesterday = day two, and the day before yesterday = day three).

Another postpositive element is the adverbial suffix -ה *-āh* (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 ארצה *ʾarṣāh* 'to the land', נגבה *negbāh* 'to the southland', and שאולה *šəʾôlāh* 'to Sheol' (i.e., the netherworld). Examples of the latter are אמנה *ʾomnah* 'in truth' (cf. אמנם *ʾomnām* 'in truth' above); חלילה *ḥālîlāh* 'to profanity' (cf. Latin *ad profanum*), with the sense of 'heaven forbid'; and לילה *laylāh* '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 ליל *layil* '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 -$\bar{a}^h$ (< -*at*) serve for the masculine. This phenomenon is sometimes referred to as "gender polarity."

The individual forms are as follows:

	Masculine		Feminine	
1	אחד	*ʼeḥād*	אחת	*ʼaḥat*
2	שנים	*šnayim*	שתים	*štayim*
3	שלשה	*šəlôšā^h*	שלש	*šālôš*
4	ארבעה	*ʼarbāʿā^h*	ארבע	*ʼarbaʿ*
5	חמשה	*ḥāmiššā^h*	חמש	*ḥāmēš*
6	ששה	*šiššā^h*	שש	*šēš*
7	שבעה	*šibʿā^h*	שבע	*šebaʿ*
8	שמנה	*šəmônā^h*	שמנה	*šəmône^h*
9	תשעה	*tišʿā^h*	תשע	*tēšaʿ*
10	עשרה	*ʿăśārā^h*	עשר	*ʿeśer*

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 *ʼaḥad* + -*t* = **ʼaḥadt* > **ʼaḥatt* > *ʼaḥat* (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 *ḥamš-* (cf. Babylonian *ḥamšat*, Aramaic *ḥamšā*, Arabic *ḥamsa*). Apparently the vowels of the attested Hebrew forms *ḥămiššā^h* and *ḥāmēš* have been influenced by the vowels of the following forms for '6', *šiššā^h* and *šēš*, with which they now "rhyme."

The numeral '1' functions as an adjective and therefore follows the noun that it modifies, e.g., פר אחד *pār ʼeḥād* '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., שלשה פרים *šəlôšā^h pārîm* 'three bulls' or פרים שלשה *pārîm šəlôšā^h* '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: שלשת הפרים *šəlôšet happārîm* 'the three bulls'.

The numerals from 11–19 are formed by combining the unit with special forms of the numeral '10', e.g., שלשה עשר *šəlôšā^h ʿāśār* '13' (masculine), שלש עשרה *šəlôš ʿeśrē^h* '13' (feminine).

The decades do not distinguish gender. The numeral 20 appears as the "plural" of the numeral '10', thus, עשרים *ʿeśrîm* '20'. The forms of 30–90 appear as the "plural" of the respective units: שלשים *šəlôšîm* '30', ארבעים *ʾarbaʿîm* '40', etc.

Forms such as 25, 36, 47, etc., are created by combining the decade form, the conjunction ־ו *wə*- 'and' (6.1), and the unit form. The unit form agrees with the gender of the item counted. A sample illustration is עשרים וחמשה *ʿeśrîm waḥāmiššā^h* '25' (masculine), literally 'twenty and five'.

The higher numerals in Hebrew are מאה *mēʾā^h* '100', אלף *ʾelep* '1000', and either רבו *ribbô* or רבבה *rəbābā^h*, 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 ראש *rôʾš* 'head', thus ראשון *rîʾšôn* 'first' (masculine), ראשונה *rîʾšônā^h* 'first' (feminine). The forms for 'second' through 'tenth' are built from the corresponding cardinal nominal/adjectival form:

	Masculine		Feminine	
2nd	שני	*šēnî*	שנית	*šēnît*
3rd	שלישי	*šəlîšî*	שלישית	*šəlîšît*
and so on through:				
10th	עשירי	*ʿăśîrî*	עשירית	*ʿăśîrît*

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Corrigenda to "Ancient Hebrew Morphology"

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p. 88, 3.1.2, chart: the first 3rd feminine singular transliteration should read *-āh* (with long *ā*), and the third one should read *-nnā^{h}* (with superscript ^{h} 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 *-nnā^{h}*

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: *ʾomna^{h}* should be *ʾomnā^{h}*.

p. 103, chart: correct *ḥāmiššā^{h}* to *ḥămiššā^{h}* (with *ă* instead of *ā*)

p. 104, third paragraph: correct *ʿeśrîm waḥāmiššā^{h}* to *ʿeśrîm waḥămiššā^{h}* (with *ă* instead of *ā*)