In the third section of the volume the author considers Jesus' own understanding of the miracles. Twelftree maintains that it is possible to recover what Jesus thought about his miracles; namely, Jesus appears to have been aware that God's own power was represented in his activities as the beginning of the eschatological kingdom of God in operation. He argues that the evidence from a historically critical examination of the Gospels leads to the conclusion that "there is hardly any aspect of the life of the historical Jesus which is so well and widely attested as that he conducted unparalleled wonders. Further, the miracles dominated and were the most important aspect of Jesus' whole pre-Easter ministry" (345).

The final section of the book is devoted to a discussion of implications of the Gospel material for the contemporary reader with regard to the quest for the historical Jesus. Twelftree concludes that "the Gospels have given a credible picture of Jesus as a miracle worker that coheres well with the historical Jesus we are able to reconstruct" (352).

This volume is an important contribution to the quest for the historical Jesus. In an era characterized by skepticism with regard to the reliability of the Gospel material, readers will welcome this refreshingly readable and clear, yet deep analysis of the subject in NT scholarship. The vast bibliographical coverage adds to the scholarly quality of Twelftree's work. While taking differing scholarly views seriously, he discusses them fairly and honestly. While bold and persuasive in defending the historical reliability of the miracles in the four Gospels, he approaches this investigation cautiously: "In addressing the historical questions, I have been aware that some readers will have wanted to retreat in fear—the fear that the so-called facts of the faith will recede and their basis of faith will have shrunk, leaving them insecure. Such insecurities are unfounded" (344). When examining the Gospel material, it is not possible for historians to say with certainty that the miracle stories reflect or do not reflect an event in the life of the historical Jesus. "As is often the case, we have had to acknowledge the limits of historical inquiry and exercise intellectual humility" (345). Such an approach is commendable.

Weaknesses in Twelftree's work are too minor and few to mention. Leaving aside a few interpretive differences, this reviewer agrees with Craig Blomberg, Colin Brown, Ralph P. Martin, John P. Meier, Martin Hengel, Graham N. Stanton, Bruce D. Chilton, and others in commending this masterful exposition of the Gospel miracle stories as a great contribution. This volume deserves to be a standard textbook on the miracles of Jesus and the Gospels in general for years to come. It should be read by those who seek to understand the relevance of miracles for the modern mind.

Andrews University   RANKO STEFANOVIC

Van der Merwe, Christo H. J., Jackie A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze. *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, Biblical Languages: Hebrew, 3. Sheffield : Sheffield Academic Press, 1999. 404 pp. Hardcover, $90.00.

The specific purpose of *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar* (*BHRG*), a team work of three authors from South Africa, is "to serve as a reference work at an intermediate level for exegetes and translators" (9). It is not intended to replace

the well-established grammars by Gesenius, Kautzsch and Cowley (1909), Waltke and O'Connor (1990), or Joüon and Muraoka (1991).

The organization of the grammar follows the traditional word-class-based approach ("for didactic reasons," 11) rather than having a more modern linguistic structure according to sentence or textgrammatical functions. After a general introduction (chap. 1), an overview of the Hebrew alphabet and Masoretic signs (chap. 2), and a survey on word, clause, and text in Biblical Hebrew (chap. 3), the main bulk of the grammar follows with a chapter each on the verb (ca. 100 pages), the noun (ca. 100 pages), and other word classes (ca. 65 pages), concluded by a section on word order (chap. 7). An excellent glossary of almost twenty pages explains the linguistic metalanguage. The grammar is rounded off by a rather short, and thus not really helpful, four-page bibliography and indexes of BH words, OT texts, subjects (very extensive!), and authors (which covering only half a page lists redundantly the same page references under Joüon and under Muraoka, as well as under O'Connor and under Waltke).

The structure of the grammar is highly transparent. Hand in hand with the word-class-based approach goes the decision to present the material from form to function. This is a good choice, for the prospective group of users will identify forms more easily than functions. With the help of the table of contents and/or the subject index and BH word index one will find in seconds the information on a specific topic. However, since cross references use the paragraph numbering system, paragraph numbers in the page header are sorely missed.

Two other elements make this reference grammar rather easy to use. First, chapter 3 introduces the reader in a most clear fashion to the linguistic categories used in the grammar. This orientation about the metalanguage, along with the glossary, assists students of BH not only in following this grammar, but also in reading other (linguistic) studies in BH. And second, similar to Waltke and O'Connor's *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, the authors strive to provide for every grammatical entry and described function one illustrative example from the Hebrew Bible with English translation (mainly RSV). Furthermore, they indicate when a specific construction or function is found only rarely in BH.

A new feature in BH grammar writing, which I consider to be most important, is that *BHRG* introduces semantic and pragmatic considerations in a systematic way. In comparison to Waltke and O'Connor (1990) and Joüon and Muraoka (1991), who limit their levels of analysis to phonology, morphology, and syntax (and under the category of syntax often refer to what could be considered semantics), *BHRG* in its form-to-function presentation does not stop at the syntactic level but also includes semantic and pragmatic functions of specific forms. While observations on semantic functions are found throughout the grammar, pragmatic considerations are introduced especially in the comments on the conjunction כִּי, (301-303), the focus particle גַּם (315-317), the discourse marker הִנֵּה (330), and word order (344-350).

BHRG tries to keep a balance between traditional language and linguistic terms (see the glossary), which at some places may be questioned. On the traditional side, *BHRG* uses, for example, the perfect/imperfect terminology for verbal forms. Though explained by apparent user-friendliness (10), as it is assumed

that most readers will be familiar with the traditional terminology, it nevertheless seems preferable to use the linguistic terms *wayyiqtol* and *weqatal*, *qatal* and *yiqtol* etc. for at least two reasons: first, these terms are already quite common in literature on BH, and second, by getting acquainted with such a terminology the users of *BHRG* would further their linguistic awareness (or knowledge of BH).

Innovative terms, for example, are "qenemlui letters" for those letters which sometimes drop the doubling of the consonant (40), the distinction between morphological, syntactic, and semantic gender of nouns (175-178), "*postconstructus*" for the second element of a construct phrase (192), or "prepositional verbs" for verbs which occur with certain preposition in a relationship which may almost be called a lexeme (275). In the survey of linguistic categories (chap. 3) the terms "adjunct" and "complement" are used for optional, respectively obligatory elements in the verb phrase. Strangely, the linguistic term "valency" is not introduced here—though the concept of complements and adjuncts is based upon it (60-62)—but only at the end of the chapter on the verb (172-173) where it almost serves as an appendage. More elaborate information on the value of the concept of valency in grammatical studies would have been desirable, e.g., the possibility to identify ellipsis of a complement, to determine the syntactic function of prepositions, or the relationship between verb valency and the meaning of the verb.

The authors attempt to utilize and incorporate recent research. For example, the section on construct relationships (191-200), especially the syntactic-semantic relationships in construct relations, is based on Kroeze's previous study. The excellent overview on word order (336-350), which is an innovative but certainly indispensable section for any future grammar dealing with syntax, draws from studies by Walter Gross (unfortunately, the more recent studies on word order, topic, and focus by Rosenbaum [1997], Disse [1998], Goldfajn [1998], and Heimerdinger [1999] appeared obviously too late to be incorporated by the authors). The differentiation between preverbal field and main field, unmarked and marked order in the main field, and the nuanced view of the semantic-pragmatic functions of BH word order (not every fronting is regarded as marked for "emphasis") deserve high commendation. Here, one issue may be in need of supplementation. As dislocated constituents *BHRG* mentions only *pendens* constructions or, in other words, left-hand dislocation (249, 339). The possibility of right-hand dislocation and its function should certainly also be considered (see, e.g., Josh 24:12).

Other sections that turned out particularly well are the syntax and semantics of finite and nonfinite verb forms, with a brief introduction to the problematics of the BH verbal system (141-163), verb chains and sequences (163-172), and the overviews on prepositions and conjunctions (272-305).

A grammar is a good place to draw a line between what we know and what we do not know (yet). Therefore, it is welcome that *BHRG* subtly points out areas that need further study, e.g., the use of the infinitive absolute in the place of other verbs (161), the semantic functions of some prepositions influenced by verbs that govern them (277), the question whether לְכֵן is a conjunction (304), or the (sociolinguistic?) function of a fronted constituent referring to God (349).

It is difficult, if not impossible, to combine in a grammar exhaustive comprehensiveness with practical considerations. The authors have opted for the

latter. It is not fair to blame them if one expects to find comprehensive treatment with detailed explanations but locates them only in some places. Here and there one may disagree, present things differently, or find inconsistencies (e.g., the internal object is categorized both under complements [242] and under adjuncts [245]). Numerous slips and minor errors should have been detected in the editorial process. Because this grammar is intended to be a reference work that is hopefully followed by future printings/editions, the mostly minor corrections below are suggested.

More serious is that references to BH in poetic sections are rare. A glance at the text index shows that the bulk of references (ca. 80%) comes from Genesis to 2 Kings. One gets the feeling that BH poetry functions under slightly different grammatical rules (cf. the author's brief comment on verb sequences, 165). An overview of these differences may well be worth a separate chapter in a reference grammar.

When it comes to determining the value of this reference grammar, it is in the end the decision of the students, teachers, and translators who will judge the usefulness of *BHRG* in the classroom, in study, and in the field. In my view, *BHRG* fulfills its stated purpose: it is an excellent and handy reference grammar for the intermediate level.

The "contemplated next volume" which is said to deal with such categories as "inter-sentence relationships, text types, speech acts and sociolinguistic conventions" (11) will fill in grammatical observations that may have been expected but not dealt with in this volume. Hopefully, the follow-up will become a reality. Such a *BHRG 2* could have the potential to become the first modern standard work on the macro levels of BH language (syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, and textual levels).

Corrigenda to BHRG

p. 1, line 31	read "§9.1." instead of "§9.1"
p. 7, line 5	read "§45.1." instead of "§45.1"
p. 35, line 31	read "third to last syllable" (or "first syllable") instead of "third or last syllable"
p. 45, line 14	the accent tifḥaʾ should be under the second letter
p. 45, line 23	read "rᵉbîᵃᶜ" instead of "rebîᵃᶜ"
p. 45, line 35	read "mûnāḥ" instead of "mûnaḥ"
p. 46, line 4	the accent ʾazlaʾ should be above the second letter
p. 46, l. 15,21,24	read "mûnāḥ" instead of "mûnaḥ"
p. 46, line 16	the accent mêrᵉkā in וַיֹּאמֶר is missing
p. 45, line 24	read "rᵉbîᵃᶜ" instead of "rebîᵃᶜ"
p. 63, line 20	read "facilitate" instead of "faci-litate"
p. 71, line 22	read "(Cf. §19.3.)" instead of "(Cf. §19.4.)"
p. 78, line 9	read "imperative" instead of "imperfect"
p. 78, line 33	read "(iii)" instead of "c."
p. 80, line 17	read "meaning" instead of "mean-ing"
p. 81, line 25	read תִּכְתַּבְנָה instead of תִכְתֹּבְנָה
p. 89, line 19	in the first three forms the vowel hireq should be centered under the letter בּ
p. 91, line 32	read "/ - /" instead of "/ - /"

p. 127, line 15-16	read "3 masculine singular" instead of "2 masculine singular"
p. 131, line 8	read "the" instead of "The"
p. 131, line 14	read "In the Qal imperfect" instead of "The Qal imperfect"
p. 155, line 33	read לֶאֱמֹר instead of לָאֱכֹל
p. 192, line 35	read "*post constructus*" instead of "*status constructus*"
p. 208	The type-area is positioned ca. 10mm too far to the right so that the right side of the print is slightly cut off.
p. 212, line 21	read " - " instead of the second " - "
p. 213, line 13	read מְלֻכוֹת instead of מלכות
p. 220, line 12	read " - " instead of " - "
p. 237, line 16	read "*The conjunction* וְ *(and)*" instead of "*The conjunction*"
p. 267, line 27-28	correct: "*Reversed gender:* With the numbers 11 to 19 the teens as well as the units (1-2) always have the same gender as the noun, while the units (3-9) have the opposite gender."
p. 325, line	read "irritation" instead of "irratation"
p. 337, line 5	read "Vorfeld" and "Hauptfeld" instead of "Vorveld" and "Hauptveld"
p. 347, line 25	read "§46.1/3(ii) and (iii)" instead of "§46.2/2(i)a"
p. 352, line 2	read "although" instead of "al-though"
p. 355, line 20	read "secondary" instead of "secon-dary"

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