

*A GRADED READER OF BIBLICAL*  
**HEBREW**

**MASTERING DIFFERENT  
LITERARY STYLES FROM  
SIMPLE TO ADVANCED**

William Fullilove

## Praise for *A Graded Reader of Biblical Hebrew*

“The ability to read, translate, interpret, and skillfully apply the Bible from the Hebrew and Greek text animates ministry and yields freshness in teaching. Students can testify that Dr. Bill Fullilove is a master teacher of the Hebrew language. This *Graded Reader*, carefully arranged and annotated, will equip students to do what they really want to do: read and use Hebrew with skill and faithfulness.”

—**James L. (Jay) Harvey III**, Executive Director, Reformed Theological Seminary, New York City

“It is always right to admire the beauty of simplicity. In this *Graded Reader*, students will find biblical texts of increasing difficulty, clear and concise explanations of grammatical and syntactical concepts, and a simple format that lends itself to student learning. Rather than forcing the reader to adopt a particular syntactical methodology, Fullilove simply provides the biblical texts with footnoted helps so that students can experience the delight of reading God’s Word. Many of my own students are hesitant to find the joy of learning jots and tittles from an introductory grammar, but they are always eager to read the Hebrew Bible. Fullilove’s *Graded Reader* provides a superb resource for students to engage the biblical text while also having valuable references to his introductory grammar so that students can enjoy the Hebrew Bible while also solidifying their knowledge of the Hebrew language.”

—**Adam J. Howell**, Assistant Professor of Old Testament Interpretation, Boyce: The College at Southern

“This *Graded Reader* is the next logical step to Fullilove’s magnificent teaching grammar, moving students from their foundational deductive grasp of grammar toward more advanced inductive mastery. The texts given here are perfect for introducing students to the breadth of Biblical Hebrew, while reinforcing basic grammatical principles and challenging them to learn new ones. As in Fullilove’s *Introduction*, the questions posed move beyond the typical parsing and grammatical analysis to aid students in seeing the exegetical significance of what they’re learning.”

—**Scott C. Jones**, Professor of Biblical and Theological Studies, Covenant College

“The *Graded Reader* offers students of Biblical Hebrew a powerful tool for retaining and improving their grasp of the language. Learning a language is more than memorization and drills, and Dr. Fullilove serves the endeavor as he guides us through representative passages from the biblical text. Thank you for this resource.”

—**Scott Redd**, President and Associate Professor of Old Testament, Reformed Theological Seminary, Washington, DC

“Fullilove addresses a real gap in language learning with this *Graded Reader*. He places students at the center yet again, providing even more resources to help them in the ultimate goal of their study: learning to read Hebrew now and in the future. This resource will provide students with the much-needed encouragement to persist with their Hebrew and to consolidate their early learning.”

—**C. A. Strine**, Vice-Chancellor’s Fellow and Lecturer in Hebrew Bible, University of Sheffield; Author, *Sworn Enemies: The Divine Oath, the Book of Ezekiel, and the Polemics of Exile*

## Praise for *Introduction to Hebrew*

“Bill Fullilove’s new grammar of Biblical Hebrew is an outstanding introduction to the language for beginning students. The author presents the basic material clearly and cogently, while deftly incorporating insights gleaned from the latest research. Beginners will enjoy starting to read actual excerpts from the Bible at an early stage; and by the end, they will be well equipped for the task of Old Testament exegesis. I warmly and enthusiastically recommend this fine new textbook.”

—**Ed Cook**, Chairman, Department of Semitic and Egyptian Languages and Literatures; Associate Professor, The Catholic University of America

“From beginning to end, Fullilove keeps in mind that the ultimate goal of biblical language-learning is to grasp the message of Scripture so that the text can master us. This is an exegetically oriented beginning Hebrew grammar. It sets itself apart by teaching not only what morphology and clause syntax are but how our knowledge of Hebrew helps us understand God’s Book. Fullilove gets students into the biblical text early and then uses creative paths to nurture discovery and to point forward toward application. The chapters are well structured and clear, and the overall work is highly creative. This is a guidebook that will motivate students to learn, so I joyfully recommend this grammar.”

—**Jason S. DeRouchie**, Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Theology, Bethlehem College & Seminary; Coauthor, *A Modern Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*

“In my experience, students work incredibly hard to learn Hebrew. But since they don’t experience firsthand the value of reading Hebrew for exegesis, a regrettable number of them don’t maintain their Hebrew and therefore never get to see its payoff. *Introduction to Hebrew* by Bill Fullilove, a great new resource for Hebrew teachers and students, was designed to solve that problem. Its chief brilliance lies in showing students the value of Hebrew for exegesis from the very beginning of their study. Every chapter guides the students through an exegetical exercise based on the material just learned. (Even if all they know is the alphabet!) It teaches them to use reference tools and to draw conclusions *based on their understanding of Hebrew*. This not only shows them the value of knowing Hebrew, but trains them to use those reference tools so that they come out equipped rather than intimidated by them. Hurray!”

—**Elizabeth Groves**, Lecturer in Biblical Hebrew, Westminster Theological Seminary

“It is a joy to commend Bill Fullilove’s *Introduction to Hebrew* to present and future pastors and to serious readers of the Scripture. He has found ways to make the language so accessible and yet filled with such accuracy that many who thought Hebrew was beyond their reach will find it readily and comfortably right at hand.”

—**Walter C. Kaiser Jr.**, President Emeritus, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

“Here’s the book that I wish I had been given—and from which I wish I had been instructed—when I was a student of Hebrew. Ministry students are frankly goal-oriented when it comes to language study. We want our language knowledge to directly and continually enable us to interpret God’s Word. Bill Fullilove’s *Introduction to Hebrew* never loses sight of this goal. I highly recommend it.”

—**Tim Keller**, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, New York City

“Dr. Bill Fullilove has successfully produced a new grammar that demonstrates the benefits of Biblical Hebrew for exegetical matters. From something as basic as the alphabet to more sophisticated linguistic concepts, he provides practical steps in gaining a knowledge of Hebrew as an essential tool to understand the message of Scripture. Diligent students will find this grammar rewarding and see immediate fruits of their labors.”

—**Peter Lee**, Associate Professor of Old Testament, Reformed Theological Seminary, Washington, DC

“Many students begin their study of Biblical Hebrew with enthusiasm but lose their zeal because they see no practical benefit. Dr. Fullilove shows beginning students the value of learning Hebrew every step of the way. His approach will encourage students to keep moving forward until they master the basic grammar of Biblical Hebrew.”

—**Richard L. Pratt Jr.**, President, Third Millennium Ministries



*A GRADED READER OF BIBLICAL*  
**HEBREW**

MASTERING DIFFERENT  
LITERARY STYLES FROM  
SIMPLE TO ADVANCED

William Fullilove

**R&R**  
P U B L I S H I N G  
P.O. BOX 817 • PHILLIPSBURG • NEW JERSEY 08865-0817

© 2018 by William Fullilove

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise—except for brief quotations for the purpose of review or comment, without the prior permission of the publisher, P&R Publishing Company, P.O. Box 817, Phillipsburg, New Jersey 08865–0817.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are the author’s own translation.

Scripture quotations marked as esv are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-62995-648-0 (pbk)

Printed in the United States of America

To Callie and Evie, with prayers that you will grow to be an אשת חיל, just like your mother.



**Additional Aids for Teachers or Students are available  
at [www.introductiontohebrew.com](http://www.introductiontohebrew.com).**

# Contents

Preface			vii
Part I: Readings in Hebrew Narrative			
א	(1)	2 Samuel 9:1–13	1
ב	(2)	Genesis 50:1–14	8
ג	(3)	Genesis 50:15–26	15
ד	(4)	2 Chronicles 1:1–18	20
ה	(5)	Nehemiah 1:1–11	29
Part II: Readings in Legal Texts			
ו	(6)	Leviticus 1:1–17	39
ז	(7)	Deuteronomy 22:1–12	46
ח	(8)	Deuteronomy 24:1–18	52
Part III: Readings in the Psalms			
ט	(9)	Psalms 23, 24, and 100	63
י	(10)	Psalms 19	72
Part IV: Readings in Prophetic Literature			
יא	(11)	Micah 6:1–8, Amos 2:1–5	79
יב	(12)	Isaiah 52:13–53:12	85
Part V: Readings in Wisdom Literature			
יג	(13)	Proverbs 28:1–16	95
יד	(14)	Job 28:1–28	99



## Preface

The way you learn Hebrew is NOT the way to retain it! In learning a language, there is an inevitable need for memorization, vocabulary drills, paradigms, etc. Further, there is a need for continuous review. At the same time, however, you will not ultimately retain any language by doing vocabulary cards and reciting paradigms. In the end, you retain a language by using it, by reading and speaking it. This graded reader seeks to bridge the gap between the initial learning stage and that ongoing use of the language. It attempts to address several challenges:

First, at the end of any introductory grammar, a student has not yet really “learned” the language. Better put, you have been exposed to all of the necessary concepts, but even the best students need to transition from a structured deductive pedagogy to a more inductive pedagogy. You may have been taught the difference between a vocal and a silent shewa or the different possible uses of an infinitive construct, but the way that knowledge will start to “stick” is when you see those features in their natural environment, by reading continuous texts. This graded reader is therefore keyed to my earlier volume *Introduction to Hebrew: A Guide for Learning and Using Biblical Hebrew*, referencing you back to the introductory grammar in order to facilitate review of all you have learned. (Any time you see the note “See section . . .” without any other modifiers, that is a reference back to *Introduction to Hebrew*.) In that inductive review your knowledge will really start to be cemented.

Second, the student who launches from his or her introductory grammar into the Hebrew Bible is often knocked backward by the variety of texts and by the different characteristics of those texts. Most students are decently well prepared to read simple narratives but are bewildered when they turn to books like Job or Proverbs. The graded reader approach again bridges the gap, starting with texts for which you are well prepared and then moving to progressively more difficult texts as your experience and skills grow. The passages begin with prose and then progressively move into more challenging pieces of poetry, at the same time surveying various genres of Biblical Hebrew.

Third, to really use Hebrew well in understanding and teaching texts, an introductory grammar is just that – an introduction. If you want to use your Hebrew well and to become a student of the text, you need to begin to use more robust reference tools. You must eventually move beyond simply flipping back through your introductory textbook and searching for what it said on a given topic. *Introduction to Hebrew* already began introducing you to more robust research tools such as lexical aids. To further that goal, this graded reader regularly references *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax (IBHS)*, by Bruce Waltke and Michael Patrick

## Preface

O'Connor, one of the standard reference works in the field, a work that will fill in the gaps that are of necessity present in an introductory grammar. I was privileged to study under both of these men, each of whom worked to demonstrate, encourage, and inspire excellence in the study of Hebrew.

Given the nature of the task, this graded reader is presented in a workbook format. While it is best used along with a copy of *Introduction to Hebrew*, its predecessor volume, it can be used profitably to follow on any other introductory grammar as well. Likewise, this graded reader can be used successfully with a small lexicon, such as Holliday's *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, but access to a research lexicon such as Koehler and Baumgartner's *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament (HALOT)*, of which Holladay's work is a very helpful abridgment, will give the greatest value.

Thanks are again due to the good men and women at P&R Publishing who believed in the first volume and now in this one. Thanks are also deeply due to my wife and daughters, who put up with this habit of writing books. And, in the end, all thanks are due to God for his grace.

Read and learn and enjoy!

SDG  
William Fullilove  
August 2018

PART I

---

Readings in Hebrew Narrative



# א (1)

## 2 Samuel 9:1–13

---

2 Samuel 9 provides the first of two examples of what has traditionally been called “Classical Biblical Hebrew” (CBH), the relatively unified style of Biblical Hebrew that is seen from Genesis all the way through 2 Kings. Classical Biblical Hebrew is, by and large, the grammatical structure that you have learned through *Introduction to Hebrew*, and these two exercises give you practice in applying the skills you have learned to complete narrative texts.

1 וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד הַכִּי<sup>1</sup> יֵשׁ-עוֹד אֲשֶׁר נֹתַר<sup>2</sup> לְבֵית שָׂאִיל וְאֶעֱשֶׂה<sup>3</sup> עִמּוֹ חֶסֶד<sup>4</sup>

בְּעֵבֹר יְהוֹנָתָן:

---

<sup>1</sup> Note that this ׀ is not the definite article, as the following consonant is not doubled. What function of ׀ is this? (See section 8.7 in *Introduction to Hebrew*.)

<sup>2</sup> Remember that I-י verbs were originally I-י and that the י reappears when “trapped” by a prefix. What is the root and what is the parsing of this verb? (See section 27.2.)

<sup>3</sup> Note that this is not technically a secondary volitive in the sense defined in section 25.7, but it functions in the same way.

<sup>4</sup> This word of all Hebrew nouns requires a word study to fully understand its semantic range and meaning in context. How would you gloss the word in your translation and why? (See sections 5.7 and 6.7.)



2 וּלְבֵית<sup>5</sup> שָׂאוּל עָבַד וּשְׁמוֹ צִיבָא וַיִּקְרְאוּ<sup>6</sup> לּוֹ<sup>7</sup> אֶל־דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ:

אֵלָיו

הַאֲתָה צִיבָא וַיֹּאמֶר עֲבָדָךְ:

3 וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ הָאֶפֶס עוֹד אִישׁ לְבֵית שָׂאוּל וְאֶעֱשֶׂה עִמּוֹ חֶסֶד אֱלֹהִים

---

<sup>5</sup> What use of lamed is this? Consult section 11.5. The particle of existence is not always necessary when expressing possession.

<sup>6</sup> Parse this verb. This is a use of the 3mp as an impersonal construction. You could translate “they called . . .,” but the “they” is an unknown entity, so the English translation can also be an impersonal passive “he was called . . .”

<sup>7</sup> Note the ל following the verb, which marks its object. Consult your lexicon to understand which gloss of the root קרא is appropriate with ל. The preposition provides a piece of surrounding context, which is one way to distinguish the correct portion of the semantic range to use when glossing a word in your translation. (See section 6.7.)

וַיֹּאמֶר צִיבָא אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ עֹד בֵּן לַיהוֹנָתָן נֹכַח רְגָלָיִם:

וַיֹּאמֶר־לּוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵיפֹה הוּא וַיֹּאמֶר צִיבָא אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ הִנֵּה־הוּא בַּיִת 4

מְכִיר בֶּן־עַמְיָאֵל בְּלוֹ דְבָר:<sup>8</sup>

וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד וַיִּקְחֵהוּ<sup>9</sup> מִבֵּית מְכִיר בֶּן־עַמְיָאֵל מִלּוֹ דְבָר: 5

---

<sup>8</sup> לֹ דְבָר is treated rightly as a place name in translations, but also note its meaning. What does that indicate about how far Mephibosheth's status has declined due to the fall of the house of Saul?

<sup>9</sup> If you have trouble parsing this word, note that it has a possessive suffix and also note the dagesh in the ק. (See sections 5.1 and 21.4.) The form here is clearly narrative, not a volitive, but it shares the suffixes because it is a "short form."

6 וַיָּבֹא מִפִּיבִשֶׁת בֶּן־יְהוֹנָתָן בֶּן־שָׁאוּל<sup>10</sup> אֶל־דָּוִד וַיִּפֹּל עַל־פָּנָיו וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה<sup>11</sup>

וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד מִפִּיבִשֶׁת וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה<sup>12</sup> עֲבָדְךָ:

7 וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ דָּוִד אֶל־תִּירָא<sup>13</sup> כִּי עָשִׂה<sup>14</sup> אֲעֲשֶׂה עִמָּךָ חֶסֶד בְּעֵבֹר יְהוֹנָתָן

אָבִיךָ וַהֲשִׁבְתִּי<sup>15</sup> לְךָ אֶת־כָּל־שָׂרֵה שָׁאוּל אָבִיךָ<sup>16</sup> וְאַתָּה תֹאכַל לֶחֶם עַל־

---

<sup>10</sup> Why does the text give both the father and grandfather of Mephibosheth? How does that make sense of his following action?

<sup>11</sup> See section 24.6.

<sup>12</sup> This is a common use of הִנֵּה to indicate one's response to being summoned. (See section 8.4.)

<sup>13</sup> The way in which this verb is negated informs your parsing. How must this verb be parsed, given the negative particle that precedes it? (See sections 7.5 and 7.8.)

<sup>14</sup> What use of the infinitive absolute is this? (See section 13.1.)

<sup>15</sup> Do not be misled into thinking this is a narrative form by the vowel under the ך. The vowel is on account of the following guttural consonant.

<sup>16</sup> Saul is obviously Mephibosheth's grandfather (see verse 6). The word אָבִי can be used for relationships beyond that of simply the biological father.

שְׁלַחְנֵי תְּמִיד:

8 וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ וַיֹּאמֶר מֶה עֲבַדְךָ כִּי<sup>17</sup> פָּנִיתָ<sup>18</sup> אֶל־הַקֶּלֶב הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר כָּמוֹנִי:

9 וַיִּקְרָא הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־צִיבָא נָעַר שָׂאוּל וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו כֹּל אֲשֶׁר הָיָה לְשָׂאוּל

וּלְכָל־בֵּיתוֹ נָתַתִּי<sup>19</sup> לְבֶן־אָדֹנָיִךְ:

---

<sup>17</sup> Which use of כִּי is this? (See section 14.10.)

<sup>18</sup> Use your lexicon to determine the best gloss for פָּנִיתָ when used with the preposition אֶל. (See section 6.7.)

<sup>19</sup> None of the translation options you learned for the perfect in section 3.7 are quite correct here. Remember that an introductory grammar only gives you the most common possibilities for the translation of a Hebrew verbal form. Consult *IBHS* section 30.5.1.d for the best translation value for this Hebrew perfect.

10 וְעָבְדָתָּ<sup>20</sup> לֹא אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה אֲתָהּ וּבְנֵיךָ וְעַבְדֶיךָ וְהָבֵאתָ וְהָיָה לְבֶן־אֲדֹנֶיךָ

לֶחֶם וְאָכְלוּ וּמִפִּיבִשְׁתִּי בֶן־אֲדֹנֶיךָ יֹאכֵל<sup>21</sup> תָּמִיד לֶחֶם עַל־שְׁלֹחֲנִי

וְלִצִּיבָא חֲמֻשָּׁה עָשָׂר בָּנִים וְעֲשָׂרִים עַבְדִּים:

11 וַיֹּאמֶר צִיבָא אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ כָּכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִצְוָה<sup>22</sup> אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־עַבְדּוֹ כֵּן

יַעֲשֶׂה עַבְדְּךָ וּמִפִּיבִשְׁתִּי<sup>23</sup> אֹכֵל עַל־שְׁלֹחֲנִי<sup>24</sup> כְּאֶחָד מִבְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ:

---

<sup>20</sup> Note that the following string of converted perfects all take their sense from the preceding verb *וַיֹּאמֶר*. How would you therefore translate them? (See section 12.3.)

<sup>21</sup> This verb now breaks the series of converted perfects and therefore needs to have its modality determined by context. How is it parsed, and how should it be translated? (See section 5.2.)

<sup>22</sup> Remember that when a *ל* has a vowel point other than *holem* or *shureq*, it must be a consonantal *ל*. What is the root of this verb?

<sup>23</sup> Note the change in word order here. What is implied? (See section 15.8.)

<sup>24</sup> Be careful not to translate the way you *think* this should read! What does the Hebrew text actually say? Consult the BHS text critical note to understand why translations typically say “his table” or “David’s table.” (See section 2.11.)

12 וְלִמְפִיבִשֶׁת בֶּן־קִטָּן וְשָׁמוֹ מִיכָא וְכֹל מוֹשֵׁב בֵּית־צִיכָא עֲבָדִים

לִמְפִיבִשֶׁת:

13 וּמְפִיבִשֶׁת יָשָׁב בִּירוּשָׁלַם כִּי<sup>25</sup> עַל־שְׁלֹחַן הַמֶּלֶךְ הַיּוֹמִיד הוּא אֲכֹל<sup>26</sup> וְהוּא

פֶּסַח שְׁתֵי רִגְלָיו: פ<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Which use of כִּי is this? (See section 14.10.)

<sup>26</sup> Is this a descriptive or identifying clause? How do you know? (See section 15.8.)

<sup>27</sup> This letter stands for *petuḥa*, the end of a segment in an ancient reading tradition of the Hebrew Bible.