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Linguistic Studies on Biblical Hebrew

Edited by

Robert D. Holmstedt

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For Edit (ז״ל)
and
For Susan (ז״ל)

Contents

1 Introduction: Linguistic Theory and Philology in the Study of Biblical Hebrew 1
Robert D. Holmstedt

2 Pausal vs. Context Forms in Tiberian Hebrew: A Multi-Planar Analysis of Vowel Reduction and Stress 9
Roman Himmelreich and Outi Bat-El Foux

3 Prosodic Dependency in Tiberian Hebrew 39
Vincent DeCaen and B. Elan Dresher

4 Ordinals in Biblical Hebrew 60
Susan Rothstein and Adina Moshavi

5 Investigating Ellipsis in Biblical Hebrew 84
Robert D. Holmstedt

6 A Unified Account of the Infinitive Absolute in Biblical Hebrew 103
Elizabeth Cowper and Vincent DeCaen

7 The Nature of the Infinitive Absolute 125
Galia Hatav

8 The Infinitive in Biblical Hebrew 144
Edit Doron

9 Light Verbs in Biblical Hebrew 169
Todd Snider

10 Argument Sharing Secondary Predicates in Biblical Hebrew 191
E.J. Jacques Boulet

11 The Causative-Inchoative Alternation and the Semantics of Hiphil 209
Kevin Grasso

12 Hybrid Syntactic Constructions in Biblical Hebrew 231
Tamar Zewi

Index of Authors 253
Index of Scriptures 257

CHAPTER 6

A Unified Account of the Infinitive Absolute in Biblical Hebrew

Elizabeth Cowper and Vincent DeCaen

1 Introduction

The Biblical Hebrew (BH) infinitive absolute form (IA), illustrated in (1), has received considerable attention in the literature. Most work (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, Harbour 1999, Hatav 2017) has concentrated on constructions like (1), where the same verb root appears in both the infinitive absolute form and the main verb of the clause.[1]

(1) *mik=kol ʿeṣ hag=gan* ***ʾaḵol*** *to-ʾ<u>ḵ</u>el* *PRO*[2]
from=all.of tree.of the=garden **eat.IA** 2MS.NPST-may.eat PRO
'Of every tree of the garden thou mayest **freely** *eat*'[3] (Gen 2.16)

In this paper, based on earlier work on BH clause structure (DeCaen 1995, 2014; Cowper and DeCaen 2017), we argue for a broader view of the IA, including cases where the two verbal forms have different roots. We propose a unified syntactic account of this broader range of IA forms, in which the infinitival phrase is a verbal projection (*v*P or VoiceP), adjoined to another verbal projection. Contra Harbour (1999, 2007), we argue that the IA is a full XP, rather than simply a head, and that the surface position of the IA depends on independently motivated movements of either the main verb or the IA phrase argued for by Cowper and DeCaen (2017). As for the morphological form of the IA, we hypothesize that the IA form is the default spellout for a verb bearing no

1 Hatav (2017) calls this construction the tautological infinitive absolute.

2 The Hebrew text follows the Leningrad codex and its Tiberian vocalization, a standard version sufficient for our purposes here (on vocalization, see Khan 2020). Where the word stress does not fall on the final syllable, an acute accent is added for clarity. The IA form under discussion, glossed with IA, is given in boldface; the main verb of the clause is underlined. Detailed morphological glossing is omitted except where relevant to the matter at hand.

3 All translations here are from the King James Version (KJV).

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inflectional features, predicting that it might appear in other constructions as well. This prediction is borne out: we show that the same form indeed appears in certain coordinate constructions that exhibit a pattern parallel to first-conjunct agreement. We propose that these constructions involve VoiceP conjunction, where only the first conjunct moves to the relevant inflectional head, leaving the second conjunct to be spelled out with the default form.

2 The Phenomenon

We constructed a database of approximately 875 infinitives in total, extracted from BibleWorks (4.0.034d (1998) with MORPH 3.0), supplemented by MORPH 4.20, and cleaned so as to exclude misparsed examples. Approximately 420 of these were from Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH); that is, from Genesis through 2 Kings. We added to these data tokens gleaned from the literature.[4]

Traditionally, the IA construction is defined as involving reduplication of the root, and possibly also the *binyan*, of the main verb of the clause, as illustrated in (2). When the two verbs appear in different *binyanim*, the infinitive overwhelmingly takes the *paʿal* form, as shown in (3) (Harbour 1999).

(2) Same root, same *binyan*:
wə=ʾaḇi=ha ***yaroq*** *yaraq* PRO *bə=p̄anɛ=ha*
and=father=3FS **spit.IA** spit.PST.3MS PRO in=face=3FS
'If her father **but** spit in her face' (Num 12.14)

(3) Same root, different *binyan* (IA as plain *Qal*/*Paʿal*):
loʾ *ṯi-ggaʿ* *b=o* *yaḏ* *ki=**saqol***
not 2MS.NPST-touch on=3MS hand but=**stone.IA**
yis-saqel
3MS.NPST.PASS-stone
'There shall not a hand touch it, but he shall **surely** be stoned' (Exod 19.13)

While the infinitive phrase frequently consists only of a single word, it can also include arguments or modifiers, or a conjoined structure, as in (4)–(7).

4 Hatav (2017) counts 266 tokens of tautological infinitive absolute in SBH.

(4) PP modifier and DP direct object:
PRO ʾɛ-ʿɛ̄bor bə=k̲ol=ṣoʾn=ə=k̲a hay=yom [***haser***
PRO 1S.NPST-pass in=all.of=flock=2MS the=day [**remove.IA**
miš=šam kol śɛ][5]
from=there every sheep]
'I will pass through all thy flock today, **removing** from thence all the sheep' (Gen 30.32)

(5) Pronominal direct object and PP modifier:
wa=yə-maddə̄d̲=em PRO ba=ḥɛb̲ɛl
and.then=3MS.NPST-measure=3MP PRO with.the=cord
[***ha-škeb̲*** *ʾo̲t̲=am ʾarṣ=a*]
[**CAUS-lie.down** OM=3MP ground=to]
'and measured them with a line, **casting** them **down** to the ground' (2 Sam 8.2)

(6) PP modifier, conjoined infinitives:
wə=šib̲ʿa hak=kohănim nośəʾim … *holək̲im* [[***halok̲***]
and=seven.of the=priests carry.PROG … go.PROG [[**go.IA**]
[*wə=ṯaqəʿu baš=šopārot̲*]][6]
[and=**sound.IA** on.the=trumpets]]
'And seven priests bearing … went on **continually**, and **blew** with the trumpets' (Josh 6.13)

(7) Conjoined infinitives:
halok̲ *wə=ṯapōpō t-elak̲-na PRO*
go.IA and=**trip.IA** 3F.NPST-go-PL PRO
'**walking** *and* **mincing** as they go' (Isa 3.16)

The IA form can also appear conjoined with an inflected infinitive, as in (8), or even conjoined with a finite verb, as in (9).

5 The object here has been abbreviated, and the inverted order of the object and the modifier is the result of heavy XP shift. We use the notation PRO throughout to indicate a phonologically null pronominal, and for simplicity do not distinguish between PRO (Chomsky's 1981 pronominal anaphor) and *pro* (Chomsky's 1981 null pronoun).

6 We read the MT's ותקעו *wətaquʿ* as the IA ותקוע *wətaqoaʿ*.

(8) Infinitive absolute conjoined with an inflected infinitive:
way=y-ešɛḇ *ha=ʿam* *lɛ=ʾĕḵol* *wə=**šaṯo***
and.then=3MS.NPST-sit the=people to=eat and=**drink.IA**
'and the people sat down to eat and **to drink**' (Exod 32.6)

(9) Infinitive absolute conjoined with a finite verb:
way=y-iṯqəʿ-u PRO *baš=šōparoṯ* *wə=**napōṣ***
and.then=3M.NPST-blow-PL PRO on.the=trumpets and=**break.IA**
hak=kaddim *ʾăšɛr* *bə=yaḏ-am*
the=jars that in=hand=3MP
'and they blew the trumpets, and **brake** the pitchers that were in their hands' (Judg 7.19)
(both activities at the same time)

Descriptively, there are two characteristics of the IA that must be explained in any unified account. First, the infinitival phrase never contains an overt subject; we assume that this is not an accident.[7] Second, it can occupy a variety of positions in the main clause, as shown in (10)–(13).

(10) At or near the end of the clause:
a. *ki* *ṯi-śtarer* PRO *ʿal=enu* *gam* ***hiśtarer***
for 2MS.NPST-lord.over PRO over=1PL even **lord.over.IA**
'except thou make thyself **altogether** a prince over us?' (Num 16.13)

b. *ʾel=ay* *y-eṣeʾ* PRO ***yaṣoʾ***
to=1S 3MS.NPST-come.out PRO **come.out.IA**
'He will **surely** come out to me' (2 Kgs 5.11)

7 We are grateful to the participants at the 2018 Halbert workshop, who drew our attention to some possible cases of IA with overt subjects. We identified five such instances, perhaps not coincidentally in the Pentateuch: Gen 17:10, Exod 12:48, Lev 6:7, Num 15:35, Deut 15:2 (for additional candidates, see further Gesenius (1910: §113*gg*) and Joüon (1923: §123*u*)).

These five instances have minimal pairs in which the IA actually appears with a matching finite verb form. Thus, ***himmol*** *laḵɛm kol zaḵar* 'Every man child among you shall be circumcised' (Gen 17:10; cf. (13) below), contrasts with a clause with the finite verb *yimmol* 'must be circumcised', ***himmol yimmol*** *yalid betəḵa umiqnaṯ kaspɛḵa:* 'He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money must needs be circumcised' (Gen 17:13). Space does not permit a full discussion of these cases here.

For us, given our broader definition of the phenomenon, there are two fatal problems with Harbour's movement-based account. First, such an account inherently cannot be extended to include forms with different verb roots. Second, since the construction is derived specifically by head movement, it cannot accommodate instances such as (14), repeated from (4) above, where both the main verb of the clause and the infinitive are fully phrasal and have their own arguments or modifiers.

(14) PP modifier and DP direct object:
PRO ʾɛ-ʿɛ̄b̲or bə=k̲ol ṣoʾn-ək̲a hay=yom [***haser***
PRO 1S.NPST-pass in=all.of flock-2MS the=day [**remove.IA**
miš=šam kol śɛ][9]
from=there every sheep]
'I will pass through all thy flock to day, **removing** from thence all the sheep' (Gen 30.32)

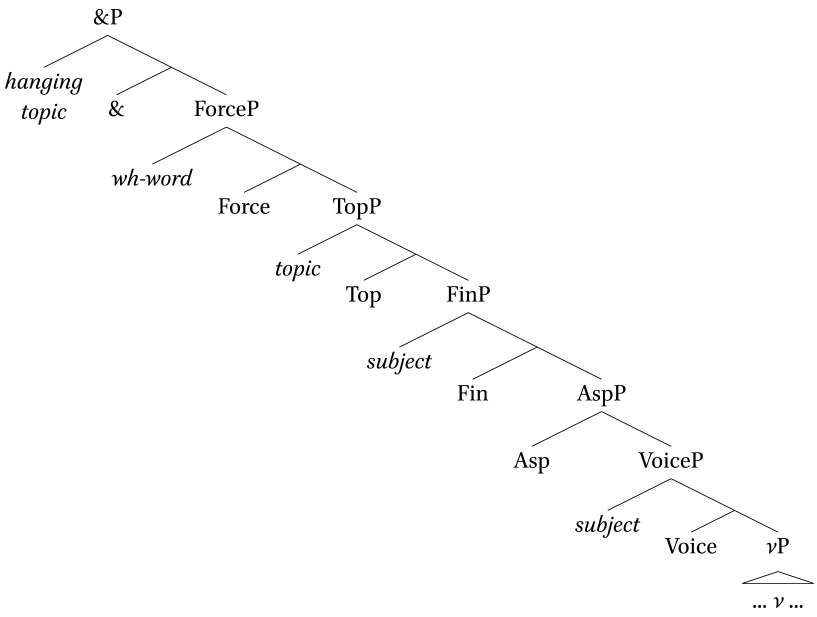
In the next section, we provide the theoretical framework and assumptions that serve as a point of departure for our analysis of the more broadly construed infinitive absolute construction.

4 Theoretical Framework

Following Cowper & DeCaen (2017), we assume that BH is a null-subject, verb-second (V2) language. In that paper, we argued for the syntactic projections shown in (15), not all of which will be relevant to our discussion of the IA.

9 The object here has been abbreviated, and the inverted order of the object and the modifier is the result of heavy XP shift.

(15)



In an ordinary declarative clause, the verb moves, via syntactic head movement, to the head of the Topic projection (Top), and some other constituent, frequently the subject, moves to the specifier position in TopP, giving surface subject-verb-object (SVO) order as in (16).

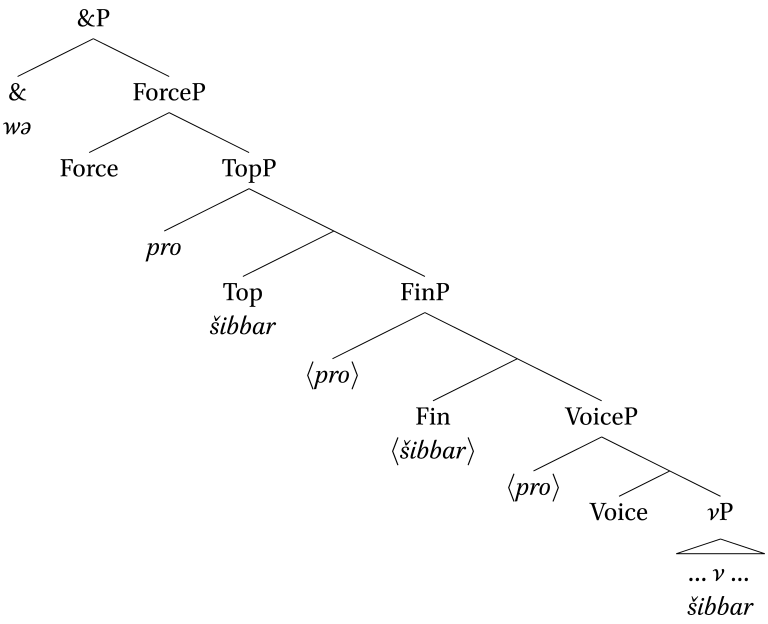
(16) *huʾ hesir ʾɛṯ hab=bamoṯ*
he remove.PST.3MS OM the=high.places
'He removed the high places' (2 Kgs 18.4)

Since BH is a null-subject language (i.e., subject pronouns are frequently not pronounced), sometimes the subject in [spec,TopP] is phonologically null, giving rise to apparent V1 order as in (17). As Cowper and DeCaen (2017) show, these sentences, while often assumed to be verb-initial, are in fact verb-second from a syntactic perspective, just like (16). The syntactic structure of (17a) is given in (18).

(17) a. *wə=PRO šibbar ʾɛṯ ham=maṣṣeḇoṯ*
and=PRO smash.PST.3MS OM the=sacred.stones
'and brake the images' (2 Kgs 18.4)

b. *wə=*PRO *k̲arat̲* *ʾɛt̲* *ha=ʾăšera*
and=PRO cut.PST.3MS OM the=Ashera
'and cut down the groves.' (2 Kgs 18.4)

(18)



As in any V2 language, sometimes a constituent other than the subject moves to [spec,TopP]. When this happens, the subject remains in [spec,FinP] while the verb still moves to Top, giving verb-subject order, as illustrated in (19).

(19) *bə=reʾšit̲* *bara'* *ʾĕlohim* *ʾet̲* *haš=šamayim* *wə=ʾet̲*
in=beginning create.PST.3MS God OM the=heavens and=OM
ha=ʾareṣ
the=earth
'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.' (Gen 1.1)

Also, phonologically overt material can appear in one or more projections above TopP. For example, in (20), the clause-initial bracketed constituents are hanging topics, which we assume occupy the specifier position of &P. In (20a), this constituent is followed by the subject in [spec,TopP], which is in turn followed by the verb in Top^0. In (20b) the nonsubject constituent *ləkā* 'to you' appears in [spec,Top], followed by the verb in Top^0 and the phonologically null PRO subject in [spec,FinP].

(20) a. [*ha=ʾiš ʾăšɛr nimṣaʾ hag=gaḇiaʿ bə=yaḏ=o*] *huʾ*
[the=man that be.found.PST.3MS the=cup in=hand=3MS] he
yi-hyɛ ll=i ʿɛḇɛḏ
3MS.NPST-be to=1S servant
'but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant' (Gen 44.17)

b. [*ki ʾɛṯ kol ha=ʾarɛṣ ʾăšɛr ʾatta roʾɛ*] *lə=ḵa*
[for OM all.of the=earth that you.MS see.PROG] to=2MS
ʾɛ-ttənɛn=na PRO
1S.NPST-give=3FS PRO
'For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it.' (Gen 13.15)

Finally, it sometimes happens that the verb moves past Top^0 to a higher head. In jussive clauses like those in (21), for example, Cowper and DeCaen (2017) argue that the verb moves through Top^0 to the jussive Force head, giving a verb-initial sentence.[10]

(21) a. *y-a-ʾer ʾăḏonay ~~ya-ʾer~~ panay=w ʾelɛ=ka*
3MS.NPST-CAUS-shine lord face=3MS to=2MS
'the LORD make his face shine upon you.' (Num 6.25)

b. *wə=ya-śem PRO ~~ya-śem~~ lə=ka šalom*
and=3MS.NPST-give PRO to=2MS peace
'and [the LORD] give you peace.' (Num 6.26)

5 Our Proposal

5.1 *The Infinitive Absolute Is a Verbal Projection* (*VoiceP or vP*)

We claim that the IA is a phrasal, verbal projection, namely VoiceP.[11] In this we differ from Harbour (1999), who takes it as the realization of a moved verbal head.[12] As mentioned earlier and repeated here in (22), the IA can contain both

10 In the examples in (21), the position from which the verb moves is indicated in the transliteration by a struck-through copy of the verb.

11 Following Kratzer (1996) and much work since then, we assume that the external argument originates in [spec,VoiceP]. We also assume that in a transitive clause, the case that licenses the direct object is provided by the Voice head (Legate 2014).

12 Recall that Harbour deals only with the tautological infinitive absolute construction,

arguments and modifiers of its own, which play no role in the clause in which the IA is embedded.

(22) a. *PRO ʾɛ-ʿĕb̲or bə=k̲ol ṣoʾn=ək̲a hay=yom* [*PRO* ***haser***
PRO 1S.NPST-pass in=all.of flock=2MS the=day [PRO **remove.IA**
miš=šam kol śɛ[13]]
from=there every sheep]
'I will pass through all thy flock to day, **removing** from thence all the sheep' (Gen 30.32)

b. *way=ə-maddəd̲=em PRO ba=ḥɛb̲ɛl* [*PRO*
and.then=3MS.NPST-measure=3MP PRO with.the=cord [PRO
ha-škeb̲ *ʾ ot̲=am ʾarṣ=a*]
CAUS-lie.down OM=3MP ground=to]
'and measured them with a line, **casting them down** to the ground' (2 Sam 8.2)

Having seen from transitive examples like (22a) that the IA must include at least VoiceP, we also argue that it includes no more than VoiceP, thus lacking the inflectional structure that characterizes a full clause. In particular, it lacks the structural machinery required to license case on its subject. While we take no particular position on exactly where structural subject case originates, it is generally held to be provided by an inflectional head above VoiceP such as Tense or Finiteness. If the IA consists only of a VoiceP, there is no mechanism internal to the infinitival clause that would case-license a subject, and it is unsurprising that its subject is virtually always covert; i.e., PRO.

A second argument that the IA has no inflectional structure above VoiceP is that the infinitival verb is always initial in the infinitival phrase. The fact that the subject is covert, together with the absence of any higher structural positions, such as [spec,TopP] or [spec,ForceP], to which another constituent could move, explains the consistently verb-initial word order.

A third, particularly compelling argument that the IA lacks inflectional heads above Voice comes from the fact that it can never bear clitics—even object clitics—despite the fact that it can take overt non-subject arguments, and be modified. This is unsurprising if, as is generally assumed, such clitics are

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where the verbal root in the infinitive absolute is identical to that in the clause in which the IA appears. Our analysis covers a wider range of data.

13 The object here is abbreviated to make the structure clearer; the inverted order is the result of heavy XP shift.

hosted by an inflectional head above Voice. A bare VoiceP can accommodate full overt DP non-subject arguments, but not clitics—even clitics representing non-subject arguments. Full infinitives can bear clitics, as shown in (23).

(23) a. *ʿaḏ bo'=i*
until come.INF=1S
'until I come' (2 Kgs 18.32)

b. *lə=ʿozr=eni*
to=help.INF=1S
'to help me' (1 Chr 12.18)

We therefore assume henceforth that the IA is a VoiceP. The next question to be dealt with is where it appears in the main clause, and how its various surface positions are to be accounted for.

5.2 *The Infinitive Absolute Modifies a Verbal Projection (VoiceP or vP)*

We claim that the IA VoiceP modifies, and is thus adjoined to, a verbal projection, potentially either VoiceP or *v*P,[14] for two reasons. First, when the IA clause remains *in situ*, it always surfaces below grammatical aspect, as can be seen in (24).

(24) a. *wə=šiḇʿa hak=kohănim nośə'im …* [$_{AspP}$ *holəḵim* [$_{IA}$ ***haloḵ***
and=seven.of the=priests carry.PROG … [$_{AspP}$ go.PROG [$_{IA}$ **go.IA**
wə=ṯaqəʿu baš=šopāroṯ]]]
and=**sound.IA** on.the=trumpets]]
'And seven priests bearing … went on **continually**, and **blew** with the trumpets' (Josh 6.13)

b. *hemma* [$_{AspP}$ *holəḵim* [$_{IA}$ ***haloḵ*** *wə=ḏabber*]]
they.MP [$_{AspP}$ go.PROG [$_{IA}$ **go.IA** and=**talk.IA**]]
'as they **still** went on, and **talked**' (2 Kgs 2.11)

Following DeCaen (1995), we assume that the participle (*hōləkîm* in (24)) spells out progressive aspect, as with *walking* in the English example in (25). However,

14 We take no position here on whether unaccusative intransitive clauses contain a VoiceP in the verbal domain, or only a *v*P. The matter has no bearing on our analysis.

15 We read the Masoretic Text's ותקעו *wətaquʃ* as the IA ותקוע *wətāqôaʃ*.

since the IA clause in (24), unlike the sentence in (25), has no marked tense feature to be spelled out, the IA clause contains no finite auxiliary corresponding to *were* in (25).

(25) They were walking along the street.

The second reason to believe that the IA is adjoined to *v*P or VoiceP is the fact that, when it remains *in situ*, it surfaces at or near the end of the clause, as in (22) and (24), followed only by other adjuncts, as in (26). This position is exactly what would be expected if the IA clause were adjoined to either *v*P or VoiceP.

(26) *wə=ham=mayim hay-u* ***halok*** *wə=**ḥasor*** *ʿaḏ ha=ḥoḏɛš*
and=the=water be.PST-3MP **go.IA** and=**recede.IA** to the=month
ha=ʿăśiri
the=tenth
'And the waters decreased **continually** until the tenth month' (Gen 8.5)

5.3 *The Infinitive Absolute, like Other XPs, Can Move*

Our third core claim is that the infinitive absolute can undergo the same movements as other phrasal projections in the language. For example, it can move to [spec,TopP], participating in the verb-second construction just as other phrases do. This is what has happened in (27), where the IA is the first element in the clause. It is followed immediately by the main verb, which has, as is normal, moved to the Top^0 head.

(27) ***zakor*** *t-izkor* PRO *ʾeṯ ʾăšɛr ʿaśa ʾăḏonay*
remember.IA 2MS.NPST-remember PRO OM that do.PST.3MS lord
ʾĕlohe=ḵa lə=pārʿo
god=2MS to=Pharaoh
'but shalt **well** remember what the Lord thy God did' (Deut 7.18)

It can also happen that the verb can move past the IA in [spec,TopP] to occupy a higher functional head. This gives rise to examples like (28). In this instance, the main verb *hēʕăbártā* has moved to Force, above TopP and thus before the IA. The wh-word *lámâ* has moved to [Spec,ForceP], and thus precedes the verb. The subject remains in [spec,FinP] below the Topic projection, and thus follows the IA.

(28) *lama he-ʿăḇar-ta* PRO ***ha-ʿăḇir*** *ʾɛṯ ha=ʿam*
why CAUS-cross.PST-2MS PRO **CAUS-cross.IA** OM the=people

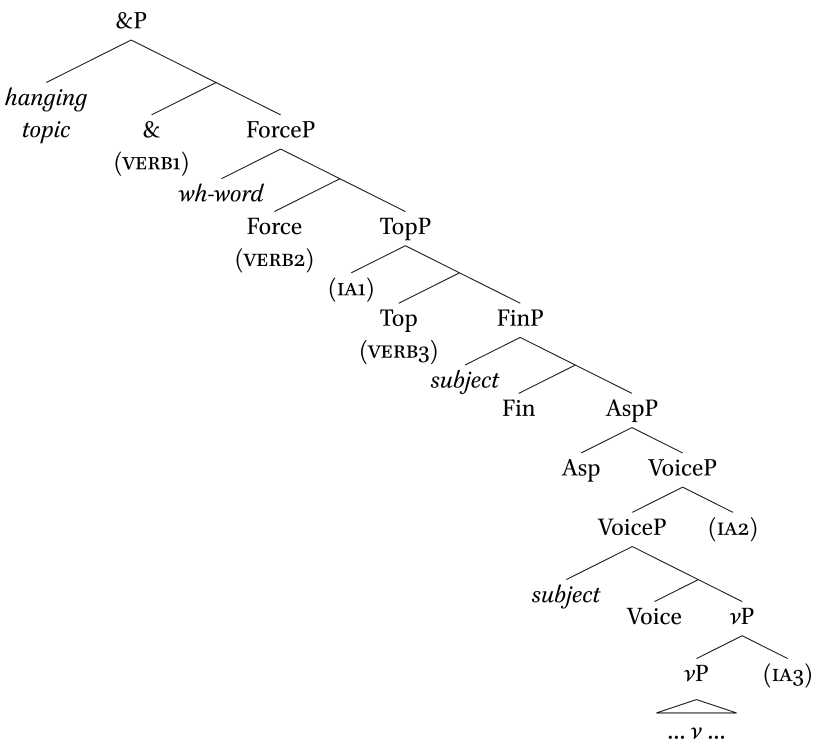
haz=zɛ ʾɛṯ hay=yarden
the=this OM the=Jordan
'wherefore hast thou **at all** brought this people over Jordan' (Josh 7.7)

Finally, a hanging topic can appear in the highest specifier position, [spec, &P]. This can derive a variety of orders, depending on which constituent has moved to [spec,TopP], and on how far the main verb has moved. In (29), *kol ʿomɔsɛha* is a hanging topic, the infinitive absolute *śaroṭ* appears in [spec,TopP], and the main verb appears in Top^0.

(29) *kol ʿomɔs-ɛ=ha* ***śaroṭ*** *yiś-śareṭ-u*
all.of burden.PROG-PL=3FS **cut.IA** 3M.NPST.PASS-cut-PL
'All that burden themselves with it shall be cut **in pieces**.' (Zech 12.3, cited by Harbour 1999: 169)

The structure in (30) shows all the possible positions of the finite verb (marked as VERB1, VERB2, and VERB3) and those of the infinitive absolute (marked as IA1, IA2, and IA3).

(30)



This structure derives all the observed word orders of the infinitive absolute construction, if we assume the four possible movements listed in (31), and take into account the fact that the subject may be either an overt DP or pronoun, or the phonologically null element PRO.

(31) a. The finite verb moves to Top^0.
This is the core of the verb-second pattern in Biblical Hebrew and happens in ordinary declarative clauses.
b. The finite verb moves from Top^0 to Force^0 or another head in the left periphery.
This movement is triggered by a particular marked feature in the higher head, and thus appears in questions and exclamatives.
c. The finite verb may move to &^{0}.
This movement derives the narrative inversion pattern.
d. The infinitive absolute moves to [spec,TopP].
This movement is one of the various possibilities available to derive verb-second order within TopP. Other adjuncts and arguments within the clause can undergo this movement; the behaviour of the IA is in this respect entirely unsurprising.

The first three movements listed in (31) are argued for by Cowper and DeCaen (2017) independently of the IA construction. They thus come at no cost to the present analysis; rather, the IA construction adds to the evidence previously adduced for them. The fourth is also independently motivated for constituents other than the IA, and given our claim that the IA is a full verbal projection rather than a head, it would be surprising if it could not also move to [spec,TopP].

As to the question of which of these operations takes place in any given sentence containing an IA, we assume that the answer lies in information-structural factors like the topicality of the IA itself (see Hatav 2017), and in the presence or absence of marked features of heads above the Topic projection.

6 Interim Summary

We have argued that the syntax of the IA construction can be understood quite straightforwardly in terms of BH clausal syntax, and that no construction-specific syntactic processes or structures are required. We have also accounted for a wider range of data than are handled by previous accounts of the IA. However, we have not so far said anything about either the morphological shape of

the IA verb, or the mechanism deriving the tautological infinitive, where the IA reduplicates the main verb root of the clause, and carries meanings often described as emphasis (see Waltke and O'Connor's 1990: § 35.3.1b "intensifying infinitive"). Before turning to these, we first discuss another kind of construction in which the IA form appears.

7 Coordinate Structures and the IA

In addition to appearing as single phrasal adjuncts to a verbal projection, the IA form is found in a variety of conjoined structures. The first of these is illustrated in (32), where two IAs together modify the main clause.

(32) ***haloḵ*** *wə=**ṯapōp̄*** *t-elaḵ-na* PRO
go.IA and=**trip.IA** 3F.NPST-go-PL PRO
'**walking** and **mincing** as they go' (Isa 3.16)

This example is straightforwardly accounted for by the analysis already presented. The IA consists of two conjoined VoicePs, which as a unit are adjoined to the matrix VoiceP, and have moved as a constituent to [spec,TopP].

Not all conjoined IA constructions are as easily accounted for, however. Consider the example in (33), where the infinitive absolute *šātô* is conjoined, not with another IA, but with the inflected infinitive *lɛʾĕḵol*.

(33) *wəy=y-ešɛḇ* *ha=ʿam* *lɛ=ʾĕḵol* *wə=**šaṯo***
and.then=3MS.NPST-sit the=people to=eat and=**drink.IA**
'and the people sat down to eat and to **drink**' (Exod 32.6)

Here, the interpretation is of a conjoined structure, as is clear from the translation. The puzzle, then, is why the two verb forms are different. Given the meaning, one might expect both 'to eat' and 'to drink' to be expressed with the regular infinitive, as indeed they are in (34).

(34) *wa=ʾănî* *ʾa-ḇoʾ* *ʾɛl* *beṯ=i* *lɛ=ʾĕḵol* *wə=li=štoṯ*
and=I 1S.NPST-go to house=1S to=eat.INF and=to=drink.INF
wə=li=škaḇ *ʿim* *ʾišt=i*
and=lie.INF with wife=1S
'shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife?' (1Sam 11.11)

A similarly puzzling example is shown in (35), where the IA phrase is conjoined with a finite verb phrase. As with (33), the interpretation is clearly one of conjoined phrases, with both activities taking place at the same time, despite the morphological difference between the two verbs.

(35) *wa̱y=yi̱tqəʿ-u* PRO *baš=šōparo̱ṯ* *wə=**napōṣ***
and.then=3M.NPST-blow.PL PRO on.the=trumpets and=**break.IA**
hak=kaddim *ʾăšɛr* *bə=ya̱ḏ-am*
the=jars that in=hand=3MP
'and they blew the trumpets, and **brake** the pitchers that were in their hands' (Judg 7.19)

Again, one might expect that in such a construction both verbs would take the finite form, as can be seen in (36).

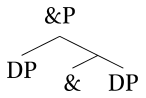
(36) *way=ya-ḇoʾ* *ʾuriyya* *ʾelay=w* *way=y-išʾal*
and.then=3MS.NPST-come Uriah to=3MS and.then=3MS.NPST-ask
dawi̱ḏ *li=šlom* *yoʾa̱b*
David to=peace.of Joab
'And when Uriah was come unto him, David **demanded** of him how Joab did' (2 Sam 11.7)

In order to explain why the verb forms in (33) and (35) differ, we turn to a parallel phenomenon that has been observed in a variety of languages: first-conjunct agreement. As illustrated in the Moroccan Arabic example in (37), coordinate structures sometimes display asymmetric agreement patterns (see also McCloskey 1986, Munn 1999, Doron 2000, Bošković 2009, and many others). Example (37) shows a typical form of asymmetric agreement, in which the verb agrees only with the first conjunct of a postverbal subject.

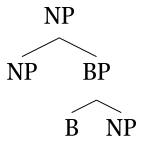
(37) *mšat* *kull* *mra* *w* *xu-ha*
left.F.SG each woman and brother-her
'Each woman and her brother left.' (Munn 1999: 653)

Current syntactic accounts of coordinate structures treat them as asymmetric, with the first conjunct occupying a higher position than the second. Various versions have been proposed, two of which are illustrated in (38).

(38) a. Standard X-bar view: first conjunct in [spec,&P]

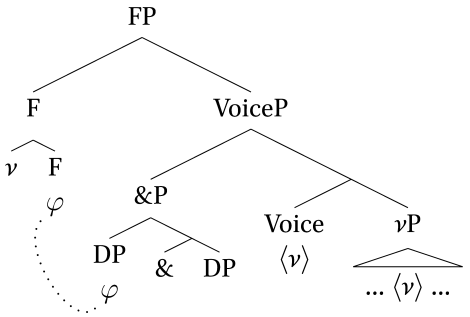


b. Munn's (1993) Boolean phrase, adjoined to NP



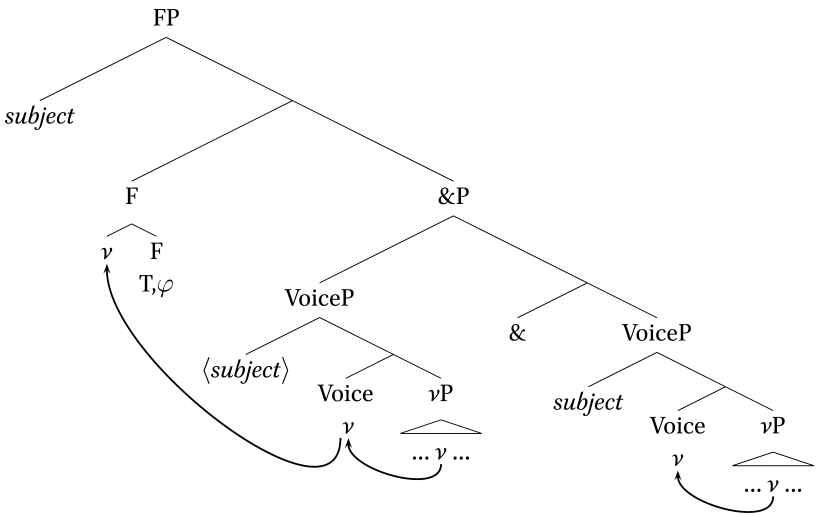
In either of these structures, the first of which we adopt here, first-conjunct agreement can happen with postverbal subjects because the first conjunct is structurally closer to the head hosting the preposed verb, as illustrated schematically in (39). Assuming that in a sentence like (37), the verb has moved past the subject to a higher head position (here F), agreement then takes place between the moved verb and the higher of two conjoined DPs, as shown.

(39)



We propose that a similar mechanism is responsible for the asymmetric inflectional patterns in (33) and (35), and that the relevant structure is as shown in (40). The only difference between (33) and (35) is the specification of the head F, which is either infinitival, as in (33), or finite, as in (35). The derivations are otherwise identical.

(40)



First, each verb moves to its own Voice head, as shown by the arrows in (40). That is as far as the verb in the second conjunct can move, there being no clausal inflectional heads directly above it in the structure. However, the verb in the first conjunct is now in a position to move to the higher inflectional head, here indicated by F, and potentially higher, if other inflectional heads are present. The first conjunct then seems to behave like a full clause, whose subject is case-licensed and thus can be overt, as is the case in (41).

(41) *way=y-arʾ* *parʿo* *ki* *hayə-ṯa* *ha=rəwaḥa*
and.then=3MS.NPST-see Pharaoh that be.PST-3FS the=relief
*wə=**ha-ḵbed*** *ʾɛṯ* *libb=o*
and=**CAUS-hard.IA** OM heart=3MS
'But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart' (Exod 8.11)

The second verb thus remains in Voice, and is spelled out with whichever *binyan* Voice provides. Its subject is not case-licensed, on the assumption that structural subject case originates in a position above VoiceP; the subject of the second conjunct must therefore be covert. Interestingly, however, it can be referentially distinct from the subject of the first conjunct, as in (42).

(42) *way=yiqrəʾ-u* *PRO* *lə=p̄anay=w* *ʾa-b̲reḵ*
and.then=3M.NPST-shout-PL PRO to=face=3MS CAUS-kneel.IMP.MS

*wə=*PRO ***naṯon*** *oṯ=o* *ʿal* *kol=ʾerɛṣ* *miṣrayim*
and= PRO **give.IA** OM=3MS over all.of=land.of Egypt
'and they [people] *cried* before him, Bow the knee: and he [Pharaoh] **made** him [Joseph] ruler over all the land of Egypt' (Gen 41.43 KJV)

What then of sentences like (34) and (36)? In those sentences the verbs in both conjuncts have the same inflected form: a fully inflected infinitive in (34), and a full finite verb in (36). We propose, uncontroversially, that sentences like these involve coordination of constituents larger than VoiceP, and that each conjunct thus contains its own inflectional material. The verb in each conjunct moves to the relevant inflectional head, and bears the appropriate inflectional morphology. This account predicts that the subject of the second conjunct can be phonologically overt only if the structures conjoined include higher, inflectional categories like FinP or AspP. Example (38) above has such a structure.

Under the account proposed here, it is unsurprising that IA forms are also found in disjunctions with 'or' as well as in conjunctions with 'and'. Examples are given in (43).

(43) a. *wə=ḵi* *ṯi-mkər-u* *mimkar* *la=ʿamiṯɛ=ḵa* *ʾo* ***qano***
and=if 2M.NPST-sell-PL sale to=neighbour=2MS or **buy.IA**
miy=yaḏ *ʿamiṯɛ=ḵa*
from=hand neighbour=2MS
'And if thou sell aught unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour's hand' (Lev 25.14)

b. *ʾiš* *ki* *yi-ddor* *nɛḏɛr* *la=ʾḏonay* *ʾo* ***hiššaḇaʿ*** *šəḇuʿa*
man that 3MS.NPST-vow vow to=lord or **swear.IA** oath
'If a man vow a vow unto the LORD, or swear an oath' (Num 30.3[2] KJV)

It remains to be explained why the second-conjunct verb, in cases of first-conjunct inflection, is spelled out with the same form as the IA. For us, the crucial property of all of the cases we have examined is that there are no clausal inflectional heads above VoiceP in the structure, and the verb thus remains in Voice. We propose that the IA form is a so-called default inflectional form, which surfaces when a verb cannot move to, or form an Agree relation with, an inflectional head such as Aspect, Finiteness, or Tense. This account is possible under a realizational approach such as Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz 1993 et seq.), where morphological form is determined by a set of rules realizing specific morphosyntactic features. The IA form, we propose,

arises when no other verbal spellout rule applies. This is parallel to Harbour's (1999, 2007) proposal, with which we concur, that *pa'al* is the default binyan that appears whenever a verb has not been able to move to, or form an agree relation with, a Voice head.

8 Conclusion and Remaining Questions

We have argued that the IA construction consists of a verbal projection (*v*P or VoiceP), modifying another verbal projection. Syntactically, the IA behaves just like other phrasal modifiers, in that it either remains *in situ*, or moves to [spec,TopP]. For us, the tautological infinitive construction is a special case of this more general construction. We assume that in those cases, the root is copied from the main clause to the IA constituent. The derivation is otherwise identical to that of the hetero-radical constructions we have focussed on. The morphological form of the IA is simply the default inflectional form which appears when a verb has no access to an inflectional head. It is found, not only in VoiceP/*v*P modifiers, but also as the second of two conjoined VoicePs, where only the first verb moves to the inflectional head position. We have taken no position here on the mechanism by which the verb root is copied in the tautological IA, though we have ruled out Harbour's account, in which the tautological IA is the spellout of the trace of a moved verb.

Finally, we have nothing new to say about cases like (13), where the infinitive absolute is the only verb in the clause. It can be noted that these examples are highly formulaic, and that for each of them, a close counterpart can be found that also contains a finite verb. One obvious avenue to pursue is that these are fragments, with the context providing an unpronounced higher finite clause that could provide a host for a VoiceP adjunct. Another avenue is suggested by the five minimal pairs in note 7 (exceptionally overt subject) with and without the finite verb. On this view, the finite verb is optionally spelled out in the presence of a matching IA.

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Index of Authors

Abney, Steven 153, 166
Adger, David 204, 206
Aelbrecht, Lobke 84, 89, 101, 102
Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 186, 187, 189
Aldridge, Edith 153, 166
Alexiadou, Artemis 209, 210, 211, 212, 216, 221, 222, 225, 226, 228, 229, 230
Amir, Noam 15, 35, 38
Anagnostopoulou, Elena 209, 212, 228, 229
Andersen, Francis I. 244, 251
Anderson, Stephen R. 13, 34
Anstey, Matthew P. 11, 34
Arad, Maya 126, 128, 129, 140, 141, 142

Bajohr, Hannes 2, 7
Balcaen, M. Jean 24, 34, 42, 43, 57
Ball, Martin J. 15, 24, 34
Barnes, Jonathan 10, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 33, 34
Barr, James 1, 3, 7, 8
Bauer, Hans 149, 166
Beavers, John 215, 230
Becker-Kristal, Roy 12, 20, 34
Becker, Michel 15, 34
Beckman, Jill N. 10, 14, 31, 34
Beckman, Mary E. 22, 34
Berkovits, Rochele 22, 27, 35
Blake, Frank 42, 57
Blau, Joshua (Yehoshua) 44, 57, 149, 160, 166, 244, 251
Bodine, Walter R. 3, 7
Borer, Hagit 126, 128, 129, 139, 140, 142
Borg, A. 63, 64, 82
Bosch, Anna 13, 15, 21, 24, 34, 35
Bošković, Željko 119, 123
Boulet, Jacques E.J. 191, 192, 193, 196, 199, 200, 203, 206
Bowers, John 199, 202, 203, 204, 206, 207
Brambatti Guzzo, Natália 15, 36
Breuer, Mordecai 40, 49, 50, 57
Butt, Miriam 178, 179, 180, 182, 183, 189
Bylinina, L. 81, 82
Byrd, Dani 22, 35

Callaham, Scott N. 132, 142, 150, 166
Cambier-Langeveld, Tina 22, 35
Cardinaletti, Anna 149, 166
Chierchia, Gennaro 215, 218, 229
Cho, Taehong 22, 35
Chomsky, Noam 33, 35
Chrzanowski, Jaroslaw 182, 189
Chung, Sandra 204, 207
Churchyard, Henry 9, 11, 35
Cinque, Guglielmo 33, 35, 154, 166, 225, 229
Clements, Nick 13
Cohen, Evan-Gary 15, 35
Cohn, Abigail 27, 35
Collins, Christopher 186, 189
Collins, James 153, 166
Condoravdi, Cleo 213, 229
Cook, John A. 144, 166, 196, 207, 213, 229
Corley, Martin 215, 230
Cowper, Elizabeth 103, 109, 110, 112, 117, 123, 125, 142
Crosswhite, Katherine M. 10, 13, 14, 20, 34, 35
Cuervo, María Cristina 196, 207
Cuyckens, Hubert 204, 207

D'hoedt, Frauke 204, 207
Dawson, Willa 18, 35
De Swart, Henriette 133, 142
DeCaen, Vincent 9, 23, 36
DeCaen, Vincent 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 103, 109, 110, 112, 114, 117, 123, 124, 125, 142
Deo, Ashwini 213, 229
Diesing, Molly 169, 178, 179, 189
Dixon, Robert M.W. 186, 187, 189
Dobrovie-Sorin, C. 76, 82
Doron, Edit 76, 82, 87, 89, 101, 119, 124, 125, 126, 128, 130, 135, 136, 139, 140, 142, 145, 157, 166, 210, 211, 221, 226, 229, 230
Dorvel, Benjamin 2, 7
Dowty, David 202, 207
Dresher, B. Elan 9, 12, 17, 24, 27, 36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59

Edwards, Jan 22, 34
Edzard, Lutz 44, 58
Even-Shoshan, Abraham 53, 54, 55, 58

Fassberg, Steven E. 235, 251
Flemming, Edward 12, 20, 34, 36
Folli, Raffaella 211, 229

Gamliel, Ophira 178, 189
Garcia, Guilherme 15, 36
Gardiner, Alan 204, 207
Geller, Stephen A. 84, 101
Gesenius, Wilhelm 12, 36, 125, 130, 131, 135, 138, 139, 142; see also Kautzsch, Emil
Gleason, H.A. 3, 7
Goad, Heather 15, 36
Goerwitz, Richard L. 9, 36
Goldberg, Lotus M. 90, 101
Goldenberg, Gideon 132, 133, 142, 236, 239, 246, 247, 248, 251, 252
Gordon, Cyrus H. 204, 207
Gordon, Matthew 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 31, 33, 36
Goshen-Gottstein, Moshe H. 160, 167
Grasso, Kevin 213, 229
Gray, George Buchanan 84, 96, 101
Griffiths, James 93, 101
Grimshaw, Jane 167, 178, 189
Gussenhoven, Carlos 33, 36

Hacquard, Valentine 158, 167
Halle, Morris 33, 35, 42, 43, 58, 122, 124, 126, 140, 142
Hammond, Michael 22, 36
Hannahs, Stephen J. 15, 36
Harbour, Daniel 103, 104, 108, 109, 112, 116, 123, 124, 125, 129, 133, 141, 142
Harley, Heidi 126, 140, 141, 142, 211, 219, 229
Haspelmath, Martin 209, 210, 212, 224, 229
Hatav, Galia 103, 104, 108, 117, 124, 125, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 142, 143, 144, 150, 167, 195, 207
Hayes, Bruce 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 35, 36, 42, 47, 58
Heller, D. 76, 82
Hendel, Ronald S. 3, 7
Hessling, Vincent 2, 7
Heuven, Vincent J. van 22, 35
Himmelreich, Roman 27, 33, 36

Hoftijzer, J. 244, 251
Holmstedt, Robert D. 49, 58, 95, 100, 101, 196, 201, 207
Hopper, Paul J. 182, 183, 189
Hornstein, Norbert 204, 207
Horvath, Julia 215, 229
Hurvitz, Avi 234, 251
Hyman, Larry M. 19, 20, 37

Idsardi, William J. 42, 43, 58
Ivlieva, N. 81, 82

Johnson, K. 167
Jones, Charles 154, 167
Joosten, Jan 144, 167
Joüon, Paul 39, 40, 41, 54, 58, 194, 200, 205, 207, 215, 219, 229, 231, 236, 251

Kastner, Itamar 215, 221, 230
Kautzsch, Emil 229, 231, 251; see also Gesenius, Wilhelm
Kayser, Samuel 13
Khan, Geoffrey 11, 13, 23, 37, 39, 58, 59, 239, 240, 244, 252
Kim, Yoo-Ki 132, 143
Kiparsky, Paul 153, 167
Koerner, Konrad 1, 2, 7
Koontz-Garboden, Andrew 215, 230
Kratzer, Angelika 112, 124, 130, 143, 218, 219, 221, 227, 228, 230
Kroeze, Jan H. 143

Labelle, Marie 126, 143
Lander, Yury 153, 167
Leander, Pontus 149, 166
Legate, Julie Anne 112, 124
Levin, Beth 216, 218, 224, 230
Liberman, Mark 33, 37, 42, 58
Lindblom, Björn 13, 20, 33, 37
Lundquist, Björn 215, 230

Malone, Joseph 42, 58
Maman, Aharon 1, 8
Manross, Lawrence N. 204, 207
Marantz, Alec 122, 124, 126, 140, 141, 142, 143
Marín, Rafael 220, 230
Mar'i, Abed al-Rahman 178, 189
McCarthy, John J. 27, 35, 37
McCloskey, James 204, 207

McNally, Louise 220, 230
McShane, Marjorie J. 85, 86, 89, 101
Merchant, Jason 84, 85, 90, 101
Mester, Armin 178, 189
Mikulskas, Rolandas 192, 207
Miller-Naudé, Cynthia L. 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 97, 98, 100, 101, 102
Mohanan, Tara 178, 189
Moon, Seung-Jae 20, 33, 37
Mor, Uri 235, 252
Moshavi, Adina 63, 83, 133, 142, 143
Moulton, Keir 153, 167
Munn, Alan S. 119, 120, 124
Muraoka, Takamitsu 39, 40, 41, 54, 58, 194, 200, 207, 215, 219, 229, 231, 236, 244, 251
Murguía, Elixabete 90, 102
Najman, Hindy 3, 7
Naudé, Jackie A. 143
Nespor, Marina 22, 35, 47, 59

O'Connor, Michael P. 3, 7, 83, 84, 102, 103, 108, 118, 124, 125, 131, 134, 135, 137, 138, 143, 200, 205, 208, 215, 219, 220, 230, 231, 252
Ostendorf, Mari 22, 38

Padgett, Jaye 10, 13, 34, 37
Pak, Miok 135, 143
Palmer, Frank R. 152, 167
Perrier, Pascal 22, 38
Pesetsky, David 167
Piñón, Christopher 220, 230
Pires, Acrisio 153, 160, 167
Podobryaev, A. 81, 82
Pollock, Sheldon 2, 7
Portner, Paul 135, 143, 151, 154, 167
Price, Patti J. 22, 38
Prince, Alan 12, 27, 33, 37, 40, 41, 42, 58, 59
Pylkkänen, Liina 219, 221, 230

Qimron, Elisha 13, 27, 37

Ramchand, Gilian 178, 179, 180, 189, 190, 204, 206, 215, 230
Rapaport, Tova 200
Rappaport Hovav, Malka 16, 17, 27, 33, 38, 42, 59, 209, 216, 218, 219, 222, 224, 230
Rendsburg, Gary A. 44, 53, 59
Reuland, Eric J. 153, 167
Revell, Ernest J. 9, 23, 27, 38, 39, 57, 59
Roberts, John R. 186, 190
Roettger, Timo 15, 22, 36
Rosen, Sara Thomas 178, 190
Ross, John R. 102
Rothstein, Susan 63, 66, 70, 76, 79, 82, 83, 130, 143, 191, 192, 194, 196, 198, 207
Ryan, Kevin M. 15, 17, 19, 38

Sagi, Hagit 15, 38
Saltzman, Elliot 22, 35
Sampson, Geoffrey 3, 7
Sanders, C. 2, 8
Schäfer, Florian 209, 212, 222, 226, 228, 229, 230
Screnock, John 83
Selkirk, Elizabeth O. 47, 59
Sharvit, Yael 81, 83
Shattuck-Hufnagel, Stefanie 22, 27, 38
Shlonsky, Ur 149, 166
Shmidman, A. 236, 252
Silber-Varod, Vered 15, 35, 38
Siloni, Tal 215, 229
Smolensky, Paul 33, 37
Sorace, Antonella 215, 230
Stateva, P. 81, 83
Steiner, Richard C. 66, 83
Steriade, Donca 19, 35, 37
Strauss, Tobie 47, 59
Sudo, Y. 81, 82

Tabain, Marija 10, 13, 22, 34, 37, 38
Tallerman, Maggie 186, 190
Taube, Moshe 178, 190
Téné, David 1, 8
Torrego, Esther 167
Traugott, Elizabeth 182, 183, 189
Truckenbrodt, Hubert 33, 38
Tungseth, Mai 215, 230
Turk, Alice E. 22, 27, 38
Turner, James 2, 3, 8

van der Merwe, Christo H.J. 131, 132, 143
Vergnaud, Jean-Roger 42, 58
Verstraete, Jean-Christophe 154, 167
Vogel, Irene 47, 59
Vries, Mark de 93, 95, 96, 101, 102

Waltke, Bruce K. 83, 103, 108, 118, 124, 125, 131, 134, 135, 137, 138, 143, 200, 205, 208, 215, 219, 220, 230, 231, 252
Waltker, N. 244, 252
Watson, Wilfred G.E. 84, 102
Weitz, Tabea 2, 7
Wickes, William 50, 59
Wightman, Colin W. 22, 38
Williams, Briony J. 15, 24, 34
Williams, Ronald J. 231, 252
Wilson, Daniel J. 203, 208
Wiltshire, Caroline 13, 15, 35
Wright, W. 151, 168
Wurmbrand, Susi 148, 168

Ylikaski, Jussi 137, 143

Zanuttini, Raffaella 135, 143
Zewi, Tamar 242, 244, 247, 248, 252
Zwiep, I. 1, 8

Index of Scriptures

Genesis

1.1 111
1.21 99
1.25 99
1.26 201
1.27 195, 201
1.29 99
1.29–30 92
2.3 64
2.16 103, 132
2.17 177
3.1 87
3.3 241
3.4 125
4.8 189
4.14 149
4.15 148, 162
4.18 245
4.23 99
4.24 99
5.1 201
5.2 195
5.3 201
7.1 195
7.2–3 99
7.6 195
7.11 68
8.3 132, 150
8.4 69
8.5 115, 131
8.12 154
8.13 69
9.6 201
9.7 215
9.11 225
9.15 145, 146
10.16 51
11.5 156
11.6 184
11.8 215
12.9 131
12.19 203
13.15 112
13.17 174
14.9 62
14.23 216
15.2 195
15.13 134
15.21 50
16.3 195
16.15 56
17.1 106
17.8 195
17.13 106, 134
18.1 134, 150
18.6 172
18.11 158
18.18 134
18.19 155
18.28 88
19.1 185
19.8 159
19.19 216
19.21 156
19.35 156
20.18 134
21.3 56
22.3 170
22.17 134
22.22 50
23.9 195
24.5 134
24.18 171
24.21 87, 195
24.31 99
24.32 99
24.47 99
24.54 171
24.67 203
25.1 173
25.25 195
25.29 216
26.13 131
26.34 195, 202
27.3 134
27.12 87, 99
27.19 174
27.37 195
27.42 245
28.2 164
28.12 215
28.14 215

Genesis (*cont.*)
29.3 63, 216, 217
30.2 61
30.4 195
30.9 195
30.19 61, 72
30.31 215
30.32 105, 109, 113
31.3 132
31.4 99
31.15 195
31.41 216
32.12 132
32.29 90
32.29 99
33.2 99
33.9 235
33.18 195
34.8 195
34.12 195
35.29 195
37.1 132
37.2 197
37.8 132
37.33 134
38.11 195
39.1 157
39.6 90, 99
39.9 90
39.23 216
40.15 134
41.32 176
41.34 69
41.35 53, 99
41.43 121, 122
41.45 195
42.6 248
42.9 145
42.15 90
43.2 134
43.3 159
43.32 99
44.5 132
44.17 112
45.8 90, 99
47.18 99
48.14 94, 99
49.1 99
49.11 99
49.13 99
49.17 99
50.14 171
50.24 134, 177
50.35 134

Exodus
2.14 146, 157, 158
2.19 132
3.7 150
3.9 99
3.19 99
5.12 215
5.13 99
5.21 214, 215
6.3 193
6.8 195
7.28 215
8.11 121
8.12 215
8.25 165
9.2 216
9.19 216
12.9 99, 195, 198, 199
12.13 146
12.18 65
12.38 99
12.42 147
12.48 106
13.3 108, 135
13.18 195
14.1 215
14.9 197
14.14 216
15.16 160
16.4 87
16.8 99
16.24 214, 215
17.1 164
17.14 195
18.2–4 93, 94
18.4 193
18.6 99
18.13 159
18.18 134
19.1 65
19.13 104
20.8 108, 135, 145
20.12 135, 215

21.5 195
21.7 163
21.14 216
21.23–24 99
22.3 195
22.12 195
22.23 99
23.18 53
24.4 99
25.2 99
25.12 99
25.17 108
26.1 99
26.3 99
26.35 99
28.1 152
28.19 72
28.21 99
29.37 78
30.19 72
31.17 63
32.6 106, 118
32.25 242
33.5 247
34.3 215
34.24 216
36.1 99
36.13 99
36.16 99
39.9 195
40.15 163
40.36–37 146

Leviticus

2.11 195
2.14 195
3.1 195
3.6 195
3.14 195
5.6 195
6.1 195
6.3 197
6.6 195
6.7 106, 135, 152
6.9 195
6.21 213
7.34 195
10.12 195
11.33 213
14.17 53
14.21 195
15.31 216
16.1 195
16.2 157
16.5 99
18.21 185
19.6 64
19.16 195
19.19 195
19.24 62
20.2 195
23.9 99
23.17 195
24.43 147
25.14 122
25.21 64

Numbers

1.52 99
2.16 195
2.24 195
3.6 215
5.21 195
6.3 216
6.19 99
6.23 134
6.25 112
6.26 112
7.24 72
7.66 68
7.72 68
7.78 69
11.1 194
11.4 171
11.15 107
11.19–20 99
11.23 87
11.25 162
11.32 107
12.14 104
13.3 132
14.33 75
15.24 99
15.35 106, 134
16.3 195
16.13 106
16.17 99
16.33 195

Numbers (*cont.*)
17.4 199
17.23 215
18.14 195
18.15 164
20.21 157
21.2 134
21.15 215
21.28 99
21.29 99
22.16 157
23.7 98, 99
23.19 91, 92
24.4 195
24.5 99
24.6 99
24.16 195
26.6 245
26.65 99
28.11 195
28.12 195
28.13 195
29.19 195
29.25 195
30.3 122
31.3 195
31.54 195
32.3 195
32.16 99
32.32 195
33.38 66
35.33 99

Deuteronomy
1.1 216
1.17 247
2.24 184
3.18 195
3.26 161
5.3 99
5.12 108, 135, 152
5.16 135
6.17 107
7.18 108, 115
7.22 157, 162
8.2 87
8.9 247
9.7 161
9.21 139, 161, 200
9.27 145
10.22 197
11.29 99
13.1 99, 132
13.15 137
14.9 9
15.2 106
15.5 132
15.7–8 132
15.12 195
15.13 195
15.18 195
15.22 99
16.1 108, 135
16.3 164
17.7 99
19.3 162
21.14 132
22.1 132
22.4 132, 176
22.9 195
22.24 92, 93
24.9 108
24.9 135
24.12–13 132
25.9 214
25.17 135
26.14 197
26.19 195
27.1 108, 135
28.1 195
28.13 87
28.23 99
29.7 195
29.13–14 99
29.22 215
30.3 215
30.9 176
31.21 195
31.27 99
32.7 91
32.25 99
33.1 99
33.18 99
33.28 99

Joshua
1.13 108, 135
2.1 215

6.3 134
6.13 105, 114
6.16 62
7.7 107, 115, 116
9.2 151
10.16 62
14.4 90
14.7 148
17.3 90, 240
17.18 216
20.7 99

Judges
1.8 48, 49
2.22 87
4.14 99
4.24 131
6.11 216, 228
6.37 98
7.1 157
7.19 106, 119
7.21 228
8.12 216
9.2 162
9.8 134
10.8 99
14.9 131
20.35 61
20.39 157

1 Samuel
1.9 139
3.5 174
3.12 134, 151
5.3 218
6.12 131
8.2 56
8.9 132
9.2 64
10.15–16 133
11.11 118
14.13 99
14.19 131
14.27 156
15.15 155
15.35 157
17.14 82
17.33 247
17.55 154, 155
18.6 99
18.12 157
18.25 157
19.2 157
19.3 89
19.15 153
20.41 216
21.7 90
22.22 243
23.13 157
23.26 99
24.2 134
25.18 61
25.28 134
25.3 238
25.7 216
26.2 99
26.25 132
27.1 157
30.17 99
30.22 90

2 Samuel
1.6 134
1.11 89, 99
3.16 131
3.34 160
5.1 131
5.19 133
6.11 65
6.22 241
8.2 105, 113, 134
8.6 164
11.7 119
11.25 216
15.3 131
15.8 228
15.32 239
16.22 215
17.2 216, 236
17.8 242, 243
17.14 157
17.17 159
18.29 90
19.6 216
21.2 90
21.22 245
24.12 135, 137
24.13 149

2 Samuel (*cont.*)
24.24 132

1 Kings
3.7 157
3.14 215
6.1 80
6.38 65
7.12 64
8.52 163
10.9 161
14.25 63, 68
15.1 67
15.28 67
16.18 68
16.24 56
17.1 90
19.15 173
20.31 243
20.37 131, 195
20.39 152
21.29 163
22.12 216
22.14 240
22.18 90

2 Kings
2.3 216
2.11 114
4.2 90
5.2 194
5.11 106
5.15 90
5.17 90
6.5 246
6.11 232, 234
7.1 90
11.11 134
11.18 107, 137
18.3 245
18.4 110, 111
18.13 70
18.32 114
19.27 161
21.20–21 163
22.18 241

Isaiah
1.3 96
1.4 238
1.11 55
1.18 215
1.21 89
1.26 84, 95
1.27 97
3.3 237
3.16 105, 108, 118
5.5 215
6.1 216
7.11 134
8.2 216
10.31 216
13.17 216
17.11 217
19.8 212, 213
19.22 131
25.12 215
28.9 216
32.17 137
33.21 239
35.6 86
40.12 54
43.18 96
45.13 91
52.8 156
52.15 96
55.1 215
59.1 87
59.9 91

Jeremiah
2.2 156, 157
2.11 216
2.26 216
6.15 216
10.18 216
12.17 131
15.15 156
20.14 164
22.19 134
25.29 129
33.8 54
33.26 228
36.22 246
47.4 159
48.41 216

48.44 228
49.12 129
49.36 228

Ezekiel
1.26 241
17.24 215, 217
18.32 217
20.14 147
26.7 78
27.26 225
31.15 213
39.16 56
43.2 215
45.14 55

Hosea
5.6 214
6.6 87
11.1 247

Joel
1.1 215
4.1 228

Amos
1.3 88
2.8 215
5.18 88
9.8 125

Jonah
1.7 232, 234
1.12 233, 234
1.13 216, 217

Micah
4.12 216
7.1 86

Nahum
2.3 215

Zechariah
9.5 91
12.13 116

Malachi
2.14 216

Psalms
2.1 216
2.4 86
10.1 215
15.1–5 89
18.29 215
18.33 149
18.42 91
18.49 149
19.11 87
20.8 85, 86, 98
22.27 172
23.1 235
24.3–4 89
25.17 215
32.8 216
33.1 54
35.8 240
46.3 216
47.5 39
49.8 125
49.17 216
51.9 55
54.7 228
57.8 216
59.16 228
60.2 39
73.1 228
76.5 87
85.4 217
87.7 54
90.6 215
95.1 237
97.6 88
100.2 88
104.25 237
109.17 157
118.13 159
119.96 54
126.1 154
132.8 86
137.1 145
139.6 87
148.6 55

Job
11.3 216
13.17 107
14.9 215, 216, 217

Job (*cont.*)
21.2 107
26.1 55
28.1 87
29.2 216
31.29 149
37.23 55
39.12 228
42.3 215

Prov
3.12 39
10.17 216
12.14 228
17.16 55
19.7 54
25.27 137, 138
26.23 55
29.27 238
30.4 56

Ruth
1.1 160
1.21 194

Song
1.1 78
1.6 233, 234
1.7 234
3.7 233, 235
8.12 233, 234, 235

Ecclesiastes
8.17 234, 235

Lamentations
1.5 55
1.18 247

Esther
1.12 51, 52
1.17 51
1.19 52
4.16 32
9.15 67

Daniel
11.32 215

Nehemiah
6.5 62
8.11 216
9.19 246

1 Chronicles
4.27 216
11.9 131
12.14 66
12.18 114
24.13–18 66
25.18–31 66
27.14–15 66

2 Chronicles
33.19 216
34.8 67