BOOK REVIEW

Miles V. Van Pelt. *Biblical Hebrew: A Compact Guide*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012. 210 pp. Pbk. ISBN 0310326079.

Miles Van Pelt has produced another entry in a series of Hebrew language aids based on his foundational text, *The Basics of Biblical Hebrew*, co-authored with Gary Pratico. At 6.3 x 4.1 x 0.4 inches, this *Compact Guide* falls somewhere between the full introductory grammar and the four-page laminated *Get an A+ Study Guide: Biblical Hebrew*. It is certainly easier to carry around and access than the 8½ x 11, 512 page, 3 lb. textbook. It also is much easier on the eyes and provides more information than the small, crowded print of the laminated summary sheet. The protective plastic cover means that it can be tossed into a knapsack or carried around in a pocket without suffering from wear and tear.

This small guide contains a wealth of information about Hebrew morphology and grammar, with the series's trademark diagnostics highlighted in red for easier identification. The layout is clear and accessible. The book begins with the alphabet and proceeds to summarize clearly the intricacies of topics such as nouns, conjunctions, prepositions, pronouns, suffixes, and construct chains. Scriptural examples are frequently provided. The Qal stem is described in detail, and the coverage of both strong and weak verbs in the derived stems is clear and helpful. The book concludes with verb paradigms, stem diagnostic summaries, and a brief lexicon of common words.

Unfortunately, the information on syntax at the level of discourse is still rather rudimentary, as it is in the main text, and consists of a few general guidelines. A more comprehensive coverage of the use of verbal forms that recognizes the significance of discourse patterns in various text types would be

helpful.

    All in all, this small book is a very useful and portable treasury of the essentials of Hebrew that will assist the student or pastor with translation and interpretation.

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