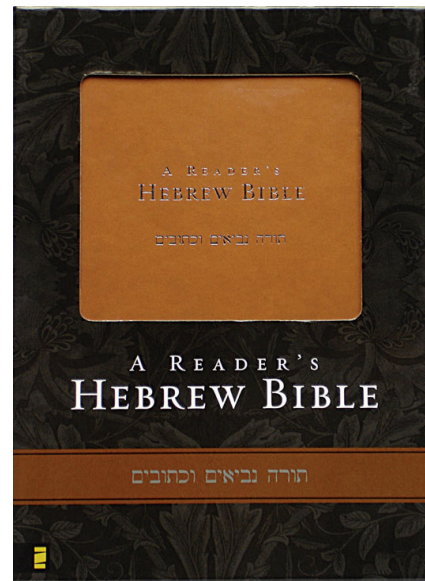


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Based on the success Zondervan had with *A Reader's Greek New Testament*, you knew it was only a matter of time before they'd put together a similar resource for the Hebrew Bible. To the delight of many, *A Reader's Hebrew Bible* was released this past March. I've been looking forward to writing this review and wanted to express a word of thanks to the folks at Zondervan for sending me a review copy. I'll be breaking this review into two parts. Part one will discuss the physical characteristics and also the packaging for this Bible. Part two will take a look at what's inside this Bible.

Let me start by talking about the physical characteristics of *A Reader's Hebrew Bible*. It has a very appealing look about it; one might go so far as to say it's beautiful. The binding is a light brown Italian Duo-Tone. You will find the title stamped on the front cover and the spine in silver lettering. The page edges match the lettering as they are also gilded silver. This volume measures 7.2 in. wide by 9.9 in. high by 2.1 in. deep, which makes it a bit larger than the other Hebrew Bibles I am familiar with. The paper used for this Bible is a bit thinner than the paper used in some of the other Zondervan Bibles in my library. It is slightly transparent as you're able to make out some of the text on the other side of each page. However, this in no way hinders the readability of the Hebrew text. I felt that the decision to go with this paper was probably design-related as it lends to the overall elegant look and feel of the Bible. In addition to the great look and feel of this Bible, Zondervan went the extra mile by creating great packaging for it. This Bible comes in what I would consider a presentation quality box. The front of the box is windowed to show the front cover with the title in silver lettering. The back of the box has a well laid out list of information that will be important to someone who is looking to buy this Bible.

Next, I wanted to take a look at the inside of *A Reader's Hebrew Bible*. There are 28 pages of worthwhile introductory material at the front of the Bible. This includes the Author's Preface, a Quick User's Guide, an Introduction, and Abbreviations & Sigla. I am very excited to note that all of the introductory material is written in English. Many of the Hebrew and Greek Bibles available in the bookstores of Bible Colleges and seminaries come from the German Bible Society. The difficulty for many American students is that the introductory material is written in German. Since most of the students are not fluent in German, they miss out on the introductory information, which will help them to make the best possible use of their new Bible. Following the introductory material is the actual Hebrew text. I really appreciate that the Hebrew text goes across the entire page, with all of the notes appearing at the bottom. This serves to make the text more readable as you don't have any notes or references in the margins, breaking up the

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text as you're trying to read it. I think this will be especially useful to first year students who are working on their Hebrew reading as it will minimize the distractions on the page. When the reader comes across a word they're not quite sure about, they can refer to the notes at the bottom of the page which contain glosses and definitions of Hebrew words occurring 100 times or less and Aramaic words occurring 25 times or less. These notes will prove very useful to the 1st year student as well as the more casual reader whose Hebrew skills may be a bit out of practice.

Let me summarize by saying that I think Zondervan did a great job with *A Reader's Hebrew Bible*. It's a very attractive and high quality Hebrew Bible at a reasonable price. The layout and notes will be invaluable for the 1st year student or the more casual reader. It will make a great gift for students, pastors, or the layperson interested in Biblical Hebrew.

A. Philip Brown II (PhD, Bob Jones University) is associate professor of Bible and Theology at God's Bible School and College in Cincinnati, Ohio. He was the author for the 4th edition of Handbook of New Testament Greek, a publication for Bob Jones University.

Bryan W. Smith (PhD, Bob Jones University) is Bible integration coordinator at Bob Jones University Press.