use the perfect tense, which is then called "the prophetic perfect." In the Old Testament, a perfect or imperfect verb is often introduced by a conjunction, called "*waw* consecutive," that has the effect of changing the usage of imperfect into perfect and vice versa.

It is often difficult to be certain how to express a particular Hebrew verb in English, as far as tense is concerned; but when one or more Hebrew verbs using a certain tense are followed by one that uses the other tense, as at the end of the last verse of Isaiah 53, one must consider that there is a definite reason for the change.

A peculiarity of Semitic languages such as Hebrew is that a verb may appear in various "stems." Hebrew has seven fairly common stems. The significance of each stem may vary with different words. In general it may be said that the *qal* stem represents the simple idea of a verb, although there are instances where this idea is carried by the *niphal* rather than the *qal*. Otherwise the *niphal* may represent a reflexive idea or may take the place of a passive for the *qal*.

The *hiphil* stem usually expresses the idea of leading some one to perform an act or causing it to be performed.

The *piel* is generally called an intensive but frequently expresses a causative idea. Thus the *qal* of *lamadh* means "learn"; in the *piel* it means "teach," or "cause to learn."

The *pual* and *hophal* are the passives of the *piel* and the *hiphil*.

The other rather common stem is called the *hithpael*.

The *qal* has both an active and a passive participle. Other participles are active or passive depending on the nature of the stem with which they are connected.

Early Hebrew does not have a word corresponding to the English verb "to be." Instead it simply places two nouns or a noun and an adjective next to each other, and some form of the copula is understood. Thus wherever a translation of Isaiah includes a form of the verb "to be," it could have been translated "is," "was," or "will be, " depending on the context.