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Sommario/riassunto	This book provides a new explanation for what has long been a challenge for scholars of Biblical Hebrew: how to understand the expression of verbal tense and aspect. Working from a representative text corpus, combined with database queries of specific usages and surveys of examples discussed in the scholarly literature, Ulf Bergström gives a comprehensive overview of the semantic meanings of the verbal forms, along with a significant sample of the variation of pragmatically inferred tense, aspect, or modality (TAM) meanings. Bergström applies diachronic typology and a redefined concept of aspect to demonstrate that Biblical Hebrew verbal forms have basic aspectual and derived temporal meanings and that communicative appeal, the action-triggering function of language, affects verbal semantics and promotes

the diversification of tense meanings. Bergström's overarching explanation of the semantic development of the Biblical Hebrew verbal system is an important contribution to the study of the evolution of the verbal system and meanings of individual verbs in the Hebrew Bible. Accessibly written and structured for seminar use, Bergström's study brings new perspectives to a debate that, in many ways, had reached a stalemate, and it challenges scholars working with TAM and the Biblical Hebrew verb to revisit their theoretical premises. Advanced students and scholars of Biblical Hebrew and other Semitic languages will find the study thought provoking, and linguists will appreciate its contributions to linguistic theory and typology.
