

INTRODUCTION

As stated briefly in the introduction to the textbook, the purpose of the Supplement is twofold: to provide reinforcement and review, and to go into further detail on some topics that are only touched on in the lessons.

One may ask, Why the review? Are there not exercises aplenty after each lesson? Years of teaching have convinced me that most students require multiple repetitions and variety in presentation in order to absorb and securely retain concepts. The Supplement's question-and-answer format, its sprinkling of true-or-false challenges, and numerous quizlets keep interest high and are meant to be fun. They give students opportunities to test themselves and to get instant feedback. No answer is further than a footnote away. The Supplement is not a simple redundancy, since the questions address topics differently from their explanations in the textbook. What this volume is not, however, is a replacement for studying the lessons. If used as it should be, which is after the student has studied the material in a particular lesson or group of lessons, it should provide a gauge as to how well the concepts have been absorbed.

A subtopic of reinforcement and review is that oh-so-difficult aspect of Biblical Hebrew: vocabulary. There simply cannot be too much review to help inculcate words, especially as they change when in the plural, suffixed, before a maqqef, or in construct. For these reasons, a separate section devoted to vocabulary review has been added at the end. Although the exercises treat words in groups of ten, not every word is in a phrase or sentence in its assigned group; some may appear a lesson or two later to accommodate a particular grammatical construction or concept not presented at the time the word is. If one studies the vocabulary list, does these exercises, reviews the readings, and works with אֱלֹהִים הַדְּבָרִים one will have a variety of input from which to build up a solid base for word retention.

The other important function of the Supplement is to provide further detail which, if added to the textbook, would make it unwieldy. Some of these more extensive treatments are considered to be useful at the present stage of learning; they are designated **S**. But the references prefaced with **§** address topics that one or two people in a class almost always seem to ask about but may not be needed "now." The most notorious of these, addressed in **§ 5**, has to do with vowel changes as nouns change number or state or have suffixes added. Lesson 5 seemed a premature place to discuss such a complex topic, but that is when the questions first seem to come up. Besides, since this is a book, and the item is highlighted, one can always come back to this discussion when one is ready. The short treatments of most of these topics are not meant to be comprehensive. They are meant to provide an introduction until one is ready for the in-depth discussions of the reference grammars.

A word about the organization of the Supplement. A serious attempt was made to cover the topics, large and small, in some sort of systematic manner. It didn't work. Examination of a number of other textbooks confirmed that the organization of Biblical Hebrew texts is somewhat arbitrary. Thus, it seemed to make most sense to mirror the organization of the parent textbook.

One significant way in which the Supplement differs from the textbook is that it uses some examples that are not from the Biblical corpus. This decision, reluctantly made, allowed a more flexible treatment of some topics, especially vocabulary. For this violation of purity we beg lenience.