

THE LOGIC BEHIND THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHAPTERS

Lessons are designed to take two days each. The first day is used for learning vocabulary and the concepts of the chapter. The second day is for the exercises (mainly translation). Since chapter concepts expect students to know the vocabulary, students should learn the vocabulary before the lesson is taught.

The organization of vocabulary lists is conceptual, not alphabetical, moving from people to objects to more abstract concepts. This is followed by verbs, which are listed separately. Verb definitions are given according to how they would be translated, not as infinitives. Following verbs one often finds a section called *Possible Confusion*. This section contains words which students frequently mix up. Often these sound similar but are spelled differently.

Many chapters also have a *Grammar Review* section. This defines various grammatical terms (and some other terms as well) which we wish students knew, but of course, few actually do. I confess that when I began learning Hebrew that I did not even know what a preposition was!

Most chapters present a major concept and one or two minor concepts. Footnotes are sometimes employed to provide some additional technical information.

The exercise portions of a lesson frequently have a forms section, followed by translation. I **STRONGLY** urge you to have students translate forms instead of parsing them. As noted above, this eliminates an unnecessary and potentially confusing step. If they can accurately translate forms, then they know what is going on with the grammar.

As for the translation, lessons employ both pointed and unpointed Hebrew. While many professors are not accustomed to working with unpointed Hebrew, students who begin with both do not tend to see a difference. In fact, I have found that they are more likely to recognize the roots of words after working with unpointed texts. This includes noting the root connections between nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

All translation portions of the chapters have complete sentences, rather than broken phrases.² These quickly progress from “Dick and Jane” type sentences in early chapters to modified Biblical Hebrew passages, and then to unmodified Biblical texts. This progression is not purely linear, for you can find modified and unmodified sentences in the same lesson (as early as Lesson 5). Thus while this book does not strictly rely on exact constructions which occur in the Bible, it nevertheless tries to get there as quickly as possible.

Words in the translation portion which students have not had (especially low-frequency words [which are not part of any vocabulary lists]) will be glossed (in parentheses).

²Unless the Biblical text itself has an incomplete sentence.