Analysis of conclusions. First, S. leaves no place for apparently motivated pragmatically. This includes indexes of biblical references and subjects. Verbal-subject without presenting any syntactical evidence supporting this view. This is a sequential/non-sequential verbal system. ZAH's central claim is twofold: clause-initial position is marked for focus in BH; and BH has two nominal and verbal clause word orders; (2) to ascertain the role of the clause-initial position; (3) to elucidate the functional difference of the different word orders; and (4) to clarify the relationship among word order, emphasis, and contrast as reflected in the use of Biblical Hebrew (p. 30).


In chaps. 2-4, S. presents an information-structure model for BH based primarily on Knud Lambrecht, Information Structure and Sentence Form: Topic, Focus, and the Mental Representation of Discourse Referents (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). S.'s central claim is twofold: clause-initial position is marked for focus in BH; and BH has three focus structures (following Lambrecht): predicate focus, argument focus, and clause focus. In the remainder of the book (chaps. 5-11), S. applies his theory of three focus structures to the clause data from earlier studies and grammars (helpfully tabulated in two appendices), and treats the contiguous text of Deut 4:4-11:32 in a third appendix. S. also includes indexes of biblical references and subjects. Despite the extensive data analyzed by S., the weakness of his theory undercuts his conclusions. First, S. leaves no place for syntax; according to his theory, all word order is apparently motivated pragmatically. Methodologically speaking, it would be more sound to explain the syntax of BH word order before attempting to unravel its pragmatics. For instance, S. adopts the position of the majority that the normal word order in BH is verb-subject without presenting any syntactical evidence supporting this view. This is a rather large assumption to make in a work on word order. If S. were to take into account syntactically motivated word orders (e.g., jussives and cohortatives are always clause-initial), his theory might look very different.

Similarly, S. appears uncritically to presuppose Endo and Buth's sequential/nonsequential model of the BH verbal system. Despite the prevalence of this model, it is unsupported in light of linguistic typology, which provides no clear parallel among the world's languages.

Finally, although S. adopts Lambrecht's triadic model of focus, he crucially departs from Lambrecht's definition of focus as that part of a proposition that is new or asserted (in contrast to old or presupposed). Instead, S. offers an alternative definition of focus that, although legitimate, is incompatible with Lambrecht's triadic model: "To focus is to mark an item as being informationally prominent or to highlight it" (p. 42). In contrast to Lambrecht's focus, which is a component of every proposition, it is doubtful that focus as S. defines it is always present.

The theoretical problems S. encounters in trying to combine his definition of focus with Lambrecht's model are evident from his confusing, if not contradictory, statements on focus and new/old information: "the clause-initial position is marked for focus" (p. 42); "the comment [i.e., new information] is always focused" (p. 43); "old information is often focused" (p. 43); and "all new information is prominent [i.e., focused], but not all prominent information is new" (p. 43). It is doubtful that the clause-initial position in BH can simultaneously mark these disparate elements of focus.

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In recent years, there has been a renaissance in the study of the apocryphal/deutero-canonical books, as this volume indicates. The author, NT professor at the Asland Theological Seminary in Ohio, has already published a volume entitled 4 Maccabees in the series Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998). He now supplies an introduction to the sixteen texts translated for the Apocrypha section of the NRSV, ranging from Tobit to 4 Maccabees. Fifteen of these texts appear in some or all of the great uncial codexes of the LXX; the exception is 2 Esdras, where the Latin text is used. It is arguable that future introductions to this literature could usefully have a supplement treating 1 Enoch and Jubilees, since the Ethiopic church regards both these books as canonical, and Qumran has yielded several Aramaic or Hebrew manuscripts of them.

After a short foreword by James Charlesworth, reflecting on the theological value of the Prayer of Manasseh, deS. provides an important introductory chapter, dealing with the definition of these writings, their canonical status, and their links with early Christian writings. While it would be possible to emphasize other aspects of the material, deS. generally navigates these disputed areas soundly and with ecumenical sensitivity. He states forthrightly that he shares "the perspective of Jerome, Wyclif, Luther, and the sixth Article of Religion of the Anglican church" that "the Apocrypha, while not of the status of sacred Scripture, have much to teach us about God" (p. 40). He specifies the chronological