
In the first essay, "Vollverb und Hilfsverb mit Infinitiv-Ergänzung im Hebräischen" (pp. 11-35), J. explores the semantic distinction between the syntagms verb + *lamed* preposition + infinitive, and verb + infinitive (as object of the verb), which he compares with the similar constructions in German "er vermag zu kommen" versus "er kann kommen" (cf. English "he is able to come" versus "he can come"). In the second essay, "Epistemische Modalitäten im Proverbienbuch" (pp. 36-47), J. examines the use of *lamed* preposition + infinitive to express different types of epistemic modality, particularly in Proverbs. In the third essay, "Einleitung formeller und familiärer Rede im Alten Testament durch 'mr 3l- und 'mr l-" (pp. 48-64), J. proposes a difference of register (formal versus familiar, respectively) between 'mr 'l- and 'mr l- introducing direct speech. In the fourth essay, "Subjektive und objektive Klassifikation im althebräischen Nominalsatz" (pp. 65-76), J. examines the role of *lamed* preposition in classificatory (identificatory) nominal clauses. J. argues that nominal clause predicates with *lamed* preposition express "reclassification" or "reevaluation"; he illustrates his interpretation with the contrastive examples in Gen 44:16 and 50:18, among others. The sixth essay, "Textinterne Epexegeese
im Alten Testament” (pp. 107-17), treats the epexegetical use of the lamed preposition. The seventh essay represents a departure from the collection’s focus on the lamed preposition by examining the syntagm ‘al-ken. “Eine hebräische Abtönungspartikel ‘al-ken,” (pp. 118-33). Finally, in the eighth essay J. ties together four of the five preceding topics in an examination of Num 10:29-31. With this brief passage J. is able to contrast constructions 'mr 'l- and 'mr l- introducing direct speech and the bare infinitive as object of the main verb versus as a helping verb headed by the lamed preposition, and to illustrate the role of the lamed preposition in the nominal clause and the syntagm ‘al-ken.

The fifth essay is unrelated to either of the main topics in the collection. Instead, in this essay, “Aktionsarten und Stammformen im Althebräischen: Das Pi'el in verbeserter Sicht” (pp. 77-106), J. presents a revision to his earlier and widely adopted interpretation of the piel stem (Das hebräische Pi'el: Syntaktisch-semasiologische Untersuchung einer Verbalform im Alten Testament [Zurich: EVZ-Verlag, 1968]). In contrast to his earlier starting point of verbal transitivity, J. bases his revised theory on Z. Vendler’s situational aspects (state, activity, accomplishment, and achievement), examining the patterned interaction of verbal roots with these aspects with the piel and hiphil stems.

The remaining three essays deal with the cohortative and imperative verb forms. In the first of these three (“Presidential Address: Höfliche Bitte im Alten Testament” [pp. 151-65]), J. distinguishes semantically and pragmatically four forms of imperatival command/request, illustrated in one instance by the verb form haggēd (pp. 164-65): (1) the unmarked usage is the short imperative by which a simple command is given (e.g., 2 Sam 18:21); (2) the long form of the imperative, haggidā, expresses a polite request (e.g., Gen 29:15); (3) the short imperative followed by the enclitic -nā expresses urgency as specified by the speech situation between speaker and addressee (e.g., Josh 7:19); and (4) the combination of the long imperative plus the enclitic -nā combines the semantics of the previous two meanings into an urgent but polite request (e.g., Gen 32:20).

The last two essays, which treat the cohortative form and imperative form, respectively, are the most substantial contributions to the collection. In “Untersuchungen zum hebräischen Kohortativ” (pp. 166-226), J. argues that instead of the vague notion of “volitive,” the cohortative is best understood in terms of communicative pragmatics, as orienting the speaker toward the address (or reflexively back to the speaker) with respect to the mood of the communicative situation (e.g., request, suggestion, encouragement). An index provides a categorized listing of cohortative forms.

In “Verwendungen des Imperativs im Biblisch-Hebräischen” (pp. 227-315), J. categorizes the imperative forms in the Bible by their grammatical shape (e.g., short form, long form) as well as by their semantic (e.g., command, invitation, exhortation, question, request) and pragmatic (e.g., woman speaker, rhetoric) properties. J.’s discussion is followed by an index in which the relevant information for each imperative is encoded.

Although only the last essay is newly published here, this collection is well constructed to give the reader an overview of two major areas of J.’s recent research. At the same time, the last essay is substantial enough to require recourse to the volume by all those examining the imperative forms.

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